

# A HANDBOOK OF MARXISM

*being*

a collection of extracts from the writings of  
Marx, Engels and the greatest of their followers

*selected*

so as to give the reader  
the most comprehensive account of Marxism  
possible within the limits of a single volume :

*the passages*

being chosen by Emile Burns, who has added  
in each case a bibliographical note, & an  
explanation of the circumstances in which the  
work was written & its special significance in  
the development of Marxism : as well as the  
necessary glossaries and index



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## INTRODUCTION

FOR SOME YEARS there has been an increasing interest in the theories and general outlook of what is known as Marxism.

The purpose of this *Handbook of Marxism* is to set out these theories in the most authoritative form possible—in the words of the founders of Marxism and of the greatest of their followers. It is therefore a collection of extracts from their writings, selected so as to give the reader the most comprehensive account of Marxism possible within the limits of a single volume.

The founders of Marxism were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marx was born in Prussia in 1818 ; his father was a lawyer, and he himself studied jurisprudence at Berlin University. But by 1842 he had entered the political arena as editor of an opposition paper which within six months was suppressed by the government of Prussia. From then on he was virtually a political exile, living in Paris and Brussels, and finally settling in London after a brief return to Cologne during the German revolution of 1848-9.

Engels was also born in Prussia, in 1820 ; his father was a manufacturer. From 1842 Engels worked in a commercial house in Manchester—at the same time studying English conditions. In 1844, he met Marx in Paris, and from then on the two were close friends, jointly developing the theories which were afterwards to be known as Marxism. Of this part in their work, Engels writes : " I cannot deny that both before and during my forty years' collaboration with Marx I had a certain independent share in laying the formulations, and more particularly in elaborating the theory.

But the greater part of its leading basic principles, particularly in the realm of economics and history, and, above all, its final clear formulation, belong to Marx . . . Marx was a genius ; we others were at best talented. Without him the theory would not be what it is to-day. It therefore rightly bears his name."

After Marx's death in 1883, Engels was able to complete, from Marx's notes, the unfinished second and third volumes of *Capital*, before his own death in 1895.

The wide range of their works is indicated by the extracts given in this *Handbook*, and by the supplementary list printed as an appendix. But it is impossible to list the innumerable articles which Marx and Engels contributed to the Press (for many years these were Marx's only regular source of income), their correspondence, and the many documents which they drafted for political and trade union organisations. All through their lives they were closely associated with the practical work of organising the labour movement ; they were particularly identified with the International Workingmen's Association (the "First International," founded in 1864), and even after its collapse continued to guide the policy of the rising labour organisations in many countries.

The *Handbook* opens with *The Communist Manifesto*, (1848), the joint work in which Marx and Engels set out their general view of history and class struggle, showing the development of human society through the changing forms of production and the conflict of classes, and indicating the inevitable overthrow of capitalism by the working class ; this was the first scientific programme of the Socialist movement.

This is followed by a series of extracts from subsequent writings, in which this historical viewpoint is reinforced and developed in relation to contemporary events—especially the revolutionary events of 1848–51 in France and Germany and the Paris Commune of 1871. This group of historical

writings is of particular importance for the development of the theory of revolution ; they formed the basis of the further extension of the theory by Lenin. Following on these come some of Marx's writings in Ireland, India and the Crimean War ; also Engels's articles on the British Labour Movement.

The next group of extracts is taken from the more general philosophical writings of Marx and Engels, in which the standpoint of dialectical materialism is explained, and applied : *German Ideology*, *Feuerbach*, and *Anti-Dühring* (of which Lenin says : " here are analysed the most important questions in the domain of philosophy, natural science and social science . . . a wonderfully rich and instructive book "). Social science is further developed in the chapters taken from Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, showing the present-day family as the outcome of a long process of development, changing as the mode of production changed, and presenting the State as the product of the division of society into classes, and the instrument of class domination. Chapters from Engels's *The Housing Question* and Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy* complete this group.

Marx's introduction to *The Critique of Political Economy* then prepares the way for the most vital chapters from the best known—at least by name—of Marx's works : *Capital*, the analysis of the capitalist system of production which is the basis of Marxist economics. The historical chapters are given first (following Marx's recommendation for the general reader). Of the chapters on economic theory it has only been possible to include those dealing with the most fundamental points, especially the labour theory of value, surplus value, accumulation and reproduction of capital, and the falling tendency of the rate of profit.

When Engels died, in 1895, the theories of Marxism had already begun to undergo the process of misrepresentation and corruption which was to transform important sections



of the socialist movement into a movement of social reform within capitalism. At this time, however, there appeared in the Russian socialist movement the man who was destined to defend and develop Marxism and to vindicate it in the greatest class struggle in history—Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov, later known by his pen-name, N. Lenin.

Lenin was born in 1870 ; his father was an inspector of schools in the Tsarist civil service. The family belonged to the Liberal intelligentsia ; Lenin's elder brother, Alexander, was hanged in 1887 for complicity in a plot to assassinate the Tsar. Lenin studied law, and was admitted to the Bar ; but after 1893 he devoted himself entirely to the socialist movement. He was in prison in 1896, and in exile in Siberia from 1897 to 1900, after which he went abroad, living mainly in Paris, London, Switzerland and Galicia. At the end of 1905 the revolutionary development enabled him to return to Russia ; but he had to leave again at the end of 1907. After the March revolution of 1917 he reached Russia once more ; was forced to take refuge in Finland in August ; and finally returned to Russia immediately before the revolution of November, 1917. In 1918 he was severely wounded in an attempt on his life, and although he was able to work for another four years, he never completely recovered, and died in January, 1924.

As with Marx and Engels, Lenin's works were written in the midst of continuous political activity : to him the theory and practice of Marxism were inseparable. His essay on Marxism, *The Teachings of Karl Marx*, is an extraordinary clear statement ; it serves here as a summing up of the writings of Marx and Engels and as an introduction to those of Lenin himself. Lenin's essential problem was to form in Russia, out of the mixed anarchist-revolutionary-democratic-liberal groups of the 'nineties, an organised party of the working class with a clear understanding of Marxism. His earlier writings are all directed to this aim—the selections given, from *Our Programme* (1898) and *What is to be Done ?* (1900), show his theoretical approach, which was

finally victorious in the London Conference of 1903, when the Russian Social Democratic Party split into the Bolsheviks (= majority following Lenin) and the Mensheviks (= minority, opposed to Lenin).

Then follows *The Revolution of 1905*, in which Lenin analyses what he afterwards called the "dress rehearsal" of the November revolution of 1917. After the final defeat of this "dress rehearsal" in 1907, Lenin returned to the theoretical fight for Marxism, defending dialectical materialism against idealist tendencies in philosophy; this was the aim of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, some sections of which are reprinted here.

Lenin's defence of Marxism continued through the years preceding the war; it reached a new stage in *Socialism and War*, and in *Imperialism*—both written during the war, and both showing the basis of reformist tendencies in the labour movement. Some essential passages from these are reprinted here, and are followed by chapters from *The State and Revolution*—a work of extreme theoretical importance, bringing together and extending the conclusions reached by Marx and Engels on this subject.

The theory of revolution is expressed in all of Lenin's writings in 1917; parts of *Letters from Afar*, *Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, and *On the Eve of October* have been selected as both tracing the development of events and showing the theoretical implications of each situation. Along with these comes Stalin's *Report on the Political Situation, August, 1917*.

Joseph Djughashvili (Stalin) was born in 1879, in the Caucasus. He was of peasant stock, though his father worked in a boot factory. In 1898 Stalin joined the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, and went through imprisonment and exile to Siberia by 1904. He escaped from exile, and thereafter was definitely associated with the Bolshevik section of the Party, meeting Lenin in 1905. He was repeatedly arrested, and from 1913 to 1916 was in exile in

Siberia, but came to Petrograd after the March revolution of 1917. He supported Lenin in the Party discussions, and was elected to the committees for political and organisational leadership of the November insurrection. Since 1922 he has been one of the secretaries and the political leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Next to Lenin, Stalin was the most consistent Marxist in the leadership of the revolution, especially in his understanding of the part played by the revolutionary party, and of revolutionary strategy in connection with the national movements and the peasantry. Two of his articles on these subjects, *The October Revolution and the National Question* and *The October Revolution and the Question of the Middle Strata*, are therefore included at this point.

After the carrying through of the revolution in Russia Lenin devoted considerable attention to the socialist movement in other countries and to the development of the Third or Communist International—the international party of Marxism. Two of his works of this period are of special theoretical interest—*The Proletarian Dictatorship and Kautsky the Renegade*, in which Lenin analyses democracy under capitalism and shows Marx's insistence on the dictatorship of the proletariat as necessary to carry through the change to socialism: and "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*, in which Lenin examines the views of a number of revolutionary groups in various countries, and in particular explains the Marxist theory of revolutionary tactics and the conditions necessary for successful revolution.

After extracts from these works, Stalin's statement on "The Party" is given—setting out the methods of work of a revolutionary Marxist party; and then the extremely important speech on the situation in China made by Stalin in 1927, in which he explains the Marxist theory of national revolutionary movements. Passages from two more recent speeches by Stalin have also been selected, dealing with theoretical problems of special practical interest after the

revolution : the question of equality, and the question of individual responsibility.

The final document given is the *Programme of the Communist International* (1928). This is based on *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848 (from which some sentences are taken), and incorporates the theoretical developments made by Lenin and Stalin in the conditions of imperialism and revolution.

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Readers who are familiar with the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin will inevitably be disappointed that some work or passage which they think of vital significance is not included in this *Handbook*. I can only say that the selection has aimed at giving the reader who is *not* familiar with Marxism as clear and comprehensive a view of Marxist theories as can be given in one volume. This has necessarily meant the exclusion of works and passages of great value. In any case, while the *Handbook* will be of immense value to everyone who wants to know what Marxism is, and will be of use as a reference book even to advanced students of Marxism, I hope that it will serve merely as an introduction to the study of some of the complete works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

I must express my thanks to Messrs George Allen and Unwin Ltd. (the successors to Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd.), Charles H. Kerr and Company, Martin Lawrence Ltd. (for a complete list of the Marx-Engels books, and those of Lenin and Stalin, published by this firm, see the last page of this book), and Modern Books Ltd., as well as to the Editorial Boards of the *Communist International* and of the *Labour Monthly*, who have allowed me to use English translations of which they had the copyright.

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At the head of each work or passage the author's name and the English title of the work are given. Then follows a

brief bibliographical note (printed in italics), giving the date when the work was first published or written, and the date and publishers of the (in my view) best current English translation. A further note, explaining the circumstances in which the work was written and its special significance in the development of Marxism, is enclosed in heavy square brackets.

Then follows the text of the work itself. In the case of shorter works, detailed references to the passages selected are unnecessary, and have not been given; in the case of longer works, the chapter heads and sub-heads will enable the enquiring reader to identify the passage in any edition of the complete work.

The glossaries at the end of the book will help the reader who finds unfamiliar names and terms in the text.

There is also a list of the chief works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, other than those from which extracts are given.

EMILE BURNS

# A HANDBOOK OF MARXISM

*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*

## THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

*Published 1848. Authorised English translation of 1888, edited by Engels and with prefaces by Engels and Marx, republished by Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1934.*

[ Engels wrote in the 1888 preface : "The Manifesto was published as the platform of the Communist League, a workingmen's association, first exclusively German, later on international. . . . At a Congress of the League, held in London in November 1847, Marx and Engels were commissioned to prepare for publication a complete theoretical and practical party programme. Drawn up in German in January 1848, the manuscript was sent to the printer in London a few weeks before the French revolution of February 24th."

The Communist League was dissolved in 1852, but the Manifesto became "undoubtedly the most widespread, the most international production of all Socialist literature, the common platform acknowledged by millions of workingmen from Siberia to California."

In their earlier writings Marx and Engels had developed the materialist conception of history ; in *The Communist Manifesto* this was first embodied in a programme for the political party of the working class. The Manifesto was called *Communist* and not *Socialist* because, as Engels explains, the word Socialist was associated with the Utopians on the one hand, and on the other with "the most multifarious social quacks, who by all manner of tinkering professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts of social grievances." But "whatever portion of the working class had become convinced of the insufficiency of mere political revolutions, and had proclaimed the necessity of a total social change, called itself Communist."

The Manifesto has inspired all revolutionary socialism ;

it is the most concise statement and the most important single document of Marxism.]

## THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

A SPECTRE is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where is the Opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of Communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact:

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London, and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish languages:

### I: BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIANS<sup>1</sup>

The history of all hitherto existing society<sup>2</sup> is the history of class struggles.

<sup>1</sup> By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live.

<sup>2</sup> That is, all *written* history. In 1847, the pre-history of society, the social organisation existing previous to recorded history, was all but



Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master<sup>1</sup> and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered

unknown. Since then Haxthausen [August von, 1792–1866] discovered common ownership of land in Russia, Maurer [Georg Ludwig von] proved it to be the social foundation from which all Teutonic races started in history, and, by and by, village communities were found to be, or to have been, the primitive form of society everywhere from India to Ireland. The inner organisation of this primitive communistic society was laid bare, in its typical form, by Morgan's [Henry, 1818–1881] crowning discovery of the true nature of the *gens* and its relation to the tribe. With the dissolution of these primæval communities, society begins to be differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic classes. I have attempted to retrace this process of dissolution in *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats*, 2nd edition, Stuttgart, 1886. (*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.*)

<sup>1</sup> Guild-master, that is a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild.

burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonisation of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, in which industrial production was monopolised by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed aside by the manufacturing middle class; division of labour between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labour in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionised industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, modern industry, the place of the industrial middle class, by industrial millionaires, the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the mediæval commune<sup>1</sup>; here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany), there taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacture proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, corner-stone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

<sup>1</sup> "Commune" was the name taken, in France, by the nascent towns even before they had conquered from their feudal lords and masters, local self-government and political rights as "the Third Estate." Generally speaking, for the economical development of the bourgeoisie, England is here taken as the typical country, for its political development, France.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which reactionaries so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals ; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and

consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones ; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production ; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country

dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilised ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class interest, one frontier and one customs tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?

We see then ; the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organisation of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces ; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder ; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted to it, and by

the economical and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism ; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence ; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed. And why ? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property ; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises ? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces ; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough

exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore, also of labour, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay, more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time, or by increased speed of the machinery, etc.

Modern industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial



capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois state ; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the over-looker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer so far at an end that he receives his wages in cash than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

The lower strata of the middle class—the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which modern industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the work people of a factory, then by the operatives of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but

against the instruments of production themselves ; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie ; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number ; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalised, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious ; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (trades' unions) against the bourgeois ; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages ; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for

these occasional revolts. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralise the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organisation of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten-hours' bill in England was carried.

Altogether, collisions between the classes of the old society further in many ways the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy ; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry ; at all times with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the

ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and, in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie to-day, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry ; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay, more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat ; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests ; they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.

The "dangerous class," the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution ; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

In the conditions of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property ; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations ; modern industrial labour, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify ; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie; in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

## II: PROLETARIANS AND COMMUNISTS

In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only : 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others ; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties : formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of

existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of Communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favour of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence : Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labour, which property is alleged to be the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property ! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form ? There is no need to abolish that ; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean modern bourgeois private property ?

But does wage-labour create any property for the labourer ? Not a bit. It creates capital, i.e., that kind of property which exploits wage-labour and which cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage-labour for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage-labour. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist is to have not only a purely personal,



but a social, *status* in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.

Capital is therefore not a personal, it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character.

Let us now take wage-labour.

The average price of wage-labour is the minimum wage, i.e., that quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the labourer in bare existence as a labourer. What, therefore, the wage-labourer appropriates by means of his labour merely suffices to prolong and reproduce a bare existence. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labour, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labour of others. All that we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it.

In bourgeois society, living labour is but a means to increase accumulated labour. In Communist society, accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer.

In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present ; in Communist society, the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois abolition of individuality and freedom ! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality,

bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other "brave words" of our bourgeoisie about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communist abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

From the moment when labour can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent, into a social power capable of being monopolised, i.e., from the moment when individual property can no longer be transformed into bourgeois property, into capital, from that moment, you say, individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by "individual" you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of

the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us.

According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have gone to the dogs through sheer idleness ; for those of its members who work acquire nothing, and those who acquire anything do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology : There can no longer be any wage-labour when there is no longer any capital.

All objections urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating material products have, in the same way, been urged against the Communistic modes of producing and appropriating intellectual products. Just as to the bourgeois the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture.

That culture, the loss of which he laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine.

But don't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, etc. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.

The selfish misconception that induces you to transform into eternal laws of nature and of reason, the social forms springing from your present mode of production and form of property—historical relations that rise and disappear in the progress of production—this misconception you share with every ruling class that has preceded you. What you

see clearly in the case of ancient property, what you admit in the case of feudal property, you are of course forbidden to admit in the case of your own bourgeois form of property.

Abolition of the family ! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based ? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents ? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you will say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education ! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, etc. The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education ; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed correlation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting the more, by the action of modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour.

But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the whole bourgeoisie in chorus.

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to

no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous that the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which they pretend is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women ; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalised community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private.

The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action of the leading civilised countries at least is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical and, generally, from an ideological standpoint are not deserving of serious examination.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conceptions, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of ideas that revolutionise society, they do but express the fact, that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

When the ancient world was in its last throes, the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the eighteenth century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death-battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

"Undoubtedly," it will be said, "religious, moral, philosophical and juridical ideas have been modified in the course of historical development. But religion, morality, philosophy, political science, and law constantly survived this change."

“ There are, besides, eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis ; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience.”

What does this accusation reduce itself to ? The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations ; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

But let us have done with the bourgeois objections to Communism.

We have seen above that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy.

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class ; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.

Of course, in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production ; by means of measures, therefore, which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the

old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production.

These measures will, of course, be different in different countries.

Nevertheless in the most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable :

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.

3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.

4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.

5. Centralisation of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.

6. Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State ; the bringing into cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8. Equal obligation of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries ; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of



circumstances, to organise itself as a class ; if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

### III : SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST LITERATURE

#### 1. *Reactionary Socialism*

##### *a. Feudal Socialism*

Owing to their historical position, it became the vocation of the aristocracies of France and England to write pamphlets against modern bourgeois society. In the French revolution of July 1830, and in the English reform agitation, these aristocracies again succumbed to the hateful upstart. Thenceforth, a serious political struggle was altogether out of the question. A literary battle alone remained possible. But even in the domain of literature the old cries of the restoration period<sup>1</sup> had become impossible.

In order to arouse sympathy, the aristocracy was obliged to lose sight, apparently, of its own interests, and to formulate its indictment against the bourgeoisie in the interest of the exploited working class alone. Thus the aristocracy took their revenge by singing lampoons on their new master, and whispering in his ears sinister prophecies of coming catastrophe.

In this way arose feudal socialism : half lamentation, half lampoon ; half echo of the past, half menace of the future ; at times, by its bitter, witty and incisive criticism, striking

<sup>1</sup> Not the English Restoration, 1660 to 1689, but the French Restoration, 1814 to 1830.

the bourgeoisie to the very heart's core, but always ludicrous in its effect, through total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history.

The aristocracy, in order to rally the people to them, waved the proletarian alms-bag in front for a banner. But the people so often as it joined them saw on their hind-quarters the old feudal coats of arms and deserted with loud and irreverent laughter.

One section of the French Legitimists and "Young England," exhibited this spectacle.

In pointing out that their mode of exploitation was different to that of the bourgeoisie, the feudalists forget that they exploited under circumstances and conditions that were quite different, and that are now antiquated. In showing that, under their rule, the modern proletariat never existed, they forget that the modern bourgeoisie is the necessary offspring of their own form of society.

For the rest, so little do they conceal the reactionary character of their criticism that their chief accusation against the bourgeoisie amounts to this, that under the bourgeois régime a class is being developed which is destined to cut up root and branch the old order of society.

What they upbraid the bourgeoisie with is not so much that it creates a proletariat as that it creates a *revolutionary* proletariat.

In political practice, therefore, they join in all coercive measures against the working class ; and in ordinary life, despite their high-faluting phrases, they stoop to pick up the golden apples dropped from the tree of industry, and to barter truth, love, and honour for traffic in wool, beetroot-sugar, and potato spirits.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This applies chiefly to Germany where the landed aristocracy and squirearchy have large portions of their estates cultivated for their own account by stewards, and are, moreover, extensive beetroot-sugar manufacturers and distillers of potato spirits. The wealthier British aristocracy are, as yet, rather above that ; but they, too, know how to make up for declining rents by lending their names to floaters of more or less shady joint-stock companies.

As the parson has ever gone hand in hand with the landlord, so has Clerical Socialism with Feudal Socialism.

Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a Socialist tinge. Has not Christianity declaimed against private property, against marriage, against the State? Has it not preached in the place of these, charity and poverty, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, monastic life and Mother Church? Christian Socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat.

### *b. Petty Bourgeois Socialism*

The feudal aristocracy was not the only class that was ruined by the bourgeoisie, not the only class whose conditions of existence pined and perished in the atmosphere of modern bourgeois society. The mediæval burgesses and the small peasant proprietors were the precursors of the modern bourgeoisie. In those countries which are but little developed, industrially and commercially, these two classes still vegetate side by side with the rising bourgeoisie.

In countries where modern civilisation has become fully developed, a new class of petty bourgeois has been formed, fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie, and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society. The individual members of this class, however, are being constantly hurled down into the proletariat by the action of competition, and, as modern industry develops, they even see the moment approaching when they will completely disappear as an independent section of modern society, to be replaced, in manufactures, agriculture and commerce, by overlookers, bailiffs and shopmen.

In countries like France, where the peasants constitute far more than half of the population, it was natural that writers who sided with the proletariat against the bourgeoisie should use, in their criticism of the bourgeois régime, the standard of the peasant and petty bourgeois, and from the standpoint of these intermediate classes should take up

the cudgels for the working class. Thus arose petty bourgeois Socialism. Sismondi was the head of this school, not only in France but also in England.

This school of Socialism dissected with great acuteness the contradictions in the conditions of modern production. It laid bare the hypocritical apologies of economists. It proved, incontrovertibly, the disastrous effects of machinery and division of labour ; the concentration of capital and land in a few hands ; overproduction and crises ; it pointed out the inevitable ruin of the petty bourgeois and peasant, the misery of the proletariat, the anarchy in production, the crying inequalities in the distribution of wealth, the industrial war of extermination between nations, the dissolution of old moral bonds, of the old family relations, of the old nationalities.

In its positive aims, however, this form of Socialism aspires either to restoring the old means of production and of exchange, and with them the old property relations, and the old society, or to cramping the modern means of production and of exchange within the framework of the old property relations that have been, and were bound to be exploded by those means. In either case, it is both reactionary and Utopian.

Its last words are : Corporate guilds for manufacture ; patriarchal relations in agriculture.

Ultimately, when stubborn historical facts had dispersed all intoxicating effects of self-deception, this form of Socialism ended in a miserable fit of the blues.

### *c. German or " True " Socialism*

The Socialist and Communist literature of France, a literature that originated under the pressure of a bourgeoisie in power, and that was the expression of the struggle against this power, was introduced into Germany at a time when the bourgeoisie in that country had just begun its contest with feudal absolutism.

German philosophers, would-be philosophers, and men of letters eagerly seized on this literature, only forgetting that when these writings immigrated from France into Germany, French social conditions had not immigrated along with them. In contact with German social conditions, this French literature lost all its immediate practical significance, and assumed a purely literary aspect. Thus, to the German philosophers of the eighteenth century, the demands of the "Practical Reason" in general—and the utterance of the will of the first French Revolution were nothing more than the demands of revolutionary French bourgeoisie—signified in their eyes the laws of pure will, of will as it was bound to be, of true human will generally.

The work of the German *literati* consisted solely in bringing the new French ideas into harmony with their ancient philosophical conscience, or, rather, in annexing the French ideas without deserting their own philosophic point of view.

This annexation took place in the same way in which a foreign language is appropriated, namely, by translation.

It is well known how the monks wrote silly lives of Catholic saints *over* the manuscripts on which the classical works of ancient heathendom had been written. The German *literati* reversed this process with the profane French literature. They wrote their philosophical nonsense beneath the French original. For instance, beneath the French criticism of the economic functions of money, they wrote "alienation of humanity," and beneath the French criticism of the bourgeois State they wrote, "dethronement of the category of the general," and so forth.

The introduction of these philosophical phrases at the back of the French historical criticisms they dubbed "Philosophy of Action," "True Socialism," "German Science of Socialism," "Philosophical Foundation of Socialism," and so on.

The French Socialist and Communist literature was thus completely emasculated. And, since it ceased in the hands of the German to express the struggle of one class with the

other, he felt conscious of having overcome "French one-sidedness" and of representing, not true requirements, but the requirements of truth; not the interests of the proletariat, but the interests of human nature, of man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality, who exists only in the misty realm of philosophical phantasy.

This German Socialism, which took its schoolboy task so seriously and solemnly, and extolled its poor stock-in-trade in such mountebank fashion, meanwhile gradually lost its pedantic innocence.

The fight of the German and especially of the Prussian bourgeoisie against feudal aristocracy and absolute monarchy, in other words, the liberal movement, became more earnest.

By this, the long-wished-for opportunity was offered to "True" Socialism of confronting the political movement with the Socialist demands, of hurling the traditional anathemas against liberalism, against representative government, against bourgeois competition, bourgeois freedom of the press, bourgeois legislation, bourgeois liberty and equality, and of preaching to the masses that they had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by this bourgeois movement. German Socialism forgot, in the nick of time, that the French criticism, whose silly echo it was, presupposed the existence of modern bourgeois society, with its corresponding economic conditions of existence, and the political constitution adapted thereto, the very things whose attainment was the object of the pending struggle in Germany.

To the absolute governments, with their following of parsons, professors, country squires and officials, it served as a welcome scarecrow against the threatening bourgeoisie.

It was a sweet finish after the bitter pills of floggings and bullets with which these same governments, just at that time, dosed the German working class risings.

While this "True" Socialism thus served the governments as a weapon for fighting the German bourgeoisie, it,

at the same time, directly represented a reactionary interest, the interest of the German Philistines. In Germany the petty bourgeois class, a relic of the sixteenth century, and since then constantly cropping up again under various forms, is the real social basis of the existing state of things.

To preserve this class is to preserve the existing state of things in Germany. The industrial and political supremacy of the bourgeoisie threatens it with certain destruction—on the one hand, from the concentration of capital ; on the other, from the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. “ True ” Socialism appeared to kill these two birds with one stone. It spread like an epidemic

The robe of speculative cobwebs, embroidered with flowers of rhetoric, steeped in the dew of sickly sentiment, this transcendental robe in which the German Socialists wrapped their sorry “ eternal truths,” all skin and bone, served to wonderfully increase the sale of their goods amongst such a public.

And on its part, German Socialism recognised, more and more, its own calling as the bombastic representative of the petty bourgeois Philistine.

It proclaimed the German nation to be the model nation, and the German petty Philistine to be the typical man. To every villainous meanness of this model man it gave a hidden, higher, socialistic interpretation, the exact contrary of its real character. It went to the extreme length of directly opposing the “ brutally destructive ” tendency of Communism, and of proclaiming its supreme and impartial contempt of all class struggles. With very few exceptions, all the so-called Socialist and Communist publications that now (1847) circulate in Germany belong to the domain of this foul and enervating literature.

## *2. Conservative or Bourgeois Socialism*

A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of Socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems.

We may cite Proudhon's *Philosophie de la Misère* (Philosophy of Poverty) as an example of this form.

The socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best ; and bourgeois Socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.

A second and more practical, but less systematic, form of this Socialism sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working class, by showing that no mere political reform, but only a change in the material conditions of existence, in economical relations, could be of any advantage to them. By changes in the material conditions of existence, this form of Socialism, however, by no means understands abolition of the bourgeois relations of production, an abolition that can be affected only by a revolution, but administrative reforms, based on the continued existence of these relations ; reforms, therefore, that in no respect affect the relations between capital and labour, but, at the best, lessen the cost, and simplify the administrative work of bourgeois government.



Bourgeois Socialism attains adequate expression, when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech.

Free trade : for the benefit of the working class. Protective duties : for the benefit of the working class. Prison reform : for the benefit of the working class. This is the last word and the only seriously meant word of bourgeois Socialism.

It is summed up in the phrase : the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working class.

### *3. Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism*

We do not here refer to that literature which, in every great modern revolution, has always given voice to the demands of the proletariat, such as the writings of Babeuf and others.

The first direct attempts of the proletariat to attain its own ends, made in times of universal excitement, when feudal society was being overthrown—these attempts necessarily failed, owing to the then undeveloped state of the proletariat, as well as to the absence of the economic conditions for its emancipation, conditions that had yet to be produced, and could be produced by the impending bourgeois epoch alone. The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat had necessarily a reactionary character. It inculcated universal asceticism and social levelling in its crudest form.

The Socialist and Communist systems properly so called, those of St. Simon, Fourier, Owen and others, spring into existence in the early undeveloped period, described above, of the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie (see Section I. Bourgeois and Proletarians).

The founders of these systems see, indeed, the class antagonisms, as well as the action of the decomposing elements in the prevailing form of society. But the proletariat, as yet in its infancy, offers to them the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement.

Since the development of class antagonism keeps even pace with the development of industry, the economic situation, as they find it, does not as yet offer to them the material conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat. They therefore search after a new social science, after new social laws, that are to create these conditions.

Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action ; historically created conditions of emancipation to phantastic ones ; and the gradual, spontaneous class organisation of the proletariat to an organisation of society specially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans.

In the formation of their plans they are conscious of caring chiefly for the interests of the working class, as being the most suffering class. Only from the point of view of being the most suffering class does the proletariat exist for them.

The undeveloped state of the class struggle, as well as their own surroundings, causes Socialists of this kind to consider themselves far superior to all class antagonisms. They want to improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favoured. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without distinction of class ; nay, by preference, to the ruling class. For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see in it the best possible plan of the best possible state of society ?

Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary action ; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavour, by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social gospel.

Such phantastic pictures of future society, painted at a time when the proletariat is still in a very undeveloped state and has but a phantastic conception of its own position, correspond with the first instinctive yearnings of that class for a general reconstruction of society.

But these Socialist and Communist publications contain

also a critical element. They attack every principle of existing society. Hence they are full of the most valuable materials for the enlightenment of the working class. The practical measures proposed in them—such as the abolition of the distinction between town and country, of the family, of the carrying on of industries for the account of private individuals, and of the wage-system the proclamation of social harmony, the conversion of the functions of the State into a mere superintendence of production—all these proposals point solely to the disappearance of class antagonisms which were, at that time, only just cropping up, and which, in these publications, are recognised in their earliest, indistinct and undefined forms only. These proposals, therefore, are of a purely Utopian character.

The significance of Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism bears an inverse relation to historical development. In proportion as the modern class struggle develops and takes definite shape, this phantastic standing apart from the contest, these phantastic attacks on it, lose all practical value and all theoretical justification. Therefore, although the originators of these systems were, in many respects, revolutionary, their disciples have, in every case, formed mere reactionary sects. They hold fast by the original views of their masters, in opposition to the progressive historical development of the proletariat. They, therefore, endeavour, and that consistently, to deaden the class struggle and to reconcile the class antagonisms. They still dream of experimental realisation of their social Utopias, of founding isolated *phalansteres*, of establishing "Home Colonies," or setting up a "Little Icaria"<sup>1</sup>—pocket editions of the New Jerusalem—and to realise all these castles in the air, they are compelled to appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeois. By degrees they sink into the category of the reactionary conservative Socialists depicted above, differing

<sup>1</sup> *Phalansteres* were socialist colonies on the plan of Charles Fourier ; Icaria was the name given by Cabet to his Utopia and, later on, to his American Communist colony.

from these only by more systematic pedantry, and by their fanatical and superstitious belief in the miraculous effects of their social science.

They, therefore, violently oppose all political action on the part of the working class ; such action, according to them, can only result from blind unbelief in the new gospel.

The Owenites in England, and the Fourierists in France, respectively, oppose the Chartists and the *Reformistes*.

#### IV : POSITION OF THE COMMUNISTS IN RELATION TO THE VARIOUS EXISTING OPPOSITION PARTIES

Section II has made clear the relations of the Communists to the existing working class parties, such as the Chartists in England and the Agrarian Reformers in America.

The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class ; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. In France the Communists ally themselves with the Social-Democrats,<sup>1</sup> against the conservative and radical bourgeoisie, reserving, however, the right to take up a critical position in regard to phrases and illusions traditionally handed down from the great Revolution.

In Switzerland they support the Radicals, without losing sight of the fact that this party consists of antagonistic elements, partly of Democratic Socialists, in the French sense, partly of radical bourgeois.

In Poland they support the party that insists on an agrarian revolution as the prime condition for national emancipation, that party which fomented the insurrection of Cracow in 1846.

In Germany they fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it

<sup>1</sup> The party then represented in Parliament by Ledru-Rollin, in literature by Louis Blanc [1811-1882], in the daily press by the *Reform*. The name of Social-Democracy signifies, with these its inventors, a section of the Democratic or Republican Party more or less tinged with Socialism.

acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie.

But they never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin.

The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilisation and with a much more developed proletariat than that of England was in the seventeenth, and of France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.

In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Working men of all countries, unite !

(NOTE : The footnotes were written by Engels for the English edition of 1888.)

*Karl Marx*

## ADDRESS TO THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE (1850)

*Drafted by Marx, and adopted by the Central Executive of the Communist League, March 1850. Translation by Max Beer published in the Labour Monthly, September 1922.*

[The *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 was the general programme of the Communist League; the 1850 Address was the practical working out of the revolutionary principles of the *Manifesto* for the next round of the revolutionary struggle. It is of particular importance for its insistence on the need for a separate working-class party which, when the bourgeois democratic governments took power, should set up its own alternative authority "either in the form of local executives and communal councils, or workers' clubs or workers' committees" thus foreshadowing the Soviets of March – November 1917.]

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## ADDRESS TO THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE (1850)

### ADDRESS OF THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY TO THE LEAGUE

**B**RETHREN,—During the last two years of revolution (1848–9) the League doubly justified its existence. First, by the vigorous activity of our members; in all places and movements where they happened to be at that time they were foremost in the Press, on the barricades, and on the battlefields of the proletariat, the only revolutionary class in society. Secondly, through the League's conception of the whole upheaval, as enunciated in the circular letter of the Congresses and the Central Executive in 1847, and

particularly in *The Communist Manifesto*. This conception has been verified by the actual happenings of the last two years. Moreover, the views of the present-day social conditions, which we in former years used to propagate in secret meetings and writings, are now public property and are preached in the market-places and in the street corners.

On the other hand, the former rigid organisation of the League has considerably loosened, a great number of members who directly participated in the revolution have come to the conclusion that the time for secret organisation was passed, and that public propaganda alone would be sufficient. Various districts and communities lost contact with the Central Authority and have not resumed it. While the Democratic Party, the party of the petty bourgeoisie, enlarged and strengthened their organisation, the working-class party lost its cohesion, or formed local organisations for local purposes, and therefore was dragged into the democratic movement and so came under the sway of the petty bourgeoisie. This state of things must be put an end to; the independence of the working class must be restored. The Central Authority, as far back as the winter of 1848-9, saw the necessity for reorganisation and sent the missionary, Joseph Moll, but this mission had no lasting result. After the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Germany and France in June, 1849, nearly all the members of the Central Authority reunited in London, supplemented by new revolutionary forces, and took the work of the reorganisation seriously in hand.

This reorganisation can only be accomplished by a special missionary, and the Central Authority thinks it most important that the missionary should start on his journey at this moment when a new upheaval is imminent; when therefore the working-class Party should be thoroughly organised and act unanimously and independently, if it does not wish again to be exploited and taken in tow by the bourgeoisie, as in 1848.

We have told you, brethren, as far back as in 1848, that German Liberalism would soon come to power and would at once use it against the working class. You have seen how this has been fulfilled. It was the bourgeoisie who after the victorious movement of March, 1848, took the reins of government, and the first use they made of their power was to force back the working man, their allies in the fight against absolutism, to their former oppressed condition. They could not achieve their purpose without the assistance of the defeated aristocracy, to whom they even transferred governmental power, securing, however, for themselves the ultimate control of the Government through the budget. . . .

The part which the Liberals played in 1848, this treacherous rôle will at the next revolution be played by the democratic petty bourgeoisie, who, among the parties opposing the Government, are now occupying the same position which the Liberals occupied prior to the March revolution. This democratic party, which is more dangerous to the working men than the Liberal Party was, consists of the following three elements :

- (i) The more progressive members of the upper bourgeoisie, whose object it is to sweep away all remnants of feudalism and absolutism ;
- (ii) The democratic-constitutional petty bourgeoisie, whose main object it is to establish a democratic federation of the Germanic States ;
- (iii) The republican petty bourgeoisie, whose ideal it is to turn Germany into a sort of Swiss republic. These republicans are calling themselves "reds" and "social democrats" because they have the pious wish to remove the pressure of large capital upon the smaller one, and of the big bourgeoisie upon the petty bourgeoisie.

All these parties, after the defeat they have suffered, are calling themselves republicans or reds, just as in France



the republican petty bourgeoisie are calling themselves socialists. Where, however, they have the opportunity of pursuing their aims by constitutional methods they are using their old phraseology and are showing by deed that they have not changed at all. It is a matter of course that the changed name of that party does not alter their attitude towards the working class ; it merely proves that in their struggle against the united forces of absolutism and large capitalists they require the support of the proletariat.

The petty bourgeois democratic party in Germany is very powerful. It embraces not only the great majority of the town population, the small traders and craftsmen, but also the peasantry and the agricultural labourers, in so far as the latter have not yet come into contact with the proletariat of the towns. The revolutionary working class acts in agreement with that party as long as it is a question of fighting and overthrowing the Aristocratic-Liberal coalition ; in all other things the revolutionary working class must act independently. The democratic petty bourgeoisie, far from desiring to revolutionise the whole society, are aiming only at such changes of the social conditions as would make their life in existing society more comfortable and profitable. They desire above all a reduction of national expenditure through a decrease of bureaucracy, and the imposition of the main burden of taxation on the landowners and capitalists. They demand, likewise, the establishment of State banks and laws against usury, so as to ease the pressure of the big capitalist upon the small traders and to get from the State cheap credit. They demand also the full mobilisation of the land, so as to do away with all remnants of manorial rights. For these purposes they need a democratic constitution which would give them the majority in Parliament, municipality, and parish.

With a view to checking the power and the growth of big capital the democratic party demand a reform of the laws of inheritance and legacies, likewise the transfer of the

public services and as many industrial undertakings as possible to the State and municipal authorities. As to the working man—well, they should remain wage workers : for whom, however, the democratic party would procure higher wages, better labour conditions, and a secure existence. The democrats hope to achieve that partly through State and municipal management and through welfare institutions. In short, they hope to bribe the working class into quiescence, and thus to weaken their revolutionary spirit by momentary concessions and comforts.

The democratic demands can never satisfy the party of the proletariat. While the democratic petty bourgeoisie would like to bring the revolution to a close as soon as their demands are more or less complied with, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, to keep it going until all the ruling and possessing classes are deprived of power, the governmental machinery occupied by the proletariat, and the organisation of the working classes of all lands is so far advanced that all rivalry and competition among themselves has ceased ; until the more important forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. With us it is not a matter of reforming private property, but of abolishing it ; not of hushing up the class antagonism, but of abolishing the classes ; not of ameliorating the existing society, but of establishing a new one. There is doubt that, with the further development of the revolution, the petty bourgeois democracy may for a time become the most influential party in Germany. The question is, therefore, what should be the attitude of the proletariat, and particularly of the League, towards it :

- (i) During the continuation of the present conditions in which the petty bourgeois democracy is also oppressed ?
- (ii) In the ensuing revolutionary struggles which would give them momentary ascendancy ?
- (iii) After those struggles, during the time of their ascendancy over the defeated classes and the proletariat ?

(i) At the present moment when the democratic petty bourgeoisie are everywhere oppressed, they lecture the proletariat, exhorting it to effect a unification and conciliation ; they would like to join hands and form one great opposition party, embracing within its folds all shades of democracy. That is, they would like to entangle the proletariat in a party organisation in which the general social democratic phrases predominate, behind which their particular interests are concealed, and in which the particular proletarian demands should not, for the sake of peace and concord, be brought forward. Such a unification would be to the exclusive benefit of the petty bourgeois democracy and to the injury of the proletariat. The organised working class would lose its hard-won independence and would become again a mere appendage of the official bourgeois democracy. Such a unification must be resolutely opposed.

Instead of allowing themselves to form the chorus of the bourgeois democracy, the working men, and particularly the League, must strive to establish next to the official democracy and independent, a secret as well as a legal organisation of the working-class party, and to make each community the centre and nucleus of working-class societies in which the attitude and the interests of the proletariat should be discussed independently of bourgeois influences. How little the bourgeois democrats care for an alliance in which the proletarians should be regarded as co-partners with equal rights and equal standing is shown by the attitude of the Breslau democrats, who in their organ the *Oder-Zeitung* are attacking those working men who are independently organised, and whom they nick-name socialists, subjecting them to severe persecutions. The gist of the matter is this : In case of an attack on a common adversary no special union is necessary ; in the fight with such an enemy the interests of both parties, the middle-class democrats and the working-class party, coincide for the moment, and both parties will carry it on by a temporary understanding. This was so in the past, and will be so in the

future. It is a matter of course that in the future sanguinary conflicts, as in all previous ones, the working men by their courage, resolution, and self-sacrifice will form the main force in the attainment of victory. As hitherto, so in the coming struggle, the petty bourgeoisie as a whole will maintain an attitude of delay, irresolution, and inactivity as long as possible, in order that, as soon as victory is assured, they may arrogate it to themselves and call upon the workers to remain quiet, return to work, avoid so-called excesses, and thus to shut off the workers from the fruits of victory. It is not in the power of the workers to prevent the petty bourgeois democrats from doing that ; but it is within their power to render their ascendancy over the armed proletariat difficult, and to dictate to them such terms as shall make the rule of the bourgeois democracy carry within itself from the beginning the germ of dissolution, and its ultimate substitution by the rule of the proletariat considerably facilitated.

The workers, above all during the conflict and immediately afterwards, must try as much as ever possible to counteract all bourgeois attempts at appeasement, and compel the democrats to carry out their present terrorist phrases. They must act in such a manner that the revolutionary excitement does not subside immediately after the victory. On the contrary, they must endeavour to maintain it as long as possible. Far from opposing so-called excesses and making examples of hated individuals or public buildings to which hateful memories are attached by sacrificing them to popular revenge, such deeds must not only be tolerated, but their direction must be taken in hand. During the fight and afterwards the workers must seize every opportunity to present their own demands beside those of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for the workers as soon as the democrats propose to take over the reins of government. If necessary, these guarantees must be exacted, and generally to see to it that the new rulers should bind themselves to every possible

concession and promise, which is the surest way to compromise them. The workers must not be swept off their feet by the general elation and enthusiasm for the new order of things which usually follow upon street battles ; they must quench all ardour by a cool and dispassionate conception of the new conditions, and must manifest open distrust of the new Government. Beside the official Government they must set up a revolutionary workers' Government, either in the form of local executives and communal councils, or workers' clubs or workers' committees, so that the bourgeois democratic Governments not only immediately lose all backing among the workers, but from the commencement find themselves under the supervision and threats of authorities, behind whom stands the entire mass of the working class. In short, from the first moment of victory we must no longer direct our distrust against the beaten reactionary enemy, but against our former allies, against the party who are now about to exploit the common victory for their own ends only.

(ii) In order that this party, whose betrayal of the workers will begin with the first hour of victory, should be frustrated in its nefarious work, it is necessary to organise and arm the proletariat. The arming of the whole proletariat with rifles, guns, and ammunition must be carried out at once ; we must prevent the revival of the old bourgeois militia, which has always been directed against the workers. Where the latter measure cannot be carried out, the workers must try to organise themselves into an independent guard, with their own chiefs and general staff, to put themselves under the order, not of the Government, but of the revolutionary authorities set up by the workers. Where workers are employed in State service they must arm and organise in special corps, with chiefs chosen by themselves, or form part of the proletarian guard. Under no pretext must they give up their arms and equipment, and any attempt at disarmament must be forcibly resisted. Destruction of the influence of bourgeois democracy over

the workers, immediate independent and armed organisation of the workers, and the exaction of the most irksome and compromising terms from the bourgeois democracy, whose triumph is for the moment unavoidable—these are the main points which the proletariat, and therefore also the League, has to keep in eye during and after the coming upheaval.

(iii) As soon as the new Government is established they will commence to fight the workers. In order to be able effectively to oppose the petty bourgeois democracy, it is in the first place necessary that the workers should be independently organised in clubs, which should soon be centralised. The central authority, after the overthrow of the existing Governments, will at their earliest opportunity transfer its headquarters to Germany, immediately call together a congress, and make the necessary proposals for the centralisation of the workers' clubs under an Executive Committee, who will have their headquarters in the centre of the movement. The rapid organisation, or at least the establishment of a provincial union of the workers' clubs, is one of the most important points in our considerations for invigorating and developing the Workers' Party. The next result of the overthrow of the existing Government will be the election of a national representation. The proletariat must see to it first that no worker shall be deprived of his suffrage by the trickery of the local authorities or Government commissioners; secondly, that beside the bourgeois democratic candidates there shall be put up everywhere working-class candidates, who, as far as possible, shall be members of the League, and for whose success all must work with every possible means. Even in constituencies where there is no prospect of our candidate being elected, the workers must nevertheless put up candidates in order to maintain their independence, to steel their forces, and to bring their revolutionary attitude and party views before the public. They must not allow themselves to be diverted from this work by the stock argument that to split the vote

of the democrats means assisting the reactionary parties. All such talk is but calculated to cheat the proletariat. The advance which the Proletarian Party will make through its independent political attitude is infinitely more important than the disadvantage of having a few more reactionaries in the national representation. The victorious democrats could, if they liked, even prevent the reactionary party having any success at all, if they only used their newly won power with sufficient energy.

The first point which will bring the democrats into conflict with the proletariat is the abolition of all feudal rights. The petty bourgeois democrats, following the example of the first French Revolution, will hand over the lands as private property to the peasants ; that is, they will leave the agricultural labourers as they are, and will but create a petty bourgeois peasantry, who will pass through the same cycle of material and spiritual misery in which the French peasant now finds himself.

The workers, in the interest of the agricultural proletariat as well as in their own, must oppose all such plans. They must demand that the confiscated feudal lands shall be nationalised and converted into settlements for the associated groups of the landed proletariat ; all the advantages of large-scale agriculture shall be put at their disposal ; these agricultural colonies, worked on the co-operative principle, shall be put in the midst of the crumbling bourgeois property institutions. Just as the democrats have combined with the small peasantry, so we must fight shoulder to shoulder with the agricultural proletariat. Further, the democrat will either work directly for a federal republic, or at least, if they cannot avoid the republic one and indivisible, will seek to paralyse the centralisation of government by granting the greatest possible independence to the municipalities and provinces. The workers must set their face against this plan, not only to secure the one and indivisible German republic, but to concentrate as much power as possible in the hands of the Central Government.

They need not be misled by democratic platitudes about freedom of the communes, self-determination, &c. In a country like Germany, where there are so many mediæval remnants to be swept away and so much local and provincial obstinacy to be overcome under no circumstances must parishes, towns, and provinces be allowed to be made into obstacles in the way of the revolutionary activity which must emanate from the centre. That the Germans should have to fight and bleed, as they have done hitherto, for every advance over and over again in every town and in every province separately cannot be tolerated. As in France in 1793, so it is to-day the task of the revolutionary party in Germany to centralise the nation.

We have seen that the democrats will come to power in the next phase of the movement, and that they will be obliged to propose measures of a more or less socialistic nature. It will be asked what contrary measures should be proposed by the workers. Of course they cannot in the beginning propose actual communist measures, but they can (i) compel the democrats to attack the old social order from as many sides as possible, disturb their regular procedure and compromise themselves, and concentrate in the hands of the State as much as possible of the productive forces, means of transport, factories, railways, &c. (ii) The measures of the democrats, which in any case are not revolutionary but merely reformist, must be pressed to the point of turning them into direct attacks on private property ; thus, for instance, if the petty bourgeoisie propose to purchase the railways and factories, the workers must demand that such railways and factories, being the property of the reactionaries, shall simply be confiscated by the State without compensation. If the democrats propose proportional taxation, the workers must demand progressive taxation ; if the democrats themselves declare for a moderate progressive tax, the workers must insist on a tax so steeply graduated as to cause the collapse of large capital ; if the democrats propose the regulation of the



National Debt, the workers must demand State bankruptcy. The demands of the workers will depend on the proposals and measures of the democrats.

If the German workers will only come to power and to the enforcement of their class interests after a prolonged revolutionary development, they will at least gain the certainty that the first act of this revolutionary drama will coincide with the victory of their class in France, and this will surely accelerate the movement of their own emancipation. But they themselves must accomplish the greater part of the work ; they must be conscious of their class interests and take up the position of an independent party. They must not be diverted from their course of proletarian independence by the hypocrisy of the democratic petty bourgeoisie. Their battle-cry must be : " The revolution in permanence."

*Friedrich Engels*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE

(1848-50)

*Written in March 1895, and published, with essential passages omitted, in the German Social Democratic paper "Vorwärts." The complete original text is in the English edition of "The Class Struggles in France," published in 1934 by Martin Lawrence Ltd.*

[In writing this introduction in 1895, Engels was able to draw on the experience of forty-five years of class struggles in Europe since Marx wrote *The Class Struggles in France*. It therefore serves as a general introduction also to the

extracts given from Marx's works covering later periods ; its particular significance is its examination of the failure of earlier working class revolts, its conclusions on insurrectionary tactics, and its emphasis on the growth of the German Social Democratic Party. It is of special interest to note that the editor of *Vorwärts*, Wilhelm Liebknecht, cut out a number of passages in which Engels drew lessons for future insurrections, thus leaving the impression on the reader that Engels had abandoned his revolutionary ideas, and had become a peaceful worshipper of legality. The text given below is complete ; the passages omitted by *Vorwärts* in 1895 are printed in italics and enclosed in square brackets.]

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE

THIS newly republished work was Marx's first attempt, with the aid of his materialist conception, to explain a section of contemporary history from the given economic situation. In *The Communist Manifesto*, the theory was applied in broad outline to the whole of modern history, while in the articles by Marx and myself in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* it was constantly used to interpret political events of the day. Here, on the other hand, the question was to demonstrate the inner causal connection in the course of a development which extended over some years, a development as critical, for the whole of Europe, as it was typical ; that is, in accordance with the conception of the author, to trace political events back to the effects of what are, in the last resort, economic causes.

In judging the events and series of events of day-to-day history, it will never be possible for anyone to go right back to the final economic causes. Even to-day, when the specialised technical press provides such rich materials, in

England itself it still remains impossible to follow day by day the movement of industry and trade in the world market and the changes which take place in the methods of production, in such a way as to be able to draw the general conclusion, at any point of time, from these very complicated and ever changing factors ; of these factors, the most important, into the bargain, generally operate a long time in secret before they suddenly and violently make themselves felt on the surface. A clear survey of the economic history of a given period is never contemporaneous ; it can only be gained subsequently, after collecting and sifting of the material has taken place. Statistics are a necessary help here, and they always lag behind. For this reason, it is only too often necessary, in the current history of the time, to treat the most decisive factor as constant, to treat the economic situation existing at the beginning of the period concerned as given and unalterable for the whole period, or else to take notice only of such changes in this situation as themselves arise out of events clearly before us, and as, therefore, can likewise be clearly seen. Hence, the materialist method has here often to limit itself to tracing political conflicts back to the struggles between the interests of the social classes and fractions of classes encountered as the result of economic development, and to show the particular political parties as the more or less adequate political expression of these same classes and fractions of classes.

It is self-evident that this unavoidable neglect of contemporaneous changes in the economic situation, of the very basis of all the proceedings subject to examination, must be a source of error. But all the conditions of a comprehensive presentation of the history of the day unavoidably imply sources of error—which, however, keeps nobody from writing contemporary history.

When Marx undertook this work, the sources of error mentioned were, to a still greater degree, impossible to avoid. It was quite impossible during the period of the

Revolution of 1848-9 to follow the economic transformations which were being consummated at the same time, or even to keep a general view of them. It was just the same during the first months of exile in London, in the autumn and winter of 1849-50. But that was just the time when Marx began this work. And, in spite of these unfavourable circumstances, his exact knowledge both of the economic situation in France and of the political history of that country since the February Revolution made it possible for him to give a picture of events which laid bare their inner connections in a way never attained since, and which later brilliantly withstood the double test instituted by Marx himself.

The first test resulted from the fact that after the spring of 1850 Marx once again found leisure for economic studies, and first of all took up the economic history of the last ten years. In this study, what he had earlier deduced, half *a priori*, from defective material, was made absolutely clear to him by the facts themselves, namely, that the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the true mother of the February and March Revolutions and that the industrial prosperity which had been returning gradually since the middle of 1848, and which attained full bloom in 1849 and 1850, was the revivifying force of the newly strengthened European reaction. That was decisive. Whereas in the three first articles (which appeared in the January, February and March numbers of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, politisch-ökonomische Revue*, Hamburg, 1850) there was still the expectation of an imminent new upsurge of revolutionary energy, the historical review written by Marx and myself for the last number, which was published in the autumn of 1850 (a double number, May to October), breaks once and for all with these illusions: "A new revolution is only possible as a result of a new crisis. It is just as certain, however, as this." But that was the only essential change which had to be made. There was absolutely nothing to alter in the interpretation of events given in the earlier chapters,

or in the causal connections established therein, as the continuation of the narrative from March 10, up to the autumn of 1850 in the review in question, proves. I have therefore included this continuation as the fourth article in the present new edition.

The second test was even more severe. Immediately after Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851. Marx worked out anew the history of France from February 1848, up to this event, which concluded the revolutionary period for the time being. (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Third edition, Meissner, Hamburg, 1885.) In this brochure the period which we had depicted in our present publication is again dealt with, although more briefly. Compare this second production, written in the light of decisive events which happened over a year later, with our present publication, and it will be found that the author had very little to change.

The thing which still gives this work of ours a quite special significance is that, for the first time, it expresses the formula in which, by common agreement, the workers' parties of all countries in the world briefly summarise their demand for economic reconstruction: the appropriation by society of the means of production. In the second chapter, in connection with the "right to work," which is characterised as "the first clumsy formula wherein the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat are summarised," it is said: "But behind the right to work stands the power over capital; behind the power over capital, the appropriation of the means of production, their subjection to the associated working class and, therefore, the abolition of wage labour as well as of capital and of their mutual relationships." Thus, here, for the first time, the proposition is formulated by which modern working class socialism is equally sharply differentiated both from all the different shades of feudal, bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., socialism and also from the confused community of goods of Utopian and spontaneous worker-communism. If, later, Marx

extended the formula to appropriation of the means of exchange also, this extension, which, in any case, was self-evident after *The Communist Manifesto*, only expressed a corollary to the main proposition. A few wisecracks in England have of late added that the "means of distribution" should also be handed over to society. It would be difficult for these gentlemen to say what these economic means of distribution are, as distinct from the means of production and exchange; unless political means of distribution are meant, taxes, poor relief, including the *Sachsenwald* and other endowments. But, first, these are means of distribution now already in collective possession, either of the state or of the commune, and, secondly, it is precisely these we wish to abolish.

When the February Revolution broke out, we all of us, as far as our conception of the conditions and the course of revolutionary movements was concerned, were under the spell of previous historical experience, namely that of France. It was, indeed, the latter which had dominated the whole of European history since 1789, and from which now once again the signal had gone forth for general revolutionary change. It was therefore natural and unavoidable that our conceptions of the nature and the path of the "social" revolution proclaimed in Paris in February 1848, of the revolution of the proletariat, were strongly coloured by memories of the models of 1789-1830. Moreover, when the Paris upheaval found its echo in the victorious insurrections in Vienna, Milan and Berlin; when the whole of Europe right up to the Russian frontier was swept into the movement; when in Paris the first great battle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was joined; when the very victory of their class so shook the bourgeoisie of all countries that they fled back into the arms of the monarchist-feudal reaction which had just been overthrown—for us, under the circumstances of the time, there could be no doubt that the great decisive struggle had broken out, that it would have to be fought

out in a single, long and changeful period of revolution, but that it could only end with the final victory of the proletariat.

After the defeats of 1849 we in no way shared the illusions of the vulgar democracy grouped around the would-be provisional governments *in partibus*. This vulgar democracy reckoned on a speedy and finally decisive victory of the "people" over the "usurpers"; we looked to a long struggle, after the removal of the "usurpers," between the antagonistic elements concealed within this "people" itself. Vulgar democracy expected a renewed outbreak from day to day; we declared as early as autumn 1850 that at least the first chapter of the revolutionary period was closed and that nothing further was to be expected until the outbreak of a new world crisis. For this reason we were excommunicated, as traitors to the revolution, by the very people who later, almost without exception, have made their peace with Bismarck—so far as Bismarck found them worth the trouble.

But we, too, have been shown to have been wrong by history, which has revealed our point of view of that time to have been an illusion. It has done even more: it has not merely destroyed our error of that time; it has also completely transformed the conditions under which the proletariat has to fight. The mode of struggle of 1848 is to-day obsolete from every point of view, and this is a point which deserves closer examination on the present occasion.

All revolutions up to the present day have resulted in the displacement of one definite class rule by another; all ruling classes up till now have been only minorities as against the ruled mass of the people. A ruling minority was thus overthrown; another minority seized the helm of state and remodelled the state apparatus in accordance with its own interests. This was on every occasion the minority group able and called to rule by the degree of economic development, and just for that reason, and only for that

reason, it happened that the ruled majority either participated in the revolution on the side of the former or else passively acquiesced in it. But if we disregard the concrete content of each occasion, the common form of all these revolutions was that they were minority revolutions. Even where the majority took part, it did so—whether wittingly or not—only in the service of a minority ; but because of this, or simply because of the passive, unresisting attitude of the majority, this minority acquired the appearance of being the representative of the whole people.

As a rule, after the first great success, the victorious minority became divided ; one half was pleased with what had been gained, the other wanted to go still further, and put forward new demands, which, to a certain extent at least, were also in the real or apparent interests of the great mass of the people. In individual cases these more radical demands were realised, but often only for the moment ; the more moderate party again gained the upper hand, and what had eventually been won was wholly or partly lost again ; the vanquished shrieked of treachery, or ascribed their defeat to accident. But in truth the position was mainly this : the achievements of the first victory were only safeguarded by the second victory of the more radical party ; this having been attained, and, with it, what was necessary for the moment, the radicals and their achievements vanished once more from the stage.

All revolutions of modern times, beginning with the great English revolution of the seventeenth century, showed these features, which appeared inseparable from every revolutionary struggle. They appeared applicable, also, to the struggles of the proletariat for its emancipation ; all the more applicable, since in 1848 there were few people who had any idea at all of the direction in which this emancipation was to be sought. The proletarian masses themselves, even in Paris, after the victory, were still absolutely in the dark as to the path to be taken. And yet the movement was there, instinctive, spontaneous, irrepressible. Was not this



just the situation in which a revolution had to succeed, led certainly by a minority, but this time not in the interests of the minority, but in the real interests of the majority? If, in all the longer revolutionary periods, it was so easy to win the great masses of the people by the merely plausible and delusive views of the minorities thrusting themselves forward, how could they be less susceptible to ideas which were the truest reflex of their economic position, which were nothing but the clear, comprehensible expression of their needs, of needs not yet understood by themselves, but only vaguely felt? To be sure, this revolutionary mood of the masses had almost always, and usually very speedily, given way to lassitude or even to a revulsion to its opposite, so soon as illusion evaporated and disappointment set in. But here it was not a question of delusive views, but of giving effect to the very special interests of the great majority itself, interests which at that time were certainly by no means clear to this great majority, but which must soon enough become clear in the course of giving practical effect to them, by their convincing obviousness. And if now, as Marx showed in the third article, in the spring of 1850, the development of the bourgeois republic that had arisen out of the "social" revolution of 1848 had concentrated the real power in the hands of the big bourgeoisie—monarchistically inclined as it was—and, on the other hand, had grouped all the other social classes, peasants as well as petty bourgeoisie, round the proletariat, so that, during and after the common victory, not they, but the proletariat grown wise by experience, must become the decisive factor—was there not every prospect here of turning the revolution of the minority into the revolution of the majority?

History has proved us, and all who thought like us, wrong. It has made it clear that the state of economic development on the Continent at that time was not, by a long way, ripe for the removal of capitalist production; it has proved this by the economic revolution which, since

1848, has seized the whole of the Continent, has really caused big industry for the first time to take root in France, Austria, Hungary, Poland and, recently, in Russia, while it has made Germany positively an industrial country of the first rank—all on a capitalist basis, which in the year 1848, therefore, still had great capacity for expansion. But it is just this industrial revolution which has everywhere for the first time produced clarity in the class relationships, which has removed a number of transition forms handed down from the manufacturing period and in Eastern Europe even from guild handicraft, and has created a genuine bourgeoisie and a genuine large-scale industrial proletariat and pushed them into the foreground of social development. But, owing to this, the struggle of these two great classes, which, apart from England, existed in 1848 only in Paris and, at the most, a few big industrial centres, has been spread over the whole of Europe and has reached an intensity such as was unthinkable in 1848. At that time the many obscure evangels of the sects, with their panaceas; to-day the one generally recognised, transparently clear theory of Marx, sharply formulating the final aims of the struggle. At that time the masses, sundered and differing according to locality and nationality, linked only by the feeling of common suffering, undeveloped, tossed to and fro in their perplexity from enthusiasm to despair; to-day a great international army of Socialists, marching irresistibly on and growing daily in number, organisation, discipline, insight and assurance of victory. If even this mighty army of the proletariat has still not reached its goal, if, a long way from winning victory with one mighty stroke, it has slowly to press forward from position to position in a hard, tenacious struggle, this only proves, once and for all, how impossible it was in 1848 to win social reconstruction by a simple surprise attack.

A bourgeoisie split into two monarchist sections adhering to two dynasties, a bourgeoisie, however, which demanded, above all, peace and security for its financial operations,

faced with a proletariat vanquished, indeed, but still a constant menace, a proletariat round which petty bourgeois and peasants grouped themselves more and more—the continual threat of a violent outbreak, which, nevertheless, offered no prospect of a final solution—such was the situation, as if created for the *coup d'état* of the third, the pseudo-democratic pretender, Louis Bonaparte. On December 2, 1851, by means of the army, he put an end to the tense situation and secured for Europe the assurance of domestic tranquillity, in order to give it the blessing of a new era of wars. The period of revolutions from below was concluded for the time being ; there followed a period of revolutions from above.

The imperial reaction of 1851 gave a new proof of the unripeness of the proletarian aspirations of that time. But it was itself to create the conditions under which they were bound to ripen. Internal tranquillity ensured the full development of the new industrial boom ; the necessity of keeping the army occupied and of diverting the revolutionary currents outwards produced wars, in which Bonaparte, under the pretext of asserting “the principle of nationality,” sought to sneak annexations for France. His imitator, Bismarck, adopted the same policy for Prussia ; he made his *coup d'état*, his revolution from above, in 1866, against the German Confederation and Austria, and no less against the Prussian *Konfliktsskammer*. But Europe was too small for two Bonapartes and historical irony so willed it that Bismarck overthrew Bonaparte, and King William of Prussia not only established the little German Empire, but also the French Republic. The general result, however, was that in Europe the autonomy and internal unity of the great nations, with the exception of Poland, had become a fact. Within relatively modest limits, it is true, but, for all that, on a scale large enough to allow the development of the working class to proceed without finding national complications any longer a serious obstacle. The grave-diggers of the Revolution of 1848 had become the executors

of its will. And alongside of them rose threateningly the heir of 1848, the proletariat, in the International.

After the war of 1870-1, Bonaparte vanishes from the stage and Bismarck's mission is fulfilled, so that he can now sink back again into the ordinary *Junker*. The period, however, is brought to a close by the Paris Commune. An underhand attempt by Thiers to steal the cannon of the Paris National Guard, called forth a victorious rising. It was shown once more that, in Paris, none but a proletarian revolution is any longer possible. After the victory power fell, wholly of its own accord, and quite undisputed, into the hands of the working class. And once again, twenty years after the time described in this work of ours, it was proved how impossible, even then, was this rule of the working class. On the one hand, France left Paris in the lurch, looked on while it bled from the bullets of MacMahon; on the other hand, the Commune was consumed in unfruitful strife between the two parties which divided it, the Blanquists (the majority) and the Proudhonists (the minority), neither of which knew what was to be done. The victory which came as a gift in 1871 remained just as unfruitful as the surprise attack of 1848.

It was believed that the militant proletariat had been finally buried with the Paris Commune. But, completely to the contrary, it dates its most powerful advance from the Commune and the Franco-German war. The recruitment of the whole of the population able to bear arms into armies that could be counted in millions, and the introduction of firearms, projectiles and explosives of hitherto undreamt of efficacy created a complete revolution in all warfare. This, on the one hand, put a sudden end to the Bonapartist war period and insured peaceful industrial development, since any war other than a world war of unheard of cruelty and absolutely incalculable outcome had become an impossibility. On the other hand, it caused military expenditure to rise in geometrical progression, and thereby forced up taxes to exorbitant levels and so drove the poorer classes

of people into the arms of Socialism. The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, the most immediate cause of the mad competition in armaments, might set the French and German bourgeoisie chauvinistically at each other's throats ; for the workers of the two countries it became a new bond of unity. And the anniversary of the Paris Commune became the first universal commemoration day of the whole proletariat.

The war of 1870-71 and the defeat of the Commune had transferred the centre of gravity of the European workers' movement for the time being from France to Germany, as Marx foretold. In France it naturally took years to recover from the bloodletting of May 1871. In Germany, on the other hand, where industry was, in addition, furthered (in positively hot-house fashion) by the blessing of the French milliards and developed more and more quickly, Social-Democracy experienced a much more rapid and enduring growth. Thanks to the understanding with which the German workers made use of the universal suffrage introduced in 1866, the astonishing growth of the Party is made plain to all the world by incontestable figures. 1871, 102,000 ; 1874, 352,000 ; 1877, 493,000 Social-Democratic votes. Then came recognition of this advance by high authority in the shape of the Anti-Socialist Law : the Party was temporarily disrupted ; the number of votes sank to 312,000 in 1881. But that was quickly overcome, and then, though oppressed by the Exceptional Law, without press, without external organisation and without the right of combination or meeting, the rapid expansion really began : 1884, 550,000 ; 1887, 763,000 ; 1890, 1,427,000 votes. Then the hand of the state was paralysed. The Anti-Socialist Law disappeared ; socialist votes rose to 1,787,000, over a quarter of all the votes cast. The government and the ruling classes had exhausted all their expedients—uselessly, to no purpose, and without success. The tangible proofs of their impotence, which the authorities, from night watchman to the imperial chancellor, had had to accept—and that from the despised workers—these proofs were

counted in millions. The state was at the end of its Latin, the workers only at the beginning of theirs.

But the German workers did a second great service to their cause in addition to the first, which they rendered by their mere existence as the strongest, best disciplined and most rapidly growing Socialist Party. They supplied their comrades of all countries with a new weapon, and one of the sharpest, when they showed them how to use universal suffrage.

There had long been universal suffrage in France, but it had fallen into disrepute through the misuse to which the Bonapartist government had put it. After the Commune there was no workers' party to make use of it. Also in Spain it had existed since the republic, but in Spain boycott of the elections was ever the rule of all serious opposition parties. The Swiss experiences of universal suffrage, also, were anything but encouraging for a workers' party. The revolutionary workers of the Latin countries had been wont to regard the suffrage as a snare, as an instrument of government trickery. It was otherwise in Germany. *The Communist Manifesto* had already proclaimed the winning of universal suffrage, of democracy, as one of the first and most important tasks of the militant proletariat, and Lassalle had again taken up this point. When Bismarck found himself compelled to introduce the franchise as the only means of interesting the mass of the people in his plans, our workers immediately took it in earnest and sent August Bebel to the first constituent Reichstag. And from that day on they have used the franchise in a way which has paid them a thousandfold and has served as a model to the workers of all countries. The franchise has been, in the words of the French Marxist programme, "*transformé, de moyen de duperie qu'il a été jusqu'ici, en instrument d'émancipation*"—they have transformed it from a means of deception, which it was heretofore, into an instrument of emancipation. And if universal suffrage had offered no other advantage than that it allowed us to count our numbers

every three years ; that by the regularly established, unexpectedly rapid rise in the number of votes it increased in equal measure the workers' certainty of victory and the dismay of their opponents, and so became our best means of propaganda ; that it accurately informed us concerning our own strength and that of all hostile parties, and thereby provided us with a measure of proportion for our actions second to none, safeguarding us from untimely timidity as much as from untimely foolhardiness—if this had been the only advantage we gained from the suffrage, then it would still have been more than enough. But it has done much more than this. In election agitation it provided us with a means, second to none, of getting in touch with the mass of the people, where they still stand aloof from us ; of forcing all parties to defend their views and actions against our attacks before all the people ; and, further, it opened to our representatives in the Reichstag a platform from which they could speak to their opponents in Parliament and to the masses without, with quite other authority and freedom than in the Press or at meetings. Of what avail to the government and the bourgeoisie was their Anti-Socialist Law when election agitation and socialist speeches in the Reichstag continually broke through it ?

With this successful utilisation of universal suffrage, an entirely new mode of proletarian struggle came into force, and this quickly developed further. It was found that the state institutions, in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is organised, offer still further opportunities for the working class to fight these very state institutions. They took part in elections to individual diets, to municipal councils and to industrial courts ; they contested every post against the bourgeoisie in the occupation of which a sufficient part of the proletariat had its say. And so it happened that the bourgeoisie and the government came to be much more afraid of the legal than of the illegal action of the workers' party, of the results of elections than of those of rebellion.

For here, too, the conditions of the struggle had essentially

changed. Rebellion in the old style, the street fight with barricades, which up to 1848 gave everywhere the final decision, was to a considerable extent obsolete.

Let us have no illusions about it : a real victory of an insurrection over the military in street fighting, a victory as between two armies, is one of the rarest exceptions. But the insurgents, also, counted on it just as rarely. For them it was solely a question of making the troops yield to moral influences, which, in a fight between the armies of two warring countries do not come into play at all, or do so to a much less degree. If they succeed in this, then the troops fail to act, or the commanding officers lose their heads, and the insurrection wins. If they do not succeed in this, then, even where the military are in the minority, the superiority of better equipment and training, of unified leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself felt. The most that the insurrection can achieve in actual tactical practice is the correct construction and defence of a single barricade. Mutual support ; the disposition and employment of reserves ; in short, the co-operation and harmonious working of the individual detachments, indispensable even for the defence of one quarter of the town, not to speak of the whole of a large town, are at best defective, and mostly not attainable at all ; concentration of the military forces at a decisive point is, of course, impossible. Hence the passive defence is the prevailing form of fight : the attack will rise here and there, but only by way of exception, to occasional advances and flank assaults ; as a rule, however, it will be limited to occupation of the positions abandoned by the retreating troops. In addition, the military have, on their side, the disposal of artillery and fully equipped corps of skilled engineers, resources of war which, in nearly every case, the insurgents entirely lack. No wonder, then, that even the barricade struggles conducted with the greatest heroism—Paris, June 1848 ; Vienna, October 1848 ; Dresden, May 1849—ended with the defeat of the insurrection,



so soon as the leaders of the attack, unhampered by political considerations, acted from the purely military standpoint, and their soldiers remained reliable.

The numerous successes of the insurgents up to 1848 were due to a great variety of causes. In Paris in July 1830 and February 1848, as in most of the Spanish street fights, there stood between the insurgents and the military a civic militia, which either directly took the side of the insurrection, or else by its lukewarm, indecisive attitude caused the troops likewise to vacillate, and supplied the insurrection with arms into the bargain. Where this citizens' guard opposed the insurrection from the outset, as in June 1848 in Paris, the insurrection was vanquished. In Berlin in 1848, the people were victorious partly through a considerable accession of new fighting forces during the night and the morning of the 19th, partly as a result of the exhaustion and bad victualling of the troops, and, finally, partly as a result of the paralysed command. But in all cases the fight was won because the troops failed to obey, because the officers lost their power of decision or because their hands were tied.

Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, then victory was won ; if not, there was defeat. [*This is the main point, which must be kept in view, likewise when the chances of contingent future street fights are examined.*]

The chances, however, were in 1849 already pretty poor. Everywhere the bourgeoisie had thrown in its lot with the governments, "culture and property" had hailed and feasted the military moving against the insurrections. The spell of the barricade was broken ; the soldier no longer saw behind it "the people," but rebels, agitators, plunderers, levellers, the scum of society ; the officer had in the course of time become versed in the tactical forms of street fighting, he no longer marched straight ahead and without cover

against the improvised breastwork, but went round it through gardens, yards and houses. And this was now successful, with a little skill, in nine cases out of ten.

But since then there have been very many more changes, and all in favour of the military. If the big towns have become considerably bigger, the armies have become bigger still. Paris and Berlin have, since 1848, grown less than fourfold, but their garrisons have grown more than that. By means of the railways, the garrisons can, in twenty-four hours, be more than doubled, and in forty-eight hours they can be increased to huge armies. The arming of this enormously increased number of troops has become incomparably more effective. In 1848 the smooth-bore percussion muzzle-loader, to-day the small-calibre magazine breech-loading rifle, which shoots four times as far, ten times as accurately and ten times as fast as the former. At that time the relatively ineffective round-shot and grape-shot of the artillery ; to-day the percussion shells, of which one is sufficient to demolish the best barricade. At that time the pick-axe of the sapper for breaking through walls ; to-day the dynamite cartridge.

On the other hand, all the conditions on the insurgents' side have grown worse. An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathise will hardly recur ; in the class struggle all the middle sections will never group themselves round the proletariat so exclusively that the reactionary parties gathered round the bourgeoisie well-nigh disappear. The "people," therefore, will always appear divided, and with this a powerful lever, so extraordinarily effective in 1848, is lacking. Even if more soldiers who have seen service were to come over to the insurrectionists, the arming of them becomes so much the more difficult. The hunting and luxury guns of the gunshops—even if not previously made unusable by removal of part of the lock by the police—are far from being a match for the magazine rifle of the soldier, even in close fighting. Up to 1848 it was possible to make the necessary ammunition oneself out of

powder and lead ; to-day the cartridges differ for each rifle, and are everywhere alike only in one point, that they are a special product of big industry, and therefore not to be prepared *ex tempore*, with the result that most rifles are useless as long as one does not possess the ammunition specially suited to them. And, finally, since 1848 the newly built quarters of the big towns have been laid out in long, straight, broad streets, as though made to give full effect to the new cannons and rifles. The revolutionary would have to be mad, who himself chose the working class districts in the North and East of Berlin for a barricade fight. [*Does that mean that in the future the street fight will play no further role ? Certainly not. It only means that the conditions since 1848 have become far more unfavourable for civil fights, far more favourable for the military. A future street fight can therefore only be victorious when this unfavourable situation is compensated by other factors. Accordingly, it will occur more seldom in the beginning of a great revolution than in its further progress, and will have to be undertaken with greater forces. These, however, may then well prefer, as in the whole Great French Revolution on September 4 and October 31, 1870, in Paris, the open attack to the passive barricade tactics.*]

Does the reader now understand why the ruling classes decidedly want to bring us to where the guns shoot and the sabres slash ? Why they accuse us to-day of cowardice, because we do not betake ourselves without more ado into the street, where we are certain of defeat in advance ? Why they so earnestly implore us to play for once the part of cannon fodder ?

The gentlemen pour out their prayers and their challenges for nothing, for nothing at all. We are not so stupid. They might just as well demand from their enemy in the next war that he should take up his position in the line formation of old Fritz, or in the columns of whole divisions *à la* Wagram and Waterloo, and with the flintlock in his hands at that. If the conditions have changed in the case of war between nations, this is no less true in the case of the class struggle.

The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for [*with body and soul*]. The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long, persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair.

In the Latin countries, also, it is being more and more recognised that the old tactics must be revised. Everywhere [*the unprepared onslaught has gone into the background, everywhere*] the German example of utilising the suffrage, of winning all posts accessible to us, has been imitated. In France, where for more than a hundred years the ground has been undermined by revolution after revolution, where there is no single party which has not done its share in conspiracies, insurrections and all other revolutionary actions; in France, where, as a result, the government is by no means sure of the army and where, in general, the conditions for an insurrectionary *coup de main* are far more favourable than in Germany—even in France the Socialists are realising more and more that no lasting victory is possible for them, unless they first win the great mass of the people, i.e., in this case, the peasants. Slow propaganda work and parliamentary activity are being recognised here, too, as the most immediate tasks of the Party. Successes were not lacking. Not only have a whole series of municipal councils been won; fifty Socialists have seats in the Chambers, and they have already overthrown three ministries and a President of the Republic. In Belgium last year the workers enforced the franchise, and have been victorious in a quarter of the constituencies. In Switzerland, in Italy, in Denmark, yes, even in Bulgaria and Rumania the Socialists are represented in the Parliaments. In Austria all parties

agree that our admission to the Reichsrat can no longer be withheld. We will get in, that is certain, the only question still in dispute is : by which door ? And even in Russia, when the famous *Zemsky Sobor* meets, that National Assembly to which young Nicholas offers such vain resistance, even there we can reckon with certainty on also being represented in it.

Of course, our foreign comrades do not renounce their right to revolution. The right to revolution is, after all, the only real "historical right," the only right on which all modern states without exception rest, Mecklenburg included, whose aristocratic revolution was ended in 1755 by the "hereditary settlement," the glorious charter of feudalism still valid to-day. The right to revolution is so incontestably recognised in the general consciousness that even General von Boguslawski derives the right to a *coup d'état*, which he vindicates for his Kaiser, solely from this popular right.

But whatever may happen in other countries, German Social-Democracy has a special situation and therewith, at least in the first instance, a special task. The two million voters, whom it sends to the ballot box, together with the young men and women, who stand behind them as non-voters, form the most numerous, most compact mass, the decisive "*shock force*" of the international proletarian army. This mass already supplies over a fourth of the recorded votes ; and as the by-elections to the Reichstag, the diet elections in individual states, the municipal council and industrial court elections demonstrate, it increases uninterruptedly. Its growth proceeds as spontaneously, as steadily, as irresistibly, and at the same time as tranquilly as a natural process. All government interventions have proved powerless against it. We can count even to-day on two and a half million voters. If it continues in this fashion, by the end of the century we shall conquer the greater part of the middle section of society, petty bourgeois and small peasants, and grow into the decisive power in the land, before which all other powers will have to bow, whether

they like it or not. To keep this growth going without interruption until of itself it gets beyond the control of the ruling governmental system [*not to fritter away this daily increasing shock force in advance guard fighting, but to keep it intact until the day of the decision,*] that is our main task. And there is only one means by which the steady rise of the socialist fighting forces in Germany could be momentarily halted, and even thrown back for some time : a clash on a big scale with the military, a bloodbath like that of 1871 in Paris. In the long run that would also be overcome. To shoot out of the world a party which numbers millions—all the magazine rifles of Europe and America are not enough for this. But the normal development would be impeded, [*the shock force would, perhaps, not be available at the critical moment,*] the decisive struggle would be delayed, protracted and attended by heavy sacrifices.

The irony of world history turns everything upside down. We, the "revolutionaries," the "rebels"—we are thriving far better on legal methods than on illegal methods and revolt. The parties of order, as they call themselves, are perishing under the legal conditions created by themselves. They cry despairingly with Odilon Barrot : *la légalité nous tue*, legality is the death of us ; whereas we, under this legality, get firm muscles and rosy cheeks and look like eternal life. And if we are not so crazy as to let ourselves be driven into street fighting in order to please them, then nothing else is finally left for them but themselves to break through this legality so fatal to them.

Meanwhile they make new laws against revolution. Again everything is turned upside down. These anti-revolt fanatics of to-day, are they not themselves the rebels of yesterday ? Have we, perchance, evoked the civil war of 1866 ? Have we driven the King of Hanover, the Elector of Hesse, the Duke of Nassau from their hereditary, lawful domains, and annexed these hereditary domains ? And do these rebels against the German Confederation and three crowns by the grace of God complain of overthrow ? *Quis tulere*

*Gracchos de seditione querentes?* Who could allow the Bismarck worshippers to rail at revolt?

Let them, nevertheless, put through their anti-revolt bills, make them still worse, transform the whole penal law into india-rubber, they will achieve nothing but a new proof of their impotence. In order seriously to hit Social-Democracy, they will have to resort to quite other measures. They can only hold in check the Social-Democratic revolt which is just now doing so well by keeping within the law, by revolt on the part of the parties of order, which cannot live without breaking the laws. Herr Rössler, the Prussian bureaucrat, and Herr von Boguslawski, the Prussian general, have shown them the only way in which the workers, who refuse to let themselves be lured into street fighting, can still, perhaps, be held in check. Breach of the constitution, dictatorship, return to absolutism, *regis voluntas suprema lex!* Therefore, only courage, gentlemen; here is no backing out of it; here you are in for it!

But do not forget that the German Empire, just as all small states and generally all modern states, is a product of contract; of the contract, firstly, of the princes with one another and, secondly, of the princes with the people. If one side breaks the contract, the whole contract falls to the ground; the other side is then also no longer bound [*as Bismarck showed us so beautifully in 1866. If, therefore, you break the constitution of the Reich, then the Social-Democracy is free, can do and refrain from doing what it will as against you. But what it will do then it will hardly give away to you to-day!*]

It is now, almost to the year, sixteen hundred years since a dangerous party of revolt made a great commotion in the Roman Empire. It undermined religion and all the foundations of the state; it flatly denied that Cæsar's will was the supreme law; it was without a fatherland, international; it spread over all countries of the Empire from Gaul to Asia, and beyond the frontiers of the Empire. It had long carried on an underground agitation in secret; for a considerable time, however, it had felt itself strong

enough to come out into the open. This party of revolt, who were known by the name of christians, was also strongly represented in the army ; whole legions were christian. When they were ordered to attend the sacrificial ceremonies of the pagan established church, in order to do the honours there, the soldier rebels had the audacity to stick peculiar emblems—crosses—on their helmets in protest. Even the wonted barrack cruelties of their superior officers were fruitless. The Emperor Diocletian could no longer quietly look on while order, obedience and discipline in his army were being undermined. He intervened energetically, while there was still time. He passed an anti-Socialist, I should say, anti-christian, law. The meetings of the rebels were forbidden, their meeting halls were closed or even pulled down, the christian badges, crosses, etc., were, like the red handkerchiefs in Saxony, prohibited. Christians were declared incapable of holding offices in the state, they were not to be allowed even to become corporals. Since there were not available at that time judges so well trained in “ respect of persons ” as Herr von Köller’s anti-revolt bill assumes, the christians were forbidden out of hand to seek justice before a court. This exceptional law was also without effect. The christians tore it down from the walls with scorn ; they are even supposed to have burnt the Emperor’s palace in Nicomedia over his head. Then the latter revenged himself by the great persecution of christians in the year 303, according to our chronology. It was the last of its kind. And it was so effective that seventeen years later the army consisted overwhelmingly of christians, and the succeeding autocrat of the whole Roman Empire, Constantine, called the Great by the priests, proclaimed christianity as the state religion.



*Karl Marx*

## THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE (1848-50)

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[The four articles which form this work covered every stage of the long struggles in France between 1848 and 1850, which led on to the imperial restoration of 1851. The passages selected show the earlier stages, up to the defeat of the proletarian uprising in June 1848; the later stages are covered in the extracts subsequently given from Marx's later work, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Marx's analysis shows the characteristic form of the bourgeois revolution—its use of the workers against the more reactionary forces, and then its disarming and suppression of the workers' forces when the new bourgeois government is established.]

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### THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE

FROM FEBRUARY TO JUNE 1848

(*From Ch. I*)

WITH the exception of a few short chapters, every important part of the annals of the revolution from 1848 to 1849 carries the heading: Defeat of the revolution!

But what succumbed in these defeats was not the revolution. It was the pre-revolutionary traditional appendages, results of social relationships, which had not yet come to the point of sharp class antagonisms—persons, illusions, conceptions, projects, from which the revolutionary party before the February Revolution was not free, from which it could be freed, not by the victory of February, but only by a series of defeats.

In a word : revolutionary advance made headway not by its immediate tragi-comic achievements, but on the contrary by the creation of a powerful, united counter-revolution, by the creation of an opponent, by fighting whom the party of revolt first ripened into a real revolutionary party.

To prove this is the task of the following pages.

### I. THE DEFEAT OF JUNE 1848

After the July Revolution, when the Liberal banker, Laffitte, led his godfather, the Duke of Orleans, in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville, he let fall the words : " From now on the bankers will rule." Laffitte had betrayed the secret of the revolution.

It was not the French bourgeoisie that ruled under Louis Philippe, but a fraction of it, bankers, Stock Exchange kings, railway kings, owners of coal and iron works and forests, a section of landed proprietors that rallied round them—the so-called finance aristocracy. It sat on the throne, it dictated laws in the Chambers, it conferred political posts from cabinet portfolios to the tobacco bureau.

The real industrial bourgeoisie formed part of the official opposition, i.e., it was represented only as a minority in the Chambers. Its opposition was expressed all the more decisively, the more unalloyed the autocracy of the finance aristocracy became, and the more it itself imagined that its domination over the working-class was ensured after the mutinies of 1832, 1834 and 1839, which had been drowned in blood. *Grandin*, the Rouen manufacturer, the most fanatical instrument of bourgeois reaction, in the Constituent Assembly, as well as in the legislative National Assembly, was the most violent opponent of Guizot in the Chamber of Deputies. *Leon Faucher*, later renowned for his impotent endeavours to push himself forward as the Guizot of the French counter-revolution, in the last days of Louis Philippe, waged a war of the pen for industry against

speculation and its train bearer, the government. *Bastiat* agitated against the ruling system in the name of Bordeaux and the whole of wine-producing France.

The petty bourgeoisie of all degrees, and the peasantry also, were completely excluded from political power. Finally, in the official opposition or entirely outside the *pays légal*, there were the ideological representatives and spokesmen of the above classes, their savants, lawyers, doctors, etc., in a word : their so-called talents.

The July monarchy, owing to its financial need, was dependent from the beginning on the big bourgeoisie, and its dependence on the big bourgeoisie was the inexhaustible source of a growing financial need. It was impossible to subordinate state administration to the interests of national production, without balancing the budget, establishing a balance between state expenses and income. And how was this balance to be established, without limiting state expenditure, i.e., without encroaching on interests which were so many supports of the ruling system, and without redistributing taxes, i.e., without putting a considerable share of the burden of taxes on the shoulders of the big bourgeoisie itself ?

Rather the fraction of the bourgeoisie that ruled and legislated through the Chambers had a direct interest in state indebtedness. The state deficit was even the main object of its speculation and played the chief rôle in its enrichment. At the end of each year a new deficit. After expiry of four or five years a new loan. And every new loan offered new opportunities to the finance aristocracy for defrauding the state which was kept artificially on the verge of bankruptcy—it had to contract with the bankers under the most unfavourable conditions. Each new loan gave a further opportunity for plundering the public that had invested its capital in state bonds, by stock exchange manipulations into the secrets of which the government and the majority in the Chambers were admitted. In general, the fluctuation of state credits and the possession of state

secrets gave the bankers and their associates in the Chambers and on the throne the possibility of evoking sudden, extraordinary fluctuations in the quotations of state bonds, the result of which was always bound to be the ruin of a mass of smaller capitalists and the fabulously rapid enrichment of the big gamblers. If the state deficit was in the direct interest of the ruling fraction of the bourgeoisie, then it is clear why extraordinary state expenditure in the last years of Louis Philippe's government was far more than double the extraordinary state expenditure under Napoleon; indeed, reached a yearly sum of nearly 400,000,000 francs, whereas the whole annual export of France seldom attained a volume amounting to 750,000,000 francs. The enormous sums which, in this way, flowed through the hands of the state, facilitated, moreover, swindling contracts for deliveries, bribery, defalcations and all kinds of roguery. The defrauding of the state, just as it occurred on a large scale in connection with loans, was repeated in detail, in the state works. The relationship between Chamber and government multiplied itself as the relationship between individual departments and individual *entrepreneurs*.

In the same way as the ruling class exploited state expenditure in general and state loans, they exploited the building of railways. The Chambers piled the main burdens on the state, and secured the golden fruits to the speculating finance aristocracy. One recalls the scandals in the Chamber of Deputies when by chance it came out that all the members of the majority, including a number of ministers, had taken part as shareholders in the very railway construction which as legislators they caused to be carried out afterwards at the cost of the state.

On the other hand, the smallest financial reform was wrecked by the influence of the bankers. For example, the postal reform. Rothschild protested. Was it permissible for the state to curtail sources of income out of which interest was to be paid on its ever increasing debt?

The July monarchy was nothing other than a joint stock

company for the exploitation of French national wealth, the dividends of which were divided amongst ministers, Chambers, 240,000 voters and their adherents. Louis Philippe was the director of this company—Robert Macaire on the throne. Trade, industry, agriculture, shipping, the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie, were bound to be continually prejudiced and endangered under this system. The bourgeoisie in the July days had inscribed on its banner : *gouvernement à bon marché*, cheap government.

While the finance aristocracy made the laws, was at the head of the administration of the State, had command of all the organised public powers, dominated public opinion through facts and through the Press, the same prostitution, the same shameless cheating, the same mania to get rich, was repeated in every sphere, from the Court to the Café Borgne, to get rich not by production, but by pocketing the already available wealth of others. In particular there broke out, at the top of bourgeois society, an unbridled display of unhealthy and dissolute appetites, which clashed every moment with the bourgeois laws themselves, wherein the wealth having its source in gambling naturally seeks its satisfaction, where pleasure becomes *crapuleux*, where gold, dirt and blood flow together. The finance aristocracy, in its mode of acquisition as well as in its pleasures, is nothing but the resurrection of the lumpen proletariat at the top of bourgeois society.

And the non-ruling sections of the French bourgeoisie cried : corruption ! The people cried : *à bas les grands voleurs ! à bas les assassins !* when in 1847, on the most prominent stages of bourgeois society, the same scenes were publicly enacted which regularly lead the *lumpenproletariat* to brothels, to workhouses and lunatic asylums, before the Bench, to bagnos and to the scaffold. The industrial bourgeoisie saw its interests endangered, the petty bourgeoisie was filled with moral indignation, the imagination of the people was offended, Paris was flooded with pamphlets—“*la dynastie Rothschild*,” “*les juifs rois de l'époque*,” etc.

—in which the rule of the finance aristocracy was denounced and stigmatised with greater or less wit.

*Rien pour la gloire !* Glory brings no profit ! *La paix partout et toujours !* War depresses the quotations of the Three and Four per Cents ! the France of the Bourse Jews had inscribed on her banner. Her foreign policy was therefore lost in a series of mortifications to French national feeling, which reacted all the more vigorously when the robbery of Poland was brought to an end with the annexation of Cracow by Austria, and when Guizot came out actively on the side of the Holy Alliance in the Swiss separatist war. The victory of the Swiss liberals in this mimic war raised the self-respect of the bourgeois opposition in France ; the bloody uprising of the people in Palermo worked like an electric shock on the paralysed masses of the people and awoke their great revolutionary memories and passions.

The eruption of the general discontent was finally accelerated and the sentiment for revolt ripened by two economic world-events.

The potato blight and the bad harvests of 1845 and 1846 increased the general ferment among the people. The high cost of living of 1847 called forth bloody conflicts in France as well as on the rest of the Continent. As against the shameless orgies of the finance aristocracy, the struggle of the people for the first necessities of life ! At Buzançais the hunger rioters executed in Paris the over-satiated *escrocs* snatched from the courts by the Royal family.

The second great economic event which hastened the outbreak of the revolution was a general commercial and industrial crisis in England. Already heralded in the autumn of 1845 by the wholesale reverses of the speculators in railway shares, delayed during 1846 by a number of incidents such as the impending abolition of the corn duties, in the autumn of 1847 the crisis finally burst forth with the bankruptcy of the London grocers, on the heels of which followed the insolvencies of the land banks and the closing of the factories in the English industrial districts.

The after-effect of this crisis on the Continent had not yet spent itself when the February Revolution broke out.

The devastation of trade and industry caused by the economic epidemic made the autocracy of the finance aristocracy still more unbearable. Throughout the whole of France the bourgeois opposition evoked the banquet agitation for an electoral reform which should win for them the majority in the Chambers and overthrow the Ministry of the Bourse. In Paris the industrial crisis had, in particular, the result of throwing a number of manufacturers and big traders, who under the existing circumstances could no longer do any business in the foreign market, on to the home market. They set up large establishments, the competition of which ruined the *épiciers* and *boutiquiers en masse*. Hence the innumerable bankruptcies among this section of the Paris bourgeoisie, and hence their revolutionary action in February. It is known how Guizot and the Chambers answered the reform proposals with a plain challenge, how Louis Philippe too late resolved on a Ministry led by Barrot, how hand-to-hand fighting took place between the people and the army, how the army was disarmed by the passive conduct of the National Guard, how the July monarchy had to give way to a Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government which emerged from the February barricades necessarily mirrored in its composition the different parties which shared in the victory. It could not be anything but a compromise between the different classes which together had overturned the July throne, but whose interests were mutually antagonistic. A large majority of its members consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie. The republican petty bourgeoisie were represented by Ledru-Rollin and Flocon, the republican bourgeoisie by the people from the *National*, the dynastic opposition by Cremieux, Dupont de l'Eure, etc. The working class had only two representatives, Louis Blanc and Albert. Finally, Lamartine as a member of the Provisional Government ; that was actually no real interest, no definite

class ; that was the February Revolution itself, the common uprising with its illusions, its poetry, its imagined content and its phrases. For the rest, the spokesman of the February Revolution, by his position and his views, belonged to the bourgeoisie.

If Paris, as a result of political centralisation, ruled France, the workers, in moments of revolutionary earthquakes, rule Paris. The first act in the life of the Provisional Government was an attempt to escape from this overpowering influence, by an appeal from intoxicated Paris to sober France. Lamartine disputed the right of the barricade fighters to proclaim the republic, on the ground that only the majority of Frenchmen had that right ; they must await their votes, the Parisian proletariat must not besmirch its victory by a usurpation. The bourgeoisie allowed the proletariat only one usurpation—that of fighting.

Up to noon on February 25, the republic had not yet been proclaimed ; on the other hand, the whole of the Ministries had already been divided among the bourgeois elements of the Provisional Government and among the generals, bankers and lawyers of the *National*. But the workers were this time determined not to put up with any swindling like that of July 1830. They were ready to take up the fight anew and to enforce the republic by force of arms. With this message, Raspail betook himself to the Hôtel de Ville. In the name of the Parisian proletariat he commanded the Provisional Government to proclaim the republic ; if this order of the people were not fulfilled within two hours, he would return at the head of 200,000 men. The bodies of the fallen were scarcely cold, the barricades were not yet cleared away, the workers not yet disarmed, and the only force which could be opposed to them was the National Guard. Under these circumstances the prudent state doubts and juristic scruples of conscience of the Provisional Government suddenly vanished. The interval of two hours had not expired before all the walls of Paris were resplendent with the tremendous historical words:



*République française ! Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité !*

Even the memory of the limited aims and motives which drove the bourgeoisie into the February Revolution was extinguished by the proclamation of the republic on the basis of universal suffrage. Instead of a few small fractions of the bourgeoisie, whole classes of French society were suddenly hurled into the circle of political power, forced to leave the boxes, the stalls and the gallery and to act in person upon the revolutionary stage ! With the constitutional monarchy the semblance of a state power independently confronting bourgeois society also vanished, as well as the whole series of subordinate struggles which this semblance of power called forth !

The proletariat, by dictating the republic to the Provisional Government and through the Provisional Government to the whole of France, stepped into the foreground forthwith as an independent party, but at the same time challenged the whole of bourgeois France to enter the lists against it. What it won was the terrain for the fight for its revolutionary emancipation, but in no way this emancipation itself !

The first thing that the February republic had to do was rather to complete the rule of the bourgeoisie by allowing, besides the finance aristocracy, all the propertied classes to enter the circle of political power. The majority of the great landowners, the Legitimists, were emancipated from the political nullity to which they had been condemned by the July Monarchy. Not for nothing had the *Gazette de France* agitated in common with the opposition papers, not for nothing had Laroche-Jaquelin taken the side of the revolution in the session of the Chamber of Deputies on February 24. The nominal proprietors, who form the great majority of the French people, the peasants, were put by universal suffrage in the position of arbiters of the fate of France. The February republic finally brought the rule of the bourgeoisie clearly into prominence, since it struck off the crown behind which Capital kept itself concealed.

Just as the workers in the July days had fought and won the bourgeois majority, so in the February days they fought and won the bourgeois republic. Just as the July monarchy had to proclaim itself as a monarchy surrounded by republican institutions, so the February republic was forced to proclaim itself a republic surrounded by social institutions. The Parisian proletariat compelled this concession, too.

Marche, a worker, dictated the decree by which the newly formed Provisional Government pledged itself to secure the existence of the workers by work, to provide work for all citizens, etc. And when, a few days later, it forgot its promises and seemed to have lost sight of the proletariat, a mass of 20,000 workers marched on the Hôtel de Ville with the cry : Organisation of labour ! Formation of a special Ministry of Labour ! The Provisional Government, with reluctance and after long debates, nominated a permanent, special commission, charged with finding means of improving the lot of the working classes ! This commission consisted of delegates from the corporations of Parisian artisans and was presided over by Louis Blanc and Albert. The Luxembourg was assigned to it as a meeting place. In this way the representatives of the working class were exiled from the seat of the Provisional Government, the bourgeois section of which held the real state power and the reins of administration exclusively in its hands, and side by side with the Ministries of Finance, Trade and Public Works, side by side with the banks and the bourse, there arose a socialist synagogue whose high priests, Louis Blanc and Albert, had the task of discovering the promised land, of preaching the new gospel and of occupying the attention of the Parisian proletariat. Unlike any profane state power, they had no budget, no executive authority at their disposal. With their heads they had to break the pillars of bourgeois society. While Luxembourg sought the philosopher's stone, in the Hôtel de Ville they minted the current coinage.

And yet the claims of the Parisian proletariat, so far as they went beyond the bourgeois republic, could win no other existence than the nebulous one of the Luxembourg.

In common with the bourgeoisie the workers had made the February Revolution, and alongside the bourgeoisie they sought to put through their interests, just as they had installed a worker in the Provisional Government itself alongside the bourgeois majority. Organisation of labour ! But wage labour is the existing bourgeois organisation of labour. Without it there is no capital, no bourgeoisie, no bourgeois society. Their own Ministry of Labour ! But the Ministries of Finance, of Trade, of Public Works—are not these the bourgeois Ministries of Labour ? And alongside these a proletarian Ministry of Labour must be a Ministry of impotence, a Ministry of pious wishes, a commission of the Luxembourg. Just as the workers thought to emancipate themselves side by side with the bourgeoisie, so they opined they would be able to consummate a proletarian revolution within the national walls of France, side by side with the remaining bourgeois nations. But French production relations are conditioned by the foreign trade of France, by her position on the world market and the laws thereof ; how should France break them without a European revolutionary war, which would strike back at the despot of the world market, England ?

A class in which the revolutionary interests of society are concentrated, so soon as it has risen up, finds directly in its own situation the content and the material of its revolutionary activity : foes to be laid low, measures, dictated by the needs of the struggle, to be taken ; the consequences of its own deeds drive it on. It makes no theoretical inquiries into its own task. The French working class had not attained this standpoint ; it was still incapable of accomplishing its own revolution.

The development of the industrial proletariat is, in general, conditioned by the development of the industrial bourgeoisie. Only under its rule the proletariat wins the

extensive national existence which can raise its revolution to a national one and itself creates the modern means of production, which become just so many means of its revolutionary emancipation. Only bourgeois rule tears up the roots of feudal society and levels the ground on which a proletarian revolution is alone possible. In France industry is more developed and the bourgeoisie more revolutionary than elsewhere on the Continent. But was not the February Revolution directed immediately against the finance aristocracy? This fact proved that the industrial bourgeoisie did not rule France. The industrial bourgeoisie can only rule where modern industry shapes all property relations in conformity with itself, and industry can only win this power when it has conquered the world market, for national bounds are not wide enough for its development. But French industry, to a great extent, maintains its command even of the national market only through a more or less modified system of prohibitive duties. If, therefore, the French proletariat, at the moment of a revolution, possesses in Paris actual power and influence which spur it on to a drive beyond its means, in the rest of France it is crowded into single, scattered industrial centres, being almost lost in the superior numbers of peasants and petty bourgeois. The struggle against capital in its developed, modern form, in its culminating phase the struggle of the industrial wage worker against the industrial bourgeois, is in France partially a fact, which after the February days could supply the national content of the revolution so much the less, since the struggle against capital's secondary modes of exploitation, that of the peasants against the usury in mortgages, of the petty bourgeois against the wholesale dealer, banker and manufacturer, in a word, against bankruptcy, was still hidden in the general uprising against the general finance aristocracy. Nothing is more understandable, then, than that the Paris proletariat sought to put through its own interests along with those of the bourgeoisie, instead of enforcing them as the revolutionary

interests of society itself, and that it let the red flag be lowered to the tricolour. The French workers could not take a step forward, could not touch a hair of the bourgeois order before the course of the revolution had forced the mass of the nation, peasants and petty bourgeois, standing between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and in revolt not against this order, against the rule of capital, to attach itself to the proletariat as its vanguard. The workers could only buy this victory through the huge defeat of June.

To the Luxembourg commission, this creation of the Paris workers, remains the merit of having disclosed from the European tribune the secret of the revolution of the nineteenth century : the emancipation of the proletariat. The *Moniteur* raged when it had to propagate officially the "wild ravings" which up to that time lay buried in the apocryphal writings of the Socialists and only reached the ears of the bourgeoisie from time to time as remote, half terrifying, half ludicrous legends. Europe awoke astonished from its bourgeois doze. In the ideas of the proletarians, therefore, who confused the finance aristocracy with the bourgeoisie in general ; in the imagination of good old republicans who denied the very existence of classes or, at most, admitted them as a result of the constitutional monarchy ; in the hypocritical phrases of the sections of the bourgeoisie up till now excluded from power, the rule of the bourgeoisie was abolished with the introduction of the republic. All the royalists were transformed into republicans and all the millionaires of Paris into workers. The phrase which corresponded to this imagined liquidation of class relations was *fraternité*, universal fraternisation and brotherhood. This pleasant abstraction from class antagonisms, this sentimental equalisation of contradictory class interests, this fantastic elevation above the class struggle, *fraternité*, this was the special catch-cry of the February Revolution. The classes were divided by a mere misunderstanding and Lamartine baptised the Provisional

Government on February 24 as "*un gouvernement qui suspende ce malentendu terrible qui existe entre les différentes classes.*" The Parisian proletariat revelled in this generous intoxication of fraternity. . . .

The Provisional Government, having honoured the bill drawn on the state by the old bourgeois society, succumbed to the latter. It had become the hard pressed debtor of bourgeoisie society instead of confronting it as the pressing creditor that had to collect the revolutionary debts of many years. It had to consolidate the shaky bourgeois relationship, in order to fulfil obligations which are only to be fulfilled within these relationships. Credit becomes a condition of life for it and the concessions to the proletariat, the promises made to it, become so many fetters which had to be struck off. The emancipation of the workers—even as a phrase—became an unbearable danger to the new republic, for it was a standing protest against the restoration of credit, which rests on undisturbed and untroubled recognition of the existing economic class relations. Therefore, it was necessary to have done with the workers.

The February Revolution had cast the army out of Paris. The National Guard, i.e., the bourgeoisie in its different grades, formed the sole power. Alone, however, it did not feel itself a match for the proletariat. Moreover, it was forced slowly and bit by bit to open its ranks and allow armed proletarians to enter the National Guard, albeit after the most tenacious resistance and after setting up a hundred different obstacles. There consequently remained but one way out : to set one part of the proletariat against the other.

For this purpose the Provisional Government formed 24 battalions of Mobile Guards, each of a thousand men, out of young men from 15 to 20 years. They belonged for the most part to the *lumpenproletariat*, which, in all big towns, form a mass strictly differentiated from the industrial proletariat, a recruiting ground for thieves and criminals

of all kinds, living on the crumbs of society, people without a definite trade, vagabonds, *gens sans feu et sans aveu*, with differences according to the degree of civilisation of the nation to which they belong, but never renouncing their *lazzaroni* character; at the youthful age at which the Provisional Government recruited them, thoroughly malleable, capable of the most heroic deeds and the most exalted sacrifices, as of the basest banditry and the dirtiest corruption. The Provisional Government paid them 1 franc 50 centimes a day, i.e., it bought them. It gave them their own uniform, i.e., it made them outwardly distinct from the blouse of the workers. They had assigned to them as leaders, partly officers from the standing army; partly they themselves elected young sons of the bourgeoisie whose rhodomontades about death for the fatherland and devotion to the republic captivated them.

And so the Paris proletariat was confronted with an army, drawn from its own midst, of 24,000 young, strong and foolhardy men. It gave cheers for the Mobile Guard on its marches through Paris. It recognised in it its champions of the barricades. It regarded it as the proletarian guard in opposition to the bourgeois National Guard. Its error was pardonable.

Besides the Mobile Guard, the Government decided to gather round itself an industrial army of workers. A hundred thousand workers thrown on the streets through the crisis and the revolution were enrolled by the Minister Marie in so-called National *Ateliers*. Under this grand name was hidden nothing but the employment of the workers on tedious, monotonous, unproductive earthworks at a wage of 23 sous. English *workhouses* in the open—that is what these National *Ateliers* were. The Provisional Government believed that it had formed in them a second proletarian army against the workers themselves. This time the bourgeoisie was mistaken in the National *Ateliers*, just as the workers were mistaken in the Mobile Guard. It had created an army for mutiny.

But one purpose was achieved.

National *Ateliers*—that was the name of the people's workshops, which Louis Blanc preached in the Luxembourg. The *Ateliers* of Marie, devised in direct antagonism to the Luxembourg, thanks to the common name, offered occasion for a plot of errors worthy of the Spanish comedy of servants. The Provisional Government itself secretly spread the report that these National *Ateliers* were the discovery of Louis Blanc, and this seemed the more plausible because Louis Blanc, the prophet of the National *Ateliers*, was a member of the Provisional Government. And in the half naïve, half intentional confusion of the Paris bourgeoisie, in the artificially maintained opinion of France and of Europe, these workhouses were the first realisation of socialism, which was put in the pillory with them.

In their title, though not in their content, the National *Ateliers* were the embodied protest of the proletariat against bourgeois industry, bourgeois credit and the bourgeois republic. The whole hate of the bourgeoisie was therefore turned upon them. At the same time, it had found in them the point against which it could direct the attack, as soon as it was strong enough to break openly with the February illusions. All the discontent, all the ill humour of the petty bourgeois was simultaneously directed against these National *Ateliers*, the common target. With real fury they reckoned up the sums that the proletarian loafers swallowed, while their own situation became daily more unbearable. A state pension for sham labour, that is socialism! they growled to themselves. They sought the basis of their misery in the National *Ateliers*, the declarations of the Luxembourg, the marches of the workers through Paris. And no one was more fantastic about the alleged machinations of the Communists than the petty bourgeoisie who hovered hopelessly on the brink of bankruptcy.

Thus in the approaching *mêlée* between bourgeoisie and



proletariat, all the advantages, all the decisive posts, all the middle sections of society were in the hands of the bourgeoisie, at the same time as the waves of the February Revolution rose high over the whole Continent, and each new post brought a new bulletin of revolution, now from Italy, now from Germany, now from the remotest parts of South-Eastern Europe, and maintained the general exuberance of the people, giving it constant testimony of a victory that it had already lost. . . .

In the Constituent National Assembly, which met on May 4, the bourgeois republicans, the republicans of the *National* had the upper hand. Legitimists and even Orleanists at first only dared to show themselves under the mask of bourgeois republicanism. Only in the name of the republic could the fight against the proletariat be undertaken.

The republic dates from May 4, not from February 25, i.e., the republic recognised by the French people; it is not the republic which the Paris proletariat thrust upon the Provisional Government, not the republic with social institutions, not the dream picture which hovered before the fighters on the barricades. The republic proclaimed by the National Assembly, the sole legitimate republic, is the republic which is no revolutionary weapon against the bourgeois order, but rather its political reconstitution, the political re-consolidation of bourgeois society, in a word, the bourgeois republic. From the tribune of the National Assembly this contention resounded and in the entire republican and anti-republican bourgeois Press it found its echo.

And we have seen how the February republic in reality was not and could not be other than a bourgeois republic; how the Provisional Government, nevertheless, was forced by the immediate pressure of the proletariat to announce it as a republic with social institutions, how the Paris proletariat was still incapable of going beyond the bourgeois republic otherwise than in ideas, in imagination; how it

everywhere acted in its service when it really came to action ; how the promises made to it became an unbearable danger for the new republic ; how the whole life process of the Provisional Government was comprised in a continuous fight against the demands of the proletariat.

In the National Assembly all France sat in judgment on the Paris proletariat. It broke immediately with the social illusions of the February Revolution ; it roundly proclaimed the bourgeois republic, nothing but the bourgeois republic. It at once excluded the representatives of the proletariat, Louis Blanc and Albert, from the Executive Commission appointed by it ; it threw out the proposal of a special Labour Ministry, and received with stormy applause the statement of the Minister Trélat : " The question is merely one of bringing labour back to its old conditions."

But all this was not enough. The February republic was won by the workers with the passive support of the bourgeoisie. The proletarians regarded themselves, and rightly, as the victors of February, and they made the proud claims of victors. They had to be vanquished on the streets, they had to be shown that they were worsted as soon as they fought, not with the bourgeoisie, but against the bourgeoisie. Just as the February republic, with its socialist concessions, required a battle of the proletariat, united with the bourgeoisie, against monarchy, so a second battle was necessary in order to sever the republic from the socialist concessions, in order to officially work out the bourgeois republic as dominant. The bourgeoisie had to refute the demands of the proletariat with arms in its hands. And the real birthplace of the bourgeois republic is not the February victory ; it is the June defeat.

The proletariat hastened the decision when, on the 15th of May, it pushed into the National Assembly, sought in vain to recapture its revolutionary influence and only delivered its energetic leaders to the jailers of the bourgeoisie. *Il faut en finir !* This situation must end ! With this cry the National assembly gave vent to its determination

to force the proletariat into a decisive struggle. The Executive Commission issued a series of provocative decrees, such as that prohibiting congregation of the people, etc. From the tribune of the Constituent National Assembly, the workers were directly provoked, insulted and derided. But the real point of the attack was, as we have seen, the National *Ateliers*. The Constituent National Assembly imperiously pointed these out to the Executive Commission, which only waited to hear its own plan put forward as the command of the National Assembly.

The Executive Commission began by making entry into the National *Ateliers* more difficult, by turning the day wage into a piece wage, by banishing workers not born in Paris to Sologne, ostensibly for the construction of earthworks. These earthworks were only a rhetorical formula with which to gloss over their expulsion, as the workers, returning disillusioned, announced to their comrades. Finally, on June 21, a decree appeared in the *Moniteur*, which ordered the forcible expulsion of all unmarried workers from the National *Ateliers*, or their enrolment in the army.

The workers were left no choice : they had to starve or start to fight. They answered on June 22 with the tremendous insurrection in which the first great battle was joined between the two classes that split modern society. It was a fight for the preservation or annihilation of the bourgeois order. The veil that shrouded the republic was torn to pieces.

It is well known how the workers, with unexampled bravery and talent, without chiefs, without a common plan, without means and, for the most part, lacking weapons, held in check for five days the army, the Mobile Guard, the Parisian National Guard, and the National Guard that streamed in from the provinces. It is well known how the bourgeoisie compensated itself for the mortal anguish it underwent by unheard of brutality, and massacred over 3,000 prisoners. . . .

The Paris proletariat was forced into the June insurrection by the bourgeoisie. In this lay its doom. Neither its immediate admitted needs drove it to want to win the forcible overthrow of the bourgeoisie, nor was it equal to this task. The *Moniteur* had to inform it officially that the time was past when the republic saw any occasion to do honour to its illusions, and its defeat first convinced it of the truth that the slightest improvement in its position remains an Utopia within the bourgeois republic, an Utopia that becomes a crime as soon as it wants to realise it. In place of its demands, exuberant in form, but petty and even still bourgeois in content, the concession of which it wanted to wring from the February republic, there appeared the bold slogan of revolutionary struggle : Overthrow of the bourgeoisie ! Dictatorship of the working class !

By making its burial place the birth place of the bourgeois republic, the proletariat compelled the latter to come out forthwith in its pure form as the state whose admitted object is to perpetuate the rule of capital, the slavery of labour. With constant regard to the scarred, irreconcilable unconquerable enemy—unconquerable because its existence is the condition of its own life—bourgeois rule, freed from all fetters, was bound to turn immediately into bourgeois terrorism. With the proletariat removed for the time being from the stage and bourgeois dictatorship recognised officially, the middle sections, in the mass, had more and more to side with the proletariat as their position became more unbearable and their antagonism to the bourgeoisie became more acute. Just as earlier in its upsurge, so now they had to find in its defeat the cause of their misery.

If the June insurrection raised the self-reliance of the bourgeoisie all over the Continent, and caused it to league itself openly with the feudal monarchy against the people, what was the first sacrifice to this alliance ? The Continental bourgeoisie itself. The June defeat prevented it from consolidating its rule and from bringing the people, half satisfied

and half out of humour, to a standstill at the lowest stage of the bourgeois revolution.

Finally, the defeat of June divulged to the despotic powers of Europe the secret that France under all conditions must maintain peace abroad in order to be able to wage civil war at home. Thus the peoples who had begun the fight for their national independence were abandoned to the superior power of Russia, Austria and Prussia, but, at the same time, the fate of these national revolutions was subordinated to the fate of the proletarian revolution, robbed of its apparent independence, its independence of the great social revolution. The Hungarian shall not be free, nor the Pole, nor the Italian, as long as the worker remains a slave !

Finally, with the victory of the Holy Alliance, Europe took on a form that makes every fresh proletarian upheaval in France directly coincide with a world war. The new French revolution is forced to leave its national soil forthwith and conquer the European terrain, on which alone the revolution of the nineteenth century can be carried through.

Only through the defeat of June, therefore, were all the conditions created under which France can seize the initiative of the European revolution. Only after baptism in the blood of the June insurgents did the tricolour become the flag of the European revolution—the red flag.

And we cry : *The revolution is dead !—Long live the revolution !*

*Karl Marx*

## THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE

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[With the restoration of the French monarchy in December 1851, the class struggles which began in France in 1848 were temporarily ended, and Marx was enabled to sum up the experiences of the whole revolutionary period. In *The Class Struggles in France* he traced the detailed history of 1848-50; in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* he drew conclusions which form the classical theoretical analysis of the bourgeois revolution, and the part played in it by the lower middle class and the proletariat.]

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### THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE

HEGEL REMARKS somewhere that all great, historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. Caussidière for Danton, Louis Blanc for Robespierre, the Mountain of 1848 to 1851 for the Mountain of 1793 to 1795, the Nephew for the Uncle. And the same caricature occurs in the circumstances in which the second edition of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* is taking place.

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like an incubus on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in

revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language. Thus Luther donned the mask of the Apostle Paul, the Revolution of 1789-1814 draped itself alternately as the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, and the Revolution of 1848 knew of nothing better to do than to parody in turn 1789, and the revolutionary tradition of 1793 to 1795. In like manner the beginner, who has learnt a new language, always translates it back into his mother tongue, but he has assimilated the spirit of the new language and can produce freely in it only when he moves in it without calling to mind his ancestral tongue.

But closer consideration of this historical conjuring with the dead reveals at once a salient difference. Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Napoleon, the heroes, as well as the parties and the masses of the old French Revolution, performed the task of their time in Roman costume and with Roman phrases, the task of releasing and establishing modern *bourgeois* society. The first mentioned knocked the feudal basis to pieces and cut off the feudal heads which had grown from it. The other created inside France the conditions under which free competition could first be developed, the parcelled landed property exploited, the unfettered productive power of the nation employed, and outside the French borders he everywhere swept the feudal form away, so far as it was necessary to furnish bourgeois society in France with a suitable up-to-date environment on the European Continent. The new social formation once established, the antediluvian Colossuses disappeared and with them the resurrected Romans—the Brutuses, Gracchi, Publicolas, the Tribunes, the Senators and Cæsar himself. Bourgeois society in its sober reality had begotten its true interpreters

and mouthpieces in the Says, Cousins, Roler-Collards, Benjamin Constants and Guizots ; its real military leaders sat behind the office desks, and the hog-headed Louis XVIII was its political chief. Wholly absorbed in the production of wealth and in the peaceful struggle of competition, it no longer comprehended that ghosts from the days of Rome had watched over its cradle. But unheroic as bourgeois society is, yet in its birth it had need of heroism and sacrifice in the classically austere traditions of the Roman Republic ; its gladiators found the ideals and the art forms, the self-deceptions that they needed, in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles and to keep their passion at the height of the great historical tragedy. Similarly, at another stage of development, a century earlier, Cromwell and the English people had borrowed speech, passions and illusions from the Old Testament for their bourgeois revolution. When the real aim had been achieved, when the bourgeois transformation of English society had been accomplished, Locke supplanted Habakkuk.

The awakening of the dead in those revolutions therefore served the purpose of glorifying the new struggles, not of parodying the old ; of magnifying the given tasks in imagination, not of fleeing back from their solution in reality ; of finding once more the spirit of revolution, not of making its ghost walk again.

From 1848 to 1851 only the ghost of the old Revolution walked, from Marrast, the *Républicain en gants jaunes*, who disguised himself as the old Bailly, to the adventurer who hides his trivially repulsive features under the iron death mask of Napoleon. An entire people, which had imagined that by a revolution it had increased its power of action, suddenly finds itself set back into a dead epoch and, so that no doubt as to the relapse may be possible, the old calendar again appears, the old chronology, the old names, the old edicts, which have long become a subject of antiquarian erudition, and the old henchmen, who had long seemed dead and



rotting. The nation appears to itself like that mad Englishman in Bedlam, who fancies that he lives in the times of the ancient Pharaohs and daily bemoans the hard labour that he must perform in the Ethiopian mines as a gold digger, immured in this subterranean prison, a dimly burning lamp fastened to his head, the slaves' overseer behind him with a long whip, and at the exits a confused mass of barbarian mercenaries, who understand neither the forced labourers in the mines nor one another, since they have no common speech. "And all this is expected of me," groans the mad Englishman, "of me, a free-born Briton, in order to make gold for the old Pharaohs." "In order to pay the debts of the Bonaparte family," sighs the French nation. The Englishman, so long as he was in his right mind, could not get rid of the fixed idea of making gold. The French, so long as they were engaged in revolution, could not get rid of the memory of Napoleon, as the election of December 10, 1848, proved. From the perils of revolution their longings went back to the flesh-pots of Egypt, and December 2, 1851, was the answer. They have not only the caricature of the old Napoleon, they have caricatured the old Napoleon himself as he would inevitably appear in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot make a beginning until it has stripped off all superstition of the past. Earlier revolutions required world-historical recollections in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its own content, the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead. There the phrase went beyond the content; here the content goes beyond the phrase.

The February Revolution was a sudden attack, a taking of the old society by *surprise*, and the people proclaimed this unexpected *stroke* as a world-historical deed, opening the new epoch. On December 2 the February Revolution is

conjured away by a cardsharp's trick, and what seems overthrown is no longer the monarchy ; it is the liberal concessions that were wrung from it by century-long struggles. Instead of *society* having conquered a new content for itself, the *state* only appears to have returned to its oldest form, to the shamelessly open domination of the sword and the club. This is the answer to the *coup de main* of February 1848, given by the *coup de tête* of December, 1851. Easy come, easy go. Meanwhile the interval has not passed by unused. During the years 1848-1851 French society has made up, and that by an abbreviated, because revolutionary, method for the studies and experiences which, in a regular, so to speak, text-book development would have had to precede the February Revolution if it was to be more than a disturbance of the surface. Society now seems to have fallen back behind its point of departure ; it has in truth first to create for itself the revolutionary point of departure, the situation, the relationships, the conditions, under which modern revolution alone becomes serious.

Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm more swiftly from success to success ; their dramatic effects outdo each other ; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants ; ecstasy is the everyday spirit ; but they are short lived ; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long depression lays hold of society before it learns to assimilate soberly the results of its storm and stress period. Proletarian revolutions, on the other hand, like those of the nineteenth century, criticise themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to recommence it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltrinesses of their first attempts, seem to throw down their adversary only in order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again more gigantic before them, recoil ever and anon from the infinite immensity of their own aims, until the situation

has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out :

Hic Rhodus, hic salta !

The first period from February 24, or the overthrow of Louis Philippe, to May 4, 1848, the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the February period proper, may be described as the *prologue* of the Revolution. Its character was officially expressed in the fact that the government improvised by it declared itself to be *provisional* and, like the government, everything that was instigated, attempted or enunciated during this period, proclaimed itself to be *provisional*. Nothing and nobody ventured to claim for themselves the right of existence and of real action. All the elements that had prepared or determined the Revolution, the dynastic opposition, the republican bourgeoisie, the democratic-republican petty bourgeoisie and the social-democratic workers, provisionally found their place in the February government.

It could not be otherwise. The February days originally intended an electoral reform, by which the circle of the politically privileged among the possessing class itself was to be widened and the exclusive domination of the aristocracy of finance overthrown. When it came to the actual conflict, however, when the people mounted the barricades, the National Guard maintained a passive attitude, the army offered no serious resistance and the monarchy ran away, the republic appeared to be a matter of course. Every party construed it in its own sense. Having been won by the proletariat by force of arms, the proletariat impressed its stamp on it and proclaimed it to be a *social republic*. There was thus indicated the general content of modern revolution, which stood in most singular contradiction to everything that, with the material at hand, with the degree of education attained by the masses, under the given

circumstances and relationships, could be immediately realised in practice. On the other hand, the claims of all the remaining elements that had participated in the February Revolution were recognised by the lion's share that they obtained in the government. In no period do we therefore find a more confused mixture of high-flown phrases and actual uncertainty and clumsiness, of more enthusiastic striving for innovation and more deeply rooted domination of the old routine, of more apparent harmony of the whole society and more profound estrangement of its elements. While the Paris proletariat still revelled in the vision of the wide prospects that had opened before it and indulged in seriously meant discussions on social problems, the old powers of society had grouped themselves, assembled, deliberated and found an unexpected support in the mass of the nation, the peasants and petty bourgeois, who all at once stormed on to the political stage, after the barriers of the July monarchy had fallen.

The *second period*, from May 4, 1848, to the end of May 1849, is the period of the *Constitution*, the *foundation of the bourgeois republic*. Directly after the February days the dynastic opposition had not only been surprised by the republicans, the republicans by the socialists, but all France had been surprised by Paris. The National Assembly, which had met on May 4, 1848, having emerged from the national elections, represented the nation. It was a living protest against the presumptuous aspirations of the February days and was to reduce the results of the Revolution to the bourgeois scale. In vain the Paris proletariat, which immediately grasped the character of this National Assembly, attempted on May 15, a few days after it met, forcibly to deny its existence, to dissolve it, to disintegrate once more into its constituent parts the organic form in which the proletariat was threatened by the reactionary spirit of the nation. As is known, May 15 had no other result save that of removing Blanqui and his comrades.

that is, the real leaders of the proletarian party, the revolutionary communists, from the public stage for the entire duration of the cycle we are considering.

The *bourgeois monarchy* of Louis Philippe can only be followed by the bourgeois republic, that is, if a limited section of the bourgeoisie formerly ruled in the name of the king, the whole of the bourgeoisie will now rule in the name of the people. The demands of the Paris proletariat are Utopian nonsense of which an end must be made. To this declaration of the Constituent National Assembly the Paris proletariat replied with the *June Insurrection*, the most colossal event in the history of European civil wars. The bourgeois republic triumphed. On its side stood the aristocracy of finance, the industrial bourgeoisie, the middle class, the petty bourgeois, the army, the *lumpenproletariat* organised as the Mobile Guard, the intellectual lights, the clergy, and the rural population. On the side of the Paris proletariat stood none but itself. More than three thousand insurgents were butchered after the victory, and fifteen thousand were transported without trial. With this defeat the proletariat passes into the background of the revolutionary stage. It attempts to press forward again on every occasion, as soon as the movement appears to make a fresh start, but with ever decreased expenditure of strength and always more insignificant results. As soon as one of the social strata situated above it gets into revolutionary ferment, it enters into an alliance with it and so shares all the defeats that the different parties suffer one after another. But these subsequent blows become steadily weaker the more they are distributed over the entire surface of society. Its more important leaders in the Assembly and the Press successively fall victims to the courts, and ever more equivocal figures come to the fore. In part it throws itself into *doctrinaire experiments, exchange banks and workers' associations, hence into a movement in which it renounces the revolutionising of the old world by means of its own great, combined resources, and seeks, rather, to achieve its salvation behind society's back,*

*in private fashion, within its limited conditions of existence, and hence inevitably suffers shipwreck.* It seems to be unable either to rediscover revolutionary greatness in itself or to win new energy from the alliances newly entered into, until *all classes* with which it contended in June themselves lie prostrate beside it. But at least it succumbs with the honour of the great, world-historical struggle ; not only France, but all Europe trembles at the June earthquake, while the ensuing defeats of the upper classes are so cheaply bought that they require bare-faced exaggeration by the victorious party to be able to pass for events at all and become the more ignominious the further the defeated party is removed from the proletariat.

The defeat of the June insurgents, to be sure, had now prepared and levelled the ground on which the bourgeois republic could be founded and built up, but it had shown at the same time that in Europe there are other questions involved than that of "republic or monarchy." It had revealed that here *bourgeois republic* signifies the unlimited despotism of one class over other classes. It had proved that in lands with an old civilisation, with a developed formation of classes, with modern conditions of production and with an intellectual consciousness into which all traditional ideas had been dissolved by centuries of effort, *the republic* signifies *in general only the political form of the revolution of bourgeois society* and not its *conservative form of life*, as, for example, in the United States of North America, where, though classes, indeed, already exist, they have not yet become fixed, but continually change and interchange their elements in a constant state of flux, where the modern means of production, instead of coinciding with a stagnant surplus population, rather supply the relative deficiency of heads and hands and where, finally, the feverishly youthful movement of material production, that has a new world to make its own, has allowed neither time nor opportunity to abolish the old spirit world.

During the June days all classes and parties had united

in the *party of order* against the proletarian class, as the *party of anarchy*, of socialism, of communism. They had "saved" society from "the enemies of society." They had given out the watchwords of the old society, "*property, family, religion, order*," to their army as passwords and proclaimed to the counter-revolutionary crusaders: "In this sign you will conquer!" From that moment as soon as one of the numerous parties which had gathered under this sign against the June insurgents seeks to hold the revolutionary battlefield in its own class interests, it goes down before the cry: "Property, family, religion, order." Society is saved just as often as the circle of its rulers contracts, as a more exclusive interest is maintained against a wider one. Every demand of the simplest bourgeois financial reform, of the most ordinary liberalism, of the most formal republicanism, of the most insipid democracy, is simultaneously castigated as an "attempt on society" and stigmatised as "socialism." And, finally, the high priests of "religion and order" themselves are driven with kicks from their Pythian tripods, hauled out of their beds in the darkness of night, stuck in prison-vans, thrown into dungeons or sent into exile; their temple is razed to the ground, their mouths are sealed, their pens broken, their law torn to pieces in the name of religion, of property, of family, of order. Bourgeois fanatics for order are shot down on their balconies by mobs of drunken soldiers, their domestic sanctuaries profaned, their houses bombarded for amusement—in the name of property, of family, of religion and of order. Finally the scum of bourgeois society forms the *holy phalanx of order* and the hero Crapulinsky installs himself in the Tuileries as the "*saviour of society*." . . .

Legitimists and Orleanists, as we have said, formed the two great sections of the Party of Order. Was that which held these sections fast to their pretenders and kept them apart from one another, nothing but lily and tricolour, house of Bourbon and house of Orleans, different shades of royalty, was it the confession of faith in royalty at all?

Under the Bourbons, large landed property had governed with its priests and lackeys ; under the Orleans, high finance, large-scale industry, wholesale trade, that is, *capital*, governed with its retinue of advocates, professors and orators. The Legitimate Monarchy was merely the political expression of the hereditary rule of the lords of the soil, as the July Monarchy was only the political expression of the usurping rule of the bourgeois *parvenus*. What kept the two sections apart, therefore, was not any so-called principles, it was their material conditions of existence, two different kinds of property, it was the old antagonism of town and country, the rivalry between capital and landed property. That at the same time old memories, personal enmities, fears and hopes, prejudices and illusions, sympathies and antipathies, convictions, articles of faith and principles bound them to one or the other royal house, who is there that denies this ? Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence rises an entire superstructure of distinct and characteristically formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations. The single individual who derives them through tradition and education may imagine that they form the real motives and the starting-point of his action. If Orleanists and Legitimists, if each section sought to make itself and the other believe that loyalty to their two royal houses separated them, it later proved to be the case that it was rather their divided interests which forbade the uniting of the two royal houses. And as in private life one distinguishes between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, still more in historical struggles must one distinguish the phrases and fancies of the parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from their reality. Orleanists and Legitimists found themselves side by side in the republic with equal claims. If each side wished to effect the *restoration of its own*



royal house against the other, that merely signifies that the two great interests into which the *bourgeoisie* is split—landed property and capital—sought each to restore its own supremacy and the subordination of the other. We speak of two interests of the bourgeoisie, for large landed property, despite its feudal coquetry and pride of race, has been rendered thoroughly bourgeois by the development of modern society. Thus the Tories in England long imagined that they were enthusiastic about the monarchy, the church and the beauties of the old English Constitution, until the day of danger wrung from them the confession that they are only enthusiastic about *ground rent*. . . .

Against this coalition of the bourgeoisie, a coalition between petty bourgeois and workers had been formed, the so-called *Social-Democratic* Party. The petty bourgeoisie saw that they were badly rewarded after the June days of 1848, their material interests imperilled and the democratic guarantees which were to secure the assertion of these interests endangered by the counter-revolution. Accordingly, they came closer to the workers. On the other hand, their parliamentary representation, the Mountain, thrust aside during the dictatorship of the bourgeois republicans, had, in the last half of the life of the Constituent Assembly, reconquered its lost popularity through the struggle with Bonaparte and the royalist ministers. It had concluded an alliance with the socialist leaders. In February 1849, banquets celebrated the reconciliation. A joint programme was drafted, joint election committees were set up and joint candidates put forward. From the social demands of the proletariat the revolutionary point was broken off and a democratic turn given to them; from the democratic claims of the petty bourgeoisie the purely political form was stripped off and their socialist point thrust forward. Thus arose *Social-Democracy*. The new *Mountain*, the result of this combination, apart from some supernumeraries from the working class and some socialist sectarians, contained the

same elements as the old Mountain, only numerically stronger. But in the course of development it had changed with the class that it represented. The peculiar character of Social-Democracy is epitomised in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded not as a means of doing away with both the extremes, capital and wage-labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty bourgeoisie. Only, one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the petty bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest. Rather, it believes that the *special* conditions of its emancipation are the *general* conditions under which modern society can alone be saved and the class struggle avoided. Just as little must one imagine that the democratic representatives are all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers. According to their education and their individual position they may be separated from them as widely as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not go beyond the limits which the latter do not go beyond in life, that they are consequently driven theoretically to the same tasks and solutions to which material interest and social position practically drive the latter. This is, in general, the relationship of the *political and literary representatives* of a class to the class that they represent. . . .

But the revolutionary threats of the petty bourgeois and their democratic representatives are mere attempts to intimidate the antagonist. And when they have run into a blind alley, when they have sufficiently compromised themselves to make it necessary to give effect to their threats, then this happens in an ambiguous fashion that avoids

nothing so much as the means to the end and tries to find an excuse for defeat. The blaring overture that announced the struggle dies away in a dejected snarl ; as soon as it is to begin, the actors cease to take themselves *au sérieux*, and the action collapses completely, like a pricked balloon.

No party exaggerates its powers more than the democrats, none deludes itself more irresponsibly over the situation. When a section of the army had voted for it, the Mountain was now convinced that the army would revolt for it. And on what grounds ? On grounds which, from the standpoint of the troops, had no other meaning than that the revolutionaries took the side of the Roman soldiers against the French soldiers. On the other hand, the recollections of June, 1848, were still too fresh to allow of anything but a profound aversion on the part of the proletariat against the National Guard and a thorough-going mistrust of the democratic chiefs on the part of the leaders of the secret societies. To adjust these differences, it was necessary for great common interests to be at stake. The violation of an abstract paragraph of the Constitution could not provide these interests. Had not the Constitution been repeatedly violated, according to the assurance of the democrats themselves ? Had not the most popular journals branded it as counter-revolutionary botch-work ? But the democrat, because he represents the petty bourgeoisie, therefore a *transition class*, in which interests of two classes simultaneously lose their point, imagines himself elevated above class antagonism generally. The democrats concede that a privileged class confronts them, but they, along with all the rest of the surrounding nation, form the *people*. What they represent are the *people's rights* ; what interests them are the *people's interests*. Accordingly, when a struggle is impending, they do not need to examine the interests and positions of the different classes. They do not need to consider their own resources too critically. They have merely to give the signal and the people, with all its inexhaustible resources, will fall

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upon the *oppressors*. If in the performance their interests now prove to be uninteresting and their power to be impotence, then the fault lies either with pernicious sophists who split the *indivisible people* into different hostile camps, or the army was too brutalised and blinded to apprehend the pure aims of democracy as best for itself, or the whole thing has been wrecked by a detail in its execution, or else an unforeseen accident has for this time spoilt the game. In any case, the democrat comes out of the most disgraceful defeat just as immaculate as he went into it innocent, with the new-won conviction that he is bound to conquer, not that he himself and his party have to give up the old standpoint, but, on the contrary, that conditions have to ripen in his direction. . . .

But the revolution is thoroughgoing. It is still in process of passing through purgatory. It does its work methodically. By December 2, 1851, it had completed one half of its preparatory work ; it is now completing the other half. First it perfected the parliamentary power, in order to be able to overthrow it. Now that it has attained this, it perfects the *executive power*, reduces it to its purest expression, isolates it, sets it up against itself as the sole object, in order to concentrate all its forces of destruction against it. And when it has done its second half of its preliminary work, Europe will leap from her seat and exultantly exclaim : " Well grubbed, old mole ! "

This executive power with its monstrous bureaucratic and military organisation, with its artificial state machinery embracing wide strata, with a host of officials numbering half a million, besides an army of another half million, this appalling parasitic growth, which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten. The scignorial privileges of the landowners and towns became transformed into so many attributes of the state power, the feudal dignitaries into paid officials and the motley pattern

of conflicting mediæval plenary powers into the regulated plan of a state authority, whose work is divided and centralised as in a factory. The first French Revolution, with its task of breaking all local, territorial, urban and provincial independent powers in order to create the bourgeois unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the absolute monarchy had begun—centralisation, but at the same time the extent, the attributes and the agents of governmental authority. Napoleon perfected this state machinery. The Legitimist monarchy and the July monarchy added nothing but a greater division of labour, growing in the same measure that the division of labour within bourgeois society created new groups of interests, and, therefore, new material for state administration. Every common interest was straightway severed from society, counterposed to it as a higher, *general* interest, snatched from the self-activity of society's members and made an object of governmental activity from the bridge, the school-house and the communal property of a village community to the railways, the national wealth and the national university of France. The parliamentary republic, finally, in its struggle against the revolution, found itself compelled to strengthen, along with the repressive measures, the resources and centralisation of governmental power. All the revolutions perfected this machine instead of smashing it up. The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor.

But under the absolute monarchy, during the first Revolution, and under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe and under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of the ruling class, however much it strove for power of its own. . . .

*Friedrich Engels*

## GERMANY: REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

*First published in 1851 and 1852, as a series of articles in the New York "Daily Tribune." Published in book form, with other writings of Engels referring to the same period, by Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1933.*

[These articles, describing and analysing the 1848-9 revolutions in Central Europe, were written by Engels and edited by Marx, in whose name they were printed. The combined analysis of the military and political events of the period is characteristic of Engels; the distinction between the classes and sections of classes involved in the revolution is clearly brought out and related to the actual course of events. Only one brief passage, from the article dated London, August 1852, is given below: it is the classical statement of the principles of insurrection, and was used by Lenin in his letters from Finland to the Bolsheviks in Petersburg just before the November revolution of 1917.]

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## GERMANY: REVOLUTION AND COUNTER- REVOLUTION

. . . Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. Those rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances one has to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the short experience of 1848 had made the Germans pretty well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play.

Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes the value of which may change every day ; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organisation, discipline, and habitual authority ; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising ; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily ; keep up the moral ascendancy which the first successful rising has given to you ; rally those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse, and which always look out for the safer side ; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you ; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known, *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace ! . . .*

Karl Marx

## THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

*Three Addresses of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association, drafted by Marx, and dated July 23, 1870, September 9, 1870, and May 30, 1871. English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1933.*

[Marx was one of the Corresponding Secretaries of the International Working Men's Association—the "First International," founded in 1864. In the course of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1 he drafted statements on the war and the Paris Commune, which were adopted by the General Council of the Association and issued to its

members in Europe and the United States. The Address dated May 30, 1871—two days after the last forces of the Paris Commune had been overpowered—is not only a record of events but an analysis of the Paris Commune itself—showing its place in history, the features which distinguished it from all previous revolutions, the reasons for its ultimate defeat. The most essential passages are given below.]

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## THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

*To All The Members of the Association in Europe and  
in the United States*

ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1870, when the working men of Paris proclaimed the Republic, which was almost instantaneously acclaimed throughout France, without a single voice of dissent, a cabal of place-hunting barristers, with Thiers for their statesman and Trochu for their general, took hold of the Hôtel de Ville. At that time they were imbued with so fanatical a faith in the mission of Paris to represent France in all epochs of historical crisis, that, to legitimatise their usurped titles as Governors of France, they thought it quite sufficient to produce their lapsed mandates as representatives of Paris. In our second address on the late war, five days after the rise of these men, we told you who they were. Yet, in the turmoil of surprise, with the real leaders of the working class still shut up in Bonapartist prisons and the Prussians already marching upon Paris, Paris bore with their assumption of power, on the express condition that it was to be wielded for the single purpose of national defence. Paris, however, was not to be defended without arming its working class, organising them into an effective force, and training their ranks by the war



itself. But Paris armed was the Revolution armed. A victory of Paris over the Prussian aggressor would have been a victory of the French workman over the French capitalist and his State parasites. In this conflict between national duty and class interest, the Government of National Defence did not hesitate one moment to turn into a Government of National Defection.

The first step they took was to send Thiers on a roving tour to all the Courts of Europe there to beg mediation by offering the barter of the Republic for a king. Four months after the commencement of the siege, when they thought the opportune moment come for breaking the first word of capitulation, Trochu, in the presence of Jules Favre and others of his colleagues, addressed the assembled mayors of Paris in these terms :

"The first question put to me by my colleagues on the very evening of September 4 was this : Paris, can it, with any chance of success stand a siege by the Prussian army ? I did not hesitate to answer in the negative. Some of my colleagues here present will warrant the truth of my words and the persistence of my opinion. I told them, in these very terms, that, under the existing state of things, the attempt of Paris to hold out a siege by the Prussian army would be a folly. Without doubt, I added, it would be an heroic folly ; but that would be all. . . . The events (managed by himself) have not given the lie to my prevision." This nice little speech of Trochu was afterwards published by M. Corbon, one of the mayors present.

Thus, on the very evening of the proclamation of the Republic, Trochu's "plan" was known to his colleagues to be the capitulation of Paris. If national defence had been more than a pretext for the personal government of Thiers, Favre and Co., the upstarts of September 4 would have abdicated on the 5th—would have initiated the Paris people into Trochu's "plan," and called upon them to surrender at once, or to take their own fate into their own hands. Instead of this, the infamous impostors resolved

upon curing the heroic folly of Paris by a regimen of famine and broken heads, and to dupe her in the meanwhile by ranting manifestoes, holding forth that Trochu, "the Governor of Paris, will never capitulate," and Jules Favre, the Foreign Minister, will "not cede an inch of our territory, nor a stone of our fortresses." In a letter to Gambetta, that very same Jules Favre avows that what they were "defending" against were not the Prussian soldiers, but the working men of Paris. During the whole continuance of the siege the Bonapartist cut-throats, whom Trochu had wisely intrusted with the command of the Paris army, exchanged, in their intimate correspondence, ribald jokes at the well-understood mockery of defence (see, for instance, the correspondence of Alphonse Simon Guiod, supreme commander of the artillery of the Army of Defence of Paris and Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, to Suzanne, general of division of artillery, a correspondence published by the *Journal officiel* of the Commune). The mask of imposture was at last dropped on January 28 1871. With the true heroism of utter self-debasement, the Government of National Defence, in their capitulation, came out as the Government of France by Bismarck's permission—a part so base that Louis Bonaparte himself had, at Sedan, shrunk from accepting it. After the events of March 18, on their wild flight to Versailles, the *capitulards* left in the hands of Paris the documentary evidence of their treason, to destroy which, as the Commune says in its manifesto to the provinces, "those men would not recoil from a sea of blood." . . .

The capitulation of Paris, by surrendering to Prussia, not only Paris, but all France, closed the long-continued intrigues or treason with the enemy, which the usurpers of September 4 began, as Trochu himself said, on that very same day. On the other hand, it initiated the civil war they were now to wage with the assistance of Prussia, against the Republic and Paris. The trap was laid in the very terms of the capitulation. At that time above one-third

of the territory was in the hands of the enemy, the capital was cut off from the provinces, all communications were disorganised. To elect under such circumstances a real representation of France was impossible unless ample time were given for preparation. In view of this the capitulation stipulated that a National Assembly must be elected within eight days ; so that in many parts of France the news of the impending election arrived on its eve only. This assembly, moreover, was, by an express clause of the capitulation, to be elected for the sole purpose of deciding on peace or war, and, eventually, to conclude a treaty of peace. The population could not but feel that the terms of the armistice rendered the continuation of the war impossible, and that for sanctioning the peace imposed by Bismarck, the worst men in France were the best. But not content with these precautions, Thiers, even before the secret of the armistice had been broached to Paris, set out for an electioneering tour through the provinces, there to galvanise back into life the Legitimist party, which now, along with the Orleanists, had to take the place of the then impossible Bonapartists. He was not afraid of them. Impossible as a government of modern France, and therefore, contemptible as rivals, what party were more eligible as tools of counter-revolution than the party whose action, in the words of Thiers himself (Chamber of Deputies, January 5, 1833), "had always been confined to the three resources of foreign invasion, civil war, and anarchy" ? They verily believed in the advent of their long-expected retrospective millennium. There were the heels of foreign invasion trampling upon France ; there was the downfall of an Empire, and the captivity of a Bonaparte ; and there they were themselves. The wheel of history has evidently rolled back to stop at the "Chambre introuvable" of 1816. In the assemblies of the Republic, 1848-51, they had been represented by their educated and trained Parliamentary champions ; it was the rank-and-file of the party which now rushed in—all the Pourceaugnacs of France.

As soon as this assembly of "Rurals" had met at Bordeaux, Thiers made it clear to them that the peace preliminaries must be assented to at once, without even the honours of a Parliamentary debate, as the only condition on which Prussia would permit them to open the war against the Republic and Paris, its stronghold. The counter-revolution had, in fact, no time to lose. The Second Empire had more than doubled the national debt, and plunged all the large towns into heavy municipal debts. The war had fearfully swelled the liabilities, and mercilessly ravaged the resources of the nation. To complete the ruin, the Prussian Shylock was there with his bond for the keep of half a million of his soldiers on French soil, his indemnity of five milliards and interest at 5 per cent on the unpaid instalments thereof. Who was to pay the bill? It was only by the violent overthrow of the Republic that the appropriators of wealth could hope to shift on to the shoulders of its producers the cost of a war which they, the appropriators, had themselves originated. Thus, the immense ruin of France spurred on these patriotic representatives of land and capital, under the very eyes and patronage of the invader, to graft upon the foreign war a civil war—a slave-holders' rebellion. . . .

Armed Paris was the only serious obstacle in the way of counter-revolutionary conspiracy. Paris was, therefore, to be disarmed. On this point the Bordeaux Assembly was sincerity itself. If the roaring rant of its Rurals had not been audible enough, the surrender of Paris by Thiers to the tender mercies of the triumvirate of Vinoy the *Démocrate*, Valentin the Bonapartist *gendarme*, and Aurelles de Paladine the Jesuit general, would have cut off even the last subterfuge of doubt. But while insultingly exhibiting the true purpose of the disarmament of Paris, the conspirators asked her to lay down her arms on a pretext which was the most glaring, the most barefaced of lies. The artillery of the Paris National Guard, said Thiers, belonged to the State, and to the State it must be returned. The fact

is this : From the very day of the capitulation, by which Bismarck's prisoners had signed the surrender of France, but reserved to themselves a numerous bodyguard for the express purpose of cowing Paris, Paris stood on the watch. The National Guard reorganised themselves and intrusted their supreme control to a Central Committee elected by their whole body, save some fragments of the old Bonapartist formation. On the eve of the entrance of the Prussians into Paris, the Central Committee took measures for the removal to Montmartre, Belleville, and La Villette of the cannon and mitrailleuses treacherously abandoned by the *capitulards* in and about the very quarters the Prussians were to occupy. That artillery had been furnished by the subscriptions of the National Guard. As their private property, it was officially recognised in the capitulation of January 28, and on that very title exempted from the general surrender, into the hands of the conqueror, of arms belonging to the Government. And Thiers was so utterly destitute of even the flimsiest pretext for initiating the war against Paris, that he had to resort to the flagrant lie of the artillery of the National Guard being State property !

The seizure of her artillery was evidently but to serve as the preliminary to the general disarmament of Paris, and, therefore, of the Revolution of the 4th September. But that Revolution had become the legal status of France. The Republic, its work, was recognised by the conqueror in the terms of the capitulation. After the capitulation, it was acknowledged by all the foreign Powers, and in its name the National Assembly had been summoned. The Paris working-men's revolution of September 4 was the only legal title of the National Assembly seated at Bordeaux, and of its executive. Without it, the National Assembly would at once have to give way to the Corps Legislatif, elected in 1869 by universal suffrage under French, not under Prussian, rule, and forcibly dispersed by the arm of the Revolution. Thiers and his ticket-of-leave men would have had to capitulate for safe conducts signed by Louis Bonaparte,

to save them from a voyage to Cayenne. The National Assembly, with its power of attorney to settle the terms of peace with Prussia, was but an incident of that Revolution, the true embodiment of which was still armed Paris, which had initiated it, undergone for it a five-months' siege, with its horrors of famine, and made her prolonged resistance, despite Trochu's plan, the basis of an obstinate war of defence in the provinces. And Paris was now either to lay down her arms at the insulting behest of the rebellious slaveholders of Bordeaux, and acknowledge that her Revolution of September 4 meant nothing but a simple transfer of power from Louis Bonaparte to his Royal rivals ; or she had to stand forward as the self-sacrificing champion of France, whose salvation from ruin, and whose regeneration were impossible, without the revolutionary overthrow of the political and social conditions that had engendered the second Empire, and, under its fostering care, matured into utter rottenness. Paris, emaciated by a five-months' famine, did not hesitate one moment. She heroically resolved to run all the hazards of a resistance against the French conspirators, even with Prussian cannon frowning upon her from her own forts. Still, in its abhorrence of the civil war into which Paris was to be goaded, the Central Committee continued to persist in a merely defensive attitude, despite the provocations of the Assembly, the usurpations of the Executive, and the menacing concentration of troops in and around Paris.

Thiers opened the civil war by sending Vinoy, at the head of a multitude of *sergents-de-ville* and some regiments of the line, upon a nocturnal expedition against Montmartre, there to seize, by surprise, the artillery of the National Guard. It is well known how this attempt broke down before the resistance of the National Guard and the fraternisation of the line with the people. Aurelles de Paladine had printed beforehand his bulletin of victory, and Thiers held ready the placards announcing his measures of *coup d'état*. Now these had to be replaced by Thiers's appeals,

imparting his magnanimous resolve to leave the National Guard in the possession of their arms, with which, he said, he felt sure they would rally round the Government against the rebels. Out of 300,000 National Guards only 300 responded to this summons to rally round little Thiers against themselves. The glorious working-men's Revolution of March 18 took undisputed sway of Paris. The Central Committee was its provisional Government. Europe seemed, for a moment, to doubt whether its recent sensational performances of state and war had any reality in them or whether they were the dreams of a long bygone past. . . .

On the dawn of the 18th of March, Paris arose to the thunderburst of "Vive la Commune!" What is the Commune, that sphinx so tantalising to the bourgeois mind?

"The proletarians of Paris," said the Central Committee in its manifesto of the 18th March, "amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs. . . . They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power." But the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.

The centralised State power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature—organs wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labour—originates from the days of absolute monarchy, serving nascent middle-class society as a mighty weapon in its struggles against feudalism. Still, its development remained clogged by all manner of mediæval rubbish, seignorial rights, local privileges, municipal and guild monopolies and provincial constitutions. The gigantic broom of the French Revolution of the eighteenth century swept away all these relics of bygone times, thus clearing simultaneously the social soil of its last hindrances to the

superstructure of the modern State edifice raised under the First Empire, itself the offspring of the coalition wars of old semi-feudal Europe against modern France. During the subsequent *régimes* the Government, placed under parliamentary control—that is, under the direct control of the propertied classes—became not only a hotbed of huge national debts and crushing taxes; with its irresistible allurements of place, pelf, and patronage, it became not only the bone of contention between the rival factions and adventurers of the ruling classes; but its political character changed simultaneously with the economic changes of society. At the same pace at which the progress of modern industry developed, widened, intensified the class antagonism between capital and labour, the State power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a public force organised for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism. After every revolution marking a progressive phase in the class struggle, the purely repressive character of the State power stands out in bolder and bolder relief. The revolution of 1830, resulting in the transfer of Government from the landlords to the capitalists transferred it from the more remote to the more direct antagonists of the working men. The bourgeois Republicans, who in the name of the Revolution of February, took the State power, used it for the June massacres, in order to convince the working class that “social” republic meant the republic ensuring their social subjection, and in order to convince the royalist bulk of the bourgeois and landlord class that they might safely leave the cares and emoluments of government to the bourgeois “Republicans.” However, after their one heroic exploit of June, the bourgeois Republicans had, from the front, to fall back to the rear of the “Party-of-Order”—a combination formed by all the rival fractions and factions of the appropriating class in their now openly declared antagonism to the producing classes. The proper form of their joint stock Government was the *Parliamentary Republic*.



with Louis Bonaparte for its President. Theirs was a *régime* of avowed class terrorism and deliberate insult towards the "vile multitude." If the Parliamentary Republic, as M. Thiers said, "divided them (the different fractions of the ruling class) least," it opened an abyss between that class and the whole body of society outside their spare ranks. The restraints by which their own divisions had under former *régimes* still checked the State power were removed by their union ; and in view of the threatening upheaval of the proletariat, they now used that State power mercilessly and ostentatiously as the national war engine of capital against labour. In their uninterrupted crusade against the producing masses they were, however, bound not only to invest the executive with continually increased powers of repression, but at the same time to divest their own parliamentary stronghold—the National Assembly—one by one, of all its own means of defence against the Executive. The Executive, in the person of Louis Bonaparte, turned them out. The natural offspring of the "Party-of-Order" Republic was the Second Empire.

The Empire, with the *coup d'état* for its certificate of birth, universal suffrage for its sanction, and the sword for its sceptre, professed to rest upon the peasantry, the large mass of producers not directly involved in the struggle of capital and labour. It professed to save the working class by breaking down Parliamentarism, and, with it, the undisguised subserviency of Government to the propertied classes. It professed to save the propertied classes by upholding their economic supremacy over the working class ; and, finally, it professed to unite all classes by reviving for all the chimera of national glory. In reality, it was the only form of government possible at a time when the bourgeoisie had already lost, and the working class had not yet required the faculty of ruling the nation. It was acclaimed throughout the world as the saviour of society. Under its sway, bourgeois society, freed from political cares, attained a development unexpected even by itself. Its industry and commerce expanded

to colossal dimensions ; financial swindling celebrated cosmopolitan orgies ; the misery of the masses was set off by a shameless display of gorgeous, meretricious, and debased luxury. The State power, apparently soaring high above society, was at the same time itself the greatest scandal of that society and the very hotbed of all its corruptions. Its own rottenness and the rottenness of the society it had saved, were laid bare by the bayonet of Prussia, herself eagerly bent upon transferring the supreme seat of that régime from Paris to Berlin. Imperialism is, at the same time, the most prostitute and the ultimate form of the State power which nascent middle-class society had commenced to elaborate as a means of its own emancipation from feudalism, and which full-grown bourgeois society had finally transformed into a means for the enslavement of labour by capital.

The direct antithesis to the Empire was the Commune. The cry of "Social Republic," with which the revolution of February was ushered in by the Paris proletariat, did but express a vague aspiration after a Republic that was not only to supersede the monarchical form of class-rule, but class-rule itself. The Commune was the positive form of that Republic.

Paris, the central seat of the old governmental power, and, at the same time, the social stronghold of the French working class, had risen in arms against the attempt of Thiers and the Rurals to restore and perpetuate that old governmental power bequeathed to them by the Empire. Paris could resist only because, in consequence of the siege, it had got rid of the army, and replaced it by a National Guard, the bulk of which consisted of working men. This fact was now to be transformed into an institution. The first decree of the Commune, therefore, was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people.

The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in various wards of the town,

responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the Administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of State disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the Central Government. Not only municipal administration, but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the State was laid into the hands of the Commune.

Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old Government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parson-power," by the disestablishment and disendowment of all churches as proprietary bodies. The priests were sent back to the recess of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the Apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of Church and State. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.

The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence which had but served to mask their abject subserviency to all succeeding governments, to which in turn they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable.

The Paris Commune was, of course, to serve as a model to all the great industrial centres of France. The communal régime once established in Paris and the secondary centres, the old centralised Government would in the provinces, too, have to give way to the self-government of the producers. In a rough sketch of national organisation which the Commune had no time to develop, it states clearly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service. The rural communes of every district were to administer their common affairs by an assembly of delegates in the central town, and these district assemblies were again to send deputies to the National Delegation in Paris, each delegate to be at any time revocable and bound by the *mandat impératif* (formal instructions) of his constituents. The few but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated, but were to be discharged by Communal and, therefore, strictly responsible agents. The unity of the nation was not to be broken ; but, on the contrary, to be organised by the Communal constitution, and to become a reality by the destruction of the State power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society. Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business. And it is well known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business

generally know how to put the right man in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly. On the other hand, nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture.

It is generally the fate of completely new historical creations to be mistaken for the counterpart of older and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks the modern State power, has been mistaken for a reproduction of the mediæval Communes, which first preceded, and afterwards became the substratum of, that very State power. The communal constitution has been mistaken for an attempt to break up into a federation of small States, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins, that unity of great nations which, if originally brought about by political force, has now become a powerful coefficient of social production. The antagonism of the Commune against the State power has been mistaken for an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against over-centralisation. Peculiar historical circumstances may have prevented the classical development, as in France, of the bourgeois form of government, and may have allowed, as in England, completion of the great central State organs by corrupt vestries, jobbing councillors, ferocious poor-law guardians in the towns, and virtually hereditary magistrates in the counties. The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the State parasite feeding upon, and clogging the free movement of, society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France. The provincial French middle-class saw in the Commune an attempt to restore the sway their order had held over the country under Louis Philippe, and which, under Louis Napoleon, was supplanted by the pretended rule of the country over the towns. In reality, the Communal Constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and

there secured to them, in the working man, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local municipal liberty, but no longer as a check upon the now superseded State power. It could only enter into the head of a Bismarck, who, when not engaged on his intrigues of blood and iron, always likes to resume his old trade, so befitting his mental calibre, of contributor to *Kladderadatsch* (the Berlin *Punch*), it could only enter in such a head, to ascribe to the Paris Commune aspirations after the caricature of the old French municipal organisation of 1791, the Prussian municipal constitution which degrades the town governments to mere secondary wheels in the police machinery of the Prussian State. The Commune made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure—the standing army and State functionarism. Its very existence presupposed the non-existence of monarchy, which, in Europe at least, is the normal incumbrance and indispensable cloak of class-rule. It supplied the Republic with the basis of really democratic institutions. But neither cheap government nor the “true Republic” was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants.

The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which construed it in their favour, show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive. Its true secret was this. It was essentially a working-class government, the produce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of Labour.

Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion. The political rule of the producer cannot co-exist with the perpetuation of his social slavery. The Commune was,

therefore, to serve as a lever for uprooting the economical foundations upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class-rule. With labour emancipated, every man becomes a working man, and productive labour ceases to be a class attribute.

It is a strange fact. In spite of all the tall talk and all the immense literature, for the last sixty years, about Emancipation of Labour, no sooner do the working men anywhere take the subject into their own hands with a will, than uprises at once all the apologetic phraseology of the mouth-pieces of present society with its two poles of Capital and Wage-slavery (the landlord now is but the sleeping partner of the capitalist), as if capitalist society was still in its purest state of virgin innocence, with its antagonisms still undeveloped, with its delusions still unexploded, with its prostitute realities not yet laid bare. The Commune, they exclaim, intends to abolish property, the basis of all civilisation ! Yes, gentlemen, the Commune intended to abolish that class-property which makes the labour of the many the wealth of the few. It aimed at the expropriation of the expropriators. It wanted to make individual property a truth by transforming the means of production, land and capital, now chiefly the means of enslaving and exploiting labour, into mere instruments of free and associated labour. But this is Communism, "impossible" Communism ! Why, those members of the ruling classes who are intelligent enough to perceive the impossibility of continuing the present system—and they are many—have become the obtrusive and full-mouthed apostles of co-operative production. If co-operative production is not to remain a sham and a snare ; if it is to supersede the Capitalist system ; if united co-operative societies are to regulate national production upon a common plan, thus taking it under their own control, and putting an end to the constant anarchy and periodical convulsions which are the fatality of capitalist production—what else, gentlemen, would it be but Communism, "possible" Communism ?

The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made Utopias to introduce *par décret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending, by its own economical agencies they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realise, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant. In the full consciousness of their historic mission, and with the heroic resolve to act up to it, the working class can afford to smile at the coarse invective of the gentlemen's gentlemen with the pen and inkhorn, and at the didactic patronage of well-wishing bourgeois-doctrinaires, pouring forth their ignorant platitudes and sectarian crotchets in the oracular tone of scientific infallibility.

When the Paris Commune took the management of the revolution in its own hands ; when plain working men for the first time dared to infringe upon the Governmental privilege of their " natural superiors," and, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, performed their work modestly, conscientiously, and efficiently—performed it at salaries the highest of which barely amounted to one-fifth of what, according to high scientific authority, is the minimum required for a secretary to a certain metropolitan school board—the old world writhed in convulsions of rage at the sight of the Red Flag, the symbol of the Republic of Labour, floating over the Hôtel de Ville.

And yet, this was the first revolution in which the working class was openly acknowledged as the only class capable of social initiative, even by the great bulk of the Paris middle-class—shop-keepers, tradesmen, merchants—the wealthy capitalist alone excepted. The Commune had saved them by a sagacious settlement of that ever recurring cause of dispute among the middle-class themselves—the debtor and creditor accounts. The same portion of the middle-class,



after they had assisted in putting down the working-men's insurrection of June 1848, had been at once unceremoniously sacrificed to their creditors by the then Constituent Assembly. But this was not their only motive for now rallying round the working-class. They felt there was but one alternative—the Commune, or the Empire—under whatever name it might reappear. The Empire had ruined them economically by the havoc it made of public wealth, by the wholesale financial swindling it fostered, by the props it lent to the artificially accelerated centralisation of capital, and the concomitant expropriation of their own ranks. It had suppressed them politically, it had shocked them morally by its orgies, it had insulted their Voltairianism by handing over the education of their children to the *frères Ignorantins*, it had revolted their national feeling as Frenchmen by precipitating them headlong into a war which left only one equivalent for the ruins it made—the disappearance of the Empire. In fact, after the exodus from Paris of the high Bonapartist and capitalist *Bohème*, the true middle-class Party-of-Order came out in the shape of the "Union Republicaine," enrolling themselves under the colours of the Commune and defending it against the wilful misconstruction of Thiers. Whether the gratitude of this great body of the middle-class will stand the present severe trial, time must show.

The Commune was perfectly right in telling the peasants that "its victory was their only hope." Of all the lies hatched at Versailles and re-echoed by the glorious European penny-a-liner, one of the most tremendous was that the Rurals represented the French peasantry. Think only of the love of the French peasant for the men to whom, after 1815, he had to pay the milliard of indemnity! In the eyes of the French peasant, the very existence of a great landed proprietary is in itself an encroachment on his conquests of 1789. The bourgeoisie, in 1848, had burdened his plot of land with the additional tax of forty-five cents in the franc; but then it did so in the name of the revolution;

while now it had fomented a civil war against the revolution, to shift on the peasant's shoulders the chief load of the five milliards of indemnity to be paid to the Prussians. The Commune, on the other hand, in one of its first proclamations, declared that the true originators of the war would be made to pay its cost. The Commune would have delivered the peasant of the blood tax, would have given him a cheap government, transformed his present blood-suckers, the notary, advocate, executor, and other judicial vampires, into salaried communal agents, elected by, and responsible to himself. It would have freed him of the tyranny of the *garde champêtre*, the gendarme, and the prefect; would have put enlightenment by the schoolmaster in the place of stultification by the priest. And the French peasant is, above all, a man of reckoning. He would find it extremely reasonable that the pay of the priest, instead of being extorted by the tax-gatherer, should only depend upon the spontaneous action of the parishioners' religious instincts. Such were the great immediate boons which the rule of the Commune—and that rule alone—held out to the French peasantry. It is, therefore, quite superfluous here to expatiate upon the more complicated but vital problems which the Commune alone was able, and at the same time compelled, to solve in favour of the peasant, viz., the hypothecary debt, lying like an incubus upon his parcel of soil, the *proletariat foncier* (the rural proletariat), daily growing upon it, and his expropriation from it enforced, at a more rapid rate, by the very development of modern agriculture and the competition of capitalist farming.

The French peasant had elected Louis Bonaparte president of the Republic; but the Party-of-Order created the Empire. What the French peasant really wants he commenced to show in 1849 and 1850, by opposing his maire to the Government's prefect, his schoolmaster to the Government's priest, and himself to the Government's gendarme. All the laws made by the Party-of-Order in January and February 1850, were avowed measures of repression

against the peasant. The peasant was a Bonapartist, because the great Revolution, with all its benefits to him, was, in his eyes, personified in Napoleon. This delusion, rapidly breaking down under the Second Empire (and in its very nature hostile to the Rurals), this prejudice of the past, how could it have withstood the appeal of the Commune to the living interests and urgent wants of the peasantry?

The Rurals—this was, in fact, their chief apprehension—knew that three months' free communication of Communal Paris with the provinces would bring about a general rising of the peasants, and hence their anxiety to establish a police blockade around Paris, so as to stop the spread of the rinderpest.

If the Commune was thus the true representative of all the healthy elements of French society, and therefore the truly national Government, it was, at the same time, a working men's Government, as the bold champion of the emancipation of labour, emphatically international. Within sight of the Prussian army, that had annexed to Germany two French provinces, the Commune annexed to France the working people all over the world.

The second Empire had been the jubilee of cosmopolitan blacklegism, the rakes of all countries rushing in at its call for a share in its orgies and in the plunder of the French people. Even at this moment the right hand of Thiers is Ganesco, the foul Wallachian, and his left hand is Markowski, the Russian spy. The Commune admitted all foreigners to the honour of dying for the immortal cause. Between the foreign war lost by their treason, and the civil war fomented by their conspiracy with the foreign invader, the bourgeoisie had found the time to display their patriotism by organising police-hunts upon the Germans in France. The Commune made a German working man its Minister of Labour. Thiers, the bourgeoisie, the Second Empire, had continually deluded Poland by loud professions of sympathy, while in reality betraying her to, and doing the dirty work of Russia. The Commune honoured

the heroic sons of Poland by placing them at the head of the defenders of Paris. And, to broadly mark the new era of history, it was conscious of initiating, under the eyes of the conquering Prussians on the one side and of the Bonapartist army, led by Bonapartist generals, on the other, the Commune pulled down that colossal symbol of martial glory, the Vendôme column.

The great social measure of the Commune was its own working existence. Its special measures could but betoken the tendency of a government of the people by the people. Such were the abolition of the nightwork of journeyman bakers ; the prohibition, under penalty, of the employers' practice to reduce wages by levying upon their workpeople fines under manifold pretexts—a process in which the employer combines in his own person the parts of legislator, judge, and executioner, and filches the money to boot. Another measure of this class was the surrender, to associations of workmen, under reserve of compensation, of all closed workshops and factories, no matter whether the respective capitalists had absconded or preferred to strike work.

The financial measures of the Commune, remarkable for their sagacity and moderation, could only be such as were compatible with the state of a besieged town. . . . .

At last, when treachery had opened the gates of Paris to General Douai, on May 21, Thiers, on the 22nd, revealed to the Rurals the "goal" of his conciliation comedy, which they had so obstinately persisted in not understanding. "I told you a few days ago that we were approaching *our goal* : to-day I came to tell you *the goal* is reached. The victory of order, justice, and civilisation is at last won !"

So it was. The civilisation and justice of bourgeois order comes out in its lurid light whenever the slaves and drudges of that order rise against their masters. Then this civilisation and justice stand forth as undisguised savagery and lawless revenge. Each new crisis in the class struggle between the appropriator and the producer brings out this fact more

glaringly. Even the atrocities of the bourgeois in June 1848, vanish before the ineffable infamy of 1871. The self-sacrificing heroism with which the population of Paris—men, women, and children—fought for eight days after the entrance of the Versaillese, reflects as much the grandeur of their cause as the infernal deeds of the soldiery reflect the innate spirit of that civilisation of which they are the mercenary vindicators. A glorious civilisation, indeed, the great problem of which is how to get rid of the heaps of corpses it made after the battle was over !

To find a parallel for the conduct of Thiers and his bloodhounds we must go back to the times of Sulla and the two Triumvirates of Rome. The same wholesale slaughter in cold blood ; the same disregard, in massacre, of age and sex, the same system of torturing prisoners ; the same proscriptions, but this time of a whole class ; the same savage hunt after concealed leaders, lest one might escape ; the same denunciations of political and private enemies ; the same indifference for the butchery of entire strangers to the feud. There is but this difference, that the Romans had no *mitrailleuses* for the despatch, in the lump, of the proscribed, and that they had not “ the law in their hands,” nor on their lips the cry of “ civilisation.”

And after those horrors, look upon the other, still more hideous, face of that bourgeois civilisation as described by its own Press !

“ With stray shots,” writes the Paris correspondent of a London Tory paper, “ still ringing in the distance, and untended wounded wretches dying amid the tombstones of Père la Chaise—with 6,000 terror-stricken insurgents wandering in an agony of despair in the labyrinth of the catacombs, and wretches hurried through the streets to be shot down in scores by the mitrailleuse—it is revolting to see the *cafés* filled with the votaries of absinthe, billiards, and dominoes ; female profligacy perambulating the boulevards, and the sound of revelry disturbing the night from the *cabinets particuliers* of fashionable restaurants.” M.

Edouard Hervé writes in the *Journal de Paris*, a Versaillist journal suppressed by the Commune : "The way in which the population of Paris (!) manifested its satisfaction yesterday was rather more than frivolous, and we fear it will grow worse as time progresses. Paris has now a *fête* day appearance, which is sadly out of place ; and, unless we are to be called the *Parisiens de la décadence*, this sort of thing must come to an end." And then he quotes the passage from Tacitus : "Yet, on the morrow of that horrible struggle—began once more to wallow in the voluptuous slough which was destroying its body and polluting its soul—*ali prælia et vulnera, alibi balnea popinæque*—(here fights and wounds, there baths and restaurants)." M. Hervé only forgets to say that the "population of Paris" he speaks of is but the population of the Paris of M. Thiers—the *francs-fleurs* returning in throngs from Versailles, Saint Denis, Rueil, and Saint Germain—the Paris of the "Decline." . . .

That after the most tremendous war of modern times, the conquering and the conquered hosts should fraternise for the common massacre of the proletariat—this unparalleled event does indicate, not, as Bismarck thinks, the final repression of a new society upheaving, but the crumbling into dust of bourgeois society. The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war ; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug, intended to defer the struggle of the classes, and to be thrown aside as soon as that class struggle bursts out in civil war. Class-rule is no longer able to disguise itself in a national uniform ; the national Governments are *one* as against the proletariat.

After Whit-Sunday, 1871, there can be neither peace nor truce possible between the working men of France and the appropriators of their produce. The iron hand of a mercenary soldiery may keep for a time both classes tied down in common oppression. But the battle must break out again and again in ever-growing dimensions, and there can be no

doubt as to who will be the victor in the end—the appropriating few, or the immense working majority. And the French working class is only the advanced guard of the modern proletariat.

While the European Governments thus testify, before Paris, to the international character of class rule, they cry down the International Working Men's Association—the international counter-organisation of labour against the cosmopolitan of capital—as the head fountain of all these disasters. Thiers denounced it as the despot of labour, pretending to be its liberator. Picard ordered that all communications between the French Internationals and those abroad should be cut off; Count Jaubet, Thiers's mummified accomplice of 1835, declares it the great problem of all civilised governments to weed it out. The Rurals roar against it, and the whole European Press joins the chorus. An honourable French writer, completely foreign to our Association, speaks as follows: "The members of the Central Committee of the National Guard, as well as the greater part of the members of the Commune, are the most active, intelligent, and energetic minds of the International Working Men's Association . . . men who are thoroughly honest, sincere, intelligent, devoted, pure, and fanatical in the *good* sense of the word." The police-tinged bourgeois mind naturally figures to itself the International Working Men's Association as acting in the manner of a secret conspiracy, its central body ordering, from time to time, explosions in different countries. Our Association is, in fact, nothing but the international bond between the most advanced working men in the various countries of the civilised world. Wherever, in whatever shape, and under whatever conditions the class struggle obtains any consistency, it is but natural that members of our association should stand in the foreground. The soil out of which it grows is modern society itself. It cannot be stamped out by any amount of carnage. To stamp it out, the Government would have to stamp out the despotism of capital

over labour—the condition of their own parasitical existence.

Working-men's Paris, with its Commune, will be for ever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them.

*Friedrich Engels*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

*Written in 1891 ; contained in English edition of " The Civil War in France " published by Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1933.*

[ Engels wrote this introduction on March 18, 1891, the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune. It is of special importance for its analysis of the State. In the last paragraph, Engels wrote "Social Democratic philistine" ; the German Social Democratic Party printed these words as "German philistine," thus obscuring Engels's criticism of the Social democrats who were against the dictatorship of the proletariat. ]

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

. . . Thanks to the economic and political development of France since 1789, for fifty years the position in Paris has



been such that no Revolution could break out there without assuming a proletarian character, that is to say, without the proletariat, which had bought victory with its blood, advancing its own demands after victory had been won. These demands were more or less unclear and even confused, corresponding to the state of evolution reached by the workers of Paris at the particular period, but the ultimate purpose of them all was the abolition of the class antagonism between capitalists and workers. It is true that no one could say how this was to be brought about. But the demand itself, however indefinite it still was in its formulation, contained a threat to the existing order of society ; the workers who put it forward were still armed, and therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for whatever bourgeois group was at the helm of the State. Hence, after every revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with the defeat of the workers.

This happened for the first time in 1848. The liberal bourgeoisie of the Parliamentary opposition held banquets in support of the reform of the franchise, which was designed to secure supremacy for their Party. Forced more and more, in their struggle with the government, to appeal to the people, they had to allow the radical and republican sections of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie gradually to take the lead. But behind these stood the revolutionary workers, and since 1830 these had acquired far more political independence than the bourgeoisie, and even the republicans, imagined. At the moment of the crisis between the Government and the opposition, the workers opened battle on the streets ; Louis Philippe vanished, and with him the franchise reforms ; and in their place arose the Republic, hailed by the victorious workers themselves as a " social " Republic. No one, however, was clear as to what this social republic was to imply ; not even the workers themselves. But they now had arms in their hands, and were a power in the State. Therefore, as soon as the bourgeois republicans in control felt the ground under their feet a little firmer,

their first aim was to disarm the workers. This was carried into effect by driving them into the revolt of June 1848—by direct breach of faith, by open defiance and the attempt to banish the unemployed to a distant province. And then followed a blood-bath of defenceless prisoners the like of which has not been seen since the days of the civil wars which led to the overthrow of the Roman Republic. It was the first time that the bourgeoisie showed to what insane cruelties of revenge they will resort, the moment that the proletariat ventures to take its stand against them as a class apart, with its own interests and demands. And yet 1848 was only child's play compared with their frenzy in 1871.

Punishment followed hard at heel. If the proletariat was not yet able to rule France, the bourgeoisie could no longer do so. At least not at that period, when it had not yet a majority in favour of the monarchy, and was divided into three dynastic parties and a fourth republican party. Their internal dissensions allowed the adventurer Louis Bonaparte to take possession of all the strategic points—army, police, and the administrative machinery and, on December 2, 1851, to torpedo that last stronghold of the bourgeoisie, the National Assembly. The Second Empire opened—the exploitation of France by a band of political and financial adventurers, but at the same time also an industrial development such as had never been possible under the narrowminded and timorous system of Louis Philippe, with its exclusive domination by only a small section of the big bourgeoisie.

Louis Bonaparte took the political power from the capitalists under the pretext of protecting them, the bourgeoisie, from the workers, and on the other hand the workers from them; but in compensation for this his rule encouraged speculation and industrial activity—in a word the rise and enrichment of the whole bourgeoisie to an extent which was hitherto unknown. To an even greater extent, it is true, corruption and mass robbery developed, clustering round

the imperial Court, and drawing their heavy percentages from this enrichment.

But the Second Empire was the appeal to French Chauvinism, the demand for the restoration of the frontiers of the First Empire, which had been lost in 1814, or at least those of the First Republic. A French Empire within the frontiers of the old monarchy and, in fact, within the even more amputated frontiers of 1815—such a thing was impossible for any long duration of time. Hence the necessity for brief wars and the extension of frontiers. But no extension of frontiers was so dazzling to the imagination of the French Chauvinists as the extension which would take in the German left bank of the Rhine. One square mile on the Rhine was more to them than ten in the Alps or anywhere else. Given the Second Empire, the demand for the restoration to France of the left bank of the Rhine, either all at once or by degrees, was merely a question of time. The time came with the Prusso-Austrian war of 1866 ; swindled by Bismarck and by his own over-cunning, vacillating policy in regard to the expected "territorial compensation," there was now nothing left for Napoleon but war, which broke out in 1870 and drove him first to Sedan, and thence to Wilhelmshöhe.

The inevitable result was the Paris Revolution of September 4, 1870. The Empire collapsed like a house of cards, and the Republic was again proclaimed. But the enemy was standing at the gates ; the armies of the Empire were either hopelessly beleaguered in Metz or held captive in Germany. In this dire situation the people allowed the Paris deputies to the former legislative body to constitute themselves into a "Government of National Defence." They were the more ready to allow this because, for the purposes of defence, all Parisians capable of bearing arms had enrolled in the National Guard and were armed, so that now the workers constituted a great majority. But almost at once the antagonism between the almost completely bourgeois government and the armed proletariat

broke into open conflict. On October 31 workers' battalions stormed the town hall, and captured some members of the government. Treachery, the government's breach of its undertakings, and the intervention of some petty bourgeois battalions set them free again, and in order not to occasion the outbreak of civil war inside a city which was already beleaguered by foreign armies, they left the former government in office.

At last, on January 8, 1871, Paris, almost starving, capitulated ; but with honours unprecedented in the history of war. The forts were surrendered, the outer wall disarmed, the weapons of the regiments of the line and of the mobile guard were handed over, and the troops considered prisoners of war. But the National Guard kept their weapons and guns, and only entered into an armistice with the victors, who themselves did not dare enter Paris in triumph. They only dared to occupy a tiny corner of Paris, which, into the bargain, consisted partly of public parks, and even this they only occupied for a few days ! And during this time they, who had maintained their encirclement of Paris for 131 days, were themselves encircled by the armed workers of Paris, who kept a sharp watch that no " Prussian " should overstep the narrow bounds of the corner yielded up to the foreign conquerors. Such was the respect which the Paris workers inspired in the army before which all the armies of the Empire had laid down their arms ; and the Prussian Junkers, who had come to take revenge at the very centre of the revolution, were compelled to stand by respectfully, and salute just precisely this armed revolution !

During the war the Paris workers had confined themselves to demanding the vigorous prosecution of the fight. But now, when peace had come with the capitulation of Paris, at this moment Thiers, the new head of the government, was compelled to realise that the supremacy of the propertied classes—large landowners and capitalists—was in constant danger so long as the workers of Paris had arms

in their hands. His first action was to attempt to disarm them. On March 18 he sent troops of the line with orders to deprive the National Guard of the artillery belonging to them, which had been constructed during the siege of Paris and had been paid for by subscription. The attempt did not come off; Paris rallied as one man in defence of the guns, and war between Paris and the French Government sitting at Versailles was declared. The Central Committee of the National Guard, which up to then had carried on the government, handed in its resignation to the National Guard, after it had first decreed the abolition of the scandalous Paris "Morality Police." On the 30th the Commune abolished conscription and the standing army, and declared that the National Guard, in which all citizens capable of bearing arms were to be enrolled, was to be the sole armed force. They released the citizens from all payments of rent for dwelling houses from October 1870 to April, taking also into account amounts already paid in advance, and stopped all sales of articles pledged in the hands of the municipal pawnshops. On the same day the foreigners elected to the Commune were confirmed in office, because "the flag of the Commune is the flag of the World Republic."

On April 1 it was decided that the highest salary received by any employee of the Commune, and therefore also by its members themselves, might not exceed 6,000 francs. On the following day the Commune decreed the separation of the Church from the State, and the abolition of all State payments for religious purposes as well as the transformation of all Church property into national property; on April 8 this was followed up by a decree excluding from the schools all religious symbols, pictures, dogmas, prayers—in a word, "all that belongs to the sphere of the individual's conscience"—and this decree was gradually applied. On the 5th, in reply to the shooting, day after day, of soldiers of the Commune captured by the Versailles troops, a decree was issued ordering the imprisonment of

hostages, but it was never carried into effect. On the 6th the guillotine was brought out by the 137th battalion of the National Guard, and publicly burnt, amid great popular rejoicing. On the 12th the Commune decided that the Column of Victory on the Place Vendôme, which had been cast from captured guns by Napoleon after the war of 1809, should be demolished, as the symbol of chauvinism and incitement to national hatreds. This decree was carried out on May 16. On April 16 the Commune ordered a statistical registration of factories which had been closed down by the manufacturers, and the working out of plans for the carrying on of these factories by workers formerly employed in them, who were to be organised in co-operative societies ; and also plans for the organisation of these co-operatives in one great Union. On the 20th the Commune abolished night work for bakers, and also the workers' registration cards, which since the Second Empire had been run as a monopoly by nominees of the police—exploiters of the first rank ; the issuing of these registration cards was transferred to the mayors of the twenty districts of Paris. On April 30 the Commune ordered the closing of the pawnshops, on the ground that they were a form of individual exploitation of the worker, and stood in contradiction with the right of the workers to their instruments of labour and to credit. On May 5 it ordered the demolition of the Chapel of Atonement, which had been built in expiation of the execution of Louis XVI.

Thus, from March 18 onwards the class character of the Paris movement, which had previously been pushed into the background by the fight against the foreign invaders, emerged sharply and clearly. As almost without exception workers, or recognised representatives of the workers, sat in the Commune, its decisions bore a decidedly proletarian character. Either they decreed reforms which the republican bourgeoisie had failed to pass only out of cowardice, but which provided a necessary basis for the free activity of the working class—such as the adoption of

the principle that *in relation to the State*, religion is a purely private affair—or they promulgated decrees which were in the direct interests of the working class and to some extent cut at the foundations of the old order of society. In a beleaguered city, however, it was possible to do no more than make a start in the realisation of all these measures. And from the beginning of May on all their energies were required for the fight against the ever-growing armies assembled by the Versailles government.

On April 7 the Versailles troops had captured the Seine crossing at Neuilly, on the west front of Paris ; on the other hand they were driven back with heavy losses by General Eudes in an attack on the south front. Paris was continuously bombarded and, moreover, by the very people who had stigmatised as a sacrilege the bombardment of the same city by the Prussians. These same people now besought the Prussian government to hasten the return of the French soldiers who had been taken prisoner at Sedan and Metz, in order that they might recapture Paris for them. From the beginning of May the gradual arrival of these troops gave the Versailles forces a decided ascendancy. This already became evident when, on April 23, Thiers broke off the negotiations for the exchange, proposed by the Commune, of the Archbishop of Paris and a whole number of other priests held as hostages in Paris, for only one man, Blanqui, who had twice been elected to the Commune but was a prisoner in Clairvaux. And even more in the changed attitude of Thiers ; previously procrastinating and double-faced, he now suddenly became insolent, threatening, brutal. The Versailles forces took the redoubt of Moulin Saquet on the south front, on May 3 ; on the 9th Fort Issy, which had been completely reduced to ruins by gunfire ; and on the 14th Fort Vanves. On the west front they advanced gradually, their weight of numbers capturing the villages and buildings which extended up to the city wall, and at last reached the wall itself ; on the 11th, thanks to treachery and the carelessness of the National Guards stationed there,

they succeeded in forcing their way into the city. The Prussians who held the northern and eastern forts allowed the Versailles troops to advance across the land north of the city, which was forbidden ground to them under the armistice, and thus to march forward and attack on a long front, which the Parisians naturally thought covered by the armistice, and therefore held only with weak forces. As a result of this, only a weak resistance was put up in the western half of Paris, the luxury quarter proper ; it grew stronger and more tenacious the nearer the attacking troops approached the eastern half, the real working-class quarter. It was only after eight days' fighting that the last defenders of the Commune were overwhelmed on the heights of Belleville and Menilmontant ; and then the massacre of defenceless men, women and children, which had been raging all through the week on an increasing scale, reached its zenith. The breech-loaders could no longer kill fast enough ; vanquished workers were shot down in hundreds by mitrailleuse fire. The " Wall of the Federals " at the Père Lachaise cemetery, where the final mass murder was consummated, is still standing to-day, a mute but eloquent testimonial to the savagery of which the ruling class is capable, as soon as the working class dares to demand its rights. Then came mass arrests ; when the slaughter of them all proved to be impossible, the shooting of victims arbitrarily selected from the prisoners' ranks, and the removal of the rest to great camps, where they had to await trial by courts-martial. The Prussian troops surrounding the northern half of Paris had orders not to allow any fugitives to pass ; but the officers often shut their eyes when the soldiers paid more obedience to the dictates of humanity than to their general's orders ; particular honour is due to the Saxon army corps for its humane conduct in letting through many workers who had obviously been fighting for the Commune.

To-day, when after twenty years we look back at the work and historical significance of the Paris Commune of 1871, we find that it is necessary to supplement the account



given in *The Civil War in France* with a few additional points.

The members of the Commune were divided into a majority, the Blanquists, who had also been predominant in the Central Committee of the National Guard ; and a minority : members of the International Working Men's Association, chiefly consisting of adherents of the Proudhon school of Socialism. The great majority of the Blanquists at that time were Socialists only by revolutionary and proletarian instinct ; only a few had attained greater clarity on the essential principles, through Vaillant, who was familiar with German scientific Socialism. It is therefore comprehensible that in the economic sphere much was neglected which, as we see to-day, the Commune should have done. The hardest thing to understand is the holy awe with which they remained standing outside the gates of the Bank of France. This was also a serious political mistake. The bank in the hands of the Commune—this would have been worth more than ten thousand hostages. It would have meant that the whole of the French bourgeoisie would have brought pressure to bear on the Versailles government in favour of peace with the Commune. But what is more astonishing is the correctness of so much that was actually done by the Commune, composed as it was of Blanquists and Proudhonists. Naturally the Proudhonists were chiefly responsible for the economic decrees of the Commune, for their praiseworthy and their less praiseworthy aspects ; as the Blanquists were for its political achievements and failings. And in both cases the irony of history willed—as often happens when doctrinaires come into power—that both did the opposite of what the doctrines of their school prescribed.

Proudhon, the Socialist of small farmers and master-craftsmen, regarded the principle of association with positive hatred. He said of it that there was more bad than good in it ; that it was by nature sterile, even harmful, because it was a fetter on the freedom of the workers ; that it was a pure dogma, unproductive and burdensome, in conflict as

much with the freedom of the workers as with economy of labour ; that its disadvantages multiplied more swiftly than its advantages ; that, as compared with it, competition, division of labour and private property were sources of economic strength. Only for the exceptional cases—as Proudhon called them—of large-scale industry and large industrial units, such as railways, was there any place for the association of workers. (Cf. *Idée Générale de la Révolution*, 3<sup>e</sup> étude.)

And by 1871, even in Paris, the great centre of handicrafts, large scale industry had already to such a degree ceased to be an exceptional case, that by far the most important decree of the Commune instituted an organisation of large-scale industry and even of manufacture which was not based only on the association of workers in each factory, but also aimed at combining all these associations in one great Union ; in short an organisation which as Marx quite rightly says in *The Civil War* must necessarily have led in the end to Communism, that is to say, the direct antithesis of the Proudhon doctrine. And, therefore, the Commune was also the grave of the Proudhon school of Socialism. To-day this school is no longer to be found in French working-class circles ; among the Possibilists no less than among the “Marxists,” the Marxian theory now rules there unchallenged. Only among the “radical” bourgeoisie can Proudhonists still be found.

The Blanquists fared no better. Brought up in the school of conspiracy, and held together by the severe discipline which went with it, they worked on the theory that a proportionately small number of resolute, well-organised men would be able, at a given favourable moment, not only to seize the helm of the State, but also by energetic and relentless action, to keep power until they succeeded in drawing the mass of the people into the revolution and ranging them round the small band of leaders. This conception involved, above all, the strictest dictatorship and centralisation of all power in the hands of the new revolutionary government. And what did the Commune, with its majority of these same

Blanquists, actually do? In all its proclamations to the French in the provinces the Commune proposed to them a free federation of all French Communes with Paris, a national organisation, which for the first time was really to be created by the nation itself. It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralised government—the army, political police and bureaucracy which Napoleon had created in 1789 and since then had been taken over by every new government and used against its opponents—it was precisely this power which should have fallen everywhere, just as it had already fallen in Paris.

The Commune was compelled to recognise from the outset that the working class, once come to power, could not carry on business with the old State machine ; that in order not to lose again its but newly won supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old repressive machinery previously used against it, and on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any moment. What had been the special characteristics of the former State? Society had created its own organs to look after its common interests, first through the simple division of labour. But these organs, at whose head was the State power, had in the course of time, in pursuance of their own special interests, transformed themselves from the servants of society into the masters of society ; as can be seen for example, not only in the hereditary monarchy, but equally also in the democratic republic. There is no country in which "politicians" form a more powerful and distinct section of the nation than in North America. There each of the two great parties which alternately succeed each other in power is itself in turn controlled by people who make a business of politics, who speculate on seats in the legislative assemblies of the Union as well as of the separate States, or who make a living by carrying on agitation for their party and on its victory are rewarded with positions. It is common knowledge that the Americans

have been striving for thirty years to shake off this yoke, which has become intolerable, and that in spite of all they can do they continue to sink ever deeper in this quicksand of corruption. It is precisely in America that we have the best example of the growing independence of the State power in opposition to society, whose mere instrument it was originally, intended to be. Here there was no dynasty, no nobility, no standing army, beyond the few men keeping watch on the Indians; no bureaucracy with permanent posts or the right to pensions. And nevertheless we find here two great groups of political speculators, who alternately take possession of the State machine, and exploit it by the most corrupt means and for the most corrupt ends—and the nation is powerless against these two great cartels of politicians, who are ostensibly its servants but in reality exploit and plunder it.

Against this transformation of the State and the organs of the State from the servants of society into masters of society—a process which had been inevitable in all previous States—the Commune made use of two infallible expedients. In the first place, it filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, with the right of these electors to recall their delegate at any time. And in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs. In this way an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the imperative mandates to delegates to representative bodies which were also added in profusion.

This shattering of the former State power and its replacement by a new and really democratic State is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War*. But it was necessary to dwell briefly here once more on some of its features because in Germany particularly the superstitious faith in the State has been carried over from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many

workers. According to the philosophical conception the State is the "realisation of the idea" or, translated into philosophical language, the Kingdom of God on earth; the sphere in which eternal truth and justice is or should be realised. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the State and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily as people from their childhood are accustomed to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the whole of society could be managed and safeguarded in any other way than as in the past, that is through the State and its well-paid officials. And people think they are taking quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they rid themselves of faith in a hereditary monarchy and become partisans of a democratic republic. In reality, however, the State is nothing more than a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy whose worst sides the proletariat, just like the Commune, will have at the earliest possible moment to lop off, until such time as a new generation, reared under new and free social conditions, will be able to throw on the scrap-heap all the useless lumber of the State.

Of late the Social Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

London, on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune,  
March 18, 1891.

F. ENGELS.

Karl Marx

## THE CRIMEAN WAR

*Between 1853 and 1856 Marx contributed a series of letters and articles to the "New York Tribune" dealing with the events leading up to the Crimean War and the war itself. A collection of these letters and articles, edited by Eleanor Marx Aveling and Edward Aveling, was published in 1897 by Swan Sonnenschein and Co. Ltd., under the title of "The Eastern Question."*

[These contributions to the *New York Tribune* formed a running commentary on the political and military events connected with the Crimean war; many of those dealing with military episodes were written or suggested by Engels. One of these articles is reprinted here: "The Decay of Religious Authority," a broad historical survey, which the *New York Tribune* published as a leading article on October 24, 1854, under the title "Aspect of the European Crisis."]

## THE CRIMEAN WAR

### THE DECAY OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

THE DAYS in which religious considerations were a governing element in the wars of Western Europe are, it seems, long gone by. The Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648, which wound up the Thirty Years' War in Germany, marks the epoch when such questions lost their force and disappeared as a moving cause of international strife. The attitude of the two great Powers of Western Europe in the present war against Russia is a striking illustration of this truth. We there see England, professedly Protestant, allied with France, professedly Catholic ("damnably heretical" as they naturally are in each other's eyes, according to the orthodox phraseology of both), for the purpose of defending Turkey, a Mohammedan Power, whose destruction they ought most religiously to desire, against the aggressions of

"holy" Russia, a Power Christian like themselves ; and though the position of Austria and Prussia is more equivocal than that of England and France, the maintenance of the Mussulman Empire in its integrity against the assaults of its Christian neighbour of the North is an object that has been avowed and guaranteed equally with France and England, by the two great Powers of Christian Germany. Religious considerations are certainly not the influences which restrain these from action against Russia.

To perfectly appreciate this state of things we must call to mind the period of the Crusades, when Western Europe, so late as the thirteenth century, undertook a "holy war" against the "infidel" Turks for the possession of the Holy Sepulchre. Western Europe now not only acquiesces in the Mussulman jurisdiction over the Sepulchre, but goes so far as to laugh at the contests and rivalries of the Greek and Latin monks to obtain undivided possession of a shrine once so much coveted by all Christendom ; and when Christian Russia steps forward to "protect" the Christian subjects of the Porte, Western Europe of to-day arrays itself in arms against the Czar to thwart a design which it would once have deemed highly laudable and righteous. To drive the Moslems out of Europe would once have roused the zeal of England and France ; to prevent the Turks from being driven out of Europe is now the most cherished resolve of those nations. So broad a gulf stands between Europe of the nineteenth and Europe of the thirteenth century ! So fallen away since the latter epoch is the political influence of religious dogma.

We have carefully watched for any expression of the purely ecclesiastical view of the European crisis, and have only found one pamphlet by a Cambridge D.D., and one North British Reviewer for England, and the *Paris Univers* for France, which have dogmatically represented the defence of a Mohammedan Power by Christendom as absolutely sinful ; and these pronunciamientos have remained without an echo in either country. Whence is this ?

From the period of the Protestant Reformation, the upper classes in every European nation, whether it remained Catholic or adopted Protestantism, and especially the statesmen, lawyers and diplomatists, began to unfasten themselves individually from all religious belief, and become free-thinkers so-called. This intellectual movement in the higher circles manifested itself without reserve in France from the time of Louis XIV, resulting in the universal predilection for what was denominated Philosophy during the eighteenth century. But when Voltaire found residence in France no longer safe, not because of his opinions, nor because he had given oral expression to them, but because he had communicated them by his writings to the whole reading public, he betook himself to England and testified that he found the *salons* of high life in London still "freer" than those of Paris. Indeed, the men and women of the court of Charles II, Bolingbroke, the Walpoles, Hume, Gibbon, and Charles Fox, are names which all suggest a prevalent unbelief in religious dogmas, and a general adhesion to the philosophy of that age on the part of the upper classes, statesmen and politicians of England. This may be called, by way of distinction, the era of aristocratic revolt against ecclesiastical authority. Comte, in one short sentence, has characterised this situation :

"From the opening of the revolutionary period in the sixteenth century this system of hypocrisy has been more and more elaborated in practice, *permitting the emancipation of all minds of a certain bearing*, on the tacit condition that they should aid in protracting the submission of the masses. This was eminently the policy of the Jesuits."

This brings us down to the period of the French Revolution, when the masses, firstly of France, and afterwards of all Western Europe, along with a desire for political and social freedom, began to entertain an ever-growing aversion from religious dogma. The total abolition of Christianity, as a recognised institution of State, by the French



Republican Convention of 1793, and since then the gradual repeal in Western Europe, wherever the popular voice has had power, of religious tests and political and civil disabilities of the same character, together with the Italian movement of 1848, sufficiently announce the well-known direction of the popular mind in Europe. We are still witnesses of this epoch, which may be characterised as the era of democratic revolt against ecclesiastical authority.

But this very movement among the masses since the French Revolution, bound up as it was with the movement for social equality, brought about a violent reaction in favour of church authority in high quarters. Nobility and clergy, lords temporal and lords spiritual, found themselves equally threatened by the popular movement, and it naturally came to pass that the upper classes of Europe threw aside their scepticism in public life and made an outward alliance with the State churches and their systems. This reaction was most apparent in France, first under Bonaparte, and during the Restoration under the elder branch of the Bourbons, but it was not less the case with the rest of Western Europe. In our own day we have seen renewed on a smaller scale this patching up of an alliance offensive and defensive between the upper classes and the ecclesiastical interest. Since the epoch of 1830 the statesmen had begun to manifest anew a spirit of independence towards ecclesiastical control, but the events of 1848 threw them back into the arms of Mother Church. Again France gave the clearest exemplification of this phenomenon. In 1849, when the terror of the Democratic deluge was at its height, Messrs. Thiers, De Hauranne, and the Universitarians (who had passed for Atheists with the clergy), together with the so-called Liberal Opposition, were unanimous in supporting that admirably qualified "saviour of religion," M. Bonaparte, in his project for the violent restoration of the Pope of Rome, while the Whig Ministry of Protestant England, at whose head was a member of the ultra-Protestant family of Russell, were warm in their

approval of the same expedition. This religious restoration by such processes was indeed only redeemed from universal ridicule by the extremely critical posture of affairs which, for the moment, in the interest of "order" did not allow the public men of Europe to indulge in the sense of the ludicrous.

But the submission of the classes of leading social influence to ecclesiastical control, which was hollow and hypocritical at the beginning of this century after the Revolution of 1792, has been far more precarious and superficial since 1848, and is only acknowledged by those classes so far as it suits their immediate political interest. The humiliating position of utter dependence which the ecclesiastical power sustains toward the temporal arm of Government has been made fully manifest since 1848. The Pope indebted to the French Government for his present tenure of the chair of St. Peter; the French clergy, for the sake of their salaries, blessing trees of liberty and proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, and afterwards canonising the present Emperor of France as the chosen instrument of God and the saviour of religion, their old proper doctrines of legitimacy, and the divine right of kings being in each case laid aside with the downfall of the corresponding political régime; the Anglican clergy, whose *ex officio* head is a temporal Queen, dependent for promotion on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, now generally a Liberal, and looking for favours and support against popular encroachment to Parliament, in which the Liberal element is ever on the increase, constitute an *ensemble* from which it would be absurd to expect acts of pure ecclesiastical independence, except in the normally impossible case of an overwhelming popular support to fall back upon.

Such was the position of affairs in 1853, when the governing classes of England and France deemed it necessary and politic to espouse the cause of the Ottoman Porte against the Christian Czar; and that policy was not only sanctioned, but in a measure forced upon them by the popular

sentiment of the two nations. Then the Governments of France and England entered upon a policy totally inconsistent with religious considerations, and threw off unhesitatingly their feigned ecclesiastical alliances. Then at length the upper-class current of revolt (which had been so long dissembled) formed a juncture with the broad popular current, and the two together, like the Missouri and the Mississippi, rolled onward a tide of opinion which the ecclesiastical power saw it would be madness to encounter. Beneath this twofold assault the pure ecclesiastical point of view has not dared to manifest itself ; while, on the contrary, the State clergy of England, on the appointed day of the national fast and humiliation, had to pray and preach patriotic sermons on behalf of the success of the Crescent and its allies. These considerations seem to afford a rational explanation of two apparent anomalies with which we started ; namely, the defence of the Crescent by allied Catholic and Protestant Europe against the assaults of the Cross, as represented by Christian Russia, and the fact that no voice of any influence has been lifted up to denounce to Christendom the novel position in which it is placed.

This coalition between the politicians of Western Europe and the popular opinion in behalf of a purely secular policy, is likely to generate ulterior consequences and to subject ecclesiastical influence to further shocks from its old accomplices, the politicians. It is doubtless owing to the ripeness of the public mind in this respect, that Lord Palmerston ventured to refuse the request of the Edinburgh Presbytery for a day of public fast and humiliation to avert the divine scourge of cholera, the Home Secretary audaciously averring that prayers would be of no consequence unless they cleansed their streets and habitations, and that cholera was generated by natural causes, such as deleterious gases from decomposed vegetable matter. The vain and unscrupulous Palmerston knew that buffeting the clergy would be a cheap and easy way of acquiring popularity,

otherwise he would not have ventured on the experiment.

A further evidence of the extreme incompetence of ecclesiastical policy to answer the exigencies of the European situation is found in the consideration that the ecclesiastical view, if logically carried out, would condemn Catholic Europe to entire indifference in the present European crisis ; for though it might be permissible for Anglican orthodoxy to side with the Greek Cross against the Turkish Crescent, Catholic Europe could not unite with so impious a denier of the authority of the successor of St. Peter, and so unhallowed a pretender to the highest spiritual functions, as the Czar of Russia, and would apparently have no other opinion to utter than that both the belligerent parties were inspired by Satan !

To complete the disparagement which ecclesiastical authority has undergone in the present European crisis, it is patent to the world that while the advanced communities of Western Europe are in a forward stage of ecclesiastical decay, in barbarian Russia, on the other hand, the State Church retains a powerful and undiminished vigour. While Western Europe, discarding religious biases, has advanced in defence of "right against might" and "for the independence of Europe," "holy" Russia has claimed for its war of might against right a religious sanction as a war of the vicegerent of God against the infidel Turks. It is true that Nesselrode, in his State papers, has never had the assurance in the face of Europe to appeal to the ecclesiastical aspect of the question, and this is in itself a remarkable symptom of the decline of the ecclesiastical sentiment ; this method of treatment is reserved by the Russian Court for internal use among the ignorant and credulous Muscovites, and the miracle-pictures, the relics, the crusading proclamations of the Russian generals show how much stress is there laid upon the religious phase of the struggle for inflaming the zeal of the Russian people and army. Even the St. Petersburg journals do not omit to cast in the teeth of France and England the reproach that they are

fighting on behalf of the abhorred Crescent, against the religion of the Cross. Such a contrast between religious Russia and secular France and England is worthy of a profound and thorough examination, which we cannot undertake to give it, our object being simply to call to these large impressive, and novel facts a degree of attention they have not hitherto received. They are facts which perhaps the philosophic and religious historians of the future will alone be able to appreciate at their exact value. They appear, however, to constitute an important step in the great movement of the world towards abrogating absolute authority and establishing the independence of the individual judgment and conscience in the religious as well as the political sphere of life. To defend or attack that movement is not our purpose ; our duty is discharged in the simple attestation of its progress.

*Karl Marx*

## INDIA

*Articles contributed to the "New York Tribune" : some of those dealing with India have been reprinted in various journals, but no complete collection exists in English.*

[ Among the articles written by Marx for the *New York Tribune* between 1852 and 1859 were several important contributions on India, in addition to comments on Indian affairs in articles of a more general character. The deep analysis of the economic and political factors underlying Indian events make these articles particularly important for the understanding of Marxist theory on the development of imperialism and colonial revolt. Two are given

below : " The British Rule in India " was published in the *Tribune* of June 25, 1853, and " The Future Results of British Rule in India " in the issue of August 8, 1853.]

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## INDIA

### THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

TELEGRAPHIC dispatches from Vienna announce that the pacific solution of the Turkish, Sardinian and Swiss questions is regarded there as a certainty.

Last night the debate on India was continued in the House of Commons, in the usual dull manner. Mr. Blackett charged the statements of Sir Charles Wood and Sir J. Hogg with bearing the stamp of optimistic falsehood. A lot of Ministerial and Directorial advocates rebuked the charge as well as they could, and the inevitable Mr. Hume summed up by calling on Ministers to withdraw their Bill. Debate adjourned.

Hindustan is an Italy of Asiatic dimensions, the Himmalayas for the Alps, the Plains of Bengal for the Plains of Lombardy, the Deccan for the Apennines, and the Isle of Ceylon for the Island of Sicily. The same rich variety in the products of the soil, and the same dismemberment in the political configuration. Just as Italy has, from time to time been compressed by the conqueror's sword into different national masses, so do we find Hindostan, when not under the pressure of the Mohammedan, or the Mogul, or the Briton, dissolved into as many independent and conflicting States as it numbered towns, or even villages. Yet, in a social point of view, Hindostan is not the Italy, but the Ireland of the East. And this strange combination of Italy and Ireland, of a world of voluptuousness and of a world of woes, is anticipated in the ancient traditions of the religion of

Hindustan. That religion is at once a religion of sensualist exuberance, and a religion of self-torturing asceticism ; a religion of the Lingam, and of the Juggernaut ; the religion of the Monk, and of the Bayadere.

I share not the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of Hindostan, without recurring, however, like Sir Charles Wood, for the confirmation of my view, to the authority of Khuli-Khan. But take, for example, the times of Aurung-Zebe ; or the epoch when the Mogul appeared in the North and the Portuguese in the South ; or the age of Mohammedan invasion, and of the Heptarchy in Southern India ; or, if you will, go still more back to antiquity : take the mythological chronology of the Brahman himself, who places the commencement of Indian misery in an epoch even more remote than the Christian creation of the world.

There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindostan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindostan had to suffer before. I do not allude to European despotism, planted upon Asiatic despotism, by the British East India Company, forming a more monstrous combination that any of the divine monsters startling us in the Temple of Salsette. This is no distinctive feature of British Colonial rule, but only an imitation of the Dutch, and so much so that in order to characterise the working of the British East India Company, it is sufficient to literally repeat what Sir Stamford Raffles, the *English* Governor of Java, said of the old Dutch East India Company :

“ The Dutch Company, actuated solely by the spirit of gain, and viewing their subjects with less regard or consideration than a West India planter formerly viewed a gang upon his estate, because the latter had paid the purchase money of human property, which the other had not, employed all the existing machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contribution, the last dregs of their labour, and thus aggravated the evils

of a capricious and semi-barbarous Government, by working it with all the practised ingenuity of politicians, and all the monopolising selfishness of traders."

All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid, and destructive as the successive action of Hindostan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world, with no gain of a new one, imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindoo, and separates Hindostan, ruled by Britain, from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history.

There have been in Asia, generally, from immemorial times, but three departments of Government: that of Finance, or the plunder of the interior; that of War, or the plunder of the exterior; and, finally, the department of Public Works.

Climate and territorial conditions, especially the vast tracts of desert, extending from the Sahara, through Arabia, Persia, India, and Tartary, to the most elevated Asiatic highlands, constituted artificial irrigation by canals and water-works the basis of Oriental agriculture. As in Egypt and India, inundations are used for fertilising the soil in Mesopotamia, Persia, etc.; advantage is taken of a high level for feeding irrigative canals. This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which, in the Occident, drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated in the Orient, where civilisation was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralising power of Government. Hence an economical function devolved upon all Asiatic Government: the function of providing public works. This artificial fertilisation of the soil, dependent on a Central Government, and immediately decaying with the neglect of irrigation and



drainage, explains the otherwise strange fact we now find : whole territories barren and desert that were once brilliantly cultivated, as Palmyra, Petra, the ruins of Yemen, and large provinces of Egypt, Persia, and Hindostan ; it also explains how a single war of devastation has been able to depopulate a country for centuries, and to strip it of all its civilisation.

Now, the British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works. Hence the deterioration of an agriculture which is not capable of being conducted on the British principle of free competition, of *laissez-faire* and *laissez-aller*. But in Asiatic empires we are quite accustomed to see agriculture deteriorating under one government and reviving again under some other government. There the harvests correspond to good or bad government, as they change in Europe with good or bad seasons. Thus the oppression and neglect of agriculture, bad as it is, could not be looked upon as the final blow dealt to Indian society by the British intruder, had it not been attended by a circumstance of quite different importance, a novelty in the annals of the whole Asiatic world. However changing the political aspect of India's past must appear, its social condition has remained unaltered since its remotest antiquity, until the first decennium of the nineteenth century. The hand-loom and the spinning-wheel, producing their regular myriads of spinners and weavers, were the pivots of the structure of that society. From immemorial times, Europe received the admirable textures of Indian labour, sending in return for them her precious metals, and furnishing thereby his material to the goldsmith, that indispensable member of Indian society, whose love of finery is so great that even the lowest class, those who go about nearly naked, have commonly a pair of golden ear-rings and a gold ornament of some kind hung round their necks. Rings on the fingers and toes have also been common. Women as well as children frequently wore massive

bracelets and anklets of gold or silver and statuettes of divinities in gold and silver were met with in the households. It was the British intruder who broke up the Indian handloom and destroyed the spinning-wheel. England began with driving the Indian cotton from the European market ; it then introduced twist into Hindostan, and in the end inundated the very mother country of cotton with cottons. From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amounted to 1,000,000 yards, while in 1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 of yards. But at the same time the population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindostan, the union between agricultural and manufacturing industry.

These two circumstances—the Hindoo, on the one hand, leaving, like all Oriental peoples, to the central government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce ; dispersed, on the other hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits—these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features—the so-called **VILLAGE-SYSTEM**, which gave to each of these small unions their independent organisation and distinct life. The peculiar character of this system may be judged from the following description, contained in an old official report of the British House of Commons on Indian affairs :

“ A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundred or thousand acres of arable and waste lands ; politically viewed it resembles a corporation or township. Its proper establishment of officers and servants consists of the following descriptions : The *potail*, or head inhabitant, who has generally the superintendence of the affair

of the village, settles the disputes of the inhabitants, attends to the police, and performs the duty of collecting the revenue within his village, a duty which his personal influence and minute acquaintance with the situation and concerns of the people render him the best qualified for this charge. The *kurnum* keeps the accounts of cultivation, and registers everything connected with it. The *tallier* and the *totie*, the duty of the former of which consists in gaining information of crimes and offences, and in escorting and protecting persons travelling from one village to another ; the province of the latter appearing to be more immediately confined to the village, consisting, among other duties, in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them. The *boundaryman*, who preserves the limits of the village, or gives evidence respecting them in cases of dispute. The Superintendent of Tanks and Watercourses distributes the water for the purposes of agriculture. The Brahmin, who performs the village worship. The schoolmaster, who is seen teaching the children in a village to read and write in the sand. The calendar-brahmin, or astrolog, etc. These officers and servants generally constitute the establishment of a village ; but in some parts of the country it is of less extent, some of the duties and functions above described being united in the same person ; in others it exceeds the above-named number of individuals. Under this simple form of municipal government, the inhabitants of the country have lived from the immemorial. The boundaries of the villages have been but seldom altered ; and though the villages themselves have been sometimes injured, and even desolated by war, famine or disease, the same name, the same limits, the same interests, and even the same families have continued for ages. The inhabitants gave themselves no trouble about the breaking-up and divisions of kingdoms ; while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred, or to what sovereign it devolves ; its internal economy remains unchanged. The potail is still the head inhabitant, and still acts as the petty judge or magistrate, and collector or rentor of the village."

These small stereotype forms of social organism have been to the greater part dissolved, and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as the working of English steam and English free trade. Those family-communities were based on domestic industry, in that

peculiar combination of hand-weaving, hand-spinning, and hand-tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting power. English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindoo spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilised communities, by blowing up their economical bases, and thus produced the greatest and, to speak the truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia.

Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organisations disorganised and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilisation, and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village-communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies: We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns, with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man into the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing

social state into never-changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Hanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.

Then, whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may have for our personal feelings, we have the right, in point of history, to exclaim with Goethe :

*“ Sollte diese Qual uns quälen  
Da sie unsere Lust vermehrt,  
Hat nicht myriaden Seelen  
Timur's Herrschaft aufgezehrt ? ”*

#### THE FUTURE RESULTS OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

I propose in the letter to conclude my observations on India.

How came it that English supremacy was established in India? The paramount power of the Great Mogul was broken by the Mogul Viceroys. The power of the Viceroys was broken by the Mahrattas. The power of the Mahrattas was broken by the Afghans, and while all were struggling against all, the Briton rushed in and was enabled to subdue them all. A country not only divided between Mohammedan and Hindoo, but between tribe and tribe, between caste and caste ; a society whose framework was based on a sort of equilibrium, resulting from a general repulsion and constitutional exclusiveness between all its members. Such

a country and such a society, were they not the predestined prey of conquest? If we knew nothing of the past history of Hindostan, would there not be the one great and incontestable fact: that even at this moment India is held in English thralldom by an Indian army maintained at the cost of India? India, then, could not escape the fate of being conquered, and the whole of the past history, if it be anything, is the history of the successive conquests she has undergone. Indian society has no history at all—at least, no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of the successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society. The question, therefore, is not whether the English had a right to conquer India, but whether we are to prefer India conquered by the Turk, by the Persian, by the Russian, to India conquered by the Briton.

England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating—the annihilation of old Asiatic society and the laying the material foundations of the Western society in Asia.

Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India, soon became *Hindooised*, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered by the superior civilisation of their subjects. The British were the first conquerors superior, therefore inaccessible, to Hindoo civilisation. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by levelling all that was great and elevated in the native society. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that of destitution. The work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins. Nevertheless, it has begun.

The political unity of India, more consolidated and extending farther than it ever did under the Great Moguls, was the first condition of its regeneration. That unity, imposed by the British sword, will now be strengthened and perpetuated by the electric telegraph. The native army,

organised and trained by the British drill-sergeant, was the *sine qua non* of Indian self-emancipation, and of India ceasing to be the prey of the first foreign intruder. The free press, introduced for the first time into Asiatic society, and managed principally by the co-offspring of the Hindoos and Europeans, is a new and powerful agent of reconstruction. The Zemindaree and Ryotwar themselves, abominable as they are, involve two distinct forms of private property in land—the great *desideratum* of Asiatic society. From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly, educated at Calcutta, under English superintendence, a fresh class is springing up, endowed with the requirements for government and imbued with European science. Steam has brought India into regular and rapid communication with Europe, has connected its chief ports with those of the whole south-eastern ocean, and has revindicated it from the isolated position which was the prime law of its stagnation. The day is not far distant when, by a combination of railways and steam vessels, the distance between England and India, measured by time, will be shortened to eight days, and when that once fabulous country will thus be actually annexed to the Western world.

The ruling classes of Great Britain have had, till now, but an accidental, transitory and exceptional interest in the progress of India. The aristocracy wanted to conquer it, moneyocracy to plunder it, and the millocracy to undersell it. But now the tables are turned. The millocracy have discovered that the transformation of India into a reproductive country has become of vital importance to them, and that, to that end, it is necessary, above all, to give her the means of irrigation and of internal communication. They intend now drawing a net of railroads over India. And they will do it. The results must be inconceivable.

It is notorious that the productive powers of India are paralysed by the utter want of means for conveying and exchanging its various produce. Nowhere, more than in India, do we meet with social destitution in the midst of

natural plenty, for want of the means of exchange. It was proved before a Committee of the British House of Commons, which sat in 1848, that "when grain was selling from 6s. to 8s. per quarter at Kandeish, it was sold at 64s. to 70s. at Poonah, where the people were dying in the streets of famine, without the possibility of gaining supplies from Kandeish because the clay-roads were impracticable."

The introduction of railroads may be easily made to subserve agricultural purposes by the formation of tanks, where ground is required for embankment, and by the conveyance of water along the different lines. Thus irrigation, the *sine qua non* of farming in the East, might be greatly extended, and the frequently recurring local famines, arising from the want of water, would be averted. The general importance of railways, viewed under this head, must become evident, when we remember that irrigated lands, even in the districts near Ghauts, pay three times as much in taxes, afford ten or twelve times as much employment, and yield twelve or fifteen times as much profit, as the same area without irrigation.

Railways will afford the means of diminishing the amount and the cost of the military establishments. Col. Warren, Town Major of the Fort St. William, stated before a Select Committee of the House of Commons :

"The practicability of receiving intelligence from distant parts of the country, in as many hours as at present it requires days and even weeks, and of sending instructions, with troops and stores, in the more brief period, are considerations which cannot be too highly estimated. Troops could be kept at more distant and healthier stations than at present, and much loss of life from sickness would by this means be spared. Stores would not to the same extent be required at the various depots, and the loss by decay, and the destruction incidental to the climate, would also be avoided. The number of troops might be diminished in direct proportion to their effectiveness."



We know that the municipal organisation and the economical basis of the village communities has been broken up, but their worst feature, the dissolution of society into stereotyped and disconnected atoms, has survived their vitality. The village isolation produced the absence of roads in India, and the absence of roads perpetuated the village isolation. On this plan a community existed with a given scale of low conveniences, almost without intercourse with other villages, without the desires and efforts indispensable to social advance. The British having broken up this self-sufficient *inertia* of the villages, railways will provide the new want of communication and intercourse. Besides, "one of the effects of the railway system will be to bring into every village affected by it such knowledge of the contrivances and appliances of other countries, and such means of obtaining them, as will first put the hereditary and stipendiary village artisanship of India to full proof of its capabilities, and then supply its defects." (Chapman, *The Cotton and Commerce of India*.)

I know that the English millocracy intend to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expenses the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactures. But when you have once introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and coals, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway system will therefore become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry. This is the more certain as the Hindoos are allowed by British authorities themselves to possess particular aptitude for accommodating themselves to entirely new labour, and acquiring the requisite knowledge of machinery. Ample proof of this fact is

afforded by the capacities and expertness of the native engineers in the Calcutta mint, where they have been for years employed in working the steam machinery, and by the natives attached to the several steam engines in the Hurdwar coal districts, and by other instances. Mr. Campbell himself, greatly influenced as he is by the prejudices of the East India Company, is obliged to avow "that the great mass of the Indian people possesses a great *industrial energy*, is well fitted to accumulate a capital, and remarkable for a mathematical clearness of head, and talent for figures and exact sciences." "Their intellects," he says, "are excellent." Modern industry, resulting from the railway system, will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.

All the English *bourgeoisie* may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of the productive power, but of their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the *bourgeoisie* ever done more? Has it ever affected a progress without dragging individuals and people through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?

The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British *bourgeoisie* till in Great Britain itself the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether. At all events, we may safely expect to see, at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country, whose gentle natives are, to use the expression of Prince Soltykow, even in the most inferior classes, "*plus fins et plus adroits que les Italiens*," whose submission even is counterbalanced by a certain calm nobility, who, notwithstanding their natural languor, have astonished the British officers

by their bravery, whose country has been the source of our languages, our religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the Jat, and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin.

I cannot part with the subject of India without some concluding remarks.

The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilisation lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked. They are the defenders of property, but did any revolutionary party ever originate agrarian revolutions like those in Bengal, in Madras, and in Bombay? Did they not in India, to borrow an expression of that great robber, Lord Clive himself, resort to atrocious extortion, when simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity? While they prated in Europe about the inviolable sanctity of the national debt, did they not confiscate in India the dividends of the Rajahs, who had invested their private savings in the Company's own funds? While they combated the French revolution under the pretext of defending "our holy religion," did they not forbid, at the same time, Christianity to be propagated in India, and did they not in order to make money out of the pilgrims streaming to the temples of Orissa and Bengal, take up the trade in the murder and prostitution perpetrated in the temple of Juggernaut? These are the men of "Property, Order, Family, and Religion."

The devastating effects of English industry, when contemplated with regard to India, a country as vast as Europe, and containing 150 millions of acres, are palpable and confounding. But we must not forget that they are only the organic results of the whole system of production as it is now constituted. That production rests on the supreme rule of capital. The centralisation of capital is essential to the existence of capital as an independent power. The destructive influence of that centralisation upon the markets of the world does but reveal, in the most gigantic dimensions, the

inherent organic laws of political economy now at work in every civilised town. The bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis of the new world—on the one hand universal intercourse founded upon the mutual dependency of mankind, and the means of that intercourse; on the other hand the development of the productive powers of man and the transformation of material production into a scientific domination of natural agencies. Bourgeois industry and commerce create these material conditions of a new world in the same way as geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth. When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production, and subjected them to the common control of the most advanced peoples, then only will human progress cease to resemble that Hindoo pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain.

*Karl Marx*

## RELATIONS BETWEEN THE IRISH AND ENGLISH WORKING CLASSES

*A Resolution drafted in 1869. Reprinted in Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Irish Revolution, Modern Books Ltd., 1933.*

[ This resolution on the relations between the Irish and English working classes was drafted by Marx and adopted by the Council of the International Workingmen's Association in 1869. It put clearly the importance of Ireland

for the social revolution in Britain—"for this end the decisive blow must be struck in Ireland." ]

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## RESOLUTION ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE IRISH AND THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASSES

"IF ENGLAND is the fortress of European landlordism and capitalism, then the only point from which a strong blow can be struck at official England is *Ireland*.

Above all, Ireland is the fortress of English landlordism. If it falls in Ireland then it will inevitably fall in England also. In Ireland this operation is a hundred times easier because the economic struggle is concentrated there exclusively around landed property, this struggle is there also a *national* one and the people of Ireland are more revolutionary and embittered than in England. Landlordism in Ireland is only supported by the *English army*. The moment an end is put to the compulsory union of these two countries, a social revolution will break out in Ireland, although in old-fashioned forms. (The resolution refers to the agrarian-democratic character of the revolution in Ireland at this time, as opposed to the socialist revolution in advanced countries like England.—AUTHOR.) English landlordism will lose not only a big source of its wealth, but also its most important source of moral strength, as the representative of the rule of England over Ireland. On the other hand, the English proletariat will find its landlords invulnerable in England so long as their power remains inviolate in Ireland.

On the other hand, the *English bourgeoisie* has not only exploited Irish poverty in order to worsen the condition of the working class in England, by the forced transplantation of poor Irish peasants, but it has moreover divided the proletariat into hostile camps. The revolutionary fire

of the Celtic workers does not harmonise with the restrained force but slowness of the Anglo-Saxons. In all the big industrial centres of England a deep antagonism exists between the English and Irish workers. The average English worker hates the Irish as a competitor who lowers his wages and *level of living*. He feels national and religious antagonism towards him. He appears to him in much the same light as the black slaves appeared to the poor whites in the Southern States of North America. This antagonism between the proletarians of England is artificially cultivated and maintained by the bourgeoisie. It knows that in this antagonism lies the *real secret of maintaining its power*.

This antagonism also appears on the other side of the Atlantic. Turned off their native land by bullocks and sheep, the Irish emigrate to the U.S.A., where they are an important and growing part of the population. Their sole thought, their sole passion, is hatred to the English. The English and the American Governments—that is, the classes which represent them—cultivate that hatred so as to perpetuate *international contradictions*, which are a brake on every serious and honest union between the working class of both countries and a brake on their common liberation.

Ireland is the only excuse of the English Government for maintaining a *big standing army*, which in case of need they send against the English workers, as has happened after the army became turned into partisans in Ireland. Finally, England is at present what Ancient Rome was, in even greater degree. A people which enslaves another people forges its own chains.

In this way the viewpoint of the International Working Men's Association on the Irish question is very clear. Its first task is the speeding on of the social revolution in England. For this end the decisive blow must be struck in Ireland.

The resolutions of the General Council on the Irish

amnesty must be the forerunner of other resolutions. In the latter it will be shown that, without mentioning international justice, *the essential preliminary condition of the emancipation of the English working class* is the turning of the present *compulsory union*, that is slavery, of Ireland with England, into an *equal and free union*, if that is possible, or *into full separation*, if this is inevitable."

*Friedrich Engels*

## THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

*Articles written as editorials for the "Labour Standard," London, in 1881. Reprinted in book form by Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1934.*

[These articles show how Engels was able to present Marxist ideas in a popular form, appropriate to a paper which was associated with the London Trades Council. The series as a whole urged that the next step for the British workers was the formation of a separate working-class party, on the lines of the Social Democratic Parties which were already developing strength in Germany and France. Three of the articles are given below.]

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### THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

#### A FAIR DAY'S WAGE FOR A FAIR DAY'S WORK

THIS HAS NOW been the motto of the English working-class movement for the last fifty years. It did good service in the time of the rising Trades Unions after the repeal of

the infamous Combination Laws in 1824 ; it did still better service in the time of the glorious Chartist movement, when the English workmen marched at the head of the European working class. But times are moving on, and a good many things which were desirable and necessary fifty, and even thirty years ago, are now antiquated and would be completely out of place. Does the old, time-honoured watch-word too belong to them ?

A fair day's wage for a fair day's work ? But what is a fair day's wage, and what is a fair day's work ? How are they determined by the laws under which modern society exists and develops itself ? For an answer to this we must not apply to the science of morals or of law and equity, nor to any sentimental feeling of humanity, justice, or even charity. What is morally fair, what is even fair in law, may be far from being socially fair. Social fairness or unfairness is decided by one science alone—the science which deals with the material facts of production and exchange, the science of political economy.

Now what does political economy call a fair day's wage and a fair day's work ? Simply the rate of wages and the length and intensity of a day's work which are determined by competition of employer and employed in the open market. And what are they, when thus determined ?

A fair day's wage, under normal conditions, is the sum required to procure to the labourer the means of existence necessary, according to the standard of life of his station and country, to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race. The actual rate of wages, with the fluctuations of trade, may be sometimes above, sometimes below this rate ; but, under fair conditions, that rate ought to be the average of all oscillations.

A fair day's work is that length of working day and that intensity of actual work which expends one day's full working power of the workman without encroaching upon his capacity for the same amount of work for the next and following days.



The transaction, then, may be thus described—the workman gives to the Capitalist his full day's working power ; that is, so much of it as he can give without rendering impossible the continuous repetition of the transaction. In exchange he receives just as much, and no more, of the necessities of life as is required to keep up the repetition of the same bargain every day. The workman gives as much, the Capitalist gives as little, as the nature of the bargain will admit. This is a very peculiar sort of fairness.

But let us look a little deeper into the matter. As according to political economists, wages and working days are fixed by competition, fairness seems to require that both sides should have the same fair start on equal terms. But that is not the case. The Capitalist, if he cannot agree with the Labourer, can afford to wait, and live upon his capital. The workman cannot. He has but wages to live upon, and must therefore take work when, where, and at what terms he can get it. The workman has no fair start. He is fearfully handicapped by hunger. Yet, according to the political economy of the Capitalist class, that is the very pink of fairness.

But this is a mere trifle. The application of mechanical power and machinery to new trades, and the extension and improvements of machinery in trades already subjected to it, keep turning out of work more and more "hands" ; and they do so at a far quicker rate than that at which these superseded "hands" can be absorbed by, and find employment in, the manufactures of the country. These superseded "hands" form a real industrial army of reserve for the use of Capital. If trade is bad they may starve, beg, steal, or go to the workhouse ; if trade is good they are ready at hand to expand production ; and until the very last man, woman, or child of this army of reserve shall have found work—which happens in times of frantic over-production alone—until then will its competition keep down wages, and by its existence alone strengthen the power of Capital in its struggle with Labour. In the race

with Capital, Labour is not only handicapped, it has to drag a cannon-ball riveted to its foot. Yet this is fair according to Capitalist political economy.

But let us inquire out of what fund does Capital pay these very fair wages? Out of capital, of course. But capital produces no value. Labour is, besides the earth, the only source of wealth ; capital itself is nothing but the stored-up produce of labour. So that the wages of Labour are paid out of labour, and the working man is paid out of his own produce. According to what we may call common fairness, the wages of the labourer ought to consist in the produce of his labour. But that would not be fair according to political economy. On the contrary, the produce of the workman's labour goes to the Capitalist, and the workman gets out of it no more than the bare necessities of life. And thus the end of this uncommonly " fair " race of competition is that the produce of the labour of those who do work gets unavoidably accumulated in the hands of those who do not work, and becomes in their hands the most powerful means to enslave the very men who produced it.

A fair day's wage for a fair day's work ! A good deal might be said about the fair day's work too, the fairness of which is perfectly on a par with that of the wages. But that we must leave for another occasion. From what has been stated it is pretty clear that the old watchword has lived its day, and will hardly hold water nowadays. The fairness of political economy, such as it truly lays down the laws which rule actual society, that fairness is all on one side—on that of Capital. Let, then, the old motto be buried for ever and replaced by another :

**POSSESSION OF THE MEANS OF WORK—RAW MATERIAL, FACTORIES, MACHINERY—BY THE WORKING PEOPLE THEMSELVES.**

*Labour Standard*, London. May 7, 1881.

## THE FRENCH COMMERCIAL TREATY

On Thursday, June 9, in the House of Commons, Mr. Monck (Gloucester) proposed a resolution to the effect that "no commercial treaty with France will be satisfactory which does not tend to the development of the commercial relations of the two countries by a further reduction of duties." A debate of some length ensued. Sir C. Dilke, on behalf of the Government, offered the mild resistance required by diplomatic etiquette. Mr. J. A. Balfour (Tamworth) would compel foreign nations, by retaliatory duties, to adopt lower tariffs. Mr. Slagg (Manchester) would leave the French to find out the value of our trade to them and of theirs to us, even without any treaty. Mr. Illingworth (Bradford) despaired of reaching free-trade through commercial treaties. Mr. MacIver (Birkenhead) declared the present system of free-trade to be only an imposture, inasmuch as it was made up of free imports and restricted exports. The resolution was carried by 77 to 49, a defeat which will hurt neither Mr. Gladstone's feelings nor his position.

This debate is a fair specimen of a long series of ever-recurring complaints about the stubbornness with which the stupid foreigner, and even the quite as stupid colonial subject, refuse to recognise the universal blessings of free-trade and its capability of remedying all economic evils. Never has a prophecy broken down so completely as that of the Manchester School—free-trade, once established in England, would shower such blessings over the country that all other nations must follow the example and throw their ports open to English manufactures. The coaxing voice of free-trade apostles remained the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Not only did the Continent and America, on the whole, increase their protective duties; even the British colonies, as soon as they had become endowed with self-government, followed suit; and no sooner had India been placed under the Crown than a five per cent. duty on cotton

goods was introduced even there, acting as an incentive to native manufacturers.

Why this should be so is an utter mystery to the Manchester School. Yet it is plain enough.

About the middle of last century England was the principal seat of the cotton manufacture, and therefore the natural place where, with a rapidly rising demand for cotton goods, the machinery was invented which, with the help of the steam engine, revolutionised first the cotton trade, and successively the other textile manufactures. The large and easily accessible coalfields of Great Britain, thanks to steam, became now the basis of the country's prosperity. The extensive deposits of iron ore in close proximity to the coal facilitated the development of the iron trade, which had received a new stimulus by the demand for engines and machinery. Then, in the midst of this revolution of the whole manufacturing system, came the anti-Jacobin and Napoleonic wars, which for some twenty-five years drove the ships of almost all competing nations from the sea, and thus gave to English manufactured goods the practical monopoly of all Transatlantic and some European markets. When in 1815 peace was restored, England stood there with her steam manufactures ready to supply the world, while steam-engines were as yet scarcely known in other countries. In manufacturing industry, England was an immense distance in advance of them.

But the restoration of peace soon induced other nations to follow in the track of England. Sheltered by the Chinese Wall of her prohibitive tariff, France introduced production by steam. So also did Germany, although her tariff was at that time far more liberal than any other, that of England not excepted. So did other countries. At the same time the British landed aristocracy, to raise their rents, introduced the Corn Laws, thereby raising the price of bread and with it the money rates of wages. Nevertheless the progress of English manufactures went on at a stupendous rate. By 1830 she had laid herself out to

become "the workshop of the world." To make her the workshop of the world in reality was the task undertaken by the Anti-Corn Law League.

There was no secret made, in those times, of what was aimed at by the repeal of the Corn Laws. To reduce the price of bread, and thereby the money rate of wages, would enable British manufacturers to defy all and every competition with which wicked or ignorant foreigners threatened them. What was more natural than that England, with her great advance in machinery, with her immense merchant navy, her coal and iron, should supply all the world with manufactured articles, and that in return the outer world should supply her with agricultural produce, corn, wine, flax, cotton, coffee, tea, etc. ? It was a decree of providence that it should be so, it was sheer rebellion against God's ordinance to set your face against it. At most France might be allowed to supply England and the rest of the world with such articles of taste and fashion as could not be made by machinery, and were altogether beneath the notice of an enlightened mill-owner. Then, and then alone, would there be peace on earth and good-will towards men ; then all nations would be bound together by the endearing ties of commerce and mutual profit ; then the reign of peace and plenty would be for ever established, and to the working class, to their "hands," they said : "There's a good time coming, boys—wait a little longer." Of course the "hands" are waiting still.

But while the "hands" waited, the wicked and ignorant foreigners did not. They did not see the beauty of a system by which the momentary industrial advantages possessed by England should be turned into means to secure to her the monopoly of manufactures all the world over and for ever, and to reduce all other nations to mere agricultural dependencies of England—in other words, to the very enviable condition of Ireland. They knew that no nation can keep up with others in civilisation if deprived of manufacturers, and thereby brought down to be a mere

agglomeration of clodhoppers. And therefore, subordinating private commercial profit to national exigency, they protected their nascent manufactures by high tariffs, which seemed to them the only means to protect themselves from being brought down to the economical condition enjoyed by Ireland.

We do not mean to say that this was the right thing to do in every case. On the contrary, France would reap immense advantages from a considerable approach towards free trade. German manufacturers, such as they are, have become what they are under Free Trade, and Bismarck's new protection tariff will do harm to nobody but the German manufacturers themselves. But there is one country where a short period of protection is not only justifiable but a matter of absolute necessity—America.

America is at that point of her development where the introduction of manufactures has become a national necessity. This is best proved by the fact that in the invention of labour-saving machinery it is no longer England which leads, but America. American inventions every day supersede English patents and English machinery. American machines are brought over to England; and this in almost all branches of manufactures. Then America possesses a population the most energetic in the world, coal-fields against which those of England appear almost as a vanishing quantity, iron and all other metals in plenty. And is it to be supposed that such a country will expose its young and rising manufactures to a long, protracted, competitive struggle with the old-established industry of England, when, by a short term of some twenty years of protection, she can place them at once on a level with any competitor? But, says the Manchester School, America is but robbing herself by her protective system. So is a man robbing himself who pays extra for the express train instead of taking the old Parliamentary train—fifty miles an hour instead of twelve.

There is no mistake about it, the present generation will

see American cotton goods compete with English ones in India and China, and gradually gain ground in those two leading markets; American machinery and hardware compete with the English makes in all parts of the world, England included; and the same implacable necessity which removed Flemish manufactures to Holland, Dutch ones to England, will ere long remove the centre of the world's industry from this country to the United States. And in the restricted field which will then remain to England she will find formidable competitors in several Continental nations.

The fact cannot be longer shirked that England's industrial monopoly is fast on the wane. If the "enlightened" middle class think it their interest to hush it up, let the working class boldly look it in the face, for it interests them more than even their "betters." These may for a long time yet remain the bankers and money-lenders of the world, as the Venetians and Dutch in their decay have done before them. But what is to become of the "hands" when England's immense export trade begins to shrink down every year instead of expanding? If the removal of the iron ship-building trade from the Thames to the Clyde was sufficient to reduce the whole East-end of London to chronic pauperism, what will the virtual removal of all the staple trades of England across the Atlantic do for England?

It will do one great thing: it will break the last link which still binds the English working class to the English middle class. This link was their common working of a national monopoly. That monopoly once destroyed, the British working class will be compelled to take in hand its own interests, its own salvation, and to make an end of the wages system. Let us hope it will not wait until then.

*Labour Standard*, London. June 18, 1881.

#### SOCIAL CLASSES—NECESSARY AND SUPERFLUOUS

The question has often been asked, in what degree are the different classes of society useful or even necessary? And

the answer was naturally a different one for every different epoch of history considered. There was undoubtedly a time when a territorial aristocracy was an unavoidable and necessary element of society. That, however, is very, very long ago. Then there was a time when a capitalist middle class, a *bourgeoisie* as the French call it, arose with equally unavoidable necessity, struggled against the territorial aristocracy, broke its political power and in its turn became economically and politically predominant. But since classes arose, there was never a time when society could do without a working class. The name, the social status of that class has changed ; the serf took the place of the slave, to be in his turn relieved by the free working man—free from servitude but also free from any earthly possessions save his own labour force. But it is plain : whatever changes took place in the upper, non-producing ranks of society, society could not live without a class of producers. This class, then, is necessary under all circumstances—though the time must come when it will no longer be a class, when it will comprise all society.

Now, what necessity is there at present for the existence of each of these three classes ?

The landed aristocracy is, to say the least, economically useless in England, while in Ireland and Scotland it has become a positive nuisance by its depopulating tendencies. To send the people across the ocean or into starvation, and to replace them by sheep or deer—that is all the merit that the Irish and Scotch landlords can lay claim to. Let the competition of American vegetable and animal food develop a little further, and the English landed aristocracy will do the same, at least those that can afford it, having large town estates to fall back upon. Of the rest, American food competition will soon free us. And good riddance—for their political action, both in the Lords and Commons, is a perfect national nuisance.

But how about the capitalist middle class, that enlightened and liberal class which founded the British colonial



empire and which established British liberty? The class that reformed Parliament in 1821, repealed the Corn Laws, and reduced tax after tax? The class that created and still directs the giant manufactures, and the immense merchant navy, the ever-spreading railway system of England? Surely that class must be at least as necessary as the working class which it directs and leads on from progress to progress.

Now the economical function of the capitalist middle class has been, indeed, to create the modern system of steam manufactures and steam communications, and to crush every economical and political obstacle which delayed or hindered the development of that system. No doubt, as long as the capitalist middle class performed this function it was, under the circumstances, a necessary class. But is it still so? Does it continue to fulfil its essential function as the manager and expander of social production for the benefit of society at large? Let us see.

To begin with the means of communication, we find the telegraphs in the hands of the Government. The railways and a large part of the sea-going steamships are owned, not by individual capitalists who manage their own business, but by joint-stock companies whose business is managed for them by *paid employees*, by servants whose position is to all intents and purposes that of superior, better-paid workpeople. As to the directors and shareholders, they both know that the less the former interfere with the management, and the latter with the supervision, the better for the concern. A lax and mostly perfunctory supervision is, indeed, the only function left to the owners of the business. Thus we see that in reality the capitalist owners of these immense establishments have no other function left with regard to them, but to cash the half-yearly dividend warrants. The social function of the capitalist here has been transferred to servants paid by wages; but he continues to pocket, in his dividends, the pay for those functions though he has ceased to perform them.

But another function is still left to the capitalist, whom the

extent of the large undertakings in question has compelled to "retire" from their management. And this function is to speculate with his shares on the Stock Exchange. For want of something better to do, our "retired" or in reality superseded capitalists gamble to their hearts' content in this temple of mammon. They go there with the deliberate intention to pocket money which they were pretending to earn; though they say, the origin of all property is labour and saving—the origin perhaps, but certainly not the end. What hypocrisy to forcibly close petty gambling houses, when our capitalist society cannot do without an immense gambling house, where millions after millions are lost and won, for its very centre! Here, indeed, the existence of the "retired" shareholding capitalist becomes not only superfluous, but a perfect nuisance.

What is true for railways and steam shipping is becoming more and more true every day for all large manufacturing and trading establishments. "Floating"—transforming large private concerns into limited companies—has been the order of the day for the last ten years and more. From the large Manchester warehouses of the City to the iron-works and coalpits of Wales and the North and the factories of Lancashire, everything has been, or is being, floated. In all Oldham there is scarcely a cotton mill left in private hands: nay, even the retail tradesman is more and more superseded by "co-operative stores," the great majority of which are co-operative in name only—but of that another time. Thus we see that by the very development of the system of capitalist production the capitalist is superseded quite as much as the handloom-weaver. With this difference, though, that the handloom-weaver is doomed to slow starvation, and the superseded capitalist to slow death from overfeeding. In this they generally are both alike, that neither knows what to do with himself.

This, then, is the result: the economical development of our actual society tends more and more to concentrate, to socialise production into immense establishments which

cannot any longer be managed by single capitalists. All the trash of "The eye of the master," and the wonders it does, turns into sheer nonsense as soon as an undertaking reaches a certain size. Imagine "the eye of the master" of the London and North-Western Railway ! But what the master cannot do the workman, the wages-paid servants of the Company, *can* do and do it successfully.

Thus the capitalist can no longer lay claim to his profits as "wages of supervision," as he supervises nothing. Let us remember that when the defenders of capital drum that hollow phrase into our ears.

But we have attempted to show, in our last week's issue, that the capitalist class had also become unable to manage the immense productive system of this country ; that they on the one hand expanded production so as to periodically flood all the markets with produce, and on the other became more and more incapable of holding their own against foreign competition. Thus we find that, not only can we manage very well without the interference of the capitalist class in the great industries of the country, but that their interference is becoming more and more a nuisance.

Again we say to them, "Stand back ! Give the working class the chance of a turn."

*Labour Standard*, London. August 6, 1881.

*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*

## GERMAN IDEOLOGY

*Written in 1845-6 : only one section was published as an article in 1847 : other parts were published in periodicals after Marx's death. Complete text first published by the Marx-Engels Institute in 1932.*

*No English edition exists.*

[ In the preface to *The Critique of Political Economy* Marx explains that when Engels and he settled in Brussels in

1845, "we decided to work out together the contrast between our view and the idealism of the German philosophy, in fact to settle our accounts with our former philosophic conscience. The plan was carried out in the form of a criticism of the post-Hegelian philosophy." The manuscript, *German Ideology*, was sent to the printers, but practical difficulties prevented its publication. *German Ideology* is largely polemical, but is still of extreme importance for its clear statement of the difference between the standpoints of idealism, materialism and dialectical materialism. A part of the first section, which deals with the contrast between the materialist and the idealist conception, is given below.]

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## GERMAN IDEOLOGY

### THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE MATERIALIST AND THE IDEALIST CONCEPTION

#### *Ideology in General, German Philosophy in Particular*

THE PREMISES from which we start are not arbitrary, they are not dogmas ; they are real premises, from which abstraction can be made only in imagination. They are real individuals, their action and their material conditions of life, both those which they find in existence and those produced through their own action. These premises can therefore be verified in a purely empirical way.

The first premise of all human history is of course the existence of living human individuals. The first fact to be established is therefore the physical organisation of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. We cannot here, of course, go into either the physical characteristics of men themselves, or the natural conditions found by men—the geological, oro-hydrographical, climatic and other conditions. All historical

work must start on the basis of these natural conditions and their modification in the course of history through the action of men.

Men may be distinguished from animals by consciousness, religion, or anything else. They begin to differentiate themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation. By producing their means of existence men indirectly produce their material life itself.

The mode in which men produce their means of existence depends in the first place on the nature of the means of existence themselves—those which they find at their disposal and have to reproduce.

This mode of production must not be considered merely from the aspect that it is the reproduction of the physical existence of individuals. It is rather, in fact, a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, their definite *mode of life*. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are therefore coincides with their production—*what* they produce as well as *how* they produce. What individuals are therefore depends on the material conditions of their production.

This production first makes its appearance with the *increase of population*. It in turn itself presupposes *intercourse* of the individuals among themselves. The form of this intercourse is again determined by production. . . .

The fact is therefore that definite individuals, who are productively active in a definite way, enter into these definite social and political relations. In every single instance empirical observation must show the connection of the social and political structure with production—empirically and without any mystification and speculation. The social structure and the State always arise from the *life-process* of definite individuals, but of these individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's ideas, but as they *really* are, that is, as they act, produce in a material way, therefore as they produce under definite

limitations, presuppositions and conditions which are material and independent of their will.

The production of ideas, concepts, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of actual life. Conception, thought, the mental intercourse of men, then still appear as the direct efflux of their material relations. The same is true of mental production, as expressed in the language of the politics, laws, morality, religion and metaphysics of a people. Men are the producers of their concepts, ideas, etc.—but real, producing men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and the intercourse, up to its most far-reaching forms, which corresponds with these. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside down, as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the reversal of objects on the retina does from their directly physical life-process.

In direct contrast to German philosophy, which descends from heaven to earth, here the ascent is made from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not start from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as described, thought of, imagined and conceived, in order thence and thereby to reach corporeal men ; we start from real, active men, and from their life-process also show the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. Even the phantasmagoria in men's brains are necessary supplements of their material life-process, empirically demonstrable and bound up with material premises. Morals, religion, metaphysics and all other ideology and the corresponding forms of consciousness thus no longer maintain the appearance of independence. They have no history, they have no development ; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, change, along with this their real existence, also their thinking and the products of their

thought. It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness. In the first mode of observation, the starting point is consciousness taken as the living individual ; in the second, in conformity with actual life, it is the real living individual himself, and consciousness is considered only as *his* consciousness.

This mode of observation is not without a basis. It sets out from real premises, and never for a moment leaves them. Its premises are men not in any imaginary isolation and state of fixation, but in their actual empirically observable process of development in definite conditions. From the moment this active life-process is shown, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts, as it is with the empiricists, themselves still abstract, or an imaginary activity of imaginary persons, as it is with the idealists.

There, where speculation ends, with real life, real positive science therefore begins, the representation of practical activity, of the practical process of the development of men. The empty phrases of consciousness break off ; real knowledge must take their place. With the representation of reality, independent philosophy loses the medium for its existence. Its place can at best be taken by a collection of the most general results which can be extracted from observation of men's historical development. The abstractions in themselves, separated from actual history, have absolutely no value. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of the historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. But they do not, like philosophy, in any way provide a recipe or formula by which the historical epochs can be neatly trimmed. On the contrary, the difficulty begins precisely when a start is made with the examination and arrangement, the actual presentation, of the material, whether of a past epoch or of the present. The overcoming of these difficulties is conditioned by premises which cannot be given at this stage, but can only result from the study of the real life-process and the action of individuals of every epoch.

*Friedrich Engels*

## LUDWIG FEUERBACH

*First published as a series of articles in "Die Neue Zeit," 1886;  
English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1934.*

[Engels wrote these articles by way of a review of a book on Feuerbach by Starcke. In the preface to the first reprint in book form (1888), Engels explains that at the time when he was asked to write the review, classical German philosophy was experiencing "a kind of rebirth abroad" at the same time as the world outlook represented by Marx and himself was spreading, and therefore: "a short, connected account of our relation to the Hegelian philosophy, of our point of departure as well as of our separation from it, appeared to me to be required more and more. Equally, a full acknowledgment of the influence which Feuerbach, more than any other post-Hegelian philosopher, had upon us during our period of storm and stress, appeared to me to be an undischarged debt of honour." *Ludwig Feuerbach* is therefore an extremely valuable statement of the distinction between materialism and idealism, and between mechanical and dialectical materialism; the passages given below not only state these differences, but in themselves illustrate the dialectical approach to philosophical questions.]

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## LUDWIG FEUERBACH

### IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM

THE GREAT BASIC QUESTION of all philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being. From the very early times when men, still completely ignorant of the structure of their own bodies,



under the stimulus of dream apparitions<sup>1</sup> came to believe that their thinking and sensation were not activities of their bodies, but of a distinct soul which inhabits the body and leaves it at death—from this time, men have been driven to reflect about the relation between this soul and the outside world. If in death it took leave of the body and lived on, there was no occasion to invent yet another distinct death for it. Thus arose the idea of its immortality which at that stage of development appeared not at all as a consolation but as a fate against which it was no use fighting, and often enough, as among the Greeks, as a positive misfortune. Not religious desire for consolation, but the quandary arising from the common universal ignorance of what to do with this soul (once its existence had been accepted) after the death of the body—led in a general way to the tedious notion of personal immortality. In an exactly similar manner the first gods arose through the personification of natural forces. And these gods in the further development of religions assumed more and more an extra-mundane form, until finally by a process of abstraction, I might almost say of distillation, occurring naturally in the course of man's intellectual development, out of the many more or less limited and mutually limiting gods there arose in the minds of men the idea of the one exclusive god of the monotheistic religions.

Thus the question of the relation of thinking to being, the relation of spirit to nature—the paramount question of the whole of philosophy—has, no less than all religion, its roots in the narrow-minded and ignorant notions of savagery. But this question could for the first time be put forward in its whole acuteness, could achieve its full significance, only after European society had awakened from the long hibernation of the Christian Middle Ages. The question of the

<sup>1</sup> Among savages and lower barbarians the idea is still universal that the human forms which appear in dreams are souls which have temporarily left their bodies ; the real man is therefore held responsible for acts committed by his dream apparition against the dreamer. Thus B. Lanthorn found this belief current, for example, among the Indians of Guiana in 1884.

position of thinking in relation to being, a question which, by the way, had played a great part also in the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, the question : which is primary, spirit or nature—that question, in relation to the Church, was sharpened into this : “ Did god create the world or has the world been in existence eternally ? ”

The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other—(and among the philosophers, Hegel, for example, this creation often becomes still more intricate and impossible than in Christianity)—comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism.

These two expressions, idealism and materialism, primarily signify nothing more than this ; and here also they are not used in any other sense. What confusion arises when some other meaning is put into them will be seen below.

But the question of the relation of thinking and being has yet another side : in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world itself ? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world ? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the real world to produce a correct reflection of reality ? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the “ identity of thinking and being,” and the overwhelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question. With Hegel, for example, its affirmation is self-evident ; for what we perceive in the real world is precisely its thought-content—that which makes the world a gradual realisation of the absolute idea, which absolute idea has existed somewhere from eternity, independent of the world and before the world. But it is manifest without more ado that thought can know a content which is from the outset a thought-content. It is equally manifest that what is here to be proved is already tacitly contained in the presupposition. But that

in no way prevents Hegel from drawing the further conclusion from his proof of the identity of thinking and being that his philosophy, because it is correct for his own thinking, is therefore the only correct one, and that the identity of thinking and being must prove its validity by mankind immediately translating his philosophy from theory into practice and transforming the whole world according to Hegelian principles. This is an illusion which he shares with well-nigh all philosophers.

In addition there is yet another set of different philosophers—those who question the possibility of any cognition (or at least of an exhaustive cognition) of the world. To them, among the moderns, belong Hume and Kant, and they have played a very important rôle in philosophical development. What is decisive in the refutation of this view has already been said by Hegel—in so far as this was possible from an idealist standpoint. The materialistic additions made by Feuerbach are more ingenious than profound. The most telling refutation of this as of all other philosophical fancies is practice, viz., experiment and industry. If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, bringing it into being out of its conditions and using it for our own purposes into the bargain, then there is an end of the Kantian incomprehensible “thing-in-itself.” The chemical substances produced in the bodies of plants and animals remained just such “things-in-themselves” until organic chemistry began to produce them one after another, whereupon the “thing-in-itself” became a thing for us, as, for instance, alizarin, the colouring matter of the madder, which we no longer trouble to grow in the madder roots in the field, but produce much more cheaply and simply from coal tar. For three hundred years the Copernican solar system was an hypothesis with a hundred, a thousand or ten thousand chances to one in its favour, but still always an hypothesis. But when Leverrier, by means of the data provided by this system, not only deduced the necessity of

the existence of an unknown planet, but also calculated the position in the heavens which this planet must necessarily occupy, and when Galle really found this planet, the Copernican system was proved. If, nevertheless, the Neo-Kantians are attempting to resurrect the Kantian conception in Germany and the agnostics that of Hume in England (where in fact it had never ceased to survive), this is—in view of their theoretical and practical refutation accomplished long ago—scientifically a regression and practically merely a shamefaced way of surreptitiously accepting materialism, while denying it before the world.

But during this long period from Descartes to Hegel and from Hobbes to Feuerbach, the philosophers were by no means impelled, as they thought they were, solely by the force of pure reason. On the contrary. What really pushed them forward was the powerful and ever more rapidly onrushing progress of natural science and industry. Among the materialists this was plain on the surface, but the idealist systems also filled themselves more and more with a materialist content and attempted pantheistically to reconcile the antithesis between mind and matter. Thus, ultimately, the Hegelian system represents merely a materialism idealistically turned upside down in method and content.

It is, therefore, comprehensible that Starcke in his characterisation of Feuerbach first of all investigates the latter's position in regard to this fundamental question of the relation of thinking and being. After a short introduction, in which the views of the preceding philosophers, particularly since Kant, are described in unnecessarily ponderous philosophical language, and in which Hegel, by an all too formalistic adherence to certain passages of his work, gets far less than his due, there follows a detailed description of the course of development of Feuerbach's "metaphysics" itself, as this course was reconstructed out of the sequence of those writings of this philosopher which have a bearing here. This description is industriously and carefully elaborated, only, like the whole book, it is loaded with a ballast

of philosophical phraseology by no means everywhere unavoidable, which is the more disturbing in its effect, the less the author keeps to the manner of expression of one and the same school, or even of Feuerbach himself, and the more he interjects expressions of very different schools—especially of the tendencies now rampant and calling themselves philosophical.

The course of evolution of Feuerbach is that of an Hegelian—a never quite orthodox Hegelian, it is true—into a materialist ; an evolution which at a definite stage necessitates a complete rupture with the idealist system of his predecessor. With irresistible force Feuerbach is finally forced to the realisation that the Hegelian pre-mundane existence of the “ absolute idea,” the “ pre-existence of the logical categories ” before the world existed, is nothing more than the fantastic survival of the belief in the existence of an extra-mundane creator ; that the material, sensuously perceptible world to which we ourselves belong is the only reality ; and that our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter. This is, of course, pure materialism. But, having got so far, Feuerbach stops short. He cannot overcome the customary philosophical prejudice, prejudice not against the thing but against the name materialism. He says : “ To me materialism is the foundation of the edifice of human essence and knowledge, but to me it is not what it is to the physiologist, to the natural scientist in the narrower sense, for example, Moleschott, and necessarily so indeed from their standpoint and profession, the building itself. Backwards I fully agree with the materialists ; but not forwards.”

Here Feuerbach lumps together the materialism that is a general world outlook resting upon a definite conception of the relation between matter and mind, and the special form in which this world outlook was expressed at a definite stage of historical development, viz., in the eighteenth century.

More than that, he confuses it with the shallow and vulgarised form in which the materialism of the eighteenth century continues to exist to-day in the minds of naturalists and physicians, the form which was preached on their tour in the 'fifties by Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott. But just as idealism underwent a series of stages of development, so also did materialism. With each epoch-making discovery even in the sphere of natural science it has to change its form ; and after history also was subjected to materialistic treatment, here also a new avenue of development has opened.

The materialism of the last century was predominantly mechanical, because at that time, of all natural sciences, mechanics and indeed only the mechanics of solid bodies—celestial and terrestrial—in short, the mechanics of gravity, had come to any definite close. Chemistry at that time existed only in its infantile, phlogistic form. Biology still lay in swaddling clothes ; vegetable and animal organisms had been only roughly examined and were explained as the result of purely mechanical causes. As the animal was to Descartes, so was man a machine to the materialists of the eighteenth century. This exclusive application of the standards of mechanics to processes of a chemical and organic nature—in which processes, it is true, the laws of mechanics are also valid, but are pushed into the background by other and higher laws—constitutes a specific but at that time inevitable limitation of classical French materialism.

The second specific limitation of this materialism lay in its inability to comprehend the universe as a process—as matter developing in an historical process. This was in accordance with the level of the natural science of that time, and with the metaphysical, i.e., anti-dialectical manner of philosophising connected with it. Nature, it was known, was in constant motion. But according to the ideas of that time, this motion turned eternally in a circle and therefore never moved from the spot ; it produced the same results over and over again. This conception was at that time

inevitable. The Kantian theory of the origin of the solar system had been put forward but recently and was regarded merely as a curiosity. The history of the development of the earth, geology, was still totally unknown, and the conception that the animate natural beings of to-day are the result of a long sequence of development from the simple to the complex could not at that time scientifically be put forward at all. The unhistorical view of nature was therefore inevitable. We have the less reason to reproach the philosophers of the eighteenth century on this account, since the same thing is found in Hegel. According to him, nature, as a mere "alienation" of the idea, is incapable of development in time—capable only of extending its manifoldness in space, so that it displays simultaneously and alongside of one another all the stages of development comprised in it, and is condemned to an eternal repetition of the same process. This absurdity of a development in space, but outside of time—the fundamental condition of all development—Hegel imposes upon nature just at the very time when geology, embryology, the physiology of plants and animals, and organic chemistry were being built up, and when everywhere on the basis of these new sciences brilliant foreshadowings of the later theory of evolution were appearing (e.g., Goethe and Lamarck). But the system demanded it; hence the method, for the sake of the system, had to become untrue to itself.

This same unhistorical conception prevailed also in the domain of history. Here the struggle against the remnants of the Middle Ages blurred the view. The Middle Ages were regarded as a mere interruption of history by a thousand years of universal barbarism. The great progress made in the Middle Ages—the extension of the area of European culture, the bringing into existence there of great nations, capable of survival, and finally the enormous technical progress of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—all this was not seen. Consequently a rational insight into the great historical inter-connections was made impossible, and

history served at best as a collection of examples and illustrations for the use of philosophers.

The vulgarising pedlars who in Germany in the 'fifties busied themselves with materialism by no means overcame the limitations of their teachers. All the advances of natural science which had been made in the meantime served them only as new proofs against the existence of a creator of the world ; and, in truth, it was quite outside their scope to develop the theory any further. Though idealism was at the end of its tether and was dealt a death blow by the Revolution of 1848, it had the satisfaction of seeing that materialism had for the moment fallen lower still. Feuerbach was unquestionably right when he refused to take responsibility for this materialism ; only he should not have confounded the doctrines of these hedge-preachers with materialism in general. . . .

#### DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Strauss, Bauer, Stirner, Feuerbach—these were the offshoots of Hegelian philosophy, in so far as they did not abandon the field of philosophy. Strauss, after his *Life of Jesus* and *Dogmatics*, produced only literary studies in philosophy and ecclesiastical history after the fashion of Renan. Bauer only achieved something in the field of the history of the origin of Christianity, though what he did here was important. Stirner remained a curiosity, even after Bakunin blended him with Proudhon and labelled the blend "anarchism." Feuerbach alone was of significance as a philosopher. But not only did philosophy—claimed to soar above all sciences and to be the all comprehensive science of sciences—remain for him an impassable barrier, an unassailable holy thing, but as a philosopher, too, he stopped half way ; the lower half of him was materialist, the upper half idealist. He was incapable of disposing of Hegel through criticism ; he simply threw him aside as useless, while he himself, compared with the encyclopædic wealth of the



Hegelian system, achieved nothing positive beyond a grandiloquent religion of love and a meagre, impotent system of morals.

Out of the dissolution of the Hegelian school, however, there developed still another tendency, the only one which has borne real fruit. And this tendency is essentially connected with the name of Marx.<sup>1</sup>

The separation from the Hegelian school was here also the result of a return to the materialist standpoint. That means it was resolved to comprehend the real world—nature and history—just as it presents itself to everyone who approaches it free from pre-conceived idealist fancies. It was decided relentlessly to sacrifice every idealist fancy which could not be brought into harmony with the facts conceived in their own and not in a fantastic connection. And materialism means nothing more than this. But here the materialistic world outlook was taken really seriously for the first time and was carried through consistently—at least in its basic features—in all domains of knowledge concerned.

Hegel was not simply put aside. On the contrary, one started out from his revolutionary side described above, from the dialectical method. But in its Hegelian form this method was unusable. According to Hegel, dialectics is the self-development of the concept. The absolute concept does not only exist—where unknown—from eternity, it is also

<sup>1</sup> Here I may be permitted to make a personal explanation. Lately repeated reference has been made to my share in this theory, and so I can hardly avoid saying a few words here to settle this particular point. I cannot deny that both before and during my forty years' collaboration with Marx I had a certain independent share in laying the formulations, and more particularly in elaborating the theory. But the greater part of its leading basic principles, particularly in the realm of economics and history, and, above all, its final, clear formulation, belong to Marx. What I contributed—at any rate with the exception of a few special studies—Marx could very well have done without me. What Marx accomplished I would not have achieved. Marx stood higher, saw farther, and took a wider and quicker view than all the rest of us. Marx was a genius; we others were at best talented. Without him the theory would not be what it is to-day. It therefore rightly bears his name.—*Note by F. Engels.*

the actual living soul of the whole existing world. It develops into itself through all the preliminary stages which are treated at length in the *Logic* and which are all included in it. Then it "alienates" itself by changing into nature, where, without consciousness of itself, disguised as the necessity of nature, it goes through a new development and finally comes again to self-consciousness in man. This self-consciousness then elaborates itself again in history from the crude form until finally the absolute concept again comes to itself completely in the Hegelian philosophy. According to Hegel, therefore, the dialectical development apparent in nature and history, i.e., the causal inter-connection of the progressive movement from the lower to the higher, which asserts itself through all zigzag movements and temporary setbacks, is only a miserable copy of the self-movement of the concept going on from eternity, no one knows where, but at all events independently of any thinking human brain. This ideological reversal had to be done away with. We comprehended the concepts in our heads once more materialistically—as images of real things instead of regarding the real things as images of this or that stage of development of the absolute concept. Thus dialectics reduced itself to the science of the general laws of motion—both of the external world and of human thought—two sets of laws which are identical in substance, but differ in their expression in so far as the human mind can apply them consciously, while in nature and also up to now for the most part in human history, these laws assert themselves unconsciously in the form of external necessity in the midst of an endless series of seeming accidents. Thereby the dialectic of the concept itself became merely the conscious reflex of the dialectical motion of the real world and the dialectic of Hegel was placed upon its head; or rather, turned off its head, on which it was standing before, and placed upon its feet again. And this materialist dialectic which for years has been our best working tool and our sharpest weapon was, remarkably enough, discovered not

only by us, but also independently of us and even of Hegel by a German worker, Joseph Dietzgen.

In this way, however, the revolutionary side of Hegelian philosophy was again taken up and at the same time freed from the idealist trammels which in Hegel's hands had prevented its consistent execution. The great basic thought that the world is not to be comprehended as a complex of ready-made *things*, but as a complex of *processes*, in which the things apparently stable no less than their mind-images in our heads, the concepts, go through an uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away, in which, in spite of all seeming accidents and of all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end—this great fundamental thought has, especially since the time of Hegel, so thoroughly permeated ordinary consciousness that in this generality it is scarcely ever contradicted. But to acknowledge this fundamental thought in words and to apply it in reality in detail to each domain of investigation are two different things. If, however, investigation always proceeds from this standpoint, the demand for final solutions and eternal truths ceases once for all ; one is always conscious of the necessary limitation of all acquired knowledge, of the fact that it is conditioned by the circumstances in which it was acquired. On the other hand, one no longer permits oneself to be imposed upon by the antitheses, insuperable for the still common old metaphysics, between true and false, good and bad, identical and different, necessary and accidental. One knows that these antitheses have only a relative validity ; that that which is recognised now as true has also its latent false side which will later manifest itself, just as that which is now regarded as false has also its true side by virtue of which it could previously have been regarded as true. One knows that what is maintained to be necessary is composed of sheer accidents and that the so-called accidental is the form behind which necessity hides itself—and so on.

The old method of investigation and thought which

Hegel calls "metaphysical," which preferred to investigate things as given, as fixed and stable, a method the relics of which still strongly haunt people's minds, had a good deal of historical justification in its day. It was necessary first to examine things before it was possible to examine processes. One had first to know what a particular thing was before one could observe the changes going on in connection with it. And such was the case with natural science. The old metaphysics which accepted things as finished objects arose from a natural science which investigated dead and living things as finished objects. But when this investigation had progressed so far that it became possible to take the decisive step forward of transition to the systematic investigation of the changes which these things undergo in nature itself, then the last hour of the old metaphysics sounded in the realm of philosophy also. And in fact, while natural science up to the end of the last century was predominantly a *collecting* science, a science of finished things, in our century it is essentially a *classifying* science, a science of the processes, of the origin and development of these things and of the inter-connection which binds all these natural processes into one great whole. Physiology, which investigates the processes occurring in plant and animal organisms; embryology, which deals with the development of individual organisms from germ to maturity; geology, which investigates the gradual formation of the earth's surface—all these are the offspring of our century.

But, above all, there are three great discoveries which had enabled our knowledge of the inter-connection of natural processes to advance by leaps and bounds: first, the discovery of the cell as the unit from whose multiplication and differentiation the whole plant and animal body develops—so that not only is the development and growth of all higher organisms recognised to proceed according to a single general law, but also, in the capacity of the cell to change, the way is pointed out by which organisms can change their species and thus go through a more than

individual development. Second, the transformation of energy, which has demonstrated that all the so-called forces operative in the first instance in inorganic nature—mechanical force and its complement, so-called potential energy, heat, radiation (light or radiant heat), electricity, magnetism and chemical energy—are different forms of manifestation of universal motion, which pass into one another in definite proportions so that in place of a certain quantity of the one which disappears, a certain quantity of another makes its appearance and thus the whole motion of nature is reduced to this incessant process of transformation from one form into another. Finally, the proof which Darwin first developed in connected form that the stock of organic products of nature surrounding us to-day, including mankind, is the result of a long process of evolution from a few original unicellular germs, and that these again have arisen from protoplasm or albumen which came into existence by chemical means.

Thanks to these three great discoveries and the other immense advances in natural science, we have now arrived at the point where we can demonstrate as a whole the inter-connection between the processes in nature not only in particular spheres but also in the inter-connection of these particular spheres themselves, and so can present in an approximately systematic form a comprehensive view of the inter-connection in nature by means of the facts provided by empirical natural science itself. To furnish this comprehensive view was formerly the task of so-called natural philosophy. It could do this only by putting in place of the real but as yet unknown inter-connections ideal and imaginary ones, filling out the missing facts by figments of the mind and bridging the actual gaps merely in imagination. In the course of this procedure it conceived many brilliant ideas and foreshadowed many later discoveries, but it also produced a considerable amount of nonsense, which indeed could not have been otherwise. To-day, when one needs to comprehend the results of natural scientific

investigation only dialectically, that is, in the sense of their own inter-connections, in order to arrive at a "system of nature" sufficient for our time; when the dialectical character of this inter-connection is forcing itself against their will even into the metaphysically-trained minds of the natural scientists, to-day this natural philosophy is finally disposed of. Every attempt at resurrecting it would be not only superfluous but a *step backwards*. . . .

*Karl Marx*

## THESES ON FEUERBACH

*Written in 1845 : first published as an appendix in the 1888 edition of Engels's "Ludwig Feuerbach" : English edition of this book, containing Marx's Theses, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1934.*

[In the preface to the 1888 edition of *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Engels says that he found the eleven theses on Feuerbach in an old notebook of Marx's. "These are notes hurriedly scribbled down for later elaboration, absolutely not intended for publication, but they are invaluable as the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook."]

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## THESES ON FEUERBACH

(THESES)

*(Jotted down in Brussels in the spring of 1845)*

### I

THE CHIEF DEFECT of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the object, reality,

sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object* or *contemplation* but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively. Thus it happened that the *active* side, in opposition to materialism, was developed by idealism—but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really differentiated from the thought-objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as activity *through* objects. Consequently, in the *Essence of Christianity*, he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and fixed only in its dirty-Jewish form of appearance. Hence he does not grasp the significance of “revolutionary,” of practical-critical, activity.

## II

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the “this-sidedness” of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.

## III

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator must himself be educated. Hence this doctrine necessarily arrives at dividing society into two parts, of which one towers above society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can only be conceived and rationally understood as revolutionising practice.

## IV

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, the duplication of the world into a religious, imaginary world and a real one. His work consists in the dissolution of the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular foundation lifts itself above itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm is only to be explained by the self-cleavage and self-contradictoriness of this secular basis. The latter must itself, therefore, first be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionised in practice. Thus, for instance, once the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be theoretically criticised and radically changed in practice.

## V

Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking*, appeals to *sensuous contemplation*, but he does not conceive sensuousness as a practical, human-sensuous activity.

## VI

Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the human. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the *ensemble* of the social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not attempt the criticism of this real essence, is consequently compelled :

1. To abstract from the historical process and to fix the religious sentiment as something for itself and to presuppose an abstract—*isolated*—human individual.
2. The human essence, therefore, can with him be comprehended only as “genus,” as a dumb internal generality which merely *naturally* unites the many individuals.



## VII

Feuerbach, consequently, does not see that the "religious sentiment" is itself a *social product*, and that the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs in reality to a particular form of society.

## VIII

Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

## IX

The highest point attained by contemplative materialism, i.e., materialism which does not understand sensuousness as practical activity, is the outlook of single individuals in "civil society."

## X

The standpoint of the old materialism is "civil society"; the standpoint of the new is *human society* or socialised humanity.

## XI

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point however is to *change* it.

*Friedrich Engels*

# ERR EUGEN DÜHRING'S REVOLUTION IN SCIENCE (*Anti-Dühring*)

*First published in 1877, as a series of articles in the Leipzig "Vorwärts." Complete English edition, with Engels's prefaces of 1878, 1885 and 1894 : Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1935.*

[ In 1874 a German professor, Eugen Dühring, published a complete philosophy or "scheme of the universe," in which was included a theory of the "socialitarian" State. This work, which claimed to be materialist and socialist, began to spread confusion among the German workers, and the German Social Democratic Party asked Engels to write a critical examination of Dühring's views, which in fact were neither materialist nor socialist. In making this examination, Engels did not confine himself to criticism of Dühring's theories, but took the opportunity of setting out in positive form the Marxist view on a wide range of subjects—as Engels says in the preface to the first German edition : "it was necessary to follow Herr Dühring into that vast territory in which he dealt with all things under the sun and then a few more." The result is that *Anti-Dühring* is the most comprehensive of all Marxist works ; Engels notes that he read the whole manuscript to Marx before it was printed, and Marx himself contributed one chapter. The selection printed in the following pages gives the positive statements of Marxist theory on Philosophy, Morality, Religion, Equality, Freedom, Dialectics, Force, and Socialism.]

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## ANTI-DÜHRING

## PART I. PHILOSOPHY

*Classification. A Priorism*

... Logical schemata can only relate to *forms of thought* ; but what we are dealing with here are only forms of *being*, of the external world, and these forms can never be created and derived by thought out of itself, but only from the external world. But with this the whole relationship is inverted : the principles are not the starting point of the investigation, but its final result ; they are not applied to Nature and human history, but abstracted from them ; it is not Nature and the realm of humanity which conform to these principles, but the principles are only valid in so far as they are in conformity with Nature and history. That is the only materialistic conception of the matter, and Herr Dühring's contrary conception is idealistic, makes things stand completely on their heads, and fashions the real world out of ideas, out of schemata, schemes or categories existing somewhere before the world, from eternity—just like a *Hegel*.

Such a result comes of accepting in quite a naturalistic way "consciousness," "reasoning," as something given, something from the outset in contrast to being, to Nature. If this were so, it must seem extremely remarkable that consciousness and Nature, thinking and being, the laws of thought and the laws of Nature, should be so closely in correspondence. But if the further question is raised : what then are thought and consciousness, and whence they come, it becomes apparent that they are products of the human brain and that man himself is a product of Nature, which has been developed in and along with its environment ; whence it is self-evident that the products of the human brain, being in the last analysis also products of Nature, do not contradict the rest of Nature but are in correspondence with it. . . .

If we deduce the world schematism not from our minds, but only *through* our minds from the real world, deducing the basic principles of being from what is, we need no philosophy for this purpose, but positive knowledge of the world and of what happens in it; and what this yields is also not philosophy, but positive science.

Further: if no philosophy as such is any longer required, then also there is no more need of any system, not even of any natural system of philosophy. The perception that all the phenomena of Nature are systematically interconnected drives science on to prove this systematic interconnection throughout, both in general and in detail. But an adequate, exhaustive scientific statement of this interconnection, the formulation on thought of an exact picture of the world system in which we live, is impossible for us, and will always remain impossible. If at any time in the evolution of mankind such a final, conclusive system of the inter-connections within the world—physical as well as mental and historical—were brought to completion, this would mean that human knowledge had reached its limit, and, from the moment when society had been brought into accord with that system, further historical evolution would be cut short—which would be an absurd idea, pure nonsense. Mankind therefore finds itself faced with a contradiction: on the one hand, it has to gain an exhaustive knowledge of the world system in all its inter-relations; and on the other hand, because of the nature both of man and of the world system, this task can never be completely fulfilled. But this contradiction lies not only in the nature of the two factors—the world, and man—it is also the main lever of all intellectual advance, and finds its solution continuously, day by day, in the endless progressive evolution of humanity, just as for example mathematical problems find their solution in an infinite series of continued fractions. Each mental image of the world system is and remains in actual fact limited, objectively through the

historical stage and subjectively through the physical and mental constitution of its maker. . . .

As with the basic forms of being, so also Herr Dühring thinks that he can produce ready-made the whole of pure mathematics *a priori*, that is, without making use of the experiences offered us by the external world. In pure mathematics, in his view, the mind deals "with its own free creations and imaginations"; the concepts of number and form are "its adequate object, which it can create of itself," and they even have "a validity which is independent of particular experience and of the real content of the world."

That pure mathematics has a validity which is independent of the *particular* experience of each individual is, for that matter, correct, and this is true of all established facts in every science, and indeed of all facts whatsoever. The magnetic poles, the fact that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen, the fact that Hegel is dead and that Herr Dühring is alive, hold good independently of my own experience or of that of any other individual's, and even independently of Herr Dühring's experience, when he begins to sleep the sleep of the just. But it is not at all true that in pure mathematics the mind deals only with its own creations and imaginations. The concepts of number and form have not been derived from any source other than the world of reality. The ten fingers on which men learnt to count, that is, to carry out the first arithmetical operation, may be anything else, but they are certainly not a free creation of the mind. Counting requires not only objects that can be counted, but also the ability to exclude all properties of the objects considered other than their number—and this ability is the product of a long historical evolution based on experience. Like the idea of number, so the idea of form is derived exclusively from the external world, and does not arise in the mind as a product of pure thought. There must be things which have shape and whose shapes are compared before anyone can arrive at the idea of form. Pure mathematics deals with the space forms and

quantity relations of the real world—that is, with material which is very real indeed. The fact that this material appears in an extremely abstract form can only superficially conceal its origin in the external world. But in order to make it possible to investigate these forms and relations in their pure state, it is necessary to abstract them entirely from their content, to put the content aside as irrelevant; hence we get the point without dimensions, lines without breadth and thickness,  $a$  and  $b$  and  $x$  and  $y$ , constants and variables; and only at the very end of all these do we reach for the first time the free creations and imaginations of the mind, that is to say, imaginary magnitudes. Even the apparent derivation of mathematical magnitudes from each other does not prove their *a priori* origin, but only their rational inter-connection. Before it was possible to arrive at the idea of deducing the *form* of a cylinder from the rotation of a rectangle about one of its sides, a number of real rectangles and cylinders, in however imperfect a form, must have been examined. Like all other sciences, mathematics arose out of the *needs* of men; from the measurement of land and of the content of vessels, from the computation of time and mechanics. But, as in every department of thought, at a certain stage of development the laws abstracted from the real world become divorced from the real world, and are set over against it as something independent, as laws coming from outside, to which the world has to conform. This took place in society and in the state, and in this way, and not otherwise, *pure* mathematics is subsequently *applied* to the world, although it is borrowed from this same world and only represents one section of its forms of inter-connection—and it is only just precisely because of this that it can be applied at all. . . .

*Natural Philosophy; Cosmogony, Physics, Chemistry*

. . . The materialists before Herr Dühring spoke of matter and motion. He reduces motion to mechanical force as its supposed basic form, and thereby makes it impossible for

himself to understand the real connection between matter and motion, which in fact was also unclear to all former materialists. And yet it is simple enough. *Motion is the mode of existence of matter.* Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. Motion in cosmic space, mechanical motion of smaller masses on the various celestial bodies, the motion of molecules as heat or as electrical or magnetic currents, chemical combination or disintegration, organic life—at each given moment each individual atom of matter in the world is in one or other of these forms of motion, or in several forms of them at once. All rest, all equilibrium, is only relative, and only has meaning in relation to one or other definite form of motion. A body, for example, may be on the ground in mechanical equilibrium, may be mechanically at rest ; but this in no way prevents it from participating in the motion of the earth and in that of the whole solar system, just as little as it prevents its most minute physical parts from carrying out the oscillations determined by its temperature, or its atoms from passing through a chemical process. Matter without motion is just as unthinkable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself ; as the older philosophy (Descartes) expressed it, the quantity of motion existing in the world is always the same. Motion therefore cannot be created ; it can only be transferred. When motion is transferred from one body to another, in so far as it transfers itself, is active, it may be regarded as the cause of motion, in so far as the latter is transferred, is passive. We call this active motion *force*, and the passive, the *manifestation of force*. In this it is as clear as daylight that the force is equal to its manifestation, because in fact it is the *same* motion which takes place in both.

A motionless state of matter is therefore one of the most empty and nonsensical of ideas—a “delirious phantasy” of the purest water. In order to arrive at such an idea it is necessary to conceive the relative mechanical equilibrium, in which state a body on the earth may in fact be, as absolute

rest, and then to extend this over the whole universe. This is certainly made easier if universal motion is reduced to purely mechanical force. And the restriction of motion to purely mechanical force has the further advantage that a force can be conceived as at rest, as tied up, and as therefore for the moment inactive. When in fact, as is very often the case, the transfer of a motion is a somewhat complex process containing a number of intermediate points, it is possible to postpone the actual transmission to any moment desired by omitting the last link in the chain. This is the case for instance if a man loads a gun and postpones the moment when, through the pulling of the trigger, the discharge, the transfer of the motion set free by the explosion of the powder, takes place. It is therefore possible to imagine that during its motionless, identical state, matter was loaded with force, and this, if anything at all, seems to be what Herr Dühring understands by the unity of matter and mechanical force. This concept is nonsensical, because it transfers to the universe, as if it were absolute, a state which by its nature is relative and therefore can only apply to *one part* of matter at one time. Even if we overlook this point, the difficulty still remains : first, how did the world come to be loaded, since nowadays guns do not load themselves ; and second, whose finger was it then that pulled the trigger ? We may turn and twist as much as we like, but under Herr Dühring's guidance we always come back again to—the finger of God. . . .

In ordinary mechanics the bridge from the static to the dynamic is—the external stimulus. If a stone weighing a hundredweight is raised from the ground ten yards into the air and is freely suspended in such a way that it *remains* hanging there in an identical state and in a relation of *rest*, it would be necessary to have an audience of sucklings *to be* able to maintain that the present state of this body does not represent any mechanical work, or that its distance from its previous position is not measured by mechanical work. Every passer-by will easily explain to Herr Dühring that



the stone did not rise of itself to the rope, and any textbook of mechanics will tell him that if he lets the stone fall again it exerts in falling just as much mechanical work as was necessary to raise it the ten yards in the air. Even the simple fact that the stone is hanging up there represents mechanical work, for if it remains hanging long enough the rope breaks, as soon as chemical decomposition makes it no longer strong enough to bear the weight of the stone. But it is to such simple basic forms, to use Herr Dühring's language, that all mechanical processes can be reduced, and the engineer is still to be born who cannot find the bridge from the static to the dynamic, so long as he has at his disposal a sufficient external impulse.

To be sure, it is a hard nut and a bitter pill for our metaphysician that motion should find its measure in its opposite, in rest. That is indeed a crying contradiction, and every contradiction, according to Herr Dühring, is nonsensical. It is none the less a fact that the suspended stone, just like the loaded gun, represents a definite quantity of mechanical motion, that this definite quantity is measurable exactly by its weight and its distance from the ground, and that the mechanical motion may be used in various ways at will, for example, by its direct fall, by sliding down an inclined plane, or by turning a shaft. From the dialectical standpoint, the possibility of expressing motion in its opposite, in rest, presents absolutely no difficulty. To dialectical philosophy the whole contradiction, as we have seen, is only relative ; there is no such thing as absolute rest, unconditional equilibrium. Each separate movement strives towards equilibrium, and the motion as a whole puts an end to the equilibrium. When therefore rest and equilibrium occur they are the result of arrested motion, and it is self-evident that this motion is measurable in its result, can be expressed in it, and can be restored out of it again in one form or another. But Herr Dühring cannot allow himself to be satisfied with such a simple presentation of the matter. As a good metaphysician he first tears open a yawning

gulf, which does not exist in reality, between motion and equilibrium, and is then surprised that he cannot find any bridge across this self-fabricated gulf. He might just as well mount his metaphysical Rosinante and chase the Kantian "thing-in-itself"; for it is that and nothing else which in the last analysis is hiding behind this undiscoverable bridge. . . .

*Morality and Law ; Eternal Truths*

. . . Is human thought sovereign ? Before we can answer yes or no we must first enquire : what is human thought ? Is it the thought of the individual man ? No. But it exists only as the individual thought of many billions of past, present and future men. If, then, I say that the total thought of all these human beings, including future ones, which is embraced in my idea, is *sovereign*, able to know the world as it exists, if only mankind lasts long enough and in so far as no limits are imposed on its knowledge by its perceptive organs or the objects to be known, then I am saying something which is pretty banal and, in addition, pretty barren. For the most valuable result from it would be that it should make us extremely distrustful of our present knowledge, inasmuch as in all probability we are but little beyond the beginning of human history, and the generations which will put us right are likely to be far more numerous than those whose knowledge we—often enough with a considerable degree of contempt—are in a position to correct.

Herr Dühring himself declares that consciousness, and therefore also thought and knowledge, of necessity can only become manifest in a series of individual beings. We can only ascribe sovereignty to the thought of each of these individuals in so far as we are not aware of any power which would be able to impose any idea forcibly on him, when he is of sound mind and wide awake. But as for the sovereign validity of the knowledge in each individual's mind, we all know that there can be no talk of such a thing, and that all

previous experience shows that without exception such knowledge always contains much more that is capable of being improved upon than that which cannot be improved upon or is correct.

In other words, the sovereignty of thought is realised in a series of extremely unsovereignly-thinking human beings ; the knowledge which has an unconditional claim to truth is realised in a series of relative errors ; neither the one nor the other can be fully realised except through an endless eternity of human existence.

Here once again we find the same contradiction as we found above, between the character of human thought, necessarily conceived as absolute, and its reality in individual human beings with their extremely limited thought. This is a contradiction which can only be solved in the infinite progression, or what is for us, at least from a practical standpoint, the endless succession, of generations of mankind. In this sense human thought is just as much sovereign as not sovereign, and its capacity for knowledge just as much unlimited as limited. It is sovereign and unlimited in its disposition, its vocation, its possibilities and its historical purpose ; it is not sovereign and it is limited in its individual expression and in its realisation at each particular moment.

It is just the same with eternal truths. If mankind ever reached the stage at which it could only work with eternal truths, with conclusions which possess sovereign validity and have an unconditional claim to truth, it would then have reached the point where the infinity of the intellectual world both in its actuality and in its potentiality had been exhausted, and this would mean that the famous miracle of the infinite series which has been counted would have been performed.

But in spite of all this, are there any truths which are so securely based that any doubt of them seems to us to amount to insanity ? That twice two makes four, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, that

Paris is in France, that a man who gets no food dies of hunger, and so forth? Are there then nevertheless *eternal* truths, final and ultimate truths?

Certainly there are. We can divide the whole realm of knowledge in the traditional way into three great departments. The first includes all sciences which are concerned with inanimate Nature and are to a greater or less degree susceptible of mathematical treatment: mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, physics, chemistry. If it gives anyone any pleasure to use mighty words for very simple things, it can be asserted that *certain* results obtained by these sciences are eternal truths, final and ultimate truths; for which reason these sciences are also known as the *exact* sciences. But very far from all their results have this validity. With the introduction of variable magnitudes and the extension of their variability to the infinitely small and infinitely large, mathematics, in other respects so strictly moral, fell from grace; it ate of the tree of knowledge, which opened up to it a career of most colossal achievements, but at the same time a path of error. The virgin state of absolute validity and irrefutable certainty of everything mathematical was gone for ever; mathematics entered the realm of controversy, and we have reached the point where most people differentiate and integrate not because they understand what they are doing but from pure faith, because up to now it has always come out right. Things are even worse with astronomy and mechanics, and in physics and chemistry we are surrounded by hypotheses as by a swarm of bees. And it must of necessity be so. In physics we are dealing with the motion of molecules, in chemistry with the formation of molecules out of atoms, and if the interference of light waves is not a myth, we have absolutely no prospect of ever seeing these interesting objects with our own eyes. As time goes on, final and ultimate truths become remarkably rare in this field.

We are even worse off for them in geology, which by its nature has to deal chiefly with events which took place not

only in our absence but in the absence of any human being whatever. The winning of final and absolute truths on this field is therefore a very troublesome business, and the crop is extremely small.

The second department of science is the one which covers the investigation of living organisms. In this fluid there is such a multitude of inter-relationships and causalities that not only does the solution of each question give rise to a host of other questions, but each separate problem can only be solved piecemeal, through a series of investigations which often requires centuries to complete ; and even then the need for a systematic presentation of all their inter-relations makes it necessary once more to surround the final and ultimate truths with a luxuriant growth of hypotheses. What a long series of intermediaries from Galen to Malpighi was necessary for correctly establishing such a simple matter as the circulation of the blood in mammals, how slight is our knowledge of the origin of blood corpuscles, and how numerous are the missing links even to-day, for example, in our attempts to bring the symptoms of a disease into some rational relationship with its causes ! And often enough discoveries, such as that of the cell, are made which compel us to revise completely all formerly established final and ultimate truths in the realm of biology, and to put whole piles of them on the scrap heap once and for all. Anyone who wants to establish really pure and immutable truths in this science will therefore have to be content with such platitudes as : all men are mortal, all female mammals have lacteal glands, and the like ; he will not even be able to assert that the higher mammals digest with their stomach and intestines and not with their heads, for the nervous activity which is centralised in the head is indispensable to digestion.

But eternal truths are in an even worse plight in the third, the historical group of sciences. The subjects investigated by these in their historical sequence and in their present forms are the conditions of human life, social

relationships, forms of law and government, with their ideal superstructure, of philosophy, religion, art, etc. In organic nature we are at least dealing with a succession of phenomena which, so far as our immediate observation is concerned, are recurring with fair regularity between very wide limits. Organic species have on the whole remained unchanged since the time of Aristotle. In social history, however, the repetition of conditions is the exception and not the rule, once we pass beyond the primitive stage of man, the so-called Stone Age ; and when such repetitions occur, they never arise under exactly similar conditions—as for example the existence of an original common ownership of the land among all civilised peoples, and the way in which this came to an end. In the sphere of human history our knowledge is therefore even more backward than in the realm of biology. Furthermore, when by way of exception the inner connection between the social and political forms in an epoch come to be recognised, this as a rule only occurs when these forms are already out of date and are nearing extinction. Therefore, knowledge is here essentially relative, inasmuch as it is limited to the perception of relationships and consequences of certain social and state forms which exist only at a particular epoch and among particular people and are of their very nature transitory. Anyone therefore who sets out on this field to hunt down final and ultimate truths, truths which are pure or absolutely immutable, will bring home but little, apart from platitudes and commonplaces of the sorriest kind—for example, that generally speaking man cannot live except by labour ; that up to the present mankind for the most part has been divided into rulers and ruled ; that Napoleon died on May 5, 1821, and others of like kind.

Now it is a remarkable thing that it is precisely in this sphere that we most frequently encounter truths which claim to be eternal, final and ultimate and all the rest of it. That twice two make four, that birds have beaks, and similar statements, are proclaimed as eternal truths only

by those who aim at deducing, from the existence of eternal truths in general, the conclusion that there are also eternal truths in the sphere of human history—eternal morality, eternal justice, and so on—which claim a validity and scope equal to those of the truths and deductions of mathematics. And then we can confidently rely on this same friend of humanity taking the first opportunity to assure us that all previous fabricators of eternal truths have been to a greater or lesser degree asses and charlatans, that they have all fallen into error and made mistakes ; but that *their* error and *their* fallibility has been in accordance with natural law, and prove the existence of truth and accuracy in *his* case ; and that he, the prophet who has now arisen, has in his bag, all ready made, final and ultimate truth, eternal morality and eternal justice. This has all happened so many hundreds and thousands of times that we can only feel astonished that there should still be people credulous enough to believe this, not of others, but of themselves. . . .

We might have made mention above of the sciences which investigate the laws of human thought, i.e., logic and dialectics. In these, however, we do not fare any better as regards eternal truths. Herr Dühring declares that dialectics proper is pure nonsense, and the many books which have been and in the future will be written on logic provide on the other hand abundant proof that in this science too final and ultimate truths are much more sparsely sown than is commonly believed.

For that matter, there is absolutely no need to be alarmed at the fact that the stage of knowledge which we have now reached is as little final as all that have preceded it. It already embraces a vast mass of facts and requires very great specialisation of study on the part of anyone who wants to become an expert in any particular science. But a man who applies the measure of pure, immutable, final and ultimate truth to knowledge which, by the very nature of its object, must either remain relative for long successions of

generations and be completed only step by step, or which, as in cosmogony, geology and the history of man, must always remain defective and incomplete because of the faultiness of historical material—such a man only proves thereby his own ignorance and perversity, even if the real background to his pretensions is not, as it is in this case, his claim to personal infallibility. Truth and error, like all concepts which are expressed in polar opposites, have absolute validity only in an extremely limited field, as we have just seen, and as even Herr Dürhing would realise if he had any acquaintance with the first elements of dialectics, which deal precisely with the inadequacy of all polar opposites. As soon as we apply the antithesis between truth and error outside of that narrow field which has been referred to above it becomes relative and therefore unserviceable for exact scientific modes of expression ; and if we attempt to apply it as absolutely valid outside that field we then really find ourselves beaten : both poles of the antithesis change into their opposites, truth becomes error and error truth. Let us take as an example the well-known Boyle's law, by which, if the temperature remains constant, the volume of gases varies inversely with the pressure to which they are subjected. Regnault found that this law does not hold good in certain cases. Had he been a philosopher of reality he would have had to say : Boyle's law is mutable, and is therefore not a pure truth, therefore it is not a truth at all, therefore it is an error. But had he done this he would have committed an error far greater than the one that was contained in Boyle's law ; his grain of truth would have been lost sight of in a sandhill of error ; he would have distorted his originally correct conclusion into an error compared with which Boyle's law, along with the little particle of error that clings to it, would have seemed like truth. But Regnault, being a man of science, did not indulge in such childishness, but continued his investigations and discovered that Boyle's law is in general only approximately correct, and in particular loses its validity in the



case of gases which can be liquefied by pressure, as soon as the pressure approaches the point at which liquefaction begins. Boyle's law therefore was proved to be correct only within definite limits. But is it absolutely and finally true even within those limits? No physicist would assert that this was so. He would say that it holds good within certain limits of pressure and temperature and for certain gases; and even within these more restricted limits he would not exclude the possibility of a still narrower limitation or altered formulation as the result of future investigations. This is how things stand with final and ultimate truths in physics for example. Really scientific works therefore as a rule avoid such dogmatic and moral expressions as error and truth, while these expressions meet us everywhere in works such as the philosophy of reality, in which empty phrase-mongering attempts to impose on us as the sovereign result of sovereign thought. . . .

If we have not made much progress with truth and error, we can make even less with good and bad. This antithesis belongs exclusively to the domain of morals, that is, a domain drawn from the history of mankind, and it is precisely in this field that final and ultimate truths are most sparsely sown. The conceptions of good and bad have varied so much from nation to nation and from age to age that they have often been in direct contradiction to each other. But all the same, someone may object, good is not bad and bad is not good; if good is confused with bad there is an end to all morality, and everyone can do and leave undone whatever he cares. This is also, stripped of his oracular phrases, Herr Dühring's opinion. But the matter cannot be so simply disposed of. If it was such an easy business there would certainly be no dispute at all over good and bad; everyone would know what was good and what was bad. But how do things stand to-day? What morality is preached to us to-day? There is first Christian-feudal morality, inherited from past centuries of faith; and this again has two main subdivisions, Catholic and Protestant

moralties, each of which in turn has no lack of further subdivisions from the Jesuit-Catholic and Orthodox-Protestant to loose "advanced" moralities. Alongside of these we find the modern bourgeois morality and with it too the proletarian morality of the future, so that in the most advanced European countries alone the past, present and future provide three great groups of moral theories which are in force simultaneously and alongside of each other. Which is then the true one? Not one of them, in the sense of having absolute validity; but certainly that morality which contains the maximum of durable elements is the one which, in the present, represents the overthrow of the present, represents the future: that is, the proletarian.

But when we see that the three classes of modern society, the feudal aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, each have their special morality, we can only draw the one conclusion, that men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their moral ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based—from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange.

But nevertheless there is much that is common to the three moral theories mentioned above—is this not at least a portion of a morality which is externally fixed? These moral theories represent three different stages of the same historical development, and have therefore a common historical background, and for that reason alone they necessarily have much in common. Even more. In similar or approximately similar stages of economic development moral theories must of necessity be more or less in agreement. From the moment when private property in movable objects developed, in all societies in which this private property existed there must be this moral law in common: Thou shalt not steal. Does this law thereby become an eternal moral law? By no means. In a society in which the motive for stealing has been done away with, in which

therefore at the very most only lunatics would ever steal, how the teacher of morals would be laughed at who tried solemnly to proclaim the eternal truth : Thou shalt not steal !

We therefore reject every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatsoever as an eternal, ultimate and for ever immutable moral law on the pretext that the moral world too has its permanent principles which transcend history and the differences between nations. We maintain on the contrary that all former moral theories are the product, in the last analysis, of the economic stage which society had reached at that particular epoch. And as society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms, morality was always a class morality ; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class has become powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed. That in this process there has on the whole been progress in morality, as in all other branches of human knowledge, cannot be doubted. But we have not yet passed beyond class morality. A really human morality which transcends class antagonisms and their legacies in thought becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class contradictions but has even forgotten them in practical life. . . .

### *Morality and Law ; Equality*

. . . The idea that all men, as men, have something in common, and that they are therefore equal so far as these common characteristics go, is of course primeval. But the modern demand for equality is something entirely different from that ; this consists rather in deducing from those common characteristics of humanity, from that equality of men as men, a claim to equal political or social status for all human beings, or at least for all citizens of a state or all members of a society. Before the original conception of

relative quality could lead to the conclusion that men should have equal rights in the state and in society, before this conclusion could appear to be something even natural and self-evident, however, thousands of years had to pass and did pass. In the oldest natural communities equality of rights existed at most for members of the community; women, slaves and strangers were excluded from this equality as a matter of course. Among the Greeks and Romans the inequalities of men were of greater importance than any form of equality. It would necessarily have seemed idiotic to the ancients that Greeks and barbarians, freemen and slaves, citizens and dependents, Roman citizens and Roman subjects (to use a comprehensive term) should have a claim to equal political status. Under the Roman Empire all these distinctions gradually disappeared, except the distinction between freemen and slaves, and there arose, for the freemen at least, that equality as between private individuals on the basis of which Roman law developed—the completest elaboration of law based on private property which we know. But so long as the distinction between freemen and slaves existed, there could be no talk of drawing legal conclusions from the fact of general equality *as men*; and we saw this again quite recently, in the slave-owning states of the North American Union.

Christianity knew only *one* point in which all men were equal: that all were equally born in original sin—which corresponded perfectly with its character as the religion of the slaves and the oppressed. Apart from this it recognised, at most, the equality of the elect, which however was only stressed at the very beginning. The traces of common ownership which are also found in the early stages of the new religion can be ascribed to the solidarity of a proscribed sect rather than to real equalitarian ideas. Within a very short time the establishment of the distinction between priests and laymen put an end even to this tendency to Christian equality.—The overrunning of Western Europe by the Germans abolished for centuries all ideas of

equality, through the gradual building up of such a complicated social and political hierarchy as had never before existed. But at the same time the invasion drew Western and Central Europe into the course of historical development, created for the first time a compact cultural area, and within this area also for the first time a system of predominantly national states exerting mutual influence on each other and mutually holding each other in check. Thereby it prepared the ground on which alone the question of the equal status of men, of the rights of man, could at a later period be raised.

The feudal middle ages also developed in its womb the class which was destined in the future course of its evolution to be the standard-bearer of the modern demand for equality: the bourgeoisie. Itself in its origin one of the "estates" of the feudal order, the bourgeoisie developed the predominantly handicraft industry and the exchange of products within feudal society to a relatively high level, when at the end of the fifteenth century the great maritime discoveries opened to it a new and more far-reaching career. Trade beyond the confines of Europe, which had previously been carried on only between Italy and the Levant, was now extended to America and India, and soon surpassed in importance both the mutual exchange between the various European countries and the internal trade within each separate country. American gold and silver flooded Europe and forced its way like a disintegrating element into every fissure, hole and pore of feudal society. Handicraft industry could no longer satisfy the rising demand; in the leading industries of the most advanced countries it was replaced by manufacture.

But this mighty revolution in the economic conditions of society was not followed by any immediate corresponding change in its political structure. The state order remained feudal, while society became more and more bourgeois. Trade on a large scale, that is to say, international and, even more, world trade, requires free owners of commodities

who are unrestricted in their movements and have equal rights as traders to exchange their commodities on the basis of laws that are equal for them all, at least in each separate place. The transition from handicraft to manufacture presupposes the existence of a number of free workers—free on the one hand from the fetters of the guild and on the other from the means whereby they could themselves utilise their labour power : workers who can contract with their employers for the hire of their labour power, and as parties to the contract have rights equal with his. And finally the equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is *human* labour, found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois economy, according to which the value of a commodity is measured by the socially necessary labour embodied in it. But where economic relations required freedom and equality of rights, the political system opposed them at every step with guild restrictions and special privileges. Local privileges, differential duties, exceptional laws of all kinds in trade affected not only foreigners or people living in the colonies, but often enough also whole categories of the nationals of each country ; the privileges of the guilds everywhere and ever anew formed barriers to the path of development of manufacture. Nowhere was the path open and the chances equal for all the bourgeois competitors—and yet this was the first and ever more pressing need.

The demand for liberation from feudal fetters and the establishment of equality of rights by the abolition of feudal inequalities was bound soon to assume wider dimensions from the moment when the economic advance of society first placed it on the order of the day. If it was raised in the interests of industry and trade, it was also necessary to demand the same equality of rights for the great mass of the peasantry who, in every degree of bondage from total serfdom upwards, were compelled to give the greater part of their labour time to their feudal lord without payment

and in addition to pay innumerable other dues to him and to the state. On the other hand, it was impossible to avoid the demand for the abolition also of feudal privileges, the freedom from taxation of the nobility, the political privileges of the various feudal estates. And as people were no longer living in a world empire such as the Roman Empire had been, but in a system of independent states dealing with each other on an equal footing and at approximately the same stage of bourgeois development, it was a matter of course that the demand for equality should assume a general character reaching out beyond the individual state, that freedom and equality should be proclaimed as *human rights*. And it is significant of the specifically bourgeois character of these human rights that the American Constitution, the first to recognise the rights of man, in the same breath confirmed the slavery of the coloured races then existing in America : class privileges were prescribed, race privileges sanctioned.

As is well known, however, from the moment when, like a butterfly from the chrysalis, the bourgeoisie arose out of the burghers of the feudal period, when this "estate" of the Middle Ages developed into a class of modern society, it was always and inevitably accompanied by its shadow, the proletariat. And in the same way the bourgeois demand for equality was accompanied by the proletarian demand for equality. From the moment when the bourgeois demand for the abolition of class privileges was put forward, alongside of it appeared the proletarian demand for the abolition of the *classes themselves*—at first in religious form, basing itself on primitive Christianity, and later drawing support from the bourgeois equalitarian theories themselves. The proletarians took the bourgeoisie at their word : equality must not be merely apparent, must not apply merely to the sphere of the state, but must also be real, must be extended to the social and economic sphere. And especially since the French bourgeoisie, from the great revolution on, brought bourgeois equality to the forefront, the French proletariat

answered blow for blow with the demand for social and economic equality, and equality became the battle-cry particularly of the French proletariat.

The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has therefore a double meaning. It is either—as was the case at the very start, for example in the peasants' war—the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast of rich and poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, surfeit and starvation ; as such it is the simple expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and indeed only in that. Or, on the other hand, the proletarian demand for equality has arisen as the reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as an agitational means in order to rouse the workers against the capitalists on the basis of the capitalists' own assertions ; and in this case it stands and falls with bourgeois equality itself. In both cases the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the *abolition of classes*. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity. . . .

The idea of equality, therefore, both in its bourgeois and in its proletarian form, is itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical conditions which in turn themselves presuppose a long previous historical development. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth. And if to-day it is taken for granted by the general public—in one sense or another—if, as Marx says, it “already possesses the fixity of a popular prejudice,” this is not the consequence of its axiomatic truth, but the result of the general diffusion and the continued appropriateness of the ideas of the eighteenth century. . . .



*Morality and Law ; Freedom and Necessity*

... Hegel was the first to state correctly the relation between freedom and necessity. To him, freedom is the appreciation of necessity. "Necessity is *blind only in so far as it is not understood*." Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends. This holds good in relation both to the laws of external nature and to those which govern the bodily and mental life of men themselves—two classes of laws which we can separate from each other at most only in thought but not in reality. Freedom of the will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with real knowledge of the subject. Therefore the *freer* a man's judgment is in relation to a definite question, with so much the greater *necessity* is the content of this judgment determined ; while the uncertainty, founded on ignorance, which seems to make an arbitrary choice among many different and conflicting possible decisions, shows by this precisely that it is not free, that it is controlled by the very object it should itself control. Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature which is founded on knowledge of natural necessity ; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development. The first men who separated themselves from the animal kingdom were in all essentials as unfree as the animals themselves, but each step forward in civilisation was a step towards freedom. On the threshold of human history stands the discovery that mechanical motion can be transformed into heat : the production of fire by friction ; at the close of the development so far gone through stands the discovery that heat can be transformed into mechanical motion : the steam engine.—And, in spite of the gigantic and liberating revolution in the social world which the steam engine is carrying through—and which is not yet half completed—it is beyond the question that the generation

of fire by friction was of even greater effectiveness for the liberation of mankind. For the generation of fire by friction gave man for the first time control over one of the forces of Nature, and thereby separated him for ever from the animal kingdom. The steam engine will never bring about such a mighty leap forward in human development, however important it may seem in our eyes as representing all those immense productive forces dependent on it—forces which alone make possible a state of society in which there are no longer class distinctions or anxiety over the means of subsistence for the individual, and in which for the first time there can be talk of real human freedom and of an existence in harmony with the established laws of Nature. But how young the whole of human history still is, and how ridiculous it would be to attempt to ascribe any absolute validity to our present views, is evident from the simple fact that all past history can be characterised as the history of the epoch from the practical discovery of the transformation of mechanical motion into heat up to that of the transformation of heat into mechanical motion. . . .

#### *Dialectics ; Quantity and Quality*

. . . So long as we consider things as static and lifeless, each one by itself, alongside of and after each other, it is true that we do not run up against any contradictions in them. We find certain qualities which are partly common to, partly diverse from, and even contradictory to each other, but which in this case are distributed among different objects and therefore contain no contradiction. Within the limits of this sphere of thought we can get along on the basis of the usual metaphysical mode of thought. But the position is quite different as soon as we consider things in their motion, their change, their life, their reciprocal influence on each other. Then we immediately become involved in contradictions. Motion itself is a contradiction : even simple mechanical change of place can only come about through

a body at one and the same moment of time being both in one place and in another place, being in one and the same place and also not in it. And the continuous assertion and simultaneous solution of this contradiction is precisely what motion is.

And if simple mechanical change of place contains a contradiction, this is even more true of the higher forms of motion of matter, and especially of organic life and its development. We saw above that life consists just precisely in this—that a living thing is at each moment itself and yet something else. Life is therefore also a contradiction which is present in things and processes themselves, and which constantly asserts and solves itself; and as soon as the contradiction ceases, life too comes to an end, and death steps in. We likewise saw that also in the sphere of thought we could not avoid contradictions, and that for example the contradiction between man's inherently unlimited faculty of knowledge and its actual realisation in men who are limited by their external conditions and limited also in their intellectual faculties finds its solution in what is, for us at least, and from a practical standpoint, an endless succession of generations, in infinite progress. . . .

On page 336<sup>1</sup> Marx, on the basis of the previous examination of constant and variable capital and surplus value, draws the conclusion that "not every sum of money, or of value, is at pleasure transformable into capital. To effect this transformation, in fact, a certain minimum of money or of exchange-value must be presupposed in the hands of the individual possessor of money or commodities."

He then takes as an example the case of a labourer in any branch of industry, who works eight hours for himself—that is, in producing the value of his wages—and the following four hours for the capitalist, in producing surplus value, which immediately flows into the pocket of the capitalist. In this case a capitalist would have to dispose of a sum of value sufficient to enable him to provide two labourers with

<sup>1</sup> *Capital*, Vol I (Kerr Edition).

raw materials, instruments of labour, and wages, in order to appropriate enough surplus value every day to enable him to live on it even as well as one of his labourers. And as the aim of capitalist production is not mere subsistence but the increase of wealth, our man with his two labourers would still not be a capitalist. Now in order that he may live twice as well as an ordinary labourer, and besides turn half of the surplus value produced again into capital, he would have to be able to employ eight labourers, that is he would have to dispose of four times the sum of value assumed above. And it is only after this, and in the course of still further explanations elucidating and establishing the fact that not every petty sum of value is enough to be transformable into capital, but that the minimum sum required varies with each period of development and each branch of industry, it is only then that Marx observes: "Here, as in natural science, is *verified* the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel (in his *Logic*) that merely quantitative changes beyond a certain point pass into qualitative differences." . . .

*Dialectics ; Negation of the Negation*

. . . But what rôle does the negation of the negation play in Marx? On page 834<sup>1</sup> and the following pages he sets out the conclusions which he draws from the preceding fifty pages of economic and historical investigation into the so-called primitive accumulation of capital. Before the capitalist era, at least in England, petty industry existed on the basis of the private property of the labourer in his means of production. The so-called primitive accumulation of capital consisted in this case in the expropriation of these immediate producers, that is, in the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. This was possible because the petty industry referred to above is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving

<sup>1</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I (Kerr edition).

within narrow and primitive bounds, and at a certain stage of its development it brings forth the material agencies for its own annihilation. This annihilation, the transformation of the individual and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, forms the pre-history of capital. As soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, the further socialisation of labour and further transformation of the land and other means of production, and therefore the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form.

“ That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use of the means of production of combined, socialised labour. . . . Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation ; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in number, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist

integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."<sup>1</sup>

Marx merely shows from history, and in this passage states in a summarised form, that just as the former petty industry necessarily, through its own development, created the conditions of its annihilation, i.e., of the expropriation of the small proprietors, so now the capitalist mode of production has likewise itself created the material conditions which will annihilate it. The process is a historical one, and if it is at the same time a dialectical process, this is not Marx's fault, however annoying it may be for Herr Dühring.

It is only at this point, after Marx has completed his proof on the basis of historical and economic facts, that he proceeds ; " The capitalist mode of production and appropriation, and hence capitalist private property, is the first negation of individual private property founded on the labours of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of the negation "—and so on (as quoted above).

In characterising the process as the negation of the negation, therefore, Marx does not dream of attempting to prove by this that the process was historically necessary. On the contrary : after he has proved from history that in fact the process has partially already occurred, and partially must occur in the future, he then also characterises it as a process which develops in accordance with a definite dialectical law. That is all. It is therefore once again a pure distortion of the facts by Herr Dühring, when he declares that the negation of the negation has to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past, or that Marx wants anyone to allow himself to be convinced of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital (which is itself a Dühringian corporeal contradiction) on the basis of the negation of the negation.

<sup>1</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 836-37 (Kerr edition).

Herr Dühring's total lack of understanding as to the nature of dialectics is shown by the very fact that he regards it as a mere instrument through which things can be proved, as in a more limited way formal logic or elementary mathematics can be regarded. Even formal logic is primarily a method of arriving at new results, of advancing from the known to the unknown—and dialectics is the same, only in a more important sense, because in forcing its way beyond the narrow horizon of formal logic, it contains the germ of a more comprehensive view of the world. It is the same with mathematics. Elementary mathematics, the mathematics of constant magnitudes, moves within the confines of formal logic, at any rate taken as a whole ; the mathematics of variable magnitudes, whose most important part is the infinitesimal calculus, is in essence nothing other than the application of dialectics to mathematical relations. In it, the simple question of proof is definitely pushed into the background, as compared with the manifold application of the method to new spheres of research. But almost all the proofs of higher mathematics, from the first—that of the differential calculus—on, are false, from the standpoint of elementary mathematics taken rigidly. And it is necessarily so when, as happens in this case, an attempt is made to prove by formal logic results obtained in the field of dialectics. To attempt to prove anything by means of dialectics alone to a crass metaphysician like Herr Dühring would be as much a waste of time as the attempt made by Leibniz and his pupils to prove the principles of the infinitesimal calculus to the mathematicians of his time. The differential calculus produced in them the same convulsions as Herr Dühring gets from the negation of the negation, in which, moreover, as we shall see, the differential calculus also plays a certain rôle. Ultimately these gentlemen—or those of them who had not died in the interval—grudgingly gave way, not because they were convinced, but because it always produced correct results. Herr Dühring, as he himself tells us, has only just entered the forties, and if he attains

old age, as we hope he may, perhaps his experience will be the same.

But what then is this fearful negation of the negation, which makes life so bitter for Herr Dühring and fulfils the same rôle with him of the unpardonable crime as the sin against the Holy Ghost does in Christianity?—A very simple process which is taking place everywhere and every day, which any child can understand, as soon as it is stripped of the veil of mystery in which it was wrapped by the old idealist philosophy and in which it is to the advantage of helpless metaphysicians of Herr Dühring's calibre to keep it enveloped. Let us take a grain of barley. Millions of such grains of barley are milled, boiled and brewed and then consumed. But if such a grain of barley meets with conditions which for it are normal, if it falls on suitable soil, then under the influence of heat and moisture a specific change takes place, it germinates ; the grain as such ceases to exist, it is negated, and in its place appears the plant which has arisen from it, the negation of the grain. But what is the normal life-process of this plant ? It grows, flowers, is fertilised and finally once more produces grains of barley, and as soon as these have ripened the stalk dies, is in its turn negated. As a result of this negation of the negation we have once again the original grain of barley, but not as a single unit, but ten, twenty or thirty fold. Species of grain change extremely slowly, and so the barley of to-day is almost the same as it was a century ago.

But if we take an artificially cultivated ornamental plant, for example a dahlia or an orchid : if we treat the seed and the plant which grows from it as a gardener does, we get as the result of this negation of the negation not only more seeds, but also qualitatively better seeds, which produce more beautiful flowers, and each fresh repetition of this process, each repeated negation of the negation increases this improvement. With most insects, this process follows the same lines as in the case of the grain of barley. Butterflies, for example, spring from the egg through a negation of the



egg, they pass through certain transformations until they reach sexual maturity, they pair and are in turn negated, dying as soon as the pairing process has been completed and the female has laid its numerous eggs. We are not concerned at the moment with the fact that with other plants and animals the process does not take such a simple form, that before they die they produce seeds, eggs or offspring not once but many times ; our purpose here is only to show that the negation of the negation *takes place in reality* in both divisions of the organic world. Furthermore, the whole of geology is a series of negated negations, a series arising from the successive shattering of old and the depositing of new rock formations. First the original earth-crust brought into existence by the cooling of the liquid mass was broken up by oceanic, meteorological and atmospherico-chemical action, and these disintegrated masses were deposited on the ocean floor. Local elevations of the ocean floor above the surface of the sea subject portions of these first strata once more to the action of rain, the changing temperature of the seasons and the oxygen and carbonic acid of the atmosphere. These same influences acted on the molten masses of rock which issued from the interior of the earth, broke through the strata and subsequently solidified. In this way, in the course of millions of centuries, ever new strata are formed and in turn are for the most part destroyed, ever anew serving as material for the formation of new strata. But the result of this process has been a very positive one : the creation, out of the most varied chemical elements, of a mixed and mechanically pulverised soil which makes possible the most abundant and diverse vegetation.

It is the same in mathematics. Let us take any algebraical magnitude whatever : for example,  $a$ . If this is negated, we get  $-a$  (minus  $a$ ). If we negate that negation, by multiplying  $-a$  by  $-a$ , we get  $a^2$ , i.e., the original positive magnitude, but at a higher degree, raised to its second power. In this case also it makes no difference that we can reach the same  $a^2$  by multiplying the positive  $a$  by itself,

thus also getting  $a^2$ . For the negated negation is so securely entrenched in  $a^2$  that the latter always has two square roots, namely  $a$  and  $-a$ . And the fact that it is impossible to get rid of the negated negation, the negative root of the square, acquires very obvious significance as soon as we get as far as quadratic equations. The negation of the negation is even more strikingly obvious in the higher analyses, in those "summations of indefinitely small magnitudes" which Herr Dühring himself declares are the highest operations of mathematics, and in ordinary language are known as the differential and integral calculus. How are these forms of calculus used? In a given problem, for example, I have two variable magnitudes  $x$  and  $y$ , neither of which can vary without the other also varying in a relation determined by the conditions of the case. I differentiate  $x$  and  $y$ , i.e., I take  $x$  and  $y$  as so infinitely small that in comparison with any real magnitude, however small, they disappear, so that nothing is left of  $x$  and  $y$  but their reciprocal relation without any, so to speak, material basis, a quantitative relation in which there is no quantity. Therefore,  $\frac{dy}{dx}$ , the relation between the differentials of  $x$  and  $y$ , is equal to  $\frac{0}{0}$ , but  $\frac{0}{0}$  as the expression of  $\frac{y}{x}$ . I only mention in passing that this relation between two magnitudes which have disappeared, caught at the moment of their disappearance, is a contradiction; it cannot disturb us any more than it has disturbed the whole of mathematics for almost two hundred years. And yet what have I done but negate  $x$  and  $y$ , though not in a way that I need not bother about them any more, not in the way that metaphysics negates, but in the way that corresponds with the facts of the case? In place of  $x$  and  $y$ , therefore, I have their negation,  $dx$  and  $dy$  in the formulæ or equations before me. I continue then to operate with these formulæ, treating  $dx$  and  $dy$  as magnitudes which are real, though subject to certain exceptional laws, and at a certain point I negate the negation, i.e., I integrate the differential formula, and in place of  $dx$

and *dy* again get the real magnitudes  $x$  and  $y$ , and am not then where I was at the beginning, but by using this method I have solved the problem on which ordinary geometry and algebra might perhaps have broken their teeth in vain.

It is the same, too, in history. All civilised peoples begin with the common ownership of the land. With all peoples who have passed a certain primitive stage, in the course of the development of agriculture this common ownership becomes a fetter on production. It is abolished, negated, and after a longer or shorter series of intermediate stages is transformed into private property. But at a higher stage of agricultural development, brought about by private property in land itself, private property in turn becomes a fetter on production as is the case to-day, both with small and large land ownership. The demand that it also should be negated, that it should once again be transformed into common property, necessarily arises. But this demand does not mean the restoration of the old original common ownership, but the institution of a far higher and more developed form of possession in common which, far from being a hindrance to production, on the contrary for the first time frees production from all fetters and gives it the possibility of making full use of modern chemical discoveries and mechanical inventions.

Or let us take another example: the philosophy of antiquity was primitive, natural materialism. As such, it was incapable of clearing up the relation between thought and matter. But the need to get clarity on this question led to the doctrine of a soul separable from the body, then to the assertion of the immortality of this soul, and finally to monotheism. The old materialism was therefore negated by idealism. But in the course of the further development of philosophy, idealism too became untenable and was negated by modern materialism. This modern materialism, the negation of the negation, is not the mere re-establishment of the old, but adds to the permanent foundations of

this old materialism the whole thought content of two thousand years of development of philosophy and natural science, as well as of the historical development of these two thousand years. It is in fact no longer a philosophy, but a simple conception of the world which has to establish its validity and be applied not in a science of sciences standing apart, but within the positive sciences. In this development philosophy is therefore "sublated," that is, "both abolished and preserved"; abolished as regards its form, and preserved as regards its real content.

What therefore is the negation of the negation? An extremely general—and for this reason extremely comprehensive and important—law of development of Nature, history and thought; a law which, as we have seen, holds good in the animal and plant kingdoms, in geology, in mathematics, in history and in philosophy—a law which even Herr Dühring, in spite of all his struggles and resistance, has unwittingly and in his own way to follow. It is obvious that in describing any evolutionary process as the negation of the negation I do not say anything concerning the *particular* process of development, for example, of the grain of barley from germination to the death of the fruit-bearing plant. For, as the integral calculus also is a negation of the negation, if I said anything of the sort I should only be making the nonsensical statement that the life-process of a barley plant was the integral calculus or for that matter that it was socialism. That, however, is what the metaphysicians are constantly trying to impute to dialectics. When I say that all these processes are the negation of the negation, I bring them all together under this one law of motion, and for this very reason I leave out of account the peculiarities of each separate individual process. Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of Nature, human society and thought. . . .

## PART II. POLITICAL ECONOMY

*The Force Theory*

... Historically, private property by no means makes its appearance as the result of robbery or violence. On the contrary. It already existed, even though it was limited to certain objects, in the ancient primitive communes of all civilised peoples. It developed even within these communes, at first through barter with strangers, till it reached the form of commodities. The more the products of the commune assumed the commodity form, that is, the less they were produced for their producers' own use, and the more for the purpose of exchange, the more the primitive natural division of labour was replaced by exchange also within the commune, the more inequality developed in the property of the individual members of the commune, the more deeply was the ancient common ownership of the land undermined, and the more rapidly the commune developed towards its dissolution and transformation into a village of small peasants. For thousands of years Oriental despotism and the changing rule of conquering nomad peoples were unable to change this old form of commune ; it saw the gradual destruction of their original home industry by the competition of products of large-scale industry which brought them nearer and nearer to dissolution. Force was as little involved in this process as in the dividing up, still now taking place, of the cultivated land held in common in the *Gehöferschaften* on the Moselle and in the Hochwald ; the peasants find it actually to their advantage that private ownership of cultivated land should take the place of common ownership. Even the formation of a primitive aristocracy, as in the case of the Celts, the Germans and the Indian Punjab, took place on the basis of common ownership of the land, and at first was not based in any way on force, but on voluntary goodwill and custom. Everywhere where private property developed, this took place as the

result of altered relations of production and exchange, in the interests of increased production and in furtherance of intercourse—that is to say, as a result of economic causes. Force plays no part in this at all. Indeed, it is clear that the institution of private property must be already in existence before the robber can *appropriate* another person's property, and that therefore force may be able to change the possessor but cannot create private property as such.

Nor can we use either force or property founded on force to explain the “enslavement of man for menial labour” in its most modern form—wage labour. We have already mentioned the rôle played in the dissolution of the primitive communes, that is, in the direct or indirect generalisation of private property, by the transformation of the products of labour into commodities, their production not for consumption by their own producers, but for exchange. In *Capital*, Marx proved with absolute clarity—and Herr Dühring avoids even the slightest reference to this—that at a certain stage of development the production of commodities becomes transformed into capitalist production, and that at this stage “the laws of appropriation or of private property, laws that are based on the production and circulation of commodities, become, by their own inner and inexorable dialectic, changed into their very opposite. The exchange of equivalents, the original operation with which we started, has now become turned round in such a way that there is only an apparent exchange. This is owing to the fact, first, that the capital which is exchanged for labour power is itself but a portion of the product of others' labour appropriated without an equivalent; and secondly, that this capital must not only be replaced by its producer, but replaced together with an added surplus. . . . At first the rights of property seemed to us to be based on a man's own labour. . . . Now, however [at the end of the Marxian development], property turns out to be the right, on the part of the capitalist, to appropriate the unpaid labour of others or its product, and, on the part of the labourer, the

impossibility of appropriating his own product. The separation of property from labour has become the necessary consequence of a law that apparently originated in their identity."

In other words, even if we exclude all possibility of robbery, violence and fraud, even if we assume that all private property was originally based on the owner's individual labour, and that throughout the whole subsequent process there was only exchange of equal values for equal values, the progressive evolution of production and exchange nevertheless brings us with necessity to the present capitalist mode of production, to the monopolisation of the means of production and the means of subsistence in the hands of a numerically small class, to the degradation of the other class, constituting the immense majority, into propertyless proletarians, to the periodic succession of production booms and commercial crises and to the whole of the present anarchy of production. The whole process is explained by purely economic causes ; robbery, force, the state of political interference of any kind are unnecessary at any point whatever. "Property founded on force" proves here also to be nothing but the phrase of a braggart intended to cover up his lack of understanding of the real course of things.

This course of things, expressed historically, is the history of the evolution of the bourgeoisie. If "political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic order," then the modern bourgeoisie cannot have developed in struggle with feudalism, but must be the latter's voluntarily begotten pet child. Everyone knows that what took place was the opposite. Originally an oppressed estate liable to pay dues to the ruling feudal nobility, recruited from serfs and villeins of every type, the burghers conquered one position after another in their continuous struggle with the nobility, and finally, in the most highly developed countries, took power in its stead : in France, by directly overthrowing the nobility ; in England, by making it more and more bourgeois,

and incorporating it as the ornamental head of the bourgeoisie itself. And how did it accomplish this? Simply through a change in the "economic order," which sooner or later, voluntarily or as the outcome of struggle, was followed by a change in the political conditions. The struggle of the bourgeoisie against the feudal nobility is the struggle of the town against the country, of industry against landed property, of money economy against natural economy; and the decisive weapon of the burghers in this struggle was their *economic* power, constantly increasing through the development first of handicraft industry, at a later stage progressing to manufacturing industry, and through the extension of commerce. During the whole of this struggle political force was on the side of the nobility, except for a period when the Crown used the burghers against the nobility, in order that the two "estates" might keep each other in check; but from the moment when the burghers, still politically powerless, began to grow dangerous owing to their increasing economic power, the Crown resumed its alliance with the nobility, and by so doing called forth the bourgeois revolution, first in England and then in France. The "political conditions" in France had remained unaltered, while the "economic order" had outgrown them. In political rank the nobleman was everything, the burgher nothing; but from the social standpoint the burgher was now the most important class in the state, while the nobleman had lost all his social functions and was now only drawing in, in the revenues that came to him, payment for these functions which had disappeared.

But moreover, in all their production the burghers had remained hemmed in by the feudal political forms of the Middle Ages, which this production—not only manufacture, but even handicraft industry—had long outgrown; they had remained hemmed in by all the thousandfold guild privileges and local and provincial customs barriers which had become mere irritants and fetters on production. The



bourgeois revolution put an end to this. Not, however, by adjusting the economic order to suit the political conditions, in accordance with Herr Dühring's principle—this was precisely what the nobles and the king had been vainly trying to do for years—but by doing the opposite, by casting aside the old mouldering political rubbish and creating political conditions in which the new "economic order" could exist and develop. And in this political and legal atmosphere which was suited to its needs it developed brilliantly, so brilliantly that the bourgeoisie already almost occupies the position filled by the nobility in 1789 : it is becoming more and more not only socially superfluous, but a social hundrance ; it is more and more becoming separated from productive activity, and becoming more and more, like the nobility in the past, a class merely drawing in revenues ; and it has accomplished this revolution in its own position and the creation of a new class, the proletariat, without any hocus-pocus of force whatever, and in a purely economic way. Even more : it did not in any way will this result of its own actions and activities—on the contrary this developed of itself with irresistible force, against the will and contrary to the intentions of the bourgeoisie ; its own productive powers have grown beyond its control, and, as with the force of a law of Nature, are driving the whole of bourgeoisie society forward to ruin or revolution. And when the bourgeoisie now make their appeal to force in order to save the collapsing "economic order" from the final crash, by so doing they only show that they are caught in the same illusion as Herr Dühring : the illusion that "political conditions are the decisive cause of the economic order" ; they show that they imagine, just as Herr Dühring does, that by making use of the "primitive phenomenon," "direct political force," they can remodel those "facts of the second order" the economic order and its inevitable development ; and that therefore the economic consequences of the steam engine and the modern machinery driven by it, of world trade and the

banking and credit developments of the present day, can be blown out of existence with Krupp guns and Mauser rifles. . . .

As men first emerged from the animal world—in the narrower sense of the term—so they made their entry into history; still half animal, brutal, still helpless in face of the forces of Nature, still ignorant of their own: and consequently as poor as the animals and hardly more productive than these. There prevailed a certain equality in the conditions of existence, and for the heads of families also a kind of equality of social position—at least an absence of social classes—which continued among the natural agricultural communities of the civilised peoples of a later period. In each such community there were from the beginning certain common interests the safeguarding of which had to be handed over to individuals, even though under the control of the community as a whole: such were the adjudication of disputes; repression of encroachments by individuals on the rights of others; control of water supplies, especially in hot countries; and finally, when conditions were still absolutely primitive, religious functions. Such offices are found in primitive communities of every period—in the oldest German Mark-communities and even to-day in India. They are naturally endowed with a certain measure of authority and are the beginnings of state power. The productive forces gradually increase; the increasing density of the population creates at one point a community of interests, at another, conflicting interests, between the separate communes, whose grouping into larger units brings about in turn a new division of labour, the setting up of organs to safeguard common interests and to guard against conflicting interests. These organs which, for the reason that they represent the common interests of the whole group, have a special position in relation to each individual community—in certain circumstances even one of opposition—soon make themselves even more independent, partly through heredity of functions, which comes

about almost as a matter of course in a world where everything happens in a natural way, and partly because they become more and more indispensable owing to the increasing number of conflicts with the other groups. It is not necessary for us to examine here how this independence of social functions in relation to society increased with time until it developed into domination over society ; how what was originally the servant developed gradually, where conditions were favourable, into the lord ; how this lord, on the basis of different conditions, emerged as an Oriental despot or satrap, the dynast of a Greek tribe, chieftain of a Celtic clan, and so on ; and to what extent subsequently used force in this transformation ; and how finally the separate individual rulers united into a ruling class. Here we are only concerned with establishing the fact that the exercise of a social function was everywhere the basis of political supremacy ; and further that political supremacy has existed for any length of time only when it fulfilled its social functions. However great the number of despotic governments which rose and fell in India and Persia, each was fully aware that its first duty was the general maintenance of irrigation throughout the valleys, without which no agriculture was possible. It was reserved for the enlightened English to lose sight of this in India ; they let the irrigation canals and sluices fall into decay, and are now at last discovering, through the regularly recurrent famines, that they have neglected the one activity which might have made their rule in India at least as legitimate as that of their predecessors.

But alongside of this development of classes another was also taking place. The natural division of labour within the family cultivating the soil made possible, at a certain level of well-being, the introduction of one or more strangers as additional labour forces. This was especially the case in countries where the old common ownership of the land had already disappeared or at least the former joint cultivation had given place to the separate cultivation of parcels of

land by the respective families. Production had so far developed that the labour power of a man could now produce more than was necessary for its mere maintenance ; the means of maintaining additional labour forces existed ; likewise the means of employing them ; labour power acquired a *value*. But within the community and the association to which it belonged there were no superfluous labour forces available. On the other hand, such forces were provided by war, and war was as old as the simultaneous existence alongside each other of several groups of communities. Up to that time they had not known what to do with prisoners of war, and had therefore simply killed them ; at an even earlier period, eaten them. But at the stage of the "economic order" which had now been attained the prisoners acquired a value ; their captors therefore let them live and made use of their labour. Thus force, instead of controlling the economic order, was on the contrary pressed into the service of the economic order. *Slavery* was invented. It soon became the predominant form of production among all peoples who were developing beyond the primitive community, but in the end was also one of the chief causes of the decay of that system. It was slavery that first made possible the division of labour between agriculture and industry on a considerable scale, and along with this, the flower of the ancient world, Hellenism. Without slavery, no Greek state, no Greek art and science ; without slavery, no Roman Empire. But without Hellenism and the Roman Empire as a basis, also no modern Europe.

We should never forget that our whole economic, political and intellectual development has as its presupposition a state of things in which slavery was as necessary as it was universally recognised. In this sense we are entitled to say : Without the slavery of antiquity, no modern socialism.

It is very easy to inveigh against slavery and similar things in general terms, and to give vent to high moral

indignation at such infamies. Unfortunately all that this conveys is only what everyone knows, namely, that these institutions of antiquity are no longer in accord with our present conditions and our sentiments, which these conditions determine. But it does not tell us one word as to how these institutions arose, why they existed, and what rôle they have played in history. And when we examine these questions, we are compelled to say—however contradictory and heretical it may sound—that the introduction of slavery under the conditions of that time was a great step forward. For it is a fact that man sprang from the beasts, and had consequently to use barbaric and almost bestial means to extricate himself from barbarism. The ancient communes, where they continued to exist, have for thousands of years formed the basis of the most barbarous form of state, Oriental despotism, from India to Russia. It was only where these communities dissolved that the peoples made progress of themselves, and their first economic advance consisted in the increase and development of production by means of slave labour. It is clear that so long as human labour was still so little productive that it provided but a small surplus over and above the necessary means of subsistence, any increase of the productive forces, extension of trade, development of the state and of law, or beginning of art and science, was only possible by means of a greater division of labour. And the necessary basis for this was the great division of labour between the masses discharging simple manual labour, and the few privileged persons directing labour, conducting trade and public affairs, and, at a later stage, occupying themselves with art and science. The simplest and most natural form of this division of labour was in fact slavery. In the historical conditions of the ancient world, and particularly of Greece, the advance to a society based on class antagonisms could only be accomplished in the form of slavery. This was an advance even for the slaves; the prisoners of war, from whom the mass of the slaves was recruited, now at least kept their lives, instead

of being killed as they had been before, or even roasted, as at a still earlier period.

We may add to this point that all historical antagonisms between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes to this very day find their explanation in this same relatively undeveloped productivity of human labour. So long as the really working population was so much occupied in their necessary labour that they had no time left for looking after the common affairs of society—the direction of labour, affairs of the State, legal matters, art, science, etc.—so long was it always necessary that there should exist a special class, freed from actual labour, to manage these affairs; while they then never failed to impose a greater and greater burden of labour, for their own advantage, on the working masses. Only the immense increase of the productive forces attained through large-scale industry made it possible to distribute labour over all members of society without exception, and thereby to limit the labour time of each individual member to such an extent that all have enough free time left to take part in the general—both theoretical and practical—affairs of society. It is only now, therefore, that any ruling and exploiting class has become superfluous and even a hindrance to social development, and it is only now, too, that it will be inexorably abolished, however much it may be in possession of the “direct force.”

When, therefore, Herr Dühring turns up his nose at Hellenism because it was founded on slavery, he might with equal justice reproach the Greeks with having no steam engines and electric telegraphs. And when he asserts that our modern wage-serfdom can only be explained as a somewhat transformed and mitigated heritage of slavery, and not from its own nature (that is, from the economic laws of modern society), either this only means that both wage labour and slavery are forms of subjection and class domination, which every child knows, or it is false. For with equal justice we might say that wage labour could only

be explained as a mitigated form of cannibalism, which is now established as having been the universal primitive form of disposal of vanquished enemies.

The rôle played in history by force as contrasted with economic development is now clear. In the first place, all political power is originally based on an economic, social function, and increases in proportion as the members of society, through the dissolution of the primitive community, become transformed into private producers, and thus become more and more separated from the administrators of the general functions of society. Secondly, after the political force has made itself independent in relation to society, and has transformed itself from its servant into its master, it can work in two different directions. Either it works in the sense and in the direction of the normal economic development in which case no conflict arises between them, the economic development being accelerated. Or, force works against economic development ; in this case, as a rule, with but few exceptions, force succumbs to it. These few exceptions are isolated cases of conquest, in which barbarian conquerors have exterminated or driven out the population of a country and have laid waste or allowed to go to ruin productive forces which they did not know how to use. This was what the Christians in Moorish Spain did with the major part of the irrigation works on which the highly-developed agriculture and horticulture of the Moors depended. Every conquest by a more barbarian people naturally disturbs the economic development and destroys numerous productive forces. But in the immense majority of cases where the conquest is permanent, the more barbarian conqueror has to adapt himself to the higher " economic order " resulting from the conquest ; he is assimilated by the vanquished and in most cases he has even to adopt their language. But where—apart from cases of conquest—the internal public force of a country stands in opposition to its economic development, as at a certain stage has occurred with almost every political

power in the past, the contest has always ended with the downfall of the political power. Inexorably and without exception the economic evolution has forced its way through—we have already mentioned the latest and most striking example of this ; the Great French Revolution. If, in accordance with Herr Dühring's theory, the economic order and with it the economic constitution of a given country were dependent simply on political force, it is absolutely impossible to understand why Friedrich Wilhelm IV could not succeed, in spite of his "magnificent army," in grafting the mediæval guilds and other romantic whims on to the railways, the steam engines and the large-scale industry which was just then developing in his country ; or why the Tsar of Russia, who is certainly even much more powerful, is not only unable to pay his debts, but cannot even maintain his "force" without continuous loans from the "economic order" of Western Europe.

For Herr Dühring force is the absolute evil ; the first act of force is for him the original sin ; his whole exposition is a jeremiad on the contamination, which this brought about, of all subsequent history by this original sin ; a jeremiad on the shameful perversion of all natural and social laws by this diabolical power, force. That force, however, plays another rôle in history, a revolutionary rôle ; that, in the words of Marx, it is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new, that it is the instrument by the aid of which social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilised, political forms—of this there is not a word in Herr Dühring. It is only with sighs and groans that he admits the possibility that force will perhaps be necessary for the overthrow of the economic system of exploitation—unfortunately, because all use of force, forsooth, demoralises the person who uses it. And this in spite of the immense moral and spiritual impetus which has resulted from every victorious revolution ! And this in Germany, where a violent collision—which indeed may be forced on the people—would at least have the advantage of



wiping out the servility which has permeated the national consciousness as a result of the humiliation of the Thirty Years' War. And this parsons' mode of thought—lifeless, insipid and impotent—claims to impose itself on the most revolutionary party which history has known !

### PART III. SOCIALISM

#### *Theoretical*

The materialist conception of history starts from the principle that production, and with production the exchange of its products, is the basis of every social order ; that in every society which has appeared in history the distribution of the products, and with it the division of society into classes or estates, is determined by what is produced and how it is produced, and how the product is exchanged. According to this conception, the ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in the minds of men, in their increasing insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the mode of production and exchange ; they are to be sought not in the *philosophy* but in the *economics* of the epoch concerned. The growing realisation that existing social institutions are irrational and unjust, that reason has become nonsense and good deeds a scourge, is only a sign that changes have been taking place quietly in the methods of production and forms of exchange with which the social order, adapted to previous economic conditions, is no longer in accord. This also involves that the means through which the abuses that have been revealed can be got rid of must likewise be present, in more or less developed form, in the altered conditions of production. These means are not to be *invented* by the mind, but *discovered* by means of the mind in the existing material facts of production.

Where then, on this basis, does modern socialism stand ?

The existing social order, as is now fairly generally admitted, is the creation of the present ruling class, the

bourgeoisie. The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie—called, since Marx, the capitalist mode of production—was incompatible with the local privileges and the privileges of birth as well as with the reciprocal personal ties of the feudal system ; the bourgeoisie shattered the feudal system, and on its ruins established the bourgeois social order, the realm of free competition, freedom of movement, equal rights for commodity owners, and all the other bourgeois glories. The capitalist mode of production could now develop freely. From the time when steam and the new too-making machinery had begun to transform the former manufacture into large-scale industry, the productive forces evolved under bourgeois direction developed at a pace that was previously unknown and to an unprecedented degree. But just as manufacture, and the handicraft industry which had been further developed under its influence, had previously come into conflict with the feudal fetters of the guilds, so large-scale industry, as it develops more fully, comes into conflict with the barriers within which the capitalist mode of production holds it confined. The new forces of production have already outgrown the bourgeois form of using them ; and this conflict between productive forces and mode of production is not a conflict which has arisen in men's heads, as for example the conflict between original sin and divine justice ; but it exists in the facts, objectively, outside of us, independently of the will or purpose even of the men who brought it about. Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex in thought of this actual conflict, its ideal reflection in the minds first of the class which is directly suffering under it—the working class.

In what, then, does this conflict consist ?

Previous to capitalist production, that is to say, in the Middle Ages, small-scale production was general, on the basis of the private ownership by the workers of their means of production : the agricultural industry of the small peasant, freeman or serf, and the handicraft industry of

the towns. The instruments of labour—land, agricultural implements, the workshop and tools—were the instruments of labour of individuals, intended only for individual use, and therefore necessarily puny, dwarfish, restricted. But just because of this they belonged, as a rule, to the producer himself. To concentrate and enlarge these scattered, limited means of production, to transform them into the mighty levers of production of the present day, was precisely the historic rôle of the capitalist mode of production and of its representative, the bourgeoisie. In Part IV of *Capital* Marx gives a detailed account of how, since the fifteenth century, this process has developed historically through the three stages of simple co-operation, manufacture and large-scale industry. But as Marx also points out, the bourgeoisie was unable to transform those limited means of production into mighty productive forces except by transforming them from individual means of production into *social* means of production, which could be used only *by a body of men as a whole*. The spinning wheel, the hand loom and the blacksmith's hammer were replaced by the spinning machine, the mechanical loom and the steam hammer; and the factory, making the co-operation of hundreds and thousands of workers necessary, took the place of the individual work-room. And, like the means of production, production itself changed from a series of individual operations into a series of social acts, and the products from the products of individuals into social products. The yarn, the cloth and the metal goods which now came from the factory were the common product of many workers through whose hands it had to pass successively before it was ready. No individual can say of such products: I made it, that is *my* product.

But where the natural spontaneous division of labour within society is the basic form of production, it imprints upon the products the form of *commodities*, the mutual exchange, purchase and sale of which enables the individual producers to satisfy their manifold needs. And this was the case during the Middle Ages. The peasant, for example,

sold agricultural products to the artisan and purchased from him in exchange the products of his craft. Into this society of individual producers, producers of commodities, the new mode of production thrust itself, setting up, in the midst of the primitive *planless* division of labour which then existed throughout society, the *planned* division of labour organised in the individual factory ; alongside of *individual* production, *social* production made its appearance. The products of both were sold on the same market, and consequently at prices which were at least approximately the same. But the planned organisation was stronger than the primitive division of labour ; the factories in which labour was socially organised produced their commodities more cheaply than the separate small producers. Individual production was vanquished on one field after another ; social production revolutionised the whole former mode of production. But this, its revolutionary character, was so little understood that, on the contrary, it was introduced as a means of stimulating and accelerating the production of commodities. In its origin, it was directly linked with certain levers of commodity production and exchange which were already in existence : merchants' capital, handicraft, wage labour. Inasmuch as it itself came into being as a new form of commodity production, the forms of appropriation characteristic of commodity production remained in full force also for it.

In commodity production as it had developed in the Middle Ages, the question could never arise of who should be the owner of the product of labour. The individual producer had produced it, as a rule, from raw material which belonged to him and was often produced by himself, with his own instruments of labour, and by his own manual labour or that of his family. There was no need whatever for the product to be appropriated by him ; it belonged to him as an absolute matter of course. His ownership of the product was therefore based *upon his own labour*. Even where outside help was used, it was as a rule subsidiary, and in

many cases received other compensation in addition to wages ; the guild apprentice and journeyman worked less for the sake of their board and wages than to train themselves to become master craftsmen. Then came the concentration of the means of production in large workshops and manufactories, their transformation into means of production that were in fact social. But the social means of production and the social products were treated as if they were still, as they had been before, the means of production and the products of individuals. Hitherto, the owner of the instruments of labour had appropriated the product because it was as a rule his own product, the auxiliary labour of other persons being the exception ; now, the owner of the instruments of production continued to appropriate the product, although it was no longer *his* product, but exclusively the product of *others' labour*. Thus, therefore, the products, now socially produced, were not appropriated by those who had really set the means of production in motion and really produced the products, but by the *capitalists*. Means of production and production itself had in essence become social. But they were subjected to a form of appropriation which has as its presupposition private production by individuals, with each individual owning his own product and bringing it on to the market. The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation, although it removes the presuppositions on which the latter was based.<sup>1</sup> In this contradiction, which gives the new mode of production its capitalist character, *the whole conflict of*

<sup>1</sup> There is no need here to explain that although the form of appropriation remains the same, the *character* of the appropriation is revolutionised by the process described above, to no less a degree than production. My appropriation of my own product and my appropriation of another person's product are certainly two very different forms of appropriation. It may be noted in passing that wage labour, in which the whole capitalist mode of production is already present in embryo form, is a very old institution ; in isolated and scattered form it developed alongside slavery for centuries. But the germ could only develop into the capitalist mode of production when the necessary historical conditions had come into existence.—*Note by F. Engels.*

*to-day is already present in germ.* The more the new mode of production gained the ascendancy on all decisive fields of production and in all countries of decisive economic importance, pressing back individual production into insignificant areas, the more glaring necessarily became the incompatibility of social production with capitalist appropriation.

The first capitalist found, as we have said, the form of wage labour already in existence ; but wage labour as the exception, as an auxiliary occupation, as a supplementary, as a transitory phase. The agricultural labourer who occasionally went to work as a day labourer had a few acres of his own land, from which if necessary he could get his livelihood. The regulations of the guilds ensured that the journeyman of to-day became the master craftsman of to-morrow. But as soon as the means of production had become social and were concentrated in the hands of capitalists, this situation changed. Both the means of production and the products of the small, individual producer lost more and more of their value ; there was nothing left for him to do but to go to the capitalist and work for wages. Wage labour, hitherto an exception and subsidiary, became the rule and the basic form of all production ; hitherto an auxiliary occupation, it now became the labourer's exclusive activity. The occasional wage worker became the wage worker for life. The number of life-long wage workers was also increased to a colossal extent by the simultaneous disintegration of the feudal system, the dispersal of the retainers of the feudal lords, the eviction of peasants from their homesteads, etc. The separation between the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, and the producers now possessing nothing but their labour power, on the other, was made complete. *The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation became manifest as the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie.*

We saw that the capitalist mode of production thrust itself into a society of commodity producers, individual

producers, whose social cohesion resulted from the exchange of their products. But every society based on commodity production has the peculiarity that in it the producers have lost control of their own social relationships. Each produces for himself, with the means of production which happen to be at his disposal and in order to satisfy his individual needs through the medium of exchange. No one knows how much of the article he produces is coming on to the market, or how much demand there is for it ; no one knows whether his individual product will meet a real need, whether he will meet a real need, whether he will cover his costs or even be able to sell it at all. Anarchy reigns in social production. But commodity production, like all other forms of production, has its own laws, which are inherent in and inseparable from it ; and these laws assert themselves in spite of anarchy, in and through anarchy. These laws are manifested in the sole form of social relationship which continues to exist, in exchange, and enforce themselves on the individual producers as compulsory laws of competition. At first, therefore, they are unknown even to these producers, and have to be discovered by them gradually, only through long experience. They assert themselves therefore apart from the producers and against the producers, as the natural laws of their form of production, working blindly. The product dominates the producers.

In mediæval society, especially in the earlier centuries, production was essentially for the producer's own use ; for the most part its aim was to satisfy only the needs of the producer and his family. Where, as in the countryside, personal relations of dependence existed, it also contributed towards satisfying the needs of the feudal lord. No exchange was involved, and consequently the products did not assume the character of commodities. The peasant family produced almost everything it required—utensils and clothing as well as food. It was only when it succeeded in producing a surplus beyond its own needs and the payments in kind due to the feudal lord—it was only at this stage that it also began

to produce commodities ; these surplus products, thrown into social exchange, offered for sale, became commodities. The town artisans, it is true, had to produce for exchange from the very beginning. But even they supplied the greatest part of their own needs themselves ; they had gardens and small fields ; they sent their cattle out into the communal woodlands, which also provided them with timber and firewood ; the women spun flax, wool, etc. Production for the purpose of exchange, the production of commodities, was only in its infancy. Hence, restricted exchange, restricted market, stable methods of production, local isolation from the outside world, and local unity within : the Mark in the countryside, the guild in the town.

With the extension of commodity production, however, and especially with the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, the laws of commodity production, previously latent, also began to operate more openly and more potently. The old bonds were loosened, the old dividing barriers broken through, the producers more and more transformed into independent, isolated commodity producers. The anarchy of social production became obvious, and was carried to further and further extremes. But the chief means through which the capitalist mode of production accentuated this anarchy in social production was the direct opposite of anarchy : the increasing organisation of production on a social basis in each individual productive establishment. This was the lever with which it put an end to the former peaceful stability. In whatever branch of industry it was introduced, it could suffer no older method of production to exist alongside it ; where it laid hold of a handicraft, that handicraft was wiped out. The field of labour became a field of battle. The great geographical discoveries and the colonisation which followed on them multiplied markets and hastened on the transformation of handicraft into manufacture. The struggle broke out not only between the individual local producers ; the local struggles developed into national struggles, the trade wars



of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the end large-scale industry and the creation of the world market made the struggle universal, and at the same time gave it an unparalleled intensity. Between individual capitalists, as between whole industries and whole countries, advantages in natural or artificial conditions of production decide life or death. The vanquished are relentlessly cast aside. It is the Darwinian struggle for individual existence, transferred from Nature to society with intensified fury. The standpoint of the animal in Nature appears as the last word in human development. The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation reproduces itself *as the antagonism between the organisation of production in the individual factory and the anarchy of production in society as a whole.*

The capitalist mode of production moves in these two forms of the contradiction immanent in it from its very nature, without hope of escaping from that "vicious circle" which Fourier long ago discovered. But what Fourier in his day was as yet unable to see is that this circle is gradually narrowing; that the motion is rather in the form of a spiral and must meet its end, like the motion of the planets, by collision with the centre. It is the driving force of the social anarchy of production which transforms the immense majority of men more and more into proletarians, and it is in turn the proletarian masses who will ultimately put an end to the anarchy of production. It is the driving force of the social anarchy of production which transforms the infinite perfectibility of the machine in large-scale industry into a compulsory commandment for each individual industrial capitalist to make his machinery more and more perfect, under penalty of ruin. But the perfecting of machinery means rendering human labour superfluous. If the introduction and increase of machinery meant the displacement of millions of hand workers by a few machine workers, the improvement of machinery means the displacement of larger and larger numbers of the machine workers themselves, and ultimately the creation of a mass

of available wage workers exceeding the average requirements of capital for labour—a complete industrial reserve army, as I called it as long ago as 1845<sup>1</sup>—a reserve that would be available at periods when industry was working at high pressure, but would be thrown out on to the street by the crash inevitably following the boom ; a reserve that would at all times be like a leaden weight on the feet of the working class in their fight for existence against capital, a regulator to keep wages down to the low level which suits the needs of capital. Thus it comes about that machinery, to use Marx's phrase, becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital against the working class, that the instruments of labour constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the labourer, that the very product of the labourer is turned into an instrument for his subjection. Thus it comes about that the economising of the instruments of labour becomes from the outset a simultaneous and absolutely reckless waste of labour power and robbery of the normal conditions necessary for the labour function ; that machinery, " the most powerful instrument for shortening labour time, becomes the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital."<sup>2</sup>

Thus it comes about that the excessive labour of some becomes the necessary condition for the lack of employment of others, and that large-scale industry, which hunts all over the world for new consumers, restricts the consumption of the masses at home to a famine minimum and thereby undermines its own internal market. " The law that always equilibrates the relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes

<sup>1</sup> *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, p. 109. (German edition.)  
—Note by F. Engels.

<sup>2</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 445 (Kerr edition).

an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that *produces its own product in the form of capital.*"<sup>1</sup>

And to expect any other distribution of the products from the capitalist mode of production is like expecting the electrodes of a battery, while they are in contact with the battery, not to decompose water, not to develop oxygen at the positive pole and hydrogen at the negative.

We have seen how the perfectibility of modern machinery, pushed to an extreme point, through the medium of the anarchy of production in society is transformed into a compulsory commandment for the individual industrial capitalist constantly to improve his machinery, constantly to increase its productive power. The mere possibility of extending his field of production is transformed for him into a similar compulsory commandment. The enormous expanding power of large-scale industry, compared with which the expanding power of gases is mere child's play, now appears to us as a *necessity* for both qualitative and quantitative expansion that laughs at all counteracting pressure. Such counteracting pressure comes from consumption, demand, markets for the products of large-scale industry. But the capacity of the market to expand, both extensively and intensively, is controlled directly by quite other and far less effective laws. The expansion of the market cannot keep pace with the expansion of production. The collision becomes inevitable, and, as it can yield no solution so long as it does not burst the capitalist mode of production itself, it becomes periodical. Capitalist production brings into being a new "vicious circle."

And in fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis broke out, the whole industrial and commercial world, the production and exchange of all civilised peoples and of their

<sup>1</sup> *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 709 (Kerr edition).

more or less barbarian dependent people have been dislocated practically once in every ten years. Trade comes to a standstill, the markets are glutted, the products lie in great masses, unsaleable, ready money disappears, credit vanishes, the factories are idle, the working masses go short of food because they have produced too much food, bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, forced sale upon forced sale. The stagnation lasts for years, both productive forces and products are squandered and destroyed on a large scale, until the accumulated masses of commodities are at last disposed of at a more or less considerable depreciation, until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. By degrees the pace quickens ; it becomes a trot ; the industrial trot passes into a gallop, and the gallop in turn passes into the mad onrush of a complete industrial commercial, credit and speculative steeplechase, only to land again in the end, after the most breakneck jumps—in the ditch of a crash. And so on again and again. We have now experienced it five times since 1825, and at this moment (1877) we are experiencing it for the sixth time. And the character of these crises is so clearly marked that Fourier hit them all off when he described the first as *crise pléthorique*, a crisis of superabundance.

In these crises, the contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation comes to a violent explosion. The circulation of commodities is for the moment reduced to nothing ; the means of circulation, money, becomes an obstacle to circulation ; all the laws of commodity production and commodity circulation are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its culminating point : *the mode of production rebels against the mode of exchange : the productive forces rebel against the mode of production, which they have outgrown.*

The fact that the social organisation of production within the factory has developed to the point at which it has become incompatible with the anarchy of production in society which exists alongside it and above it—this fact is

made palpable to the capitalists themselves by the violent concentration of capitals which takes place during crises through the ruin of many big and even more small capitalists. The whole mechanism of the capitalist mode of production breaks down under the pressure of the productive forces which it itself created. It is no longer able to transform the whole of this mass of means of production into capital ; they lie idle, and for this very reason the industrial reserve army must also lie idle. Means of production, means of subsistence, available labourers, all the elements of production and of general wealth are there in abundance. But "abundance becomes the source of distress and want" (Fourier), because it is precisely abundance that prevents the conversion of the means of production and subsistence into capital. For in capitalist society the means of production cannot begin to function unless they have first been converted into capital, into means for the exploitation of human labour power. The necessity for the means of production and subsistence to take on the form of capital stands like a ghost between them and the workers. It alone prevents the coming together of the material and personal levers of production ; it alone forbids the means of production to function, the workers to work and to live. Thus on the one hand the capitalist mode of production stands convicted of its own incapacity any longer to control these productive forces. And on the other hand these productive forces themselves press forward with increasing force to put an end to the contradiction, to rid themselves of their character as capital, *to the actual recognition of their character as social productive forces.*

It is this pressure of the productive forces, in their mighty upgrowth, against their character as capital, increasingly compelling the recognition of their social character, which forces the capitalist class itself more and more to treat them as social productive forces, in so far as this is at all possible within the framework of capitalist relations. Both the period of industrial boom, with its unlimited credit inflation,

and the crisis itself through the collapse of great capitalist establishments, urge forward towards that form of the socialisation of huge masses of means of production which we find in the various kinds of joint-stock companies. Many of these means of production and communication are from the outset so colossal that, like the railways, they exclude all other forms of capitalist exploitation. At a certain stage of development even this form no longer suffices; the official representative of capitalist society, the State, is constrained to take over their management.<sup>1</sup> This necessity of conversion into state property makes itself evident first in the vast institutions for communication: the postal service, telegraphs and railways.

If the crises revealed the incapacity of the bourgeoisie any longer to control the modern productive forces, the conversion of the great organisations for production and communication into joint-stock companies and State property shows that for this purpose the bourgeoisie can be dispensed with. All the social functions of the capitalists are now carried out by salaried employees. The capitalist has no

<sup>1</sup> I say *is constrained to*. For it is only when the means of production or communication have *actually* outgrown management by share companies, and therefore their transfer to the State has become inevitable from an economic standpoint—it is only then that this transfer to the State, even when carried out by the State of to-day, represents an economic advance, the attainment of another preliminary step towards the taking over of all productive forces by society itself. Recently, however, since Bismarck adopted state ownership, a certain spurious socialism has made its appearance—here and there even degenerating into a kind of flunkeyism—which declares that *all* taking over by the State, even the Bismarckian kind, is in itself socialistic. If, however, the taking over of the tobacco trade by the State was socialistic, Napoleon and Metternich would rank among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian State, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, constructed its own main railway lines; if Bismarck, without any economic compulsion, took over the main railway lines in Prussia, simply in order to be better able to organise and use them for war, to train the railway officials as the government's voting cattle, and especially to secure a new source of revenue independent of Parliamentary votes—such actions were in no sense socialist measures, whether direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal Porcelain Manufacture, and even the regimental tailors in the army, would be socialist institutions. [*Note by F. Engels.*]

longer any social activity save the pocketing of revenues, the clipping of coupons and gambling on the Stock Exchange, where the different capitalists fleece each other of their capital. Just as at first the capitalist mode of production displaced the workers, so now it displaces the capitalists, relegating them, just as it did the workers, to the superfluous population, even if in the first instance not to the industrial reserve army.

But the conversion into either joint-stock companies or State property does not deprive the productive forces of their character as capital. In the case of joint-stock companies this is obvious. And the modern state, too, is only the organisation with which bourgeois society provides itself in order to maintain the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against encroachments either by the workers or by individual capitalists. The modern State, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine ; it is the State of the capitalists, the ideal collective body of all capitalists. The more productive forces it takes over, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished ; it is rather pushed to an extreme. But at this extreme it changes into its opposite. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but it contains within itself the formal means, the handle to the solution.

This solution can only consist in the recognition in practice of the social nature of the modern productive forces ; that is, therefore, the mode of production, appropriation and exchange must be brought into accord with the social character of the means of production. And this can only be brought about by society, openly and without deviation, taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control other than that of society itself. Thereby the social character of the means of production and of the products—which to-day operates against the

producers themselves, periodically breaking through the mode of production and exchange and enforcing itself only as a blind law of Nature, violently and destructively—is quite consciously asserted by the producers, and is transformed from a cause of disorder and periodic collapse into the most powerful lever of production itself.

The forces operating in society work exactly like the forces operating in Nature : blindly, violently, destructively, so long as we do not understand them and fail to take them into account. But when once we have recognised them and understood how they work, their direction and their effects, the gradual subjection of them to our will and the use of them for the attainment of our aims depends entirely upon ourselves. And this is quite especially true of the mighty productive forces of the present day. So long as we obstinately refuse to understand their nature and their character—and the capitalist mode of production and its defenders set themselves against any such attempt—so long do these forces operate in spite of us, against us, and so long do they control us, as we have shown in detail. But once their nature is grasped, in the hands of the producers working in association they can be transformed from demoniac masters into willing servants. This is the difference between the destructive force of electricity in a thunderstorm and the tamed electricity of the telegraph and the arc light ; the difference between a conflagration and fire in the service of man. A similar manipulation of the productive forces of the present day, on the basis of their real nature at last recognised by society, opens the way to the replacement of the anarchy of social production by a socially planned regulation of production in accordance with the needs both of society as a whole and of each individual. The capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the producer, and then also the appropriator, will thereby be replaced by the mode of appropriation of the product based on the nature of the modern means of production themselves : on the one hand direct social



appropriation as a means to the maintenance and extension of production, and on the other hand direct individual appropriation as a means to life and pleasure.

By more and more transforming the great majority of the population into proletarians, the capitalist mode of production brings into being the force which, under penalty of its own destruction, is compelled to carry out this revolution. By more and more driving towards the conversion of the vast socialised means of production into State property, it itself points the way for the carrying through of this revolution. *The proletariat seizes the State power, and transforms the means of production in the first instance into State property.* But in doing this, it puts an end to itself as the proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms, it puts an end also to the State as the State. Former society, moving in class antagonisms, had need of the State, that is, an organisation of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production ; that is, therefore, for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, villeinage or serfdom, wage labour) determined by the existing mode of production. The State was the official representative of society as a whole, its embodiment in a visible corporation ; but it was this only in so far as it was the State of that class which itself, in its epoch, represented society as a whole ; in ancient times, the state of the slave-owning citizens ; in the Middle Ages, of the feudal nobility ; in our epoch, of the bourgeoisie. When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it makes itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection ; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed which would make a special repressive force, a State, necessary. The first act in which the State really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—

the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a State. The interference of the State power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The State is not “abolished,” *it withers away*. It is from this standpoint that we must appraise the phrase “free people’s State”—both its justification at times for agitational purposes, and its ultimate scientific inadequacy—and also the demand of the so-called anarchists that the State should be abolished overnight.

Since the emergence in history of the capitalist mode of production, the taking over of all means of production by society has often been dreamed of by individuals as well as by whole sects, more or less vaguely and as an ideal of the future. But it could only become possible, it could only become a historical necessity, when the material conditions for its realisation had come into existence. Like every other social progress, it becomes realisable not through the perception that the existence of classes is in contradiction with justice, equality, etc., not through the mere will to abolish these classes, but through certain new economic conditions. The division of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary outcome of the low development of production hitherto. So long as the sum of social labour yielded a product which only slightly exceeded what was necessary for the bare existence of all ; so long, therefore, as all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society was absorbed in labour, so long was society necessarily divided into classes. Alongside of this great majority exclusively absorbed in labour there developed a class, freed from direct productive labour, which managed the general business of society : the direction of labour, affairs of State, justice, science, art, and so forth. It is therefore the law of the division of labour which lies at the root of the

division into classes. But this does not mean that this division into classes was not established by violence and robbery, by deception and fraud, or that the ruling class, once in the saddle, has ever failed to strengthen its domination at the cost of the working class and to convert its social management into the exploitation of the masses.

But if, on these grounds, the division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period of time, for given social conditions. It was based on the insufficiency of production ; it will be swept away by the full development of the modern productive forces. And in fact the abolition of social classes has as its presupposition a stage of historical development at which the existence not merely of some particular ruling class or other but of any ruling class at all, that is to say, of class differences themselves, has become an anachronism, is out of date. It therefore presupposes that the development of production has reached a level at which the appropriation of means of production and of products, and with these, of political supremacy, the monopoly of education and intellectual leadership by a special class of society, has become not only superfluous but also economically, politically and intellectually a hindrance to development.

This point has now been reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is hardly still a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves, and their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every ten years. In each crisis society is smothered under the weight of its own productive forces and products of which it can make no use, and stands helpless in face of the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume because there are no consumers. The expanding force of the means of production bursts asunder the bonds imposed upon them by the capitalist mode of production. Their release from these bonds is the sole condition necessary for an unbroken and constantly more rapidly progressing development of the productive forces, and therewith of a practically limitless growth of production itself.

Nor is this all. The appropriation by society of the means of production will put an end not only to the artificial restraints on production which exist to-day, but also to the positive waste and destruction of productive forces and products which is now the inevitable accompaniment of production and reaches its zenith in crises. Further, it sets free for society as a whole a mass of means of production and products by putting an end to the senseless luxury and extravagance of the present ruling class and its political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, through social production, an existence which is not only fully sufficient from a material standpoint and becoming richer from day to day, but also guarantees to them the completely unrestricted development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility now exists for the first time, but it *does exist*.<sup>1</sup>

The seizure of the means of production by society puts an end to commodity production, and therewith to the domination of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by conscious organisation on a planned basis. The struggle for individual existence comes to an end. And at this point, in a certain sense, man finally cuts himself off from the animal world, leaves the conditions of animal existence behind him and enters conditions which are really human. The conditions of existence forming man's environment, which up to now have dominated man, at this point pass under the dominion and control of man, who now for the first time becomes the real conscious master

<sup>1</sup> A few figures may give an approximate idea of the enormous expansive power of modern means of production, even under the weight of capitalism. According to Giffen's latest estimates, the total wealth of Great Britain and Ireland was as under in round figures :

1814	.....	£2,200,000,000
1865	.....	6,100,000,000
1875	.....	8,500,000,000

An indication of the waste of means of production and products resulting from crises is the estimate given at the Second German Industrial Congress (Berlin, Feb. 21, 1878) that the total loss to the *German iron industry* alone in the past crisis amounted to 455 million marks [£22,750,000].  
[Note by F. Engels.]

of Nature, because and in so far as he has become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as external, dominating laws of Nature, will then be applied by man with complete understanding, and hence will be dominated by man. Men's own social organisation which has hitherto stood in opposition to them as if arbitrarily decreed by Nature and history, will then become the voluntary act of men themselves. The objective, external forces which have hitherto dominated history will then pass under the control of men themselves. It is only from this point that men, with full consciousness, will fashion their own history ; it is only from this point that the social causes set in motion by men will have, predominantly and in constantly increasing measure, the effects willed by men. It is humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom.

To carry through this world-emancipating act is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. And it is the task of scientific socialism, the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, to establish the historical conditions and, with these, the nature of this act, and thus to bring to the consciousness of the now oppressed class the conditions and nature of the act which it is its destiny to accomplish.

*State, Family, Education (Religion)*

. . . All religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. In the beginnings of history it was the forces of Nature which were at first so reflected, and in the course of further evolution they underwent the most manifold and varied personifications among the various peoples. Comparative mythology has traced back this first process, at least in the case of the Indo-European nations, to its origin in the Indian Vedas, and has shown its detailed evolution among

the Indians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Germans and, so far as material is available, also among the Celts, Lithuanians and Slavs. But it is not long before, side by side with the forces of Nature, social forces begin to be active ; forces which present themselves to man as equally extraneous and at first equally inexplicable, dominating them with the same apparent necessity, as the forces of Nature, themselves. The fantastic personifications, which at first only reflected the mysterious forces of nature, at this point acquire social attributes, become representatives of the forces of history.<sup>1</sup> At a still further stage of evolution, all the natural and social attributes of the innumerable gods are transferred to one almighty god, who himself once more is only the reflex of the abstract man. Such was the origin of monotheism, which was historically the last product of the vulgarised philosophy of the later Greeks and found its incarnation in the exclusively national god of the Jews, Jehovah. In this convenient, handy and adaptable form religion can continue to exist as the immediate, that is, the sentimental form of men's relation to the extraneous natural and social forces which dominate them, so long as men remain under the control of these forces. We have already seen, more than once, that in existing bourgeois society men are dominated by the economic conditions created by themselves, by the means of production which they themselves have produced, as if by an extraneous force. The actual basis of religious reflex action therefore continues to exist, and with it the religious reflex itself. And although bourgeois political economy has given a certain insight into the causal basis of this domination by extraneous forces, this makes no essential difference.

<sup>1</sup> Comparative mythology overlooks this twofold character assumed at a later stage by the gods ; it continues to pay exclusive attention to their character as reflexes of the forces of Nature, although it is this twofold character which is the basis of the confusion of mythologies which subsequently creeps in. Thus in some Germanic tribes the ancient Nordic war-god, Tyr, in Old High German Zio, corresponds to the Greek Zeus, Latin Jupiter for Diu-piter ; in other Germanic tribes, Er, Eor, corresponds to the Greek Ares, Latin Mars.

Bourgeois economics can neither prevent crises in general, nor protect the individual capitalists from losses, bad debts and bankruptcy, nor secure the individual workers against unemployment and destitution. It is still true that man proposes and God (that is, the extraneous force of the capitalist mode of production) disposes. Mere knowledge, even if it went much further and deeper than that of bourgeois economic science, is not enough to bring social forces under the control of society. What is above all necessary for this, is a social *act*. And when this act has been accomplished, when society, by taking possession of all means of production and using them on a planned basis, has freed itself and all its members from the bondage in which they are now held by these means of production which they themselves have produced but which now confront them as an irresistible extraneous force ; when therefore man no longer merely proposes, but also disposes—only then will the last extraneous force which is still reflected in religion vanish ; and with it will also vanish the religious reflection itself, for the simple reason that then there will be nothing left to reflect. . . .

*Friedrich Engels*

## THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE

*First published in 1884. The only English edition now available was published by Kerr, Chicago. As the translation is not satisfactory the chapters given below have been specially re-translated.*

[ In 1877 Lewis H. Morgan's *Ancient Society* was published by Macmillan. Its sub-title was: "Researches in the Lines

of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilisation." This book was greatly appreciated by Marx and Engels, and Engels says in the preface to his own work that Marx had himself intended to write on this subject, to examine the material collected by Morgan and show that it confirms, in relation to ancient society, the materialist conception of history. After Marx's death in 1883, Engels, making use of Marx's notes, wrote *The Origin of the Family*. This book traces the development of the family as a social institution, its relation to the prevailing mode of production ; the changes in the family arising from changing forms of production which also brought private property as an institution ; the division of society into classes ; and the emergence of the State. In the course of the book Engels sums up Morgan's material, on the successive stages of the consanguine family (group intermarriage of brothers and sisters, own and collateral) ; the punaluan family (group intermarriage of several sisters with each other's husbands, not necessarily related ; or of several brothers with each other's wives, not necessarily related) ; the pairing family (marriage between single pairs, without exclusive cohabitation, and terminable) ; the patriarchal (marriage of one man with several wives) ; and finally monogamy. The basis of early social organisation was the gens, or group of related persons, all descent at first being traced through the mother, and later through the father. A wider grouping was the tribe, uniting several gentes (which might be organised in an intermediate group, the phratry) ; and several tribes formed a confederation ultimately merging into a people or a nation. Engels shows the connection of these groupings and changes with production ; the passages reprinted below are his summing up on the Family and on the State.]

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THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVACY  
PROPERTY AND THE STATE

## THE FAMILY

## (Ch. II)

... Accordingly we have three principal forms of marriage, which in the main correspond to the three principal stages of human development. For the period of savagery, the group marriage; for barbarism, the pairing marriage; for civilisation, monogamy supplemented by adultery and prostitution. Between the pairing marriage and monogamy there intervened, at the highest stage of barbarism, the right of men to female slaves, and polygamy.

As our whole exposition has shown, the progress which manifests itself in this succession is linked with the peculiarity that the sexual freedom of the group marriage is more and more taken away from women, but not from men. And in fact the group marriage continues to exist for men actually up to the present time. What for a woman is a crime drawing in its train grave legal and social consequences, for a man is regarded as honourable or at worst as a slight moral blemish, easily tolerated. But the more the heterism of antiquity is altered, in our age, by capitalist commodity production and is adapted to this, the more it is transformed into unconcealed prostitution, the more demoralising are its effects. And in fact it demoralises men far more than women. Prostitution degrades, among women, only the unfortunate ones to whose lot it falls, and even these not at all to the extent that is commonly believed. On the other hand, it degrades the character of the whole world of men. A long engagement particularly is in nine cases out of ten actually a preparatory school for marital infidelity.

We are now approaching a social revolution in which the former economic foundations of monogamy will just as surely disappear as those of its complement, prostitution.

Monogamy arose from the concentration of great riches in a single hand—that of the man—and from the need to bequeath these riches to the children of that man and not of any other. And for this purpose the monogamy of the woman was necessary, not that of the man, so that this monogamy of the woman did not at all stand in the way of open or concealed polygamy on the part of the man. The coming social revolution, however, through the transformation at least of the infinitely greater portion of permanent, heritable wealth—the means of production—into social property, will reduce this whole solicitude for inheritance to a minimum. If then monogamy came into being from economic causes, will it disappear when these causes disappear? It would be possible to answer, not without justice : far from disappearing, it will then on the contrary be fully realised for the first time. For with the transformation of the means of production into social property there will disappear also wage-labour, the proletariat, and therefore also the necessity for a certain—statistically calculable—number of women to surrender themselves for money. Prostitution disappears, monogamy, instead of collapsing, at last becomes a reality—even for men.

The position of men is therefore in any case very much altered. But also the position of women, of *all* women, undergoes a significant change. With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private house-keeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of children becomes a public affair ; society looks after all children equally, whether they are legitimate or not. And this puts an end to the anxiety about the “ consequences,” which is now the most essential social—moral as well as economic—factor that deters a girl from giving herself without reluctance to the man she loves. Will that not be cause enough to bring about the gradual establishment of an unconstrained sexual

intercourse, and with this also a more lenient public opinion in regard to maidenly honour and womanly shame? And finally, have we not seen that in the modern world monogamy and prostitution are, it is true, contradictions, but inseparable contradictions, poles of the same social conditions? Can prostitution disappear without dragging monogamy down with it into the abyss?

Here a new factor comes into play, a factor which, at the time when monogamy developed, existed at most in germ : individual sex-love.

Before the middle ages there can be no question of individual sex-love. That personal beauty, intimate intercourse, sympathetic tastes, and so forth, awakened the desire for sexual intercourse among people of opposite sexes; that both to men and to women it was not a matter of absolute indifference with whom they entered into this most intimate relationship—this goes without saying. But there is an infinite distance between that and our sex-love. Throughout the whole ancient world marriages were arranged by the parents for the partners, and the latter were easily reconciled. The little portion of marital love known to antiquity is not any subjective inclination, but an objective duty, not a ground but a correlative of marriage. Love relationships in the modern sense only make their appearance in antiquity outside of official society. The shepherds of whose joys and sorrows in love Theocritus and Moschus sing, the Daphnis and Chlœ of Longos, were simple slaves who had no share in the State, the free citizens' sphere of life. Apart from slaves we find love affairs only as products of the disintegration of the old world in its decline, and with women who also stood outside official society, with *hetæræ*, that is, with "barbarians" or freed slaves : in Athens from the eve of its ruin onwards, in Rome at the time of the Cæsars. If love affairs really developed between free men and women citizens, it was only through adultery. And to the classical love poet of antiquity, old Anakreon, sex-love in our sense was of so

little concern that even the sex of the loved one was a matter of absolute indifference to him.

Our sex-love is essentially different from the simple sexual desire, the Eros, of the ancients. In the first place it presupposes that the love is reciprocated by the loved one ; to this extent the woman stands on the same footing as the man, while in the Eros of antiquity she was by no means always asked. Secondly, our sex-love has a degree of intensity and duration which makes both lovers feel that non-possession and separation are a very great, if not the greatest, misfortune. In order to ensure mutual possession they risk high stakes, even staking their lives—a thing which in antiquity happened only in adultery. And finally a new moral standard arises by which sexual intercourse is judged ; we not only ask whether it was within or without the marriage tie, but also whether it sprang from love and reciprocated love or not. Of course this new standard has fared no better in feudal or bourgeois practice than any other moral standard—it is simply ignored. But also it fares no worse. It is recognised to the same extent as previous standards—in theory, on paper. And at present it can ask no more than this.

At the point where antiquity ended its progress towards sex-love, the middle ages took it up—in adultery. We have already spoken of the knightly love which gave rise to the songs. From this love, urging violation of the marriage tie, to the love which is to be the foundation of marriage, is still a long road, and this road was never fully traversed by the knights. Even when we pass from the frivolous Latin race to the virtuous Germans, we find in the *Nibelungenlied* that although in her heart Kriemhild is not less in love with Siegfried than he is with her, when Gunther tells her that he has promised her to a knight whom he does not name, she simply answers : “ You have no need to ask me ; as you bid me, so will I ever be ; the man whom you, lord, give me to wed, that man will I gladly take in troth.” It does not even enter her head that her love can in any way

come into consideration in this matter. Gunther asks for Brünhild, Etzel for Kriemhild, although they have never seen each other; the same is true of the suit of Gutrun Sigebant of Ireland for the Norwegian Ute, of Hetel of Hegelingen's suit for Hilde of Ireland; and finally of Siegfried of Morland, Hartmut of Ormanien and Herwig of Zeeland, in their suit for Gutrun—and in this case for the first time it happens that Gutrun voluntarily decides in favour of the last-named of the three. As a rule the young prince's bride is selected by his parents, if they are still living, and if not, by the prince himself on the advice of the great feudal lords, whose views in all cases carry considerable weight. And it cannot be otherwise. For the knight or baron, as the head of the land himself, marriage is a political act, an occasion for the extension of power through new alliances; the interest of the *house* must be decisive, not the wishes of the individual. In such circumstances how can love reach the position in which it has the decisive say in marriage?

The same held good for the guild member in the towns of the middle ages. The privileges protecting him, the clauses of the guild charters, the artificial lines of demarcation which legally cut him off, both from the other guilds, and from other members of his own guild and from his own journeymen and apprentices, already sufficiently narrowed down the circle within which he might select a suitable spouse. And in that complicated system it was certainly not his individual fancy, but the interests of the family, which decided who was the most suitable spouse within that circle.

In the infinitely greater majority of cases, therefore, marriage remained, up to the close of the middle ages, what it had been from the very beginning—a matter which the partners did not decide. In the earliest stages men and women were already married when they came into the world—married to an entire group of the opposite sex. In the later forms of group marriage probably similar

relations existed, but within continually contracting groups. In the pairing marriage it was customary for the mothers to arrange the marriages of their children; here too the decisive considerations are the new ties of kinship which can win for the young couple a stronger position in the gens and tribe. And when, with the predominance of private over communal property and the growing concern for inheritance, patriarchy and monogamy came to dominate, marriage then became completely dependent on economic considerations. The *form* of marriage by purchase disappeared, but the practice itself came to be more and more consistently applied, so that not only the woman but also the man acquired a price—based not on his personal characteristics but on his property. From the very beginning the conception that the mutual inclination of the contracting parties should be the ground, outweighing all others, for the marriage was completely unheard of in the practice of the ruling classes. Anything of this sort occurred at best in romance, or—among the oppressed classes, who did not count.

Such was the state of things which capitalist production found in existence when, following the epoch of geographical discoveries, it set out to conquer the world through trade and manufacture. It might have assumed that this mode of marriage suited it exceptionally well; and such was the case. And yet—the irony of history knows no limit—it was capitalist production which was destined to make the decisive breach in this mode of marriage. By transforming everything into commodities, it destroyed all inherited, traditional relationships, it set up, in place of time-honoured custom and historical right, purchase and sale and “free” contract. The English jurist H. S. Maine thought he had made an immense discovery when he stated that our whole progress as compared with former epochs consisted in the fact that we had passed from status to contract, from inherited and traditional conditions to those brought into being by voluntary contract—a

statement which, in so far as it is correct, was already, as a matter of fact, contained in *The Communist Manifesto*.

The making of contracts, however, requires people who can freely dispose of their persons, actions and possessions, and meet each other on the basis of equal rights. It was precisely the creation of these "free" and "equal" people that was one of the principal functions of capitalist society. And although at first it happened only in a half-conscious way, and moreover disguised in religious wrappings, by the time of the Lutheran and Calvinist Reformation it was an established principle that man is only fully responsible for his actions when he acts with complete freedom of will, and that it is a moral obligation to resist all coercion to an immoral act. But how did this fit in with former practice in the arrangement of marriages? According to the bourgeois conception, marriage was a contract, a juridical matter, and indeed the most important of all contracts, because it deposed of the body and mind of the two human beings for the period of their life. It is true that at that time, from a formal standpoint, it was entered into voluntarily; it could not be completed without the assent of the persons concerned. But everyone knew only too well how this assent was obtained, and who were the real contracting parties to the marriage. But if real freedom of decision was required for all other contracts, why not also in this one? Had not the two young people who were to be united in marriage also the right to dispose freely of themselves, of their body and its organs? Had not sex-love come into fashion through the knights, and, in contrast to the adulterous love of the age of chivalry, was not the love of one's own spouse its proper bourgeois form? And if it was the duty of married people to love each other, was it not equally the duty of lovers to marry each other and no one else? Was not the right of lovers superior to the right of parents, relatives and other traditional marriage brokers and agents? If the right of free personal investigation made its way unchecked into the

church and religion, how could it stand still in face of the older generation's intolerable claim to dispose over the body, soul, property, weal and woe of young persons ?

These questions had to be raised at a period which loosened all the old ties of society and shattered all inherited conceptions. The world had suddenly become almost ten times bigger ; instead of a quadrant of a hemisphere, the whole globe now lay before the eyes of the West Europeans, who hastened to take possession of the other seven quadrants. And along with the old narrow barriers of their native land, the thousand-year old barriers of mediæval conventional thought were also broken down. An infinitely wider horizon opened out before both the outward and the inward gaze of man. What mattered the prospects offered by respectability, or the honourable guild privileges inherited through generations, to the young man tempted by the wealth of India, the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Potosi ? It was the knight-errant period of the bourgeoisie ; it had too its romance and its amorous enthusiasms, but on a bourgeois footing, and in the last analysis, with bourgeois aims.

So it came about that the rising bourgeoisie, especially in the protestant countries where existing institutions were most severely shaken, more and more came to recognise freedom of contract also in marriage, and developed it in the way described above. Marriage remained class marriage, but a certain degree of free choice within the class was allowed to the partners. And on paper, in ethical theory and poetic description, nothing was more firmly established than that every marriage is immoral which does not rest on mutual sex-love and really free contract between husband and wife. In a word, the love-marriage was proclaimed as a human right, and indeed not only as *droit de l'homme*, but even by way of exception as *droit de la femme*.

This human right, however, differed in one respect from all other so-called human rights. While the latter,



in practice, remained restricted to the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly curtailed for the oppressed class, the proletariat, in the case of the former the irony of history once more lived up to its reputation. The ruling class remained dominated by the familiar economic influences, and therefore only in exceptional cases provided instances of really freely contracted marriages, while these, as we have seen, were the rule among the oppressed class.

Full freedom of marriage can therefore only become generally established when the abolition of capitalist production and of the property relations created by it has done away with all the economic considerations which still exert such powerful influence on the choice of a spouse. For then no motive other than mutual affection will be left.

And as sex-love is by its nature exclusive—although this exclusiveness is now fully effective only in the woman—the marriage based on sex-love is by its nature individual marriage. We have seen how right Bachofen was when he considered the advance from group marriage to individual marriage as primarily due to the woman. Only the further step forward from the pairing marriage to monogamy can be credited to the men ; and the essence of this, historically, was to change for the worse the position of women and to make easier the infidelity of the men. If now the economic considerations because of which women acquiesce in this customary infidelity of their husbands—concern for their own means of existence and still more for their children's future—also disappear, to judge from all previous experience the equality of the woman resulting from this will have an infinitely stronger tendency to make men really monogamous than to make women polyandrous.

But what will quite positively disappear from monogamy are all the features impressed on it through its origin in property relations ; these are in the first place the

predominance of the man, and secondly, indissolubility. The predominance of the man in marriage is the simple consequence of his economic predominance, and will disappear of itself along with the latter. The indissolubility of marriage is partly a consequence of the economic situation in which monogamy arose, and partly a tradition from the period when the connection between this economic situation and monogamy was as yet not fully understood and was pushed to extremes by religion. To-day it is already broken through at a thousand points. If only the marriage based on love is moral, then also only the marriage in which love continues to exist. The duration of an attack of sex-love for an individual is however very different for different individuals, especially among men, and if affection definitely comes to an end, or is supplanted by a new passionate love, this makes divorce a benefit for both partners as well as for society. The only thing people will be spared will be having to wade through the useless mire of a divorce case.

What we can now anticipate as to the way in which sex relations will be ordered after capitalist production has been swept away is mainly negative, limited for the most part to the features that will disappear. But what new features will come into being? The answer will be given when a new generation has grown up; a generation of men who never in their life chanced to buy a woman's surrender for money or any other social instrument of power; and a generation of women who have never happened to give themselves to a man for any consideration other than real love, nor to refuse themselves to the man they love from fear of the economic consequences. When such people have come into existence, they will not care a brass farthing what people think to-day about how they should act; they will make their own practice for themselves, and their own public opinion, measured by this practice, as to the practice of each individual—and that will be the end of it.

Let us, however, turn back to Morgan, from whom we have moved a considerable distance. The historical investigation of the social institutions developed during the period of civilisation goes beyond the limits of his book. He therefore deals only very briefly with the fate of monogamy during this epoch. He too sees in the development of the monogamous family a step forward, an approximation to the complete equality of the sexes, though he does not regard this goal as having been attained. But, he says :

“When the fact is accepted that the family has passed through four successive forms, and is now in a fifth, the question at once arises whether this form can be permanent in the future. The only answer that can be given is, that it must advance as society advances, and change as society changes, even as it has done in the past. It is the creature of the social system, and will reflect its culture. As the monogamian family has improved greatly since the commencement of civilisation, and very sensibly in modern times, it is at least supposable that it is capable of still further improvement until the equality of the sexes is attained. Should the monogamian family in the distant future fail to answer the requirements of society, assuming the continuous progress of civilisation, it is impossible to predict the nature of its successor.”

#### BARBARISM AND CIVILISATION

##### (Ch. IX)

We have now traced the dissolution of gens society in its three main distinct types among the Greeks, Romans and Germans. In conclusion we examine the general economic conditions which had already undermined the gens organisation of society by the later stage of barbarism, and completely abolished it with the advent of civilisation. Here Marx's *Capital* will be as necessary to us as Morgan's book.

Making its appearance at the middle stage, and further developing at the later stage of savagery, the gens, so far as we can judge from our material, reached its most flourishing period at the lower stage of barbarism. We therefore start from this stage of development.

At this stage—here the American Redskins must serve as our example—gens society is fully developed. A tribe has divided itself into several, but as a rule two, separate gentes; as the population increases these original gentes split into several daughter gentes, in relation to which the mother gens now appears as a phratry. The tribe itself splits into several tribes, in each of which we find, as a rule, the old gentes; at least in some cases the related tribes are held together by a confederacy. This simple organisation is fully adequate for the social conditions from which it sprang. It is nothing more than the natural grouping peculiar to these social conditions; it is able to adjust all the conflicts which can arise within a society so organised. External adjustments are made by war; war may end with the annihilation of the tribe, but never with its subjection. It is the magnificent but at the same time the limiting feature of gens society that it had no place for domination and subjection. Within gens society there was as yet no distinction between rights and obligations; the question whether participation in public affairs, revenge for the murder of kinsmen or other expiatory act, is a right or a duty, does not exist for the Indian; it would seem to him as absurd as the question whether eating, sleeping, hunting is a right or a duty. Just as little can a division of the tribe and the gens into different classes take place. And this leads us to investigate the economic basis of this state of things.

The population is extremely sparse: it is dense only at the place where the tribe lives, round which extend in a wide circle first the hunting ground, and then the neutral protective forest which separates it from other tribes. The division of labour is purely natural; it exists only

between the two sexes. The man wages war, goes hunting and fishing, procures the raw material of food and the tools required for these. The woman looks after the house and the preparation of food and clothing, cooks, weaves and sews. Each is master in the appropriate sphere : the man in the forest, the woman in the house. Each owns the tools made and used by each : the man owns the weapons and the instruments for hunting and fishing, the woman the household equipment. The housekeeping is communal for several families, often a great many.<sup>1</sup> Whatever is used and made in common is common property : the house, the garden, the long-boat. Here, therefore, and as yet only here, exists that "self-made property" falsely ascribed by jurists and economists to civilised society—the last fictitious legal subterfuge on which modern capitalist property still rests.

But men did not everywhere remain stationary at this stage. In Asia they came across animals which could be tamed and bred when tamed. The wild buffalo cow had to be hunted ; the tame one provided a calf each year and milk besides. A number of the most advanced tribes—Aryans, Semites, perhaps also Turanians—made their chief occupation at first the taming, and only later also the breeding and tending of cattle. Pastoral tribes separated themselves off from the general mass of barbarians : *the first great social division of labour*. The pastoral tribes produced not only more but also different means of existence as compared with other barbarians. They had not only milk, milk products and meat in greater quantity than other barbarians, but also skins, wool, goat-hair and spun and woven materials which increased in quantity with the mass of raw material. And this for the first time made regular exchange possible. At earlier stages only

<sup>1</sup> Especially on the North West Coast of America—see Bancroft. Among the Haidahs on Queen Charlotte's Island there are households with up to 700 persons under one roof. Among the Nootkas whole tribes used to live under one roof.

occasional exchanges could take place ; special ability in the making of weapons and tools might lead to a transitory division of labour. Thus indisputable traces of workplaces for stone tools of the Neolithic period have been found at many places ; the experts who there perfected their skill probably worked for the account of the commune, as the permanent handicraftsmen of the Indian gens communes still do. In no case, at this stage, could any other exchange arise than that within the tribe, and this remained an exceptional incident. But, in contrast to this, after the separation of the pastoral tribes we find all the conditions ripe for exchange between the members of different tribes, for its development and establishment as a regular institution.

Originally tribe exchanged with tribe, through their respective heads of the gens ; but when the herds began to pass into individual ownership, individual exchange began to predominate more and more, and eventually became the only form. The chief article, however, which the pastoral tribes gave to their neighbours in exchange was cattle ; cattle became the commodity by which all other commodities were valued and which was everywhere willingly accepted in exchange for these—in a word, cattle assumed the function of money and performed the services of money already at this stage. Such was the necessity and speed with which the need for a money commodity developed right at the very beginning of commodity exchange.

Horticulture, which was probably unknown to the Asiatics in the lower stage of barbarism, made its appearance among them at the latest in the middle stage of barbarism, as the forerunner of agriculture. The climate of the Turanian plateau makes pastoral life impossible without supplies of fodder for the long and severe winter ; here the cultivation of grass and corn was therefore a necessary condition. This is also true of the steppes north of the Black Sea. But when once corn had been won for

the cattle, it soon became food for men also. The cultivated land still remained the property of the tribe ; at first it was handed over to the gens, by this later to the household and ultimately to individuals for their use : they might have certain rights of possession in this land, but nothing more than that.

Of the industrial achievements of this stage two are especially important. The first is the weaving loom, the second the smelting of metal ores and the working of metal. Copper and tin, and bronze, an alloy of these, were far the most important ; bronze provided usable tools and weapons, but could not displace stone tools ; only iron could do this, and as yet men did not understand how to win iron. Gold and silver began to be used for ornament and decoration, and must already have been set at a high value as compared with copper and bronze.

The increase of production in all branches—cattle raising, agriculture, home handicrafts—gave human labour power the capacity to produce a larger product than was necessary for its maintenance. Simultaneously it increased the daily amount of labour which fell to the lot of each member of the gens, the house commune or the individual family. The bringing in of new labour forces became desirable. These were provided by war : prisoners of war were transformed into slaves.

In the general historical conditions then prevailing the first great social division of labour, with its increase of the productivity of labour and therefore of wealth, and its widening of the field of production, necessarily brought slavery in its train. From the first great social division of labour sprang the first great cleavage of society into two classes : masters and slaves, exploiters and exploited.

Up to the present we do not know how and when the herds passed from the common possession of the tribe or the gens into the property of the individual heads of families. It must, however, have taken place mainly at this stage. With the herds and the other new forms of

wealth, however, a revolution came over the family. It had always been the man's business to procure the means of existence, and the instruments required for this had been produced by him and were his property. The herds were the new means of existence ; their initial taming and subsequent tending were the work of the man. The cattle therefore belonged to him, to him also belonged the commodities and slaves taken in exchange for cattle. All the surplus which the acquisition of the means of living now yielded fell to the man ; the woman shared in the enjoyment of this surplus, but she had no share in its ownership. The " savage " warrior and hunter had been content with the second place in the house, below the woman ; the " milder " herdsman, boasting of his property, pushed himself forward to the first place, and the woman back to the second. And she could not complain. The division of labour in the family had regulated the division of property between man and woman ; it had remained the same, and yet now it turned the former household relations upside down, merely because the division of labour outside the family had become different. The same cause which had secured for the woman her former dominion in the house—her restriction to household work—this same cause now ensured the dominion of the man in the house : the woman's household work had now dwindled in comparison with the man's labour in procuring the means of existence ; the latter was all-important, the former an insignificant adjunct. It is already clear at this point that the emancipation of woman, her equalisation with man, is and remains impossible so long as the woman is excluded from the productive work of society and remains restricted to private household work. The emancipation of woman first becomes possible when she is able, on an extensive, social scale, to participate in production, and household work claims her attention only to an insignificant extent. And this for the first time has been made possible by modern large-scale industry, which not only admits women's



labour over a wide range, but absolutely demands it, and also strives to transform private household work more and more into a public industry.

With the *de facto* dominion of the man in the house the last barrier to his exclusive dominion had fallen. This exclusive dominion was confirmed and perpetuated by the overthrow of the matriarchy and the introduction of the patriarchy, the gradual transition from the pairing family to monogamy. But this brought a rupture in the old gens organisation of society: the individual family became a power and rose up menacingly confronting the gens.

The next step brings us to the highest stage of barbarism, the period in which all civilised peoples passed through their heroic age: the period of the iron sword, but also of the iron ploughshare and axe. Iron had become usable by man—the last and most important of all raw materials which played a revolutionary part in history, the last—until the potato. Iron extended agriculture to wider areas, clearing more extensive stretches of forest; it provided handicraft with a tool of a hardness and cutting power that no stone or any other known metal could withstand. But all this was a gradual process; the first iron was often even softer than bronze. Stone weapons therefore only slowly disappeared; not only in the Song of Hildebrand, but even at Hastings in the year 1066 stone axes were still brought to battle. But the advance now proceeded irresistibly, with fewer checks and at a more rapid pace. The town, with its stone walls, towers and battlements encircling stone or brick houses, became the central seat of the tribe or tribal federation—a mighty step forward in architecture, but also an indication of greater danger and need of protection. Wealth grew rapidly, but as the wealth of individuals; weaving, metal-working and the other handicrafts, more and more separating themselves apart, developed increasing variety and technical skill in production; in addition to corn, leguminous plants and fruit,

agriculture now yielded oil and wine, which man had learnt to make. Such manifold activities could no longer be carried on by the same individual. *The second great division of labour* took place : handicraft was separated off from agriculture. The continuous rise of production, and with it, of the productivity of labour, raised the value of human labour power. Slavery, in the preceding period still coming into existence and sporadic, now became an essential part of the social system ; slaves ceased to be mere auxiliaries, and were driven in dozens to work in the fields and workplaces. With the cleavage of production into the two great branches, agriculture and handicraft, arose production directly for exchange, the production of commodities ; and with this, trade, not only within the tribe and at the fringes of the tribal territory, but also already overseas. But all of this as yet in very undeveloped form ; the precious metals began to be the predominant and general money commodities, but as yet in unminted form, exchanging simply on the basis of their as yet uncloaked weight.

The distinction between rich and poor made its appearance, alongside that between freemen and slaves—with the new division of labour, a new cleavage of society into classes. The differences of property as between the heads of individual families burst asunder the old communal households wherever they had continued to exist, and with these, the joint cultivation of land for account of this house-commune. Agricultural land was transferred to individual families for their use, first for a period, and later in permanence ; the transition to full private ownership was completed gradually and parallel with the transition from the pairing marriage to monogamy. The individual family begins to become the economic unit in society.

The increasing density of the population necessitated closer consolidation within the tribe as well as externally. Everywhere the related tribes found it necessary to form

confederations, and soon even to merge, and consequently to merge the separate tribal territories into an aggregate territory of the nation. The chief of the nation's army—*rex*, *basileus*, *thiudans*—became an indispensable, permanent official. The national assembly sprang up, where it did not already exist. The chief of the army, council and national assembly constituted the organs of a gens society developed into a military democracy. Military, because war and the organisation for war had now become regular functions of national life. The wealth of neighbours excited the greed of nations to whom the acquisition of wealth already appeared as one of the first aims of life. They were barbarians: to them pillage seemed easier and even more honourable than acquisition by labour. War, previously only waged in revenge for attacks or to extend territory which had become insufficient, was then carried on for the sake of pure pillage, and became a permanent branch of industry. It is not for nothing that menacing walls rose high, encircling the newly fortified towns: in the ditches under them gaped the grave of gens society, and their turrets were already towering into civilisation. And the same process was going on within them. Wars of robbery increased the power of the supreme military chief, as well as that of the subordinate chieftains; the customary choice of successors within the same family was gradually transformed, especially since the introduction of patriarchy, into what was at first a tolerated, then a claimed, and finally a usurped heredity; the foundations of the hereditary monarchy and hereditary nobility were laid. In this way the organs of gens society were gradually torn from their roots in the people, in the gens, phratry and tribe; and the entire gens organisation of society was transformed into its opposite: from an organisation of tribes for the free ordering of their affairs it became an organisation for the pillage and oppression of neighbouring peoples, and its organs accordingly changed from instruments of the peoples' will into independent organs of

domination and repression in relation to their own people. But this would never have been possible had not the greed for wealth cleft the members of the gens into rich and poor ; had not " the property differences within the same gens transformed the identity of interests into antagonisms of the members of the gens " (Marx) ; and had not the extension of slavery already begun to lead to the acquisition of the means of subsistence by labour being regarded as an activity only fit for slaves, more dishonourable than pillage.

And with this we reach the threshold of civilisation. The period opens with a new step forward in the division of labour. At the lower stage men produced only for their own immediate needs ; the acts of exchange which may have taken place were isolated, and covered only accidental surpluses which arose. At the middle stage of barbarism we find already among the pastoral peoples property in the form of cattle, which when the herds reach a certain size regularly yields a surplus over their own requirements ; and at the same time, a division of labour between pastoral peoples and backward tribes without herds. That is to say, two different stages of production in existence alongside each other, and hence the conditions for regular exchange. The later stage of barbarism shows us the further division of labour between agriculture and handicraft, and with this the production of a constantly growing portion of the products of labour directly for exchange ; and the raising of exchange between individual producers into a necessity of life for society. Civilisation strengthened and increased all these divisions of labour which it found in existence, particularly through the sharpening of the antagonism between town and country. (In this process the town may, from an economic standpoint, rule the country, or the country the town, as in the middle ages.) And to these existing divisions it adds a third division of labour, peculiar

to it, and of decisive importance : it creates a class which is no longer engaged in production, but only in the exchange of the products—the *merchants*. All previous tendencies to the formation of classes were as yet exclusively connected with production ; they separated the people engaged in production into those directing the work and those carrying it out, or into producers on a larger and producers on a smaller scale. Now for the first time a class arose which, without in any way participating in production, won for itself the directing rôle over production as a whole and threw the producers into economic subjection ; a class which made itself the indispensable mediator between every two producers and exploited them both. Under the pretext of relieving the producers of the trouble and risk of exchange, and extending the sale of their products to the most distant markets, and thereby becoming the most useful class of the population, a class of parasites was formed, real social bloodsuckers, who as compensation for very slight actual services skimmed the cream off both home and foreign production, rapidly acquired enormous wealth and corresponding social influence, and precisely because of this throughout the period of civilisation attained ever fresh honours and ever greater control of production, until it ultimately brought to light a product of its own : the periodical commercial crises.

At the stage of development we are now considering, however, the young merchant class had as yet not the faintest inkling of the great things that lay before it. But it built itself up and made itself indispensable, and that sufficed. With it, however, metallic money, minted coin, developed, and with metallic money a new means to the dominion of the non-producer over the producer and his production. The commodity of commodities, which contained hidden within itself all other commodities, was discovered ; the charm which can transform itself at will into any desirable and desired thing. Whoever had it controlled the world of production—and who above

all others had it? The merchant. In his hand the cult of money was secure. He made sure that it became evident how low in the dust all commodities, and with them all producers of commodities, must prostrate themselves in face of money. He demonstrated in a practical way that all other forms of wealth were merely empty illusion in comparison with this embodiment of wealth as such. Never again did the power of money show itself with such primordial crudity and violence as in this its period of youth. After the sale of commodities for money came the loaning of money, and with this, interest and usury. And no legislation of later epochs hurled the debtor so helplessly and irretrievably at the usurious creditor's feet as the legislation of ancient Athens and Rome—and both arose spontaneously, as customary rights, without any pressure other than economic.

Alongside the wealth in commodities and slaves, alongside of money wealth, there now also appeared wealth in land. The possessive rights held by individuals in the parcels of land originally allocated to them by the gens or tribe had now been consolidated to such an extent that these parcels now belonged to them by inheritance. In the most recent period the chief aim for which they strove was liberation from the claim of the corporate gens to these parcels, since this claim had become a fetter to them. They rid themselves of this fetter—but soon after, also of their new landed property. The full, unrestricted ownership of the lands means not only the possibility of possessing the land intact and without limit; it means also the possibility of disposing of it. So long as the land was the property of the gens, this possibility did not exist. But when the new landowner finally struck off the fetter of the paramount right of the gens and the tribe to the land, he also tore away the bond that up to then had bound him indissolubly to the land. What this meant was made clear to him by money, which was invented simultaneously with private property in land. The land could now become

a commodity that was sold or mortgaged. Property in land was no sooner introduced than mortgages also were discovered (see Athens). Just as hetærisism and prostitution clung to the heels of monogamy, so now the mortgage clung to the heels of property in land. You wanted full, unrestricted, alienable property in land ; very well, then, you have it—*tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin !*

Thus, with the extension of trade, money and money usury, property in land and mortgages, the concentration and centralisation of wealth in the hands of a numerically small class went rapidly ahead, and alongside it the increasing impoverishment of the masses and the increasing mass of poor people. The new aristocracy of wealth, in so far as it was not already identical from the outset with the old tribal nobility, pushed the latter eventually into the background (in Athens, in Rome, and among the Germans). And alongside this division of freemen into classes based on wealth there took place, especially in Greece, an immense increase in the number of slaves<sup>1</sup> whose forced labour formed the foundation on which the superstructure of the entire society was built up.

Let us now turn to consider what had become of the gens organisation in the course of this social revolution. As against the new elements which had grown up without its aid, the gens organisation was powerless. Its presupposition was that the members of a gens, or even of a tribe, lived united in the same territory, occupied it exclusively. That had long ceased to be the case. Everywhere gentes and tribes were intermingled ; everywhere slaves, " clients," " barbarians " lived right among the citizens. The settled domicile which had been won only towards the end of the middle stage of barbarism was ever and again broken through by the mobility and change of domicile resulting

<sup>1</sup> In Corinth at the zenith of its power the number of slaves was 460,000 ; in Ægina 470,000—in both cases ten times the population of free citizens.

from trade, alteration of occupation and changes in the ownership of land. The members of the gens could no longer meet together to take cognisance of their own common affairs ; only unimportant things, such as religious festivals, were still here and there maintained. Alongside the needs and interest for the safeguarding of which the gens councils were appropriate and competent, out of the revolution in productive relations and the consequent change in the social structure new needs and interests had arisen, which were not only unknown to the old gens organisation but even cut across it in every way. The interests of the handicraft groups which had arisen through the division of labour, the special interests of the town as opposed to the country, required new organs : each of these groups, however, was composed of people of the most diverse gentes, phratries and tribes, and even included "barbarians" ; these organs had therefore to be formed outside the gens organisation, alongside of it, and hence in opposition to it.—And again each gens began to experience this conflict of interests, which reached its highest point in the union of rich and poor, usurers and debtors within the same gens and the same tribe. In addition there was the mass of the new population, outside of the gens groupings, who, as in Rome, might become a power in the land, and yet was too numerous to be gradually absorbed in the families and tribes based on blood relationship. Over against this mass stood the gens groups as closed, privileged associations ; the primitive natural democracy had been transformed into a hated aristocracy. And finally, the gens organisation had grown up in a society which knew no internal contradictions, and was only suited to such a society. It had no means of coercion other than public opinion. But now a society had arisen which, by virtue of its entire economic conditions of life, had been compelled to split into freeman and slaves, into exploiting rich and exploited poor ; a society which not only could not again reconcile these contradictions, but necessarily drove them



to an ever sharpened point. Such a society could only continue to exist either in constant open conflict of these classes with one another, or under the rule of a third power, which, seemingly standing above the conflicting classes, suppressed their open conflict, and allowed the class struggle to be fought out at most on the economic field, in so-called legal form. The gens organisation of society had ceased to live. It had been burst asunder by the division of society into classes. It was replaced by the *State*.

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In the foregoing pages we have considered in detail the three chief forms in which the State arose on the ruins of the gens organisation. Athens provided the purest, the classical form : here the State sprang directly and predominantly from the class contradictions which developed within gens society itself. In Rome gens society grew into a closed aristocracy surrounded by a numerically large plebs which was outside the gens organisation and had no rights but was subject to obligations ; the victory of the plebs burst asunder the old organisation based on kinship, and set up on its ruins the State, in which both the gens aristocracy and the plebs were soon completely fused. Among the German conquerors of the Roman Empire, finally, the State arose directly from the conquest of large foreign territories, for the control of which the gens organisation was not adapted. But because this conquest involved neither any serious struggle with the former population, nor a more advanced division of labour ; because the victors' level of economic development was almost the same as that of the vanquished, and the economic basis of society therefore remained the same—for these reasons the gens organisation of society was able to continue in existence for many centuries in the altered, territorial form of the Mark, and even for a time to rejuvenate itself in modified form in the later noble and patrician

families; in fact even in peasant families, as in Ditmarsh.<sup>1</sup>

The State is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from the outside; just as little is it "the reality of the moral idea" "the image and reality of reason," as Hegel asserted. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, may not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society becomes necessary, whose purpose is to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power arising out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly separating itself from it, is the State.

In contrast with the ancient organisation of the gens, the first distinguishing characteristic of the State is the grouping of the subjects of the State on a territorial basis. The old gens organisations, built up and held together by ties of blood, had become inadequate, largely because they presupposed that the members of the gens were bound to a definite territory, and this had long ceased to be the case. The territory had stood still, but men had become mobile. The territorial division was therefore taken as the starting point, and the citizens were allowed to exercise their rights and obligations at the place where they settled, without regard to gens and tribe. This organisation of the subjects of a State on the basis of their attachment to a particular place is common to all States. To us, therefore, it seems natural; but we have seen what bitter and protracted struggles had to be passed through before it was

<sup>1</sup>The first historian who had at least an approximate idea of the nature of the gens was Niebuhr; and this—but also undoubtedly the erroneous conceptions he embodied in it—he owed to his acquaintance with the families in Ditmarsh.

able, in Athens and Rome, to replace the old organisation based on kinship.

The second is the establishment of a *public force*, which is no longer absolutely identical with the population organising itself as an armed power. This special public force is necessary, because a self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible since the cleavage of society into classes. The slaves also formed part of the population; the 90,000 Athenian citizens constituted only a privileged class as against the 365,000 slaves. The national army of the Athenian democracy was an aristocratic public force as against the slaves, and held them in check; but in order to hold the citizens in check, as noted above, a gendarmerie also was necessary. This public force exists in every State; it consists not merely of armed men, but of material appendages, prisons and repressive institutions of all kinds, of which gens society knew nothing. It may be very insignificant, almost infinitesimal, in societies where class contradictions are still undeveloped and in outlying areas, as at certain periods and in certain parts of the United States of America. It grows stronger, however, in proportion as the class antagonisms within the State grow sharper, and with the growth in size and population of the adjacent States. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have screwed up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the State itself.

For the maintenance of this public force, contributions from the citizens are necessary—*taxes*. To gens society these were completely unknown. We, however, nowadays know more than enough about them. With the advance of civilisation even these become inadequate; the State draws bills on the future, it contracts loans, *State debts*. Of these, too, ancient Europe can tell a tale.

Having at their disposal the public force and the right to exact taxes, the officials now stand as organs of society

*above* society. The free, voluntary respect which was accorded to the organs of the gens form of government does not satisfy them, even if they could have it ; as representatives of a force alien to society, respect for them had to be established through exceptional laws, thanks to which they enjoyed a special sanctity and inviolability. The shabbiest police servant of the civilised State had more "authority" than all the organs of gens society put together ; but the most powerful prince and the greatest statesman or military chief of a civilised State may well envy the least among the chiefs of the gens the unconstrained and uncontested respect which was paid to him. The latter stood right in the middle of society ; the former is compelled to pose as something outside of and above society.

As the State arose out of the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it, at the same time, arose in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the State of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which by virtue thereof becomes also the dominant class politically, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. Thus the ancient State was above all the slaveowners' State for holding down the slaves, as a feudal State was the organ of the nobles for holding down the peasantry, bondmen and serfs, and the modern representative State is the instrument of the exploitation of wage-labour by capital. By way of exception, however, there are periods when the warring classes so nearly attain equilibrium that the State power, ostensibly appearing as a mediator, assumes for the moment a certain independence in relation to both. Such were the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which balanced the nobles and burghers against each other ; the Bonapartism of the First and particularly the Second Empire in France, which played off the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The latest achievement of this kind, in

which both ruler and subjects appear equally ridiculous, is the New German Imperial Bismarckian Nation : here the capitalists and the workers are balanced against each other and both equally fleeced by the degenerate and boorish country-squires of Prussia.

Moreover in most States that have existed in history the rights conceded to citizens have been graded on the basis of property, and thereby the fact has been directly expressed that the State is an organisation of the possessing class for protection against the non-possessing class. This was already the case in the Athenian and Roman classes based on property. This was the case in the feudal State of the middle ages, in which political power was graded in accordance with the ownership of land. And it is the case in the electoral register of the modern representative States. This political recognition of property differences is, however, by no means essential. On the contrary, it indicates a low stage of development of the State. The highest form of State, the democratic republic, which in our modern social relations is becoming more and more an unavoidable necessity, and is the form of State in which alone the last decisive battle between proletariat and bourgeoisie can be fought out—the democratic republic no longer has any official cognisance of property differences. In it, wealth wields its power indirectly, but all the more effectively. On the one hand in the form of direct corruption of the officials—America is the classical example of this ; on the other hand in the form of the alliance between the government and the stock exchange, which comes about all the more easily the more the public debt increases and the more share companies concentrate in their hands not only transport but even production, and in turn find their own centre of gravity in the stock exchange. Apart from America, the most recent republic of France is a striking example of this, and even honest Switzerland has played her part on this field. On the other hand, that a democratic republic is not essential for this fraternal

alliance between government and stock exchange is proved, in addition to England, by the new German Empire, where it is impossible to say which of the two universal suffrage has the more exalted, Bismarck or Bleichröder. And in the last analysis the possessing class rules directly by means of universal suffrage. So long as the oppressed class, that is, in our case, the proletariat, is not yet ripe for self-liberation, so long will it, that is, the majority, regard the existing social order as the only possible one, and be politically the tail of the capitalist class, its extreme left wing. In the degree, however, that it matures towards its self-emancipation, to that degree it constitutes itself as its own party, elects its own representatives and not those of the capitalists. Universal suffrage is therefore the measure of the maturity of the working class ; in the State of to-day it cannot and never will be anything more. But this in any case is enough. On the day when the thermometer of universal suffrage indicates boiling-point among the workers, they as well as the capitalists will know where they are.

The State, therefore, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies which managed without it, which had no conception of the State and State power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the State became a necessity owing to this cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but is becoming a positive hindrance to production. They will disappear as inevitably as they arose at an earlier age. Along with them the State will inevitably disappear. The society that organises production anew on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will put the whole State machine where it will then belong : in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning wheel and the bronze axe.

Civilisation is therefore, in accordance with the above analysis, the stage of development of society in which the division of labour, the exchange between individuals arising therefrom, and the production of commodities embracing both of these, reach full development and revolutionise the whole of earlier society.

Production at all earlier stages of society was essentially collective, just as consumption also was on the basis of direct distribution of the products within larger or smaller communal groupings. This collective production took place within extremely narrow limits; but it brought with it the domination of the producers over their process of production and their product. They knew what became of their product: they consumed it, it did not leave their hands; and so long as production was carried on on this basis, it could not grow beyond the control of the producers, nor beget any spectral, extraneous forces in opposition to them, as in civilisation is always and inevitably the case.

But slowly the division of labour penetrated this process of production and appropriation, it raised appropriation by individuals into the prevailing rule, and thereby begot exchange between individuals—we have investigated above how it did this. By degrees the production of commodities became the dominant form.

With the production of commodities, production no longer for the use of the producer but for exchange, the products necessarily change hands. The producer gives away his product in exchange; he no longer knows what becomes of it. When money, and with money the merchant, steps in as intermediary between the producers, the process of exchange becomes still more complicated, the ultimate fate of the products still more uncertain. There are many merchants, and none of them knows what the other is doing. Commodities now already not merely pass from hand to hand, they move also from market to market; the producers have lost control over the total production

of the group in which they live, and the traders have not taken over this control. Products and production become subject to chance.

But chance is only one pole of an interrelation whose other pole is necessity. In nature, where also chance seems to rule, we have long since established in each separate field the inner necessity and subjection to law which runs through this chance. But what is true of Nature is true also of society. The more a social activity, a series of social processes, becomes too powerful for men's conscious control, gets beyond them, and the more it seems left to the purest chance, all the more surely, as though with elemental necessity, the immanent laws peculiar to this chance work themselves out within it. Such laws govern also the accidents of commodity production and exchange ; they face individual producers and traders as hostile, in the beginning even unrecognised, forces, whose nature must first be laboriously investigated and established. These economic laws of commodity production are modified with the various stages of development of this form of production ; but in one form or another the whole period of civilisation is dominated by them. And even to this day the product dominates the producer ; even to this day the aggregate production of society is regulated not by a jointly-devised plan, but by blind laws which make themselves felt with elemental force, ending with the storms of the periodical commercial crises.

We saw above that at a rather early stage of development of production human labour power became able to produce a considerably greater product than was necessary for the maintenance of the producers, and that this stage of production was in the main the same as that in which the division of labour and exchange between individuals made their appearance. After that it was not long before the great " truth " was discovered that man also can be a commodity ; that human strength is exchangeable and usable, by the transformation of a man into a slave.



Hardly had men begun to exchange when they themselves began to be exchanged. The active became the passive, whether men liked it or not.

With slavery, which in civilisation reached its most complete development, came the first great cleavage of society into an exploiting and an exploited class. This cleavage lasted throughout the whole period of civilisation. Slavery is the first form of exploitation, the form proper to the world of antiquity ; it was followed by serfdom in the middle ages, and wage labour in the more recent period. These are the three great forms of subjection, characteristic of the three great epochs of civilisation ; open, and more recently disguised, slavery continues throughout, side by side with the later forms.

The stage of commodity production at which civilisation begins is marked, from the economic standpoint, by the introduction of (1) metallic money, and with it money capital, interest and usury ; (2) merchants, as a class of intermediaries between the producers ; (3) the private ownership of land, and mortgages ; and (4) slave labour as the prevailing form of production. The form of the family which corresponds to civilisation and reaches definite ascendancy with it is monogamy, the domination of the man over the woman, and the individual family as the economic unit of society. The combining link of civilised society is the State, which in all typical periods without exception is the State of the ruling class, and in all cases continues to be in essence a machine for holding down the oppressed and exploited class. A further characteristic of civilisation is : on the one hand the establishment of the opposition between town and country as the basis of the entire social division of labour ; and on the other hand the introduction of the testament through which the property owner can dispose of his property even after his death. This institution, which struck a blow straight in the face of the former gens organisation, was unknown in Athens until

the time of Solon ; in Rome it was introduced at an early date, though we do not know exactly when<sup>1</sup> ; among the Germans it was the priests who introduced it, in order that the devout German might without hindrance bequeath his heritage to the church.

With this fundamental constitution civilisation has accomplished things of which the old gens society was quite incapable. But it has accomplished them by setting in motion the basest impulses and passions of man and developing these at the cost of all his other talents. Sheer greed has been the driving spirit of civilisation from its first day up to now : wealth, and more wealth, and still more wealth—the wealth not of society but of the wretched individual, its sole decisive goal. If in pursuit of this goal the progressive development of science, and at recurrent periods the highest achievements of art, fell into its lap, it was only because without these the full conquest of wealth of our time would not have been possible.

As the basis of civilisation is the exploitation of one class by another class, its whole development moved within a permanent contradiction. Each advance of production is at the same time a step backwards in the position of the oppressed class, that is, of the immense majority. Each benefit for some is necessarily a disadvantage for the others ; each new liberation of one class is a new oppression for another class. The most striking proof of this is given

<sup>1</sup> Part II of Lassalle's *System of Inherited Rights* depends mainly on the proposition that the Roman testament is as old as Rome itself, that in Roman history there was never "a period without the testament" ; that, on the contrary, the testament had come into existence in pre-Roman days, through the cult of the dead. Lassalle, as a faithful Hegelian, derives Roman legal dispositions not from the social conditions of the Romans, but from the "speculative conceptions" of the will, and because of this arrives at this totally unhistorical assertion. It is not to be wondered at in a book which, on the basis of these same "speculative conceptions," comes to the conclusion that the transfer of property was a purely subsidiary matter in Roman inheritance. Lassalle not only believes in the illusions of the Roman jurists, especially those of the earlier period ; he even surpasses them.

by the introduction of machinery, the effects of which are now known throughout the world. And if among barbarians, as we saw, the distinction between rights and obligations can hardly as yet be made, civilisation makes the distinction and contrast between these clear even to the most stupid, inasmuch as it bestows on one class to all intents and purposes all the rights, and on the other class, on the contrary, to all intents and purposes all the obligations.

But this has not to be so. What is good for the ruling class has also to be good for the whole of society, with which the ruling class identifies itself. The further civilisation advances, therefore, the more it is compelled to cover up the evil conditions necessarily created by it with the cloak of charity, to palliate them or deny their existence ; in short, to introduce a conventional hypocrisy which was unknown either to earlier forms of society or even to the first stages of civilisation, and finally culminates in the assertion that the exploitation of the oppressed class is carried on by the exploiting class simply and solely in the interests of the exploited class itself ; and if the latter does not understand this, and even grows rebellious, this is the most base ingratitude to the benefactors and exploiters.<sup>1</sup>

And now to conclude with Morgan's judgment on civilisation :

Since the advent of civilisation the outgrowth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding and its management so intelligent in the interests of its

<sup>1</sup> I originally intended, when dealing with Morgan's and my own views, also to take account of the brilliant critique of civilisation which is to be found scattered through Charles Fourier's works. Unfortunately I have not the time for this. I only note that already in Fourier's writings monogamy and property in land are treated as the chief characteristics of civilisation, and that he calls it a war of the rich against the poor. Similarly, his insight was deep enough to understand even then that in all imperfect societies which are split into antagonisms the economic units are the individual families (*les familles incohérentes*).

owners, that it has become, on the part of the people, an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation. The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property and define the relations of the State to the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests, and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relations. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilisation began is but a fragment of the past duration of man's existence ; and but a fragment of the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim ; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes.

*Friedrich Engels*

## THE HOUSING QUESTION

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[ In the late 'sixties and early 'seventies of last century the housing shortage became acute in Germany, owing to the rapid industrial development of that period. The German Press was full of articles on the housing question, and a

number of "solutions" were put forward, including some which professed to be socialist, but in fact represented "mere social patchwork." Engels protested against such articles being printed in the socialist Press ; the Editors of *Volksstaat* invited him to write a critical examination of them. Engels therefore wrote these articles, showing that the housing shortage is only one feature of the capitalist mode of production and the class relations of capitalism, and can never be "solved" so long as these class relations exist. The articles are mainly polemic, but also state positive Marxist principles, indicating the revolutionary solution of the housing question. ]

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## THE HOUSING QUESTION

### HOW PROUDHON SOLVES THE HOUSING QUESTION

... The so-called housing shortage, which plays such a great rôle in the Press nowadays, does not consist in the fact that the working class generally lives in bad, overcrowded and unhealthy dwellings. *This* shortage is not something peculiar to the present ; it is not even one of the sufferings peculiar to the modern proletariat in contradistinction to all earlier oppressed classes. On the contrary, all oppressed classes in all periods suffered more or less uniformly from it. In order to make an end of *this* housing shortage there is only *one* means : to abolish altogether the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the ruling class. What is meant to-day by housing shortage is the peculiar intensification of the bad housing conditions of the workers as the result of the sudden rush of population to the big towns ; a colossal increase in rents, a still further aggravation of overcrowding in the individual houses, and, for some, the impossibility of finding a place to live in at all. And *this* housing shortage gets talked of so much only

because it does not limit itself to the working class but has affected the petty bourgeoisie also.

The housing shortage from which the workers and part of the petty bourgeoisie suffer in our modern big cities is one of the numerous *smaller*, secondary evils which result from the present-day capitalist mode of production. It is not at all a direct result of the exploitation of the worker *as a* worker by the capitalists. This exploitation is the basic evil which the social revolution strives to abolish by abolishing the capitalist mode of production. The corner-stone of the capitalist mode of production is, however, the fact that our present social order enables the capitalists to buy the labour power of the worker at its value, but to extract from it much more than its value by making the worker work longer than is necessary in order to reproduce the price paid for the labour power. The surplus value produced in this fashion is divided among the whole class of capitalists and landowners together with their paid servants, from the Pope and the Kaiser, down to the night watchman and below. We are not concerned here as to how this distribution comes about, but this much is certain : that all those who do not work can live only from fragments of this surplus value which reach them in one way or another. (See Marx's *Capital* where this was worked out for the first time.)

The distribution of this surplus value, produced by the working class and taken from it without payment, among the non-working classes proceeds amid extremely edifying squabbings and mutual swindling. In so far as this distribution takes place by means of buying and selling, one of its chief methods is the cheating of the buyer by the seller, and in retail trade, particularly in the big towns, this has become an absolute condition of existence for the sellers. When, however, the worker is cheated by his grocer or his baker, either in regard to the price or the quality of the commodity, this does not happen to him in his specific capacity as a worker. On the contrary, as soon as a certain

average level of cheating has become the social rule in any place, it must in the long run be levelled out by a corresponding increase in wages. The worker appears before the small shopkeeper as a buyer, that is, as the owner of money or credit, and hence not at all in his capacity as a worker, that is, as a seller of labour power. The cheating may hit him, and the poorer class as a whole, harder than it hits the richer social classes, but it is not an evil which hits him exclusively or is peculiar to his class.

And it is just the same with the housing shortage. The growth of the big modern cities gives the land in certain areas, particularly in those which are centrally situated, an artificial and often colossally increasing value ; the buildings erected on these areas depress this value, instead of increasing it, because they no longer correspond to the changed circumstances. They are pulled down and replaced by others. This takes place above all with workers' houses which are situated centrally and whose rents, even with the greatest overcrowding, can never, or only very slowly, increase above a certain maximum. They are pulled down and in their stead shops, warehouses and public buildings are erected. Through its Haussmann in Paris, Bonapartism exploited this tendency tremendously for swindling and private enrichment. But the spirit of Haussmann has also been abroad in London, Manchester and Liverpool, and seems to feel itself just as much at home in Berlin and Vienna. The result is that the workers are forced out of the centre of the towns towards the outskirts ; that workers' dwellings, and small dwellings in general, become rare and expensive and often altogether unobtainable, for under these circumstances the building industry, which is offered a much better field for speculation by more expensive houses, builds workers' dwellings only by way of exception.

This housing shortage therefore certainly hits the worker harder than it hits any more prosperous class, but it is just as

little an evil which burdens the working class exclusively as the cheating of the shopkeeper, and it must, as far as the working class is concerned, when it reaches a certain level and attains a certain permanency similarly find a certain economic adjustment.

It is with just such sufferings as these, which the working class endures in common with other classes, and particularly the petty bourgeoisie, that petty-bourgeois socialism, to which Proudhon belongs, prefers to occupy itself. And thus it is not at all accidental that our German Proudhonist occupies himself chiefly with the housing question, which, as we have seen, is by no means exclusively a working-class question ; and that, on the contrary, he declares it to be a true, exclusively working-class question.

"As the *wage worker* is in relation to the *capitalist*, so is the *tenant* in relation to the *house owner*."

This is totally untrue.

In the housing question we have two parties confronting each other : the tenant and the landlord or house owner. The former wishes to purchase from the latter the temporary use of a dwelling ; he has money or credit, even if he has to buy this credit from the house owner himself at a usurious price as an addition to the rent. It is simple commodity sale ; it is not an operation between proletarian and bourgeois, between worker and capitalist. The tenant—even if he is a worker—appears as a *man with money* ; he must already have sold his own particular commodity, his labour power, in order to appear with the proceeds as the buyer of the use of a dwelling, or he must be in a position to give a guarantee of the impending sale of this labour power. The peculiar results which attend the sale of labour power to the capitalist are completely absent here. The capitalist causes the purchased labour power firstly to produce its own value and secondly to produce a surplus value which remains in his hands for the time being, subject to its distribution among the capitalist class. In this case therefore



an extra value is produced, the total sum of the existing value is increased. In the rent transaction the situation is quite different. No matter how much the landlord may over-reach the tenant it is still only a transfer of already *existing*, previously *produced* value, and the total sum of values possessed by the landlord and the tenant *together* remains the same after as it was before. The worker is always cheated of a part of the product of his labour, whether that labour is paid for by the capitalist below, above, or at its value. The tenant, on the other hand, is cheated only when he is compelled to pay for the dwelling above its value. It is, therefore, a complete misrepresentation of the relation between landlord and tenant to attempt to make it equivalent to the relation between worker and capitalist. On the contrary, we are dealing here with a quite ordinary commodity transaction between two citizens, and this transaction proceeds according to the economic laws which govern the sale of commodities in general and in particular the sale of the commodity, land property. The building and maintenance costs of the house, or of the part of the house in question, enters first of all into the calculation ; the land value, determined by the more or less favourable situation of the house, comes next ; the state of the relation between supply and demand existing at the moment is finally decisive. . . .

. . . How is the housing question to be solved then ? In present-day society just as any other social question is solved : by the gradual economic adjustment of supply and demand, a solution which ever reproduces the question itself anew and therefore is no solution. How a social revolution would solve this question depends not only on the circumstances which would exist in each case, but is also connected with still more far-reaching questions, among which one of the most fundamental is the abolition of the antithesis between town and country. As it is not our task to create Utopian systems for the arrangement of the future society, it would be more than idle to go into the question here

But one thing is certain : there are already in existence sufficient buildings for dwellings in the big towns to remedy immediately any real "housing *shortage*," given rational utilisation of them. This can naturally only take place by the expropriation of the present owners and by quartering in their houses the homeless or those workers excessively overcrowded in their former houses. Immediately the proletariat has conquered political power such a measure dictated in the public interests will be just as easy to carry out as other expropriations and billeting is by the existing state. . . .

#### HOW THE BOURGEOISIE SOLVES THE HOUSING QUESTION

. . . It is the essence of bourgeois socialism to want to maintain the basis of all the evils of present-day society and at the same time to want to abolish the evils themselves. As already pointed out in *The Communist Manifesto*, the bourgeois socialist "is desirous of redressing social grievances in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society," he wants "*a bourgeoisie without a proletariat*." We have already seen that Dr. Sax formulates the question in exactly the same fashion. The solution he finds in the solution of the housing question. He is of the opinion that :

by improving the housing of the working classes it would be possible successfully to remedy the material and spiritual misery which has been described and thereby—by a radical improvement of the housing conditions *alone*—to raise the greater part of these classes out of the morass of their often hardly human conditions of existence to the pure heights of material and spiritual well-being.

Incidentally, it is in the interests of the bourgeoisie to disguise the fact of the existence of a proletariat created by the bourgeois production relations and determining the continued existence of these production relations. And, therefore, Dr. Sax tells us (p. 21) that the expression working classes is to be understood as including all

"impecunious social classes," "and in general, people in a small way, such as handicraftsmen, widows, pensioners (!), subordinate officials, etc.," as well as actual workers. Bourgeois socialism extends its hand to the petty-bourgeois variety.

Whence then comes the housing shortage? How did it arise? As a good bourgeois, Dr. Sax is not supposed to know that it is a necessary product of the bourgeois social order; that it cannot fail to be present in a society in which the great masses of the workers are exclusively dependent upon wages, that is to say, on the sum of foodstuffs necessary for their existence and for the propagation of their kind; in which improvements of the existing machinery continually throw masses of workers out of employment; in which violent and regularly recurring industrial vacillations determine on the one hand the existence of a large reserve army of unemployed workers, and on the other hand drive large masses of the workers temporarily unemployed on to the streets; in which the workers are crowded together in masses in the big towns, at a quicker rate than dwellings come into existence for them under existing conditions; in which, therefore, there must always be tenants even for the most infamous pigsties; and in which finally the house owner in his capacity as capitalist has not only the right, but, in view of the competition, to a certain extent also the duty, of ruthlessly making as much out of his property in house rent as he possibly can. In such a society the housing shortage is no accident; it is a necessary institution and it can be abolished together with all its effects on health, etc., only if the whole social order from which it springs is fundamentally refashioned. That, however, bourgeois socialism dare not know. It dare not explain the housing shortage from the existing conditions. And therefore nothing remains for it but to explain the housing shortage by means of moral phrases as the result of the baseness of human beings, as the result of original sin, so to speak. . . .

. . . In any case, Dr. Sax has solved the question raised in the beginning : the worker "*becomes a capitalist*" by acquiring his own little house.

Capital is the command over the unpaid labour of others. The house of the worker can only become capital therefore if he rents it to a third person and appropriates a part of the labour product of this third person in the form of rent. By the fact that the worker lives in it himself the house is prevented from becoming capital, just as a coat ceases to be capital the moment I buy it from the tailor and put it on. The worker who owns a little house to the value of a thousand thalers is certainly no longer a proletarian, but one must be Dr. Sax to call him a capitalist.

However, the capitalist character of our worker has still another side. Let us assume that in a given industrial area it has become the rule that each worker own his own little house. In this case *the working class of that area lives rent free* ; expenses for rent no longer enter into the value of its labour power. Every reduction in the cost of production of labour power, that is to say, every permanent price reduction in the worker's necessities of life, is equivalent "on the basis of the iron laws of political economy" to a reduction in the value of labour power and will therefore finally result in a corresponding fall in wages. Wages would fall on an average corresponding to the average sum saved on rent, that is, the worker would pay rent for his own house, but not, as formerly, in money to the house owner, but in unpaid labour to the factory owner for whom he works. In this way the savings of the worker invested in his little house would certainly become capital to some extent, but not capital for him, but for the capitalist employing him.

Dr. Sax is thus unable to succeed even on paper in turning his worker into a capitalist.

Incidentally, what has been said above applies to all

so-called social reforms which aim at saving or cheapening the means of subsistence of the worker. Either they become general and then they are followed by a corresponding reduction of wages, or they remain quite isolated experiments, and then their very existence as isolated exceptions proves that their realisation on a general scale is incompatible with the existing capitalist mode of production. Let us assume that in a certain area a general introduction of consumers' co-operatives succeeds in reducing the cost of foodstuffs for the workers by 20 per cent ; in the long run wages would fall in that area by approximately 20 per cent, that is to say, in the same proportion as the foodstuffs in question enter into the means of subsistence of the workers. If the worker, for example, spends three-quarters of his weekly wage on these foodstuffs, then wages would finally fall by three-quarters of 20 = 15 per cent. In short, as soon as any such savings reform has become general, the worker receives in the same proportion less wages, as his savings permit him to live cheaper. Give every worker a saved independent income of 52 thalers a year and his weekly wage must finally fall by one thaler. Therefore : the more he saves the less he will receive in wages. He saves therefore not in his own interests, but in the interests of the capitalist. Is anything else necessary in order "to stimulate in the most powerful fashion the primary economic virtue, thrift" ? . . .

. . . It is perfectly clear that the existing state is neither able nor willing to do anything to remedy the housing difficulty. The state is nothing but the organised collective power of the possessing classes, the landowners and the capitalists as against the exploited classes, the peasants and the workers. What the individual capitalists (and it is here only a question of these because in this matter the landowner who is also concerned acts primarily as a capitalist) do not want, their state also does not want. If therefore the *individual* capitalists deplore the housing shortage, but can hardly be persuaded even superficially to palliate its most

terrifying consequences, then the *collective* capitalist, the state, will not do much more. At the most it will see to it that the measure of superficial palliation which has become standard is carried out everywhere uniformly. And we have already seen that this is the case. . . .

*Karl Marx*

## THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY

*Published 1847 ; English edition : Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1935.*

[ This was written as a reply to Proudhon's *The Philosophy of Poverty*, a work referred to in *The Communist Manifesto* as an example of "conservative or bourgeois socialism"—the form of socialism put forward by a section of the capitalist class which is "desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society." In *The Poverty of Philosophy* Marx not only criticised Proudhon's variety of "socialism" and philosophical confusion, but developed in a positive form the fundamental ideas which he and Engels had by then clearly formulated for themselves. The first section of the book represents an early statement of Marxist economic theory, leading on to *The Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital*. The second section, from which the following passages are taken, criticises Proudhon's philosophical conceptions and indicates the Marxist viewpoint. ]

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## THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY

## THE METAPHYSICS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

HERE we are, right in Germany! We shall now have to talk metaphysics while talking political economy. And in this again we shall but follow M. Proudhon's "contradictions." Just now he forced us to speak English, to become ourselves to some extent English. Now the scene is changing. M. Proudhon is transporting us to our dear fatherland and is forcing us to resume, whether we like it or not, our capacity as German.

If the Englishman transforms men into hats, the German transforms hats into ideas. The Englishman is Ricardo, rich banker and distinguished economist; the German is Hegel, simple professor of philosophy at the University of Berlin.

Louis XV, the last absolute monarch and representative of the decadence of French royalty, had attached to his person a doctor who was himself France's first economist. This doctor, this economist, represented the imminent and certain triumph of the French bourgeoisie. Doctor Quesnay made a science out of political economy; he summarised it in his famous *Tableau Économique* [*Economic Table*]. Besides the thousand and one commentaries which have appeared on this table, we possess one by the doctor himself. It is the "analysis of the economic table," followed by "seven important observations."

M. Proudhon is another Dr. Quesnay. He is the Quesnay of the metaphysics of political economy.

Now metaphysics—indeed all philosophy—can be summed up, according to Hegel, in method. We must, therefore, try to elucidate the method of M. Proudhon, which is at least as foggy as the *Economic Table*. It is for this reason that we are making seven more or less important observations. If Dr. Proudhon is not pleased with our observations, well, then, he will have to become an Abbé Baudeau and give the "explanation of the economico-metaphysical method" himself.

*First Observation*

"We are not giving a *history according to the order in time*, but *according to the sequence of ideas*. Economic phases or categories are in their *manifestation* sometimes contemporary, sometimes inverted. . . . Economic theories have none the less their *logical sequence* and their *serial relation in the understanding* : it is this order that we flatter ourselves to have discovered." (Proudhon, Vol. I, p. 146.)

M. Proudhon most certainly wanted to frighten the French by flinging quasi-Hegelian phrases at them. So we have to deal with two men ; firstly with M. Proudhon, and then with Hegel. How does M. Proudhon distinguish himself from other economists ? And what part does Hegel play in M. Proudhon's political economy ?

Economists express the relations of bourgeois production, the division of labour, credit, money, etc., as fixed, immutable, eternal categories. M. Proudhon, who has these ready-made categories before him, wants to explain to us the act of formation, the genesis of these categories, principles, laws, ideas, thoughts.

Economists explain how production takes place in the above-mentioned relations, but what they do not explain is how these relations themselves are produced, that is, the historical movement which gave them birth. M. Proudhon, taking these relations for principles, categories, abstract thoughts, has merely to put into *order* these thoughts, which are to be found alphabetically arranged at the end of every treatise on political economy. The economists' material is the active, energetic life of man ; M. Proudhon's material is the dogmas of the economists. But the moment we cease to pursue the historical movement of production-relations, of which the categories are but the theoretical expression, the moment we try to see in these categories no more than ideas, spontaneous thoughts, independent of real relations, we are forced to attribute the origin of these thoughts to the movement of pure reason. How does pure,



eternal, impersonal reason give rise to these thoughts? How does it proceed in order to produce them?

If we had M. Proudhon's intrepidity in the matter of Hegelianism we should say: it is distinguished in itself from itself. What does this mean? Impersonal reason, having outside itself neither a base on which it can pose itself, nor an object to which it can oppose itself, nor a subject with which it can compose itself, is forced to turn head over heels, in posing itself, opposing itself and composing itself—position, opposition, composition. Or, to speak Greek—we have thesis, antithesis and synthesis. For those who do not know the Hegelian language, we shall give the consecrating formula: affirmation, negation and negation of the negation. That is what language means. It is certainly not Hebrew (with due apologies to M. Proudhon); but it is the language of this pure reason, separate from the individual. Instead of the ordinary individual with his ordinary manner of speaking and thinking we have nothing but this ordinary manner in itself—without the individual.

Is it surprising that everything in the final abstraction—for we have here an abstraction, and not an analysis—presents itself as a logical category? Is it surprising that, if you let drop little by little all that constitutes the individuality of a house, making an abstraction first of the materials of which it is composed, then of the form that distinguishes it, you end up with nothing but a body; that, if you make an abstraction of the limits of this body, you soon have nothing but a space—that if, finally, you make an abstraction of the dimensions of this space, there is absolutely nothing left but pure quantity, the logical category? If we abstract thus from every subject all the alleged accidents, animate or inanimate, men or things, we are right in saying that in the final abstraction, the only substance left is the logical categories. Thus the metaphysicians who, in making these abstractions, think they are making analyses, and who, the more they detach themselves from things, imagine themselves to be getting all the

nearer to the point of penetrating to their core—these metaphysicians in turn are right in saying that things here below are embroideries of which the logical categories constitute the canvas. This is what distinguishes the philosopher from the Christian. The Christian, in spite of logic, has only one incarnation of the *Logos*; the philosopher has never finished with incarnations. If all that exists, all that lives on land and under water can be reduced by abstraction to a logical category—if the whole real world can be drowned thus in a world of abstractions, in the world of logical categories—who need be astonished at it?

All that exists, all that lives on earth and under water, exists and lives only by some kind of movement. Thus the movement of history produces social relations; industrial movement gives us industrial products, etc.

Just as by dint of abstraction we have transformed everything into a logical category, so one has only to make an abstraction of every characteristic distinctive of different movements to attain movement in its abstract condition—purely formal movement, the purely logical formula of movement. If one finds in logical categories the substance of all things, one imagines one has found in the logical formula of movement the *absolute method*, which not only explains all things, but also implies the movement of things.

It is of this absolute method that Hegel speaks in these terms: "Method is the absolute, unique, supreme, infinite force, which no object can resist; it is the tendency of reason to find itself again, to recognise itself in all things." (*Logik*, Vol. III.) All things being reduced to a logical category, and every movement, every act of production, to method, it follows naturally that every aggregate of products and production, of objects and of movement, can be reduced to a form of applied metaphysics. What Hegel has done for religion, law, etc., M. Proudhon seeks to do for political economy.

So what is this absolute method? The abstraction of movement. What is the abstraction of movement? Movement

in abstract condition. What is movement in abstract condition? The purely logical formula of movement or the movement of pure reason. Wherein does the movement of pure reason consist? In posing itself, opposing itself, composing itself, in formulating itself as thesis, antithesis, synthesis; or, yet again, in affirming itself, negating itself and negating its negation.

How does reason manage to affirm itself, to pose itself in a definite category? That is the business of reason itself and of its apologists.

But once it has managed to pose itself as a thesis, this thesis, this thought, opposed to itself, splits up into two contradictory thoughts—the positive and the negative, the yes and the no. The struggle between these two antagonistic elements comprised in the antithesis constitutes the dialectical movement. The yes becoming no, the no becoming yes, the yes becoming both yes and no, the no becoming both no and yes, the contraries balance, neutralise, paralyse each other. The fusion of these two contradictory thoughts constitutes a new thought, which is the synthesis of them. This thought splits up once again into two contradictory thoughts, which in turn establish a new synthesis. Of this travail is born a group of thoughts. This group of thoughts follows the same dialectic movement as the simple category, and has a contradictory group as antithesis. Of these two groups of thoughts is born a new group of thoughts, which is the synthesis of them.

Just as from the dialectic movement of the simple categories is born the group, so from the dialectic movement of the groups is born the series, and from the dialectic movement of the series is born the entire system.

Apply this method to the categories of political economy, and you have the logic and metaphysics of political economy, or, in other words, you have the economic categories that everybody knows, translated into a little-known language which makes them look as if they had newly blossomed forth in an intellect of pure reason; so much do

these categories seem to engender one another, to be linked up with, intertwined with one another, by the very working of the dialectic movement. The reader must not get alarmed at these metaphysics with all their scaffolding of categories, groups, series and systems. M. Proudhon, in spite of all the trouble he has taken to scale the heights of the *system of contradictions*, has never been able to raise himself above the first two rungs of simple thesis and antithesis ; and even these he has mounted only twice, and on one of these two occasions he fell over backwards.

Up to now we have expounded only the dialectics of Hegel. We shall see later how M. Proudhon has succeeded in reducing it to the meanest proportions. Thus, for Hegel, all that has happened and is still happening is only just what is happening in his own mind. Thus the philosophy of history is nothing but the history of philosophy, of his own philosophy. There is no longer a "history according to the order in time," there is only "the sequence of ideas in the understanding." He thinks he is constructing the world by the movement of thought, whereas he is merely reconstructing systematically and classifying by the absolute method the thoughts which are in the minds of all.

### *Second Observation*

Economic categories are only the theoretical expressions, the abstractions of the social relations of production. M. Proudhon, holding things upside down like a true philosopher, sees in actual relations nothing but the incarnation of these principles, of these categories, which were slumbering—so M. Proudhon the philosopher tells us—in the bosom of the "impersonal reason of humanity."

M. Proudhon the economist understands well enough that men make cloth, linen or silk materials in definite relations of production. But what he has not understood is that these definite social relations are just as much produced by men as linen, flax, etc. Social relations are closely bound

up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production ; and in changing their mode of production they change their way of earning their living—they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord ; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist.

The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in conformity with their social relations.

Thus these ideas, these categories, are as little eternal as the relations they express. They are *historical and transitory products*.

There is a continual movement of growth in productive forces, of destruction in social relations, of formation in ideas ; the only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement—*mors immortalis*.

### *Third Observation*

The production relations of every society form a whole. M. Proudhon considers economic relations as so many social phases, engendering one another, resulting one from the other like the antithesis from the thesis, and realising in their logical sequence the impersonal reason of humanity.

The only drawback to this method is that when he comes to examine a single one of these phases, M. Proudhon cannot explain it without having recourse to all the other relations of society ; which relations, however, he has not yet contrived to engender by means of his dialectic movement. When, after that, M. Proudhon, by means of pure reason, proceeds to give birth to these other phases, he treats them as if they were new-born babes. He forgets that they are of the same age as the first.

Thus, to arrive at the constitution of value, which for him is the basis of all economic evolutions, he could not do without division of labour, competition, etc. Yet in the *series*,

in the *understanding* of M. Proudhon, in the *logical sequence*, these relations were still non-existent.

In constructing the edifice of an ideological system by means of the categories of political economy, the limbs of the social system are dislocated. The different limbs of society are converted into so many separate societies, following one upon the other. How, indeed, could the single logical formula of movement, of sequence, of time, explain the structure of society, in which all relations co-exist simultaneously and support one another?

#### *Fourth Observation*

Let us see now to what modifications M. Proudhon subjects Hegel's dialectics, when he applies it to political economy.

For him, M. Proudhon, every economic category has two sides—one good, the other bad. He looks upon these categories as the petty bourgeois looks upon the great men of history : *Napoleon* was a great man ; he did a lot of good ; he also did a lot of harm.

The *good side* and the *bad side*, the *advantages* and the *drawbacks*, taken together form for M. Proudhon the *contradiction* in every economic category.

The problem to be solved : to keep the good side, while eliminating the bad.

*Slavery* is an economic category like any other. Thus it also must have its two sides. Let us leave alone the bad side and talk about the good side of slavery. Needless to say we are dealing only with direct slavery, with Negro slavery in Surinam, in Brazil, in the Southern States of North America.

Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, etc. Without slavery you have no cotton ; without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery that has given the colonies their value ; it is the colonies that have created world trade, and

it is world trade that is the pre-condition of large-scale industry. Thus slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance.

Without slavery, North America, the most progressive of countries, would be transformed into a patriarchal country. Wipe out North America from the map of the world, and you will have anarchy—the complete decay of modern commerce and civilisation. Abolish slavery and you will have wiped America off the map of nations.<sup>1</sup>

Thus slavery, because it is an economic category, has always existed among the institutions of the peoples. Modern nations have been able to disguise slavery in their own countries, but they have imposed it without disguise upon the New World.

What would M. Proudhon do to save slavery? He would formulate the *problem* thus: preserve the good side of this economic category, eliminate the bad.

Hegel has no problems to formulate. He has only dialectics. M. Proudhon has nothing of Hegel's dialectics but the language. For him the dialectic movement is his own dogmatic distinction between good and bad.

Let us for a moment consider M. Proudhon himself as a category. Let us examine his good and his bad side, his advantages and his drawbacks.

If he has the advantage over Hegel of formulating problems which he reserves the right of solving for the greater good of humanity, he has the drawback of being stricken with sterility when it is a question of engendering a new

<sup>1</sup> "This was perfectly correct for the year 1847. At that time the world trade of the United States was limited to the import of immigrants and industrial products, and the export of cotton and tobacco, that is, of the products of slave labour. The northern states produced principally corn and meat for the slave states. It was only when the North produced corn and meat for export and also became an industrial country, and when the American cotton monopoly had to face powerful competition in India, Egypt, Brazil, etc., that the abolition of slavery became possible. And even then this led to the ruin of the South, which did not succeed in replacing the open Negro slavery by the disguised slavery of Indian and Chinese coolies." [Note by F. Engels to the German edition, 1885.]

category by dialectical birth-throes. What constitutes dialectical movement is the co-existence of two contradictory sides, their conflict and their fusion into a new category. The very formulation of the problem as one of eliminating the bad side cuts short the dialectic movement. It is not the category which is posed and opposed to itself, by its contradictory nature, it is M. Proudhon who gets excited, perplexed and frets himself between the two sides of the category.

Caught thus in a blind alley, from which it is difficult to escape by legal means, M. Proudhon takes a real flying leap which transports him at one bound into a new category. Then it is that to his astonished gaze is revealed the *sequence in the understanding*.

He takes hold of the first category that comes handy and attributes to it arbitrarily the quality of supplying a remedy for the drawbacks of the category to be purified. Thus, if we are to believe M. Proudhon, taxes remedy the drawbacks of monopoly ; the balance of trade, the drawbacks of taxes ; landed property ; the drawbacks of credit.

By taking the economic categories thus successively, one by one, and making one the *antidote* to the other, M. Proudhon manages to make with this mixture of contradictions and antidotes to contradictions, two volumes of contradictions which he rightly entitles : *The System of Economic Contradictions*.

#### *Fifth Observation*

"In the absolute reason all these ideas . . . are equally simple and general. . . . In fact, we attain knowledge only by a *sort of scaffolding* of our ideas. But truth in itself is independent of these dialectical symbols and freed from the combinations of our minds." (Proudhon, Vol. II, p. 97.)

Here all of a sudden, by a kind of switch-over of which we now know the secret, the metaphysics of political economy has become an illusion ! Never has M. Proudhon spoken more truly. Indeed, from the moment the process of the



dialectic movement is reduced to the simple process of opposing good to bad, of posing problems tending to eliminate the bad, and of administering one category as an antidote to another, the categories are deprived of all spontaneity ; the idea "ceases to function" ; there is no life left in it. It is no longer posed or decomposed into categories. The sequence of categories has become a *sort of scaffolding*. Dialectics has ceased to be the movement of absolute reason. There is no longer any dialectics but only, at the most, an absolutely pure morality.

When M. Proudhon spoke of the *series in the understanding*, of the *logical sequence of categories*, he declared positively that he did not want to give *history according to the order in time*, that is, in M. Proudhon's view, the historical sequence in which the categories have *manifested* themselves. Thus for him everything happened in the *pure ether of reason*. Everything was to be derived from this ether by means of dialectics. Now that he has to put this dialectics into practice his reason defaults. M. Proudhon's dialectics runs counter to Hegel's dialectics, and now we have M. Proudhon reduced to saying that the order in which he gives his economic categories is not the order in which they engender one another. Economic evolutions are no longer the evolutions of reason itself.

What, then, does M. Proudhon give us ? Real history, which is, according to M. Proudhon's understanding, the sequence in which the categories have *manifested* themselves in order of time ? No ! History as it takes place in the idea itself ? Still less ! That is, neither the profane history of the categories, nor their sacred history ! What history does he give us, then ? The history of his own contradictions. Let us see how they go, and how they drag M. Proudhon in their train.

Before entering upon this examination, which gives rise to the sixth important observation, we have yet another important observation to make.

Let us grant with M. Proudhon that true history, history

according to the order in time, is the historical sequence in which ideas, categories and principles have manifested themselves.

Each principle has had its own century in which to manifest itself. The principle of authority, for example, had the eleventh century, just as the principle of individualism had the eighteenth century. In due sequence, it was the century that belonged to the principle, and not the principle that belonged to the century. In other words it was the principle that made the history, and not the history that made the principle. When, consequently, in order to save principles as much as to save history, we ask ourselves why such a principle was manifested in the eleventh or in the eighteenth century rather than in any other, we are necessarily forced to examine minutely what men were like in the eleventh century, what they were like in the eighteenth, what were their respective needs, their productive forces, their mode of production, the raw materials of their production—in short, what were the relations between man and man which resulted in all these conditions of existence. To get to the bottom of all these questions—what is this but to study the real, profane history of men in every century and to present these men as both the authors and the actors of their own drama? But the moment you present men as the actors and authors of their own history, you arrive—by a detour—at the real starting point, because you have abandoned those eternal principles of which you spoke at the outset.

M. Proudhon has not even gone far enough along the cross-road which an ideologist takes to reach the main road of history.

#### *Sixth Observation*

Let us take this cross-road with M. Proudhon.

We shall concede that economic relations, viewed as *immutable laws, eternal principles, ideal categories*, existed before active and energetic men did; we shall concede further

that these laws, principles and categories had, since the beginning of time, slumbered "in the impersonal reason of humanity." We have already seen that, in all these changeless and motionless eternities, there is no history left; there is at most history in the idea, that is, history reflected in the dialectic movement of pure reason. M. Proudhon, by saying that, in the dialectic movement, ideas are no longer *differentiated*, has done away with both the *shadow of movement* and the *movement of shadows*, by means of which one could still have created at least a semblance of history. Instead of that, he imputes to history his own impotence. He lays the blame on everything, even the French language. "It is not correct then," says M. Proudhon, the philosopher, "to say that something *happens*, that something is produced: in civilisation as in the universe, everything has existed, has acted, from eternity. *This applies to the whole of social economy.*" (Vol. II, p. 102.)

So great is the productive force of the contradictions which *function* and which make M. Proudhon function, that, in trying to explain history, he is forced to deny it; in trying to explain the successive appearance of social relations, he denies that *anything* can appear: in trying to explain production, with all its phases, he questions whether *anything can be produced*!

Thus, for M. Proudhon, there is no longer any history: no longer any sequence of ideas. And yet his book still exists; and it is just this book which is, to use his own expression, "*history according to the sequence of ideas.*" How shall we find a formula, for M. Proudhon is a man of formulas, to help him to clear, *in a single leap*, all these contradictions?

To this end he has invented a new reason, which is neither the pure and virgin absolute reason, nor the common reason of men living and acting in different periods, but a reason quite apart—the reason of the person, Society—of the subject, *Humanity*—which under the pen of M. Proudhon figures at times also as *social genius*, *general reason*,

or finally as *human reason*. This reason, decked out under so many names, betrays itself nevertheless, at every moment, as the individual reason of M. Proudhon, with his good and his bad side, his antidotes and his problems.

"Human reason does not create truth," hidden in the depths of absolute, eternal reason. It can only unveil it. But such truth as it has unveiled up to now is incomplete, insufficient and consequently contradictory. Thus, economic categories, being themselves truths discovered, revealed by human reason, by the social genius, are equally incomplete and contain within themselves the germ of contradiction. Before M. Proudhon, the social genius saw only the *antagonistic elements*, and not the *synthetic formula*, both hidden simultaneously in *absolute reason*. Economic relations, which merely realise on earth just these insufficient truths, these incomplete categories, these contradictory ideas, are consequently contradictory in themselves, and present the two sides, one good, the other bad.

To find complete truth, the Idea, in all its fullness, the synthetic formula that is to annihilate the contradiction, this is the problem of the social genius. This again is why, in M. Proudhon's illusion, this same social genius has been harried from one category to another without ever, despite all its battery of categories, having been able to snatch from God, or from absolute reason, a synthetic formula.

"At first, society (the social genius) states a primary fact, puts forward a *hypothesis* . . . a veritable antinomy whose antagonistic results develop in the social economy in the same way as its consequences could have been deduced in the mind ; so that industrial movement, following in all things the deduction of ideas, splits up into two currents, one of useful effects, the other of subversive results. To bring harmony into the constitution of this two-sided principle, and to solve this antinomy, society gives rise to a *second*, which will soon be followed by a third ; and *progress of the social genius* will take place in this manner, until, having exhausted all its contradictions—I suppose, but it is not proved that there is a limit to human contradictions—it returns at one leap to all its former positions and with a single formula solves all its problems." (Vol. I, p. 135.)

Just as the *antithesis* was before turned into an *antidote*, so now the *thesis* becomes a *hypothesis*. This change of terms, coming from M. Proudhon, has no longer anything surprising for us ! Human reason, which is anything but pure, having only incomplete vision, encounters at every step new problems to be solved. Every new thesis which it discovers in absolute reason and which is the negation of the first thesis, becomes for it a synthesis, which it accepts rather naively as the solution of the problem in question. It is thus that this reason tortures itself in ever renewing contradictions until, coming to the end of its contradictions, it perceives that all its theses and syntheses are merely contradictory hypotheses. In its perplexity, "human reason, the social genius, returns at one leap to all its former positions and, in a single formula, solves all its problems." This unique formula, by the way, constitutes M. Proudhon's true discovery. It is *constituted value*.

Hypotheses are made only in view of a certain aim. The aim that the social genius, speaking through the mouth of M. Proudhon, set itself in the first place, was to eliminate the bad in every economic category, in order to have nothing left but the good. For him, the good, the supreme well-being, the real practical aim, is *equality*. And why did the social genius aim at equality rather than inequality, fraternity, catholicism or any other principle ? Because "humanity has successively realised so many separate hypotheses only in view of a superior hypothesis," which precisely is equality. In other words : because equality is M. Proudhon's ideal, he imagines that the division of labour, credit, the workshop, that all economic relations were invented merely for the benefit of equality, and yet they always end up by turning against it. Since history and the fiction of M. Proudhon contradict each other at every step, the latter concludes that there is a contradiction. If there is a contradiction, it exists only between his fixed idea and real movement.

Henceforth the good side of an economic relation is that

which affirms equality ; the bad side, that which negates it and affirms inequality. Every new category is a hypothesis of the social genius to eliminate the inequality engendered by the preceding hypothesis. In short, equality is the *primordial intention*, the *mystical tendency*, the *providential aim* that the social genius has constantly before its eyes as it twists round in the circle of economic contradictions. Thus *Providence* is the locomotive which makes the whole of M. Proudhon's economic baggage move better than his pure, volatilised reason. He has devoted to Providence a whole chapter, which follows the one on taxes.

Providence, providential aim, this is the great word used to-day to explain the movement of history. In fact, this word explains nothing. It is at most a rhetorical form, one of the various ways of paraphrasing facts.

It is a fact that in Scotland landed property acquired a new value by the development of English industry. This industry opened up new outlets for wool. In order to produce wool on a large scale, arable land had to be transformed into pasturage. To effect this transformation, the estates had to be concentrated. To concentrate the estates, small holdings had first to be abolished, thousands of tenants had to be driven from their native soil and a few shepherds in charge of millions of sheep to be installed in their place. Thus, by successive transformations, landed property in Scotland has resulted in the driving out of men by sheep. Now say that the providential aim of the institution of landed property in Scotland was to have men driven out by sheep, and you will have made providential history.

Of course, the tendency towards equality belongs to our century. To say now that all former centuries, with entirely different needs, means of production, etc., worked providentially for the realisation of equality, is, firstly, to substitute the means and the men of our century for the men and the means of earlier centuries and to misunderstand the historical movement by which the successive generations

transformed the results acquired by the generations that preceded them. Economists know well enough that the very thing that was for the one a finished product was for the other but the raw material for new production.

Suppose, as M. Proudhon does, that the social genius produced, or rather improvised, the feudal lords with the providential aim of transforming the *settlers* into *responsible* and *equally-placed* workers : and you will have effected a substitution of aims and of persons worthy of the Providence that instituted landed property in Scotland, in order to give itself the malicious pleasure of driving out men by sheep.

But since M. Proudhon takes such a tender interest in Providence, we refer him to the *History of Political Economy* of M. de Villeneuve-Bargemont, who likewise goes in pursuit of a providential aim. This aim, however, is not equality, but catholicism.

#### *Seventh and Last Observation*

Economists have a singular method or procedure. There are only two kinds of institutions for them, artificial and natural. The institutions of feudalism are artificial institutions, those of the bourgeoisie are natural institutions. In this they resemble the theologians, who likewise establish two kinds of religion. Every religion which is not theirs is an invention of men, while their own religion is an emanation from God. When they say that present-day relations—the relations of bourgeois production—are natural, the economists imply that these are the relations in which wealth is created and productive forces developed in conformity with the laws of nature. Thus these relations are themselves natural laws independent of the influence of time. They are eternal laws which must always govern society. Thus there has been history, but there is no longer any. There has been history, since there were the institutions of feudalism, and in these institutions of feudalism we find quite different production relations from those of

bourgeois society, which the economists try to pass off as natural and consequently eternal.

Feudalism also had its proletariat—serfdom, which contained all the germs of the bourgeoisie. Feudal production also had two antagonistic elements which are likewise designated by the name of *good side* and *bad side*, without considering that it is always the bad side that in the end triumphs over the good side. It is the bad side that produces the movement which makes history, by providing a struggle. If, during the epoch of the domination of feudalism, the economists, enthusiastic over the knightly virtues, the harmony between rights and duties, the patriarchal life of the towns, the prosperous condition of domestic industry in the countryside, the development of industry organised into corporations, guilds and fraternities, in short, everything that constitutes the good side of feudalism, had set themselves the problem of eliminating everything that cast a shadow on this picture—serfdom, privileges, anarchy—what would have happened? All the elements which called forth the struggle would have been destroyed, and the development of the bourgeoisie nipped in the bud. One would have set oneself the absurd problem of eliminating history.

After the triumph of the bourgeoisie there was no longer any question of the good or the bad side of feudalism. The bourgeoisie took possession of the productive forces it had developed under feudalism. All the old economic forms, the corresponding civil relations, the political state which was the official expression of the old civil society, were smashed.

Thus feudal production, to be judged properly, must be considered as a mode of production founded on antagonism. It must be shown how wealth was produced within this antagonism, how the productive forces were developed at the same time as class antagonisms, how one of the classes, the bad side, the drawback of society, went on growing until the material conditions for its emancipation



had attained full maturity. Is not this as good as saying that the mode of production, the relations in which productive forces are developed, are anything but eternal laws, but that they correspond to a definite development of men and of their productive forces, and that a change in men's productive forces necessarily brings about a change in their production-relations? As it is a matter of prime concern not to be deprived of the fruits of civilisation, of the acquired productive forces, the traditional forms in which they were produced must be smashed. From this moment the revolutionary class becomes conservative.

The bourgeoisie begins with a proletariat which is itself a relic of the proletariat of feudal times. In the course of its historical development, the bourgeoisie necessarily develops its antagonistic character, which at first is more or less disguised, existing only in a latent state. As the bourgeoisie develops, there develops in its bosom a new proletariat, a modern proletariat; there develops a struggle between the proletarian class and the bourgeois class, a struggle which, before being felt, perceived, appreciated, understood, avowed and proclaimed aloud by the two sides, expresses itself, to start with, merely in partial and momentary conflicts, in subversive acts. On the other hand, if all the members of the modern bourgeoisie have the same interests in so far as they form a class as against another class they have opposite, antagonistic interests inasmuch as they stand face to face with one another. This opposition of interests results from the economic conditions of their bourgeois life. From day to day it thus becomes clearer that the production-relations in which the bourgeoisie moves have not a simple uniform character, but a dual character; that in the self-same relations in which wealth is produced, misery is produced also; that in the self-same relations in which there is a development of the productive forces, there is also a driving force of repression; that these relations produce *bourgeois wealth*, i.e., the wealth of the bourgeois class, only by continually annihilating the wealth of the

individual members of this class and by producing an ever-growing proletariat.

The more the antagonistic character comes to light, the more the economists, the scientific representatives of bourgeois production, find themselves in conflict with their own theory ; and different schools arise.

We have the *fatalist* economists, who in their theory are as indifferent to what they call the drawbacks of bourgeois production as the bourgeois themselves are in practice to the sufferings of the proletarians who help them to acquire wealth. In this fatalist school there are the Classics and the Romantics. The Classics, like Adam Smith and Ricardo, represent a bourgeoisie which, while still struggling with the relics of feudal society, works only to purge economic relations of feudal taints, to increase the productive forces and to give a new upsurge to industry and commerce. The proletariat that takes part in this struggle and is absorbed in this feverish labour experiences only passing, accidental sufferings, and itself regards them as such. The economists like Adam Smith and Ricardo, who are the historians of this epoch, have no other mission than that of showing how wealth is acquired in bourgeois production-relations, of formulating these relations into categories, laws, and of showing how superior these laws, categories, are for the production of wealth to the laws and categories of feudal society. Misery is in their eyes merely the pang which accompanies every childbirth, in nature as in industry.

The Romantics belong to our own age, in which the bourgeoisie is in direct opposition to the proletariat ; in which misery is engendered in as great abundance as wealth. The economists now pose as blasé fatalists, who, from their elevated position, cast a proudly disdainful glance at the human locomotives who manufacture wealth. They copy all the developments, given by their predecessors, and the indifference which to the latter was merely naïveté becomes to them coquetry.

Next comes the *humanitarian school*, which takes to heart

the bad side of present-day production-relations. It seeks, by way of easing its conscience, to palliate to a certain extent the real contrasts ; it sincerely deplores the distress of the proletariat, the unbridled competition of the bourgeois among themselves ; it counsels the workers to be sober, to work hard and to have few children ; it advises the bourgeois to put a reasoned ardour into production. The whole theory of this school rests on interminable distinctions between theory and practice, between principles and results, between idea and application, between form and content, between essence and reality, between right and fact, between the good side and the bad side.

The *philanthropic* school is the humanitarian school carried to perfection. It denies the necessity of antagonism ; it wants to turn all men into bourgeois ; it wants to realise theory in so far as it is distinguished from practice and contains no antagonism. It goes without saying that, in theory, it is easy to make an abstraction of the contradictions that are met with at every moment in actual reality. This theory would therefore become idealised reality. The philanthropists, then, want to retain the categories which express bourgeois relations, without the antagonism which constitutes them and is inseparable from them. They think they are seriously fighting bourgeois practice, and they are more bourgeois than the others.

Just as the *economists* are the scientific representatives of the bourgeois class, so the *Socialists* and the *Communists* are the theoreticians of the proletarian class. So long as the proletariat is not yet sufficiently developed to constitute a class, and consequently so long as the struggle itself of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie has not assumed a political character, and the productive forces are not yet sufficiently developed in the bosom of the bourgeoisie itself to enable us to catch a glimpse of the material conditions necessary for the emancipation of the proletariat and for the formation of a new society, these theoreticians are merely Utopians who, to meet the wants of the oppressed classes,

improvise systems and go in search of a regenerating science. But in the measure that history moves forward and with it the struggle of the proletariat assumes clearer outlines, they no longer need to seek science in their minds ; they have only to take note of what is happening before their eyes and to become the mouthpiece of this. So long as they look for science and merely make systems, so long as they are at the beginning of the struggle, they see in misery nothing but misery, without seeing in it the revolutionary, subversive side, which will overthrow the old society. From this moment, science, produced by the historical movement and associating itself with it in full recognition of its cause, has ceased to be doctrinaire and has become revolutionary. . . .

*Karl Marx*

## A CONTRIBUTION TO "THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY"

*First published in 1859. English edition, Chas. H. Kerr & Co.,  
Chicago, 1904.*

[ This work, which is an analysis of Commodities and Money, was originally intended by Marx as the first part of a much longer work which was to cover : "Capital, landed property, wage labour, State, foreign trade, world market." This idea, however, later took shape in *Capital*, which is not a continuation of *The Critique of Political Economy*, but a complete work, the early chapters of which summarise the analysis made in *The Critique of Commodities*

and Money. In particular, however, the treatment of Money in *The Critique* is much more detailed than the corresponding treatment in Vol. I of *Capital*. The unique feature of *The Critique* is the author's preface, in which Marx explains how he and Engels developed their theories, and summarises the conclusions which inspired their work. The main part of this preface is given below. It has been retranslated, as the Kerr translation is not altogether satisfactory. ]

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A CONTRIBUTION TO  
"THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL  
ECONOMY"

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

. . . My investigations led to the conclusion that legal relations as well as forms of State could not be understood from themselves, nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but, on the contrary, are rooted in the material conditions of life, the aggregate of which Hegel, following the precedent of the English and French of the eighteenth century, grouped under the name of "civil society"; but that the anatomy of civil society is to be found in political economy. My study of the latter, begun in Paris, was continued in Brussels, whither I migrated in consequence of an expulsion order issued by M. Guizot. The general conclusion I arrived at—and once reached, it served as the guiding thread in my studies—can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production of their means of existence men enter into definite, necessary relations which are independent of their will, productive relationships which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The aggregate of these productive relationships constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis on which a

juridical and political superstructure arises, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing productive relationships, or, what is but a legal expression for these, with the property relationships within which they had moved before. From forms of development of the productive forces these relationships are transformed into their fetters. Then an epoch of social revolution opens. With the change in the economic foundation the whole vast superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such revolutions it is necessary always to distinguish between the material revolution in the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with scientific accuracy, and the juridical, political, religious, æsthetic or philosophic—in a word, ideological forms wherein men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as we cannot judge an individual on the basis of his own opinion of himself, so such a revolutionary epoch cannot be judged from its own consciousness ; but on the contrary this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between social productive forces and productive relationships. A social system never perishes before all the productive forces have developed for which it is wide enough ; and new, higher productive relationships never come into being before the material conditions for their existence have been brought to maturity within the womb of the old society itself. Therefore, mankind always sets itself only such problems as it can solve ; for when we look closer we will always find that the problem itself only arises when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at

least in process of coming into being. In broad outline, the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois modes of production can be indicated as progressive epochs in the economic system of society. Bourgeois productive relationships are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production—antagonistic in the sense not of individual antagonism, but of an antagonism arising out of the conditions of the social life of individuals ; but the productive forces developing within the womb of bourgeois society at the same time create the material conditions for the solution of this antagonism. With this social system, therefore, the pre-history of human society comes to a close. . . .

*Karl Marx*

## CAPITAL

*This work is in three volumes : I. "Capitalist Production" ; II. "Capitalist Circulation" ; III. "Capitalist Production as a Whole." The separate volumes were first published (in German) in 1867, 1885 and 1894—the second and third being completed by Engels after Marx's death in 1883. An English translation of Vol. I was first published in 1886 by Swan Sonnenschein & Co. ; the only complete English translation of the three volumes is published by Charles H. Kerr & Co., Chicago.*

[ *Capital* was the completion of the detailed analysis of capitalism which Marx had already begun in his earlier works, especially *The Critique of Political Economy* (1859). At that time, as to-day, most writers on political economy regarded the existing system of production—capitalism—as the absolutely final and unalterable form of social production. Marx, starting from the standpoint of dialectical materialism, saw the historical succession of systems of

production—primitive communism, the slave system, feudalism, capitalism—and capitalism itself as a passing historical phase, to be succeeded by socialism. His economic work was therefore directed towards discovering and stating the economic laws which brought capitalism into existence, controlled its development, and eventually produced contradictions insoluble within capitalism ; as he wrote in the preface to Vol. I : “ It is the ultimate aim of this work to lay bare the economic law of motion of modern society.”

It is an enormous work : the three volumes in the Kerr edition make almost 2,500 pages. (Additional material, originally intended by Marx to complete *Capital*, was edited by Karl Kautsky after Engels's death, and published in German in a further three volumes under the title of *Theories of Surplus Value*. These have not yet been translated into English.)

As a whole, *Capital* is not light reading ; no fundamental study of economics could be. But the legend that it is dull and pompously long-winded is carefully cultivated by those whose antagonism to the style is a result of their antagonism to Marx's conclusions. It is characteristic of this outlook that most economics students in British universities have no first-hand knowledge of Marx ; they meet him only in refutations which inevitably distort Marx's theories.

The historical sections of *Capital* are in fact extremely interesting and vivid ; Marx himself suggested that these should be read first by the general reader. Other sections are of compelling interest because of their clear analysis and almost prophetic conclusions, which history is to-day confirming in more and more obvious ways. And if the abstract theory and arithmetical illustrations require great concentration, this is equally true of any scientific work.

The selection of passages from *Capital* is extraordinarily difficult, owing to the careful development of the main theme and the logical dependence of successive chapters, apart from the wide range of the work as a whole. It has been necessary to concentrate on a few of the key points



for the understanding of Marx's economic theory : the general historical analysis, which comes at the end of Vol. I, is given first, and this is followed by the economic analysis, from the study of value and surplus value to the accumulation of surplus value as capital and the falling tendency of the rate of profit, with the resultant difficulties for capitalism.

It has not been possible to include even portions of many other sections which are perhaps of equal importance—in particular, the whole theory of Capitalist Circulation, dealt with in Vol. II, and the study of ground rent. But the passages given below cover the most fundamental points—those which are most hotly contested by the opponents of Marxism.

The chapter references given show the chapter in the Kerr edition from which the passages are taken ; they do not mean that the whole chapter is given, as in many cases illustrations and elaborations of particular points have had to be omitted. ]

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## CAPITAL

### THE SECRET OF PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

(Vol. I, Ch. XXVI)

WE HAVE SEEN how money is changed into capital ; how through capital surplus-value is made, and from surplus-value more capital. But the accumulation of capital presupposes surplus-value ; surplus-value presupposes capitalistic production ; capitalistic production presupposes the pre-existence of considerable masses of capital and of labour-power in the hands of producers of commodities. The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation (previous accumulation of Adam Smith) preceding capitalistic accumulation ; an accumulation not the result of the capitalist mode of production, but its starting point.

This primitive accumulation plays in Political Economy about the same part as original sin in theology. Adam bit the apple, and thereupon sin fell on the human race. Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote of the past. In times long gone by there were two sorts of people ; one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal élite ; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. The legend of theological original sin tells us certainly how man came to be condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow ; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us that there are people to whom this is by no means essential. Never mind ! Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority that, despite all its labour, has up to now nothing to sell but itself, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly although they have long ceased to work. Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defence of property. M. Thiers, e.g., had the assurance to repeat it with all the solemnity of a statesman, to the French people, once so *spirituel*. But as soon as the question of property crops up, it becomes a sacred duty to proclaim the intellectual food of the infant as the one thing fit for all ages and for all stages of development. In actual history it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, briefly force, play the great part. In the tender annals of Political Economy, the idyllic reigns from time immemorial. Right and "labour" were from all time the sole means of enrichment, the present year of course always excepted. As a matter of fact, the methods of primitive accumulation are anything but idyllic.

In themselves, money and commodities are no more capital than are the means of production and of subsistence. They want transforming into capital. But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, viz., that two very different kinds of

commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact ; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labour-power ; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour-power, and therefore the sellers of labour. Free labourers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, &c., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors ; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by any means of production of their own. With this polarisation of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. The capitalist system presupposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realise their labour. As soon as capitalist production is once on its own legs, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale. The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production ; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it.

The economic structure of capitalistic society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of the latter set free the elements of the former.

The immediate producer, the labourer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave, serf, or bondsman of another. To become a free seller of labour-power, who

carries his commodity wherever he finds a market, he must further have escaped from the régime of the guilds, their rules for apprentices and journeymen, and the impediments of their labour regulations. Hence, the historical movement which changes the producers into wage-workers, appears, on the one hand, as their emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds, and this side alone exists for our bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.

The industrial capitalists, these new potentates, had on their part not only to displace the guild masters of handicrafts, but also the feudal lords, the possessors of the sources of wealth. In this respect their conquest of social power appears as the fruit of a victorious struggle both against feudal lordship and its revolting prerogatives, and against the guilds and the fetters they laid on the free development of production and the free exploitation of man by man. The chevaliers d'industrie, however, only succeed in supplanting the chevaliers of the sword by making use of events of which they themselves were wholly innocent. They have risen by means as vile as those by which the Roman freedman once on a time made himself the master of his *patronus*.

The starting-point of the development that gave rise to the wage-labourer as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the labourer. The advance consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation. To understand its march, we need not go back very far. Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the fourteenth or fifteenth century, sporadically, in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalistic era dates from the sixteenth century. Wherever it appears, the

abolition of serfdom has been long effected, and the highest development of the middle ages, the existence of sovereign towns, has been long on the wane.

In the history of primitive accumulation, all revolutions are epoch-making that act as levers for the capitalist class in course of formation ; but, above all, those moments when great masses of men are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence, and hurled as free and "unattached" proletarians on the labour market. The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process. The history of this expropriation, in different countries, assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different periods. In England alone, which we take as our example, has it the classic form.

#### EXPROPRIATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION FROM THE LAND

(Vol. I, Ch. XXVII)

In England, serfdom had practically disappeared in the last part of the fourteenth century. The immense majority of the population consisted then, and to a still larger extent in the fifteenth century, of free peasant proprietors, whatever was the feudal title under which their right of property was hidden. In the larger seignorial domains, the old bailiff, himself a serf, was displaced by the free farmer. The wage-labourers of agriculture consisted partly of peasants, who utilised their leisure time by working on the large estates, partly of an independent special class of wage-labourers, relatively and absolutely few in numbers. The latter also were practically at the same time peasant farmers, since, besides their wages, they had allotted to them arable land to the extent of four or more acres, together with their cottages. Besides they, with the rest of the peasants, enjoyed the usufruct of the common land, which gave pasture to their cattle, furnished them

with timber, fire-wood, turf, etc. In all countries of Europe, feudal production is characterised by division of the soil amongst the greatest possible number of sub-feudatories. The might of the feudal lord, like that of the sovereign, depended not on the length of his rent roll, but on the number of his subjects, and the latter depended on the number of peasant proprietors. Although, therefore, the English land, after the Norman conquest, was distributed in gigantic baronies, one of which often included some 900 of the old Anglo-Saxon lordships, it was bestrewn with small peasant properties, only here and there interspersed with great seignorial domains. Such conditions, together with the prosperity of the towns so characteristic of the fifteenth century, allowed of that wealth of the people which Chancellor Fortescue so eloquently paints in his "*Laudes legum Angliæ*"; but it excluded the possibility of capitalistic wealth.

The prelude of the revolution that laid the foundation of the capitalist mode of production was played in the last third of the fifteenth, and the first decade of the sixteenth century. A mass of free proletarians was hurled on the labour-market by the breaking-up of the bands of feudal retainers, who, as Sir James Steuart well says, "everywhere uselessly filled house and castle." Although the royal power, itself a product of bourgeois development, in its strife after absolute sovereignty forcibly hastened on the dissolution of these bands of retainers, it was by no means the sole cause of it. In insolent conflict with king and parliament, the great feudal lords created an incomparably larger proletariat by the forcible driving of the peasantry from the land, to which the latter had the same feudal right as the lord himself, and by the usurpation of the common lands. The rapid rise of the Flemish wool manufactures, and the corresponding rise in the price of wool in England, gave the direct impulse to these evictions. The old nobility had been devoured by the great feudal wars. The new nobility was the child of its time, for which money was the power of all

powers. Transformation of arable land into sheep-walks was, therefore, its cry. . . .

The process of forcible expropriation of the people received in the sixteenth century a new and frightful impulse from the Reformation, and from the consequent colossal spoliation of the church property. The Catholic church was, at the time of the Reformation, feudal proprietor of a great part of the English land. The suppression of the monasteries, etc., hurled their inmates into the proletariat. The estates of the church were to a large extent given away to rapacious royal favourites, or sold at a nominal price to speculating farmers and citizens, who drove out, *en masse*, the hereditary sub-tenants and threw their holdings into one. The legally guaranteed property of the poorer folk in a part of the church's tithes was tacitly confiscated. "Pauper ubique jacet," cried Queen Elizabeth, after a journey through England. In the 43rd year of her reign the nation was obliged to recognise pauperism officially by the introduction of a poor-rate. "The authors of this law seem to have been ashamed to state the grounds of it, for [contrary to traditional usage] it has no preamble whatever." By the 16th of Charles I., ch. 4, it was declared perpetual, and in fact only in 1834 did it take a new and harsher form. These immediate results of the Reformation were not its most lasting ones. The property of the church formed the religious bulwark of the traditional conditions of landed property. With its fall these were no longer tenable.

Even in the last decade of the seventeenth century, the yeomanry, the class of independent peasants, were more numerous than the class of farmers. They had formed the backbone of Cromwell's strength, and, even according to the confession of Macaulay, stood in favourable contrast to the drunken squires and to their servants, the country clergy, who had to marry their master's cast-off mistresses. About 1750, the yeomanry had disappeared, and so had, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the last trace of the common land of the agricultural labourer. We leave on

one side here the purely economic causes of the agricultural revolution. We deal only with the forcible means employed.

After the restoration of the Stuarts, the landed proprietors carried, by legal means, an act of usurpation, effected everywhere on the Continent without any legal formality. They abolished the feudal tenure of land, i.e., they got rid of all its obligations to the State, "indemnified" the State by taxes on the peasantry and the rest of the mass of the people, vindicated for themselves the rights of modern private property in estates to which they had only a feudal title, and, finally, passed those laws of settlement, which, *mutatis mutandis*, had the same effect on the English agricultural labourer, as the edict of the Tartar Boris Godunof on the Russian peasantry.

The "glorious Revolution" brought into power, along with William of Orange, the landlord and capitalist appropriators of surplus-value. They inaugurated the new era by practising on a colossal scale thefts of State lands, thefts that had been hitherto managed more modestly. These estates were given away, sold at a ridiculous figure, or even annexed to private estates by direct seizure. All this happened without the slightest observation of legal etiquette. The crown lands thus fraudulently appropriated, together with the robbery of the Church estates, as far as these had not been lost again during the republican revolution, form the basis of the to-day princely domains of the English oligarchy. The bourgeois capitalists favoured the operation with the view, among others, to promoting free trade in land, to extending the domain of modern agriculture on the large farm-system, and to increasing their supply of the free agricultural proletarians ready to hand. Besides, the new landed aristocracy was the natural ally of the new bankocracy, of the newly-hatched *haute finance*, and of the large manufacturers, then depending on protective duties. The English bourgeoisie acted for its own interest quite as wisely as did the Swedish bourgeoisie who, reversing the process, hand in hand with their economic allies, the



peasantry, helped the kings in the forcible resumption of the Crown lands from the oligarchy. This happened since 1604 under Charles X. and Charles XI.

Communal property—always distinct from the State property just dealt with—was an old Teutonic institution which lived on under cover of feudalism. We have seen how the forcible usurpation of this, generally accompanied by the turning of arable into pasture land, begins at the end of the fifteenth and extends into the sixteenth century. But, at that time, the process was carried on by means of individual acts of violence against which legislation, for a hundred and fifty years, fought in vain. The advance made by the eighteenth century shows itself in this, that the law itself becomes now the instrument of the theft of the people's land, although the large farmers make use of their little independent methods as well. The parliamentary form of the robbery is that of Acts for enclosures of Commons, in other words, decrees by which the landlords grant themselves the people's land as private property, decrees of expropriation of the people. Sir F. M. Eden refutes his own crafty special pleading, in which he tries to represent communal property as the private property of the great landlords who have taken the place of the feudal lords, when he, himself, demands a "general Act of Parliament for the enclosure of Commons" (admitting thereby that a parliamentary *coup d'état* is necessary for its transformation into private property), and moreover calls on the legislature for the indemnification for the expropriated poor.

Whilst the place of the independent yeoman was taken by tenants at will, small farmers on yearly leases, a servile rabble dependent on the pleasure of the landlords, the systematic robbery of the Communal lands helped especially, next to the theft of the State domains, to swell those large farms, that were called in the eighteenth century capital farms or merchant farms, and to "set free" the agricultural populations as proletarians for manufacturing industry.

The eighteenth century, however, did not yet recognise as fully as the nineteenth the identity between national wealth and the poverty of the people. Hence the most vigorous polemic, in the economic literature of that time, on the "enclosure of commons." . . .

In the nineteenth century, the very memory of the connexion between the agricultural labourer and the communal property had, of course, vanished. To say nothing of more recent times, have the agricultural population received a farthing of compensation for the 3,511,770 acres of common land which between 1801 and 1831 were stolen from them and by parliamentary devices presented to the landlords by the landlords?

The last process of wholesale expropriation of the agricultural population from the soil is, finally, the so-called clearing of estates, i.e., the sweeping men off them. All the English methods hitherto considered culminated in "clearing." As we saw in the picture of modern conditions given in a former chapter, where there are no more independent peasants to get rid of, the "clearing" of cottages begins; so that the agricultural labourers do not find on the soil cultivated by them even the spot necessary for their own housing. But what "clearing of estates" really and properly signifies, we learn only in the promised land of modern romance, the Highlands of Scotland. There the process is distinguished by its systematic character, by the magnitude of the scale on which it is carried out at one blow (in Ireland landlords have gone to the length of sweeping away several villages at once; in Scotland areas as large as German principalities are dealt with), finally by the peculiar form of property, under which the embezzled lands were held. . . .

The spoliation of the church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the State domains, the robbery of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property, and its transformation into modern private property under circumstances of reckless terrorism, were just so many idyllic

methods of primitive accumulation. They conquered the field for capitalistic agriculture, made the soil part and parcel of capital, and created for the town industries the necessary supply of a "free" and outlawed proletariat.

## GENESIS OF THE CAPITALIST FARMER

(Vol. I, Ch. XXIX)

Now that we have considered the forcible creation of a class of outlawed proletarians, the bloody discipline that turned them into wage-labourers, the disgraceful action of the State which employed the police to accelerate the accumulation of capital by increasing the degree of exploitation of labour, the question remains: whence came the capitalists originally? For the expropriation of the agricultural population creates, directly, none by great landed proprietors. As far, however, as concerns the genesis of the farmer, we can, so to say, put our hand on it, because it is a slow process evolving through many centuries. The serfs, as well as the free small proprietors, held land under very different tenures, and were therefore emancipated under very different economic conditions. In England the first form of the farmer is the bailiff, himself a serf. His position is similar to that of the old Roman *villicus*, only in a more limited sphere of action. During the second half of the fourteenth century he is replaced by a farmer, whom the landlord provides with seed, cattle and implements. His condition is not very different from that of the peasant. Only he exploits more wage-labour. Soon he becomes a *métayer*, a half-farmer. He advances one part of the agricultural stock, the landlord the other. The two divide the total product in proportions determined by contract. This form quickly disappears in England, to give place to the farmer proper, who makes his own capital breed by employing wage-labourers, and pays a part of the surplus product, in money or in kind, to the landlord as rent. So long, during the fifteenth century, as the independent peasant and the farm-labourer working for himself as well as for wages, enriched

themselves by their own labour, the circumstances of the farmer, and his field of production, were equally mediocre. The agricultural revolution which commenced in the last third of the fifteenth century, and continued during almost the whole of the sixteenth (excepting, however, its last decade), enriched him just as speedily as it impoverished the mass of the agricultural people.

The usurpation of the common lands allowed him to augment greatly his stock of cattle, almost without cost, whilst they yielded him a richer supply of manure for the tillage of the soil. To this was added in the sixteenth century a very important element. At that time the contracts for farms ran for a long time, often for 99 years. The progressive fall in the value of the precious metals, and therefore of money, brought the farmers golden fruit. Apart from all the other circumstances discussed above, it lowered wages. A portion of the latter was now added to the profits of the farm. The continuous rise in the price of corn, wool, meat, in a word of all agricultural produce, swelled the money capital of the farmer without any action on his part, whilst the rent he paid (being calculated on the old value of money), diminished in reality. Thus they grew rich at the expense both of their labourers and their landlords. No wonder, therefore, that England, at the end of the sixteenth century, had a class of capitalist farmers, rich, considering the circumstances of the time.

REACTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION ON  
INDUSTRY : CREATION OF THE HOME MARKET FOR  
INDUSTRIAL CAPITAL

(Vol. I, Ch. XXX)

The expropriation and expulsion of the agricultural population, intermittent but renewed again and again, supplied, as we saw, the town industries with a mass of proletarians, entirely unconnected with the corporate guilds and unfettered by them ; a fortunate circumstance that

makes old A. Anderson (not to be confounded with James Anderson) in his *History of Commerce*, believe in the direct intervention of Providence. We must still pause a moment on this element of primitive accumulation. The thinning-out of the independent, self-supporting peasants not only brought about the crowding together of the industrial proletariat, in the way that Geoffroy Saint Hilaire explained the condensation of cosmical matter at one place, by its rarefaction at another. In spite of the smaller numbers of its cultivators, the soil brought forth as much or more produce, after as before, because the revolution in the conditions of landed property was accompanied by improved methods of culture, greater co-operation, concentration of the means of production, etc., and because not only were the agricultural wage-labourers put on the strain more intensely, but the field of production on which they worked for themselves became more and more contracted. With the setting free of a part of the agricultural population, therefore, their former means of nourishment were also set free. They were now transformed into material elements of variable capital. The peasant, expropriated and cast adrift, must buy their value in the form of wages, from his new master, the industrial capitalist. That which holds good of the means of subsistence holds with the raw materials of industry dependent upon home agriculture. They were transformed into an element of constant capital. Suppose, e.g., a part of the Westphalian peasants, who, at the time of Frederic II, all spun flax, forcibly expropriated and hunted from the soil; and the other part that remained, turned into day-labourers of large farmers. At the same time arise large establishments for flax-spinning and weaving, in which the men "set free" now work for wages. The flax looks exactly as before. Not a fibre of it is changed, but a new social soul has popped into its body. It forms now a part of the constant capital of the master manufacturer. Formerly divided among a number of small producers, who cultivated it themselves and with their families spun it in retail fashion,

it is now concentrated in the hand of one capitalist, who sets others to spin and weave it for him. The extra labour expended in flax-spinning realised itself formerly in extra income to numerous peasant families, or maybe, in Frederic II's time, in taxes *pour le roi de Prusse*. It realises itself now in profit for a few capitalists. The spindles and looms, formerly scattered over the face of the country, are now crowded together in a few great labour-barracks, together with the labourers and the raw material. And spindles, looms, raw material, are now transformed, from means of independent existence for the spinners and weavers, into means for commanding them and sucking out of them unpaid labour. One does not perceive, when looking at the large manufactories and the large farms, that they have originated from the throwing into one of many small centres of production, and have been built up by the expropriation of many small independent producers. Nevertheless, the popular intuition was not at fault. In the time of Mirabeau, the lion of the Revolution, the great manufactories were still called manufactures réunies, workshops thrown into one, as we speak of fields thrown into one. . . .

The expropriation and eviction of a part of the agricultural population not only set free for industrial capital the labourers, their means of subsistence, and material for labour ; it also created the home market.

In fact, the events that transformed the small peasants into wage-labourers, and their means of subsistence and of labour into material elements of capital, created, at the same time, a home-market for the latter. Formerly, the peasant family produced the means of subsistence and the raw materials, which they themselves, for the most part, consumed. These raw materials and means of subsistence have now become commodities ; the large farmer sells them, he finds his market in manufactures. Yarn, linen, coarse woollen stuffs—things whose raw materials had been within the reach of every peasant family, had been spun and woven by it for its own use—were now transformed

into articles of manufacture, to which the country districts at once served for markets. The many scattered customers, whom stray artisans until now had found in the numerous small producers working on their own account, concentrate themselves now into one great market provided for by industrial capital. Thus, hand in hand with the expropriation of the self-supporting peasants, with their separation from their means of production, goes the destruction of rural domestic industry, the process of separation between manufacture and agriculture. And only the destruction of rural domestic industry can give the internal market of a country that extension and consistence which the capitalist mode of production requires. Still the manufacturing period, properly so-called, does not succeed in carrying out this transformation radically and completely. It will be remembered that manufacture, properly so-called, conquers but partially the domain of national production, and always rests on the handicrafts of the town and the domestic industry of the rural districts as its ultimate basis. If it destroys these in one form, in particular branches, at certain points, it calls them up again elsewhere, because it needs them for the preparation of raw material up to a certain point. It produces, therefore, a new class of small villagers who, while following the cultivation of the soil as an accessory calling, find their chief occupation in industrial labour, the products of which they sell to the manufacturers directly, or through the medium of merchants. This is one, though not the chief, cause of a phenomenon which, at first, puzzles the student of English history. From the last third of the fifteenth century he finds continually complaints, only interrupted at certain intervals, about the encroachment of capitalist farming in the country districts, and the progressive destruction of the peasantry. On the other hand, he always finds this peasantry turning up again, although in diminished number, and always under worse conditions. The chief reason is : England is at one time chiefly a cultivator of corn, at another chiefly a breeder of cattle, in

alternate periods, and with these the extent of peasant cultivation fluctuates. Modern Industry alone, and finally, supplies, in machinery, the lasting basis of capitalistic agriculture, expropriates radically the enormous majority of the agricultural population, and completes the separation between agriculture and rural domestic industry, whose roots—spinning and weaving—it tears up. It therefore also, for the first time, conquers for industrial capital the entire home market.

#### GENESIS OF THE INDUSTRIAL CAPITALIST

(Vol. I, Ch. XXXI)

The genesis of the industrial capitalist did not proceed in such a gradual way as that of the farmer. Doubtless many small guild-masters, and yet more independent small artisans, or even wage-labourers, transformed themselves into small capitalists, and (by gradually extending exploitation of wage-labour and corresponding accumulation) into full-blown capitalists. In the infancy of capitalist production, things often happened as in the infancy of mediæval towns, where the question, which of the escaped serfs should be master and which servant, was in great part decided by the earlier or later date of their flight. The snail's-pace of this method corresponded in no wise with the commercial requirements of the new world-market that the great discoveries of the end of the fifteenth century created. But the middle age had handed down two distinct forms of capital, which mature in the most different economic social formations, and which, before the era of the capitalist mode of production, are considered as capital *quand même*—usurer's capital and merchant's capital. . . .

The money capital formed by means of usury and commerce was prevented from turning into industrial capital, in the country by the feudal constitution, in the towns by the guild organisation. These fetters vanished with the dissolution of feudal society, with the expropriation and partial eviction of the country population. The new manufacturers



were established at sea-ports, or in inland points beyond the control of the old municipalities and their guilds. Hence in England an embittered struggle of the corporate towns against these new industrial nurseries.

The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre. It begins with the revolt of the Netherlands from Spain, assumes giant dimensions in England's anti-jacobin war, and is still going on in the opium wars against China, etc.

The different momenta of primitive accumulation distribute themselves now, more or less in chronological order, particularly over Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, and England. In England at the end of the seventeenth century, they arrive at a systematical combination, embracing the colonies, the national debt, the modern mode of taxation, and the protectionist system. These methods depend in part on brute force, e.g., the colonial system. But they all employ the power of the State, the concentrated and organised force of society, to hasten, hothouse fashion, the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition. Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power.

Of the Christian colonial system, W. Howitt, a man who makes a specialty of Christianity, says: "The barbarities and desperate outrages of the so-called Christian race, throughout every region of the world, and upon every people they have been able to subdue, are not to be paralleled by those of any other race, however fierce, however untaught, and however reckless of mercy and of shame, in

any age of the earth." The history of the colonial administration of Holland—and Holland was the head capitalistic nation of the seventeenth century—"is one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery, massacre, and meanness." Nothing is more characteristic than their system of stealing men, to get slaves for Java. The men stealers were trained for this purpose. The thief, the interpreter, and the seller, were the chief agents in this trade, native princes the chief sellers. The young people stolen were thrown into the secret dungeons of Celebes, until they were ready for sending to the slave-ships. An official report says : "This one town of Macassar, e.g., is full of secret prisons, one more horrible than the other, crammed with unfortunates, victims of greed and tyranny fettered in chains, forcibly torn from their families." To secure Malacca, the Dutch corrupted the Portuguese governor. He let them into the town in 1641. They hurried at once to his house and assassinated him, to "abstain" from the payment of £21,875, the price of his treason. Wherever they set foot, devastation and depopulation followed. Banjuwangi, a province of Java in 1750 numbered over 80,000 inhabitants, in 1811 only 18,000. Sweet commerce !

The English East India Company, as is well known, obtained, besides the political rule in India, the exclusive monopoly of the tea-trade, as well as of the Chinese trade in general and of the transport of goods to and from Europe. But the coasting trade of India and between the islands, as well as the internal trade of India, were the monopoly of the higher employés of the company. The monopolies of salt, opium, betel and other commodities, were inexhaustible mines of wealth. The employés themselves fixed the price and plundered at will the unhappy Hindus. The Governor-General took part in this private traffic. His favourites received contracts under conditions whereby they, cleverer than the alchemists, made gold out of nothing. Great fortunes sprang up like mushrooms in a day ; primitive accumulation went on without the advance of

a shilling. The trial of Warren Hastings swarms with such cases. Here is an instance. A contract for opium was given to a certain Sullivan at the moment of his departure on an official mission to a part of India far removed from the opium district. Sullivan sold his contract to one Binn for £40,000 ; Binn sold it the same day for £60,000, and the ultimate purchaser who carried out the contract declared that after all he realised an enormous gain. According to one of the lists laid before Parliament, the Company and its employes from 1757-66 got £6,000,000 from the Indians as gifts. Between 1769 and 1770, the English manufactured a famine by buying up all the rice and refusing to sell it again, except at fabulous prices.<sup>1</sup>

The treatment of the aborigines was, naturally, most frightful in plantation-colonies destined for export trade only, such as the West Indies, and in rich and well-populated countries, such as Mexico and India, that were given over to plunder. But even in the colonies properly so-called, the Christian character of primitive accumulation did not belie itself. Those sober virtuosi of Protestantism, the Puritans of New England, in 1703, by decrees of their assembly, set a premium of £40 on every Indian scalp and every captured red-skin : in 1720 a premium of £100 on every scalp ; in 1744, after Massachusetts Bay had proclaimed a certain tribe as rebels, the following prices : for a male scalp of 12 years and upwards £100 (new currency), for a male prisoner £105, for women and children prisoners £50, for scalps of women and children £50. Some decades later, the colonial system took its revenge on the descendants of the pious pilgrim fathers, who had grown seditious in the meantime. At English instigation and for English pay they were tomahawked by red-skins. The British Parliament, proclaimed blood-hounds and scalping as " means that God and Nature had given into its hand."

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1866 more than a million Hindus died of hunger in the province of Orissa alone. Nevertheless, the attempt was made to enrich the Indian treasury by the price at which the necessities of life were sold to the starving people.

The colonial system ripened, like a hot-house, trade and navigation. The "societies Monopolia" of Luther were powerful levers for concentration of capital. The colonies secured a market for the budding manufactures, and, through the monopoly of the market, an increased accumulation. The treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised looting, enslavement, and murder, floated back to the mother-country and were there turned into capital. Holland, which first fully developed the colonial system, in 1648 stood already in the acme of its commercial greatness. It was "in almost exclusive possession of the East Indian trade and the commerce between the south-east and north-west of Europe. Its fisheries, marine, manufactures, surpassed those of any other country. The total capital of the Republic was probably more important than that of all the rest of Europe put together." Gülich forgets to add that by 1648, the people of Holland were more overworked, poorer and more brutally oppressed than those of all the rest of Europe put together.

To-day industrial supremacy implies commercial supremacy. In the period of manufacture properly so-called, it is, on the other hand, the commercial supremacy that gives industrial predominance. Hence the preponderant rôle that the colonial system plays at that time. It was "the strange God" who perched himself on the altar cheek by jowl with the old Gods of Europe, and one fine day with a shove and a kick chucked them all of a heap. It proclaimed surplus-value making as the sole end and aim of humanity.

The system of public crédit, i.e., of national debts, whose origin we discover in Genoa and Venice as early as the middle ages, took possession of Europe generally during the manufacturing period. The colonial system with its maritime trade and commercial wars served as a forcing-house for it. Thus it first took root in Holland. National debts, i.e., the alienation of the State—whether despotic, constitutional or republican—marked with its stamp the capitalistic era. The only part of the so-called national wealth that

actually enters into the collective possessions of modern peoples is—their national debt.<sup>1</sup> Hence, as a necessary consequence, the modern doctrine that a nation becomes the richer the more deeply it is in debt. Public credit becomes the *credo* of capital. And with the rise of national debt-making, want of faith in the national debt takes the place of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which may not be forgiven.

The public debt becomes one of the most powerful levers of primitive accumulation. As with the stroke of an enchanter's wand, it endows barren money with the power of breeding and thus turns it into capital, without the necessity of its exposing itself to the troubles and risks inseparable from its employment in industry or even in usury. The State-creditors actually give nothing away, for the sum lent is transformed into public bonds, easily negotiable, which go on functioning in their hands just as so much hard cash would. But further, apart from the class of lazy annuitants thus created, and from the improvised wealth of the financiers, middlemen between the government and the nation—as also apart from the tax-farmers, merchants, private manufacturers, to whom a good part of every national loan renders the service of a capital fallen from heaven—the national debt has given rise to joint-stock companies, to dealings in negotiable effects of all kinds, and to agiotage, in a word to stock-exchange gambling and the modern bankocracy.

At their birth the great banks, decorated with national titles, were only associations of private speculators, who placed themselves by the side of governments, and, thanks to the privileges they received, were in a position to advance money to the State. Hence the accumulation of the national debt has no more infallible measure than the successive rise in the stock of these banks, whose full development dates

<sup>1</sup> William Cobbett remarks that in England all public institutions are designated "royal"; as compensation for this, however, there is the "national" debt.

from the founding of the Bank of England in 1694. The Bank of England began with lending its money to the Government at 8 per cent ; at the same time it was empowered by Parliament to coin money out of the same capital, by lending it again to the public in the form of bank-notes. It was allowed to use these notes for discounting bills, making advances on commodities, and for buying the precious metals. It was not long ere this credit-money, made by the bank itself, became the coin in which the Bank of England made its loans to the State, and paid, on account of the State, the interest on the public debt. It was not enough that the bank gave with one hand and took back more with the other ; it remained, even whilst receiving, the eternal creditor of the nation down to the last shilling advanced. Gradually it became inevitably the receptacle of the metallic hoard of the country, and the centre of gravity of all commercial credit. What effect was produced on their contemporaries by the sudden uprising of this brood of bankocrats, financiers, rentiers, brokers, stock-jobbers, etc., is proved by the writings of that time, e.g., by Bolingbroke's.

With the national debt arose an international credit system, which often conceals one of the sources of primitive accumulation in this or that people. Thus the villainies of the Venetian thieving system formed one of the secret bases of the capital-wealth of Holland to whom Venice in her decadence lent large sums of money. So also was it with Holland and England. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch manufactures were far outstripped. Holland had ceased to be the nation preponderant in commerce and industry. One of its main lines of business, therefore, from 1701-76, is the lending out of enormous amounts of capital, especially to its great rival England. The same thing is going on to-day between England and the United States. A great deal of capital, which appears to-day in the United States without any certificate of birth, was yesterday, in England, the capitalised blood of children.

As the national debt finds its support in the public revenue, which must cover the yearly payments for interest, etc., the modern system of taxation was the necessary complement of the system of national loans. The loans enable the government to meet extraordinary expenses, without the tax-payers feeling it immediately, but they necessitate, as a consequence, increased taxes. On the other hand, the raising of taxation caused by the accumulation of debts contracted one after another, compels the government always to have recourse to new loans for new extraordinary expenses. Modern fiscality, whose pivot is formed by taxes on the most necessary means of subsistence (thereby increasing their price), thus contains within itself the germ of automatic progression. Over-taxation is not an incident, but rather a principle. In Holland, therefore, where this system was first inaugurated, the great patriot, De Witt, has in his *Maxims* extolled it as the best system for making the wage-labourer submissive, frugal, industrious, and overburdened with labour. The destructive influence that it exercises on the condition of the wage-labourer concerns us less, however, here than the forcible expropriation, resulting from it, of peasants, artisans, and, in a word, all elements of the lower middle-class. On this there are not two opinions, even among the bourgeois economists. Its expropriating efficacy is still further heightened by the system of protection, which forms one of its integral parts.

The great part that the public debt, and the fiscal system corresponding with it, has played in the capitalisation of wealth and the expropriation of the masses, has led many writers, like Cobbett, Doubleday and others, to seek in this, incorrectly, the fundamental cause of the misery of the modern peoples.

The system of protection was an artificial means of manufacturing manufacturers, of expropriating independent labourers, of capitalising the national means of production and subsistence, of forcibly abbreviating the transition from

the mediæval to the modern mode of production. The European States tore one another to pieces about the patent of this invention, and, once entered into the service of the surplus-value makers, did not merely lay under contribution in the pursuit of this purpose their own people, indirectly through protective duties, directly through export premiums. They also forcibly rooted out, in their dependent countries, all industry, as, e.g., England did with the Irish woollen manufacture. On the continent of Europe, after Colbert's example, the process was much simplified. The primitive industrial capital, here, came in part directly out of the State treasury. "Why," cries Mirabeau, "why go so far to seek the cause of the manufacturing glory of Saxony before the war? 180,000,000 of debts contracted by the sovereigns!"

Colonial system, public debts, heavy taxes, protection, commercial wars, etc., these children of the true manufacturing period, increase gigantically during the infancy of Modern Industry. The birth of the latter is heralded by a great slaughter of the innocents. Like the royal navy, the factories were recruited by means of the press-gang. Blase as Sir F. M. Eden is as to the horrors of the expropriation of the agricultural population from the soil, from the last third of the fifteenth century to his own time; with all the self-satisfaction with which he rejoices in this process, "essential" for establishing capitalistic agriculture and "the due proportion between arable and pasture land"—he does not show, however, the same economic insight in respect to the necessity of child-stealing and child-slavery for the transformation of manufacturing exploitation into factory exploitation, and the establishment of the "true relation" between capital and labour-power. He says: "It may, perhaps, be worthy the attention of the public to consider, whether any manufacture, which, in order to be carried on successfully, requires that cottages and work-houses should be ransacked for poor children; that they should be employed by turns during the greater part of



the night and robbed of that rest which, though indispensable to all, is most required by the young ; and that numbers of both sexes, of different ages and dispositions, should be collected together in such a manner that the contagion of example cannot but lead to profligacy and debauchery ; will add to the sum of individual or national felicity ? ”

“ In the counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and more particularly in Lancashire,” says Fielden, “ the newly-invented machinery was used in large factories built on the sides of streams capable of turning the water-wheel. Thousands of hands were suddenly required in these places, remote from towns ; and Lancashire, in particular, being, till then, comparatively thinly populated and barren, a population was all that she now wanted. The small and nimble fingers of little children being by very far the most in request, the custom instantly sprang up of procuring *apprentices* from the different parish workhouses of London, Birmingham, and elsewhere. Many, many thousands of these little, hapless creatures were sent down into the north, being from the age of 7 to the age of 13 or 14 years. The custom was for the master to clothe his apprentices and to feed and lodge them in an “ apprentice house ” near the factory ; overseers were appointed to see to the works, whose interest it was to work the children to the utmost, because their pay was in proportion to the quantity of work that they could exact. Cruelty was, of course, the consequence. . . . In many of the manufacturing districts, but particularly, I am afraid, in the guilty county to which I belong [Lancashire], cruelties the most heart-rending were practised upon the unoffending and friendless creatures who were thus consigned to the charge of master manufacturers ; they were harassed to the brink of death by excess of labour . . . were flogged, fettered and tortured in the most exquisite refinement of cruelty ; . . . they were in many cases starved to the bone while flogged to their work and . . . even in some instances . . . were driven to commit suicide . . . The beautiful and romantic valleys of

Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lancashire, secluded from the public eye, became the dismal solitudes of torture, and of many a murder. The profits of manufactures were enormous ; but this only whetted the appetite that it should have satisfied, and therefore the manufacturers had recourse to an expedient that seemed to secure to them those profits without any possibility of limit ; they began the practice of what is termed ' night-working,' that is, having tired one set of hands, by working them throughout the day, they had another set ready to go on working throughout the night ; the day-set getting into the beds that the night-set had just quitted, and in their turn again, the night-set getting into the beds that the day-set quitted in the morning. It is a common tradition in Lancashire, that the beds *never get cold.*"

With the development of capitalist production during the manufacturing period, the public opinion of Europe had lost the last remnant of shame and conscience. The nations bragged cynically of every infamy that served them as a means to capitalistic accumulation. Read, e.g., the naïve Annals of Commerce of the worthy A. Anderson. Here it is trumpeted forth as a triumph of English statecraft that at the Peace of Utrecht, England extorted from the Spaniards by the Asiento Treaty the privilege of being allowed to ply the negro-trade, until then only carried on between Africa and the English West Indies, between Africa and Spanish America as well. England thereby acquired the right of supplying Spanish America until 1743 with 4,800 negroes yearly. This threw, at the same time, an official cloak over British smuggling. Liverpool waxed fat on the slave-trade. This was its method of primitive accumulation. And, even to the present day, Liverpool " respectability " is the Pindar of the slave-trade which—compare the work of Aikin [1795] already quoted—" has coincided with that spirit of bold adventure which has characterised the trade of Liverpool and rapidly carried it to its present state of prosperity ; has occasioned vast employment for

shipping and sailors, and greatly augmented the demand for the manufactures of the country" (p. 339). Liverpool employed in the slave-trade, in 1730, 15 ships; in 1751, 53; in 1760, 74; in 1770, 96; and in 1792, 132.

Whilst the cotton industry introduced child-slavery in England, it gave in the United States a stimulus to the transformation of the earlier, more or less patriarchal slavery, into a system of commercial exploitation. In fact, the veiled slavery of the wage-earners in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world.

Tantæ molis erat, to establish the "eternal laws of Nature" of the capitalist mode of production, to complete the process of separation between labourers and conditions of labour, to transform, at one pole, the social means of production and subsistence into capital, at the opposite pole, the mass of the population into wage-labourers, into "free labouring poor," that artificial product of modern society. If money, according to Augier, "comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek," capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.

#### HISTORICAL TENDENCY OF CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION

(Vol. I, Ch. XXXII)

What does the primitive accumulation of capital, i.e., its historical genesis, resolve itself into? In so far as it is not immediate transformation of slaves and serfs into wage-labourers, and therefore a mere change of form, it only means the expropriation of the immediate producers, i.e., the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. Private property, as the antithesis to social, collective property, exists only where the means of labour and the external conditions of labour belong to private individuals. But according as these private individuals are labourers or not labourers, private property has a different

character. The numberless shades, that it at first sight presents, correspond to the intermediate stages lying between these two extremes. The private property of the labourer in his means of production is the foundation of petty industry, whether agricultural, manufacturing or both ; petty industry, again, is an essential condition for the development of social production and of the free individuality of the labourer himself. Of course, this petty mode of production exists also under slavery, serfdom, and other states of dependence. But it flourishes, it lets loose its whole energy, it attains its adequate classical form only where the labourer is the private owner of his own means of labour set in action by himself : the peasant of the land which he cultivates, the artisan of the tool which he handles as a virtuoso. This mode of production pre-supposes parcelling of the soil, and scattering of the other means of production. As it excludes the concentration of these means of production, so also it excludes co-operation, division of labour within each separate process of production, the control over, and the productive application of the forces of Nature by society, and the free development of the social productive powers. It is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and more or less primitive bounds. To perpetuate it would be, as Pecqueur rightly says, "to decree universal mediocrity." At a certain stage of development it brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution. From that moment new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society ; but the old social organisation fetters them and keeps them down. It must be annihilated ; it is annihilated. Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualised and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence, and from the means of labour, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. It

comprises a series of forcible methods, of which we have passed in review only those that have been epoch-making as methods of the primitive accumulation of capital. The expropriation of the immediate producers was accomplished with merciless vandalism, and under the stimulus of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious. Self-earned private property, that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent labouring-individual with the conditions of his labour, is supplanted by capitalistic private property, which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labour of others, i.e., on wages-labour.

As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, then the further socialisation of labour and further transformation of the land and other means of production into socially exploited and, therefore, common means of production, as well as the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour-process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world-market, and this, the international character of the capitalistic régime. Along with the constantly

diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation ; but with this too grows the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.

The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era : i.e., on co-operation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.

The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult, than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialised production, into socialised property. In the former case, we had the expropriation of the mass of the people by a few usurpers ; in the latter, we have the expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people.

## COMMODITIES

(Vol. I, Ch. I)

*The Two Factors of a Commodity : Use-Value and Value (the Substance of Value and the Magnitude of Value)*

The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities," its unit being a single commodity. Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity.

A commodity is, in the first place, an object outside us, a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort or another. The nature of such wants, whether, for instance, they spring from the stomach or from fancy, makes no difference. Neither are we here concerned to know how the object satisfies these wants, whether directly as means of subsistence, or indirectly as means of production.

Every useful thing, as iron, paper, etc., may be looked at from the two points of view of quality and quantity. It is an assemblage of many properties, and may therefore be of use in various ways. To discover the various use of things is the work of history. So also is the establishment of socially-recognised standards of measure for the quantities of these useful objects. The diversity of these measures has its origin partly in the diverse nature of the objects to be measured, partly in convention.

The utility of a thing makes it a use-value. But this utility is not a thing of air. Being limited by the physical properties of the commodity, it has no existence apart from that commodity. A commodity, such as iron, corn, or a diamond, is therefore, so far as it is a material thing, a use-value, something useful. This property of a commodity is independent of the amount of labour required to appropriate its useful qualities. When treating of use-value, we always assume to be dealing with definite quantities, such as dozens of watches, yards of linen, or tons of iron. The use-values of commodities furnish the material for a special

study, that of the commercial knowledge of commodities. Use-values become a reality only by use or consumption : they also constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth. In the form of society we are about to consider, they are, in addition, the material depositories of exchange value.

Exchange value, at first sight, presents itself as a quantitative relation, as the proportion in which values in use of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort, a relation constantly changing with time and place. Hence exchange value appears to be something accidental and purely relative, and consequently an intrinsic value, i.e., an exchange value that is inseparably connected with, inherent in commodities, seems a contradiction in terms. Let us consider the matter a little more closely.

A given commodity, e.g., a quarter of wheat is exchanged for  $x$  blacking,  $y$  silk, or  $z$  gold, etc.—in short, for other commodities in the most different proportions. Instead of one exchange value, the wheat has, therefore, a great many. But since  $x$  blacking,  $y$  silk, or  $z$  gold, etc., each represent the exchange value of one quarter of wheat,  $x$  blacking,  $y$  silk,  $z$  gold, etc., must as exchange values be replaceable by each other, or equal to each other. Therefore, first : the valid exchange values of a given commodity express something equal ; secondly, exchange value, generally, is only the mode of expression, the phenomenal form, of something contained in it, yet distinguishable from it.

Let us take two commodities, e.g., corn and iron. The proportions in which they are exchangeable, whatever those proportions may be, can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron : e.g., 1 quarter corn =  $x$  cwt. iron. What does this equation tell us ? It tells us that in two different things—in 1 quarter of corn and  $x$  cwt. of iron, there exists in equal quantities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is



exchange value, must therefore be reducible to this third.

A simple geometrical illustration will make this clear. In order to calculate and compare the areas of rectilinear figures, we decompose them into triangles. But the area of the triangle itself is expressed by something totally different from its visible figure, namely, by half the product of the base into the altitude. In the same way the exchange values of commodities must be capable of being expressed in terms of something common to them all, of which thing they represent a greater or less quantity.

This common "something" cannot be either a geometrical, a chemical, or any other natural property of commodities. Such properties claim our attention only in so far as they affect the utility of those commodities, make them use-values. But the exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-value. Then one use-value is just as good as another, provided only it be present in sufficient quantity. Or, as old Barbon says, "one sort of wares are as good as another, if the values be equal. There is no difference or distinction in things of equal value. . . . An hundred pounds' worth of lead or iron, is of as great value as one hundred pounds' worth of silver or gold." As use-values, commodities are, above all, of different qualities, but as exchange values they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value.

If then we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities, they have only one common property left, that of being products of labour. But even the product of labour itself has undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value, we see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing. Its existence as a material thing is put out of sight. Neither can it any longer be regarded as the product of the labour of the joiner, the mason, the spinner, or of any other definite kind of

productive labour. Along with the useful qualities of the products themselves, we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labour embodied in them, and the concrete forms of that labour ; there is nothing left but what is common to them all ; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract.

Let us now consider the residue of each of these products ; it consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogeneous human labour, of labour-power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure. All that these things now tell us is, that human labour-power has been expended in their production, that human labour is embodied in them. When looked at as crystals of this social substance, common to them all, they are—Values.

We have seen that when commodities are exchanged, their exchange value manifests itself as something totally independent of their use-value. But if we abstract from their use-value, there remains their Value as defined above. Therefore, the common substance that manifests itself in the exchange value of commodities, whenever they are exchanged, is their value. The progress of our investigation will show that exchange value is the only form in which the value of commodities can manifest itself or be expressed. For the present, however, we have to consider the nature of value independently of this, its form.

A use-value, or useful article, therefore, has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied or materialised in it. How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured ? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour, contained in the article. The quantity of labour, however, is measured by its duration, and labour-time in its turn finds its standard in weeks, days, and hours.

Some people might think that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour spent on

it, the more idle and unskilful the labourer, the more valuable would his commodity be, because more time would be required in its production. The labour, however, that forms the substance of value is homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power. The total labour-power of society, which is embodied in the sum total of the values of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one homogeneous mass of human labour-power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units. Each of these units is the same as any other, so far as it has the character of the average labour-power of society, and takes effect as such ; that is, so far as it requires for producing a commodity, no more time than is needed on an average, no more than is socially necessary. The labour-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time. The introduction of power looms into England probably reduced by one half the labour required to weave a given quantity of yarn into cloth. The hand-loom weavers, as a matter of fact, continued to require the same time as before ; but for all that, the product of one hour of their labour represented after the change only half an hour's social labour, and consequently fell to one-half its former value.

We see then that that which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour socially necessary, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production. Each individual commodity, in this connection, is to be considered as an average sample of its class. Commodities, therefore, in which equal quantities of labour are embodied, or which can be produced in the same time, have the same value. The value of one commodity is to the value of any other, as the labour-time necessary for the production of the one is to that necessary for the production of the other. "As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time."

The value of a commodity would therefore remain constant, if the labour-time required for its production also remained constant. But the latter changes with every variation in the productiveness of labour. This productiveness is determined by various circumstances, amongst others, by the average amount of skill of the workmen, the state of science, and the degree of its practical application, the social organisation of production, the extent and capabilities of the means of production, and by physical conditions. For example, the same amount of labour in favourable seasons is embodied in eight bushels of corn, and in unfavourable, only in four. The same labour extracts from rich mines more metal than from poor mines. Diamonds are of very rare occurrence on the earth's surface, and hence their discovery costs, on an average, a great deal of labour-time. Consequently much labour is represented in a small compass. Jacob doubts whether gold has ever been paid for at its full value. This applies still more to diamonds. According to Eschwege, the total produce of the Brazilian diamond mines for the eighty years ending in 1823 had not realised the price of one and a half years' average produce of the sugar and coffee plantations of the same country, although the diamonds cost much more labour, and therefore represented more value. With richer mines, the same quantity of labour would embody itself in more diamonds and their value would fall. If we could succeed at a small expenditure of labour, in converting carbon into diamonds, their value might fall below that of bricks. In general, the greater the productiveness of labour, the less is the labour-time required for the production of an article, the less is the amount of labour crystallised in that article, and the less is its value ; and vice versa, the less the productiveness of labour, the greater is the labour-time required for the production of an article, and the greater is its value. The value of a commodity, therefore, varies directly as the quantity, and inversely as the productiveness, of the labour incorporated in it.

A thing can be a use-value, without having value. This is the case whenever its utility to man is not due to labour. Such are air, virgin soil, natural meadows, etc. A thing can be useful, and the product of human labour, without being a commodity. Whoever directly satisfies his wants with the produce of his own labour, creates, indeed, use-values, but not commodities. In order to produce the latter, he must not only produce use-values, but use-values for others, social use-values. Lastly, nothing can have value, without being an object of utility. If the thing is useless, so is the labour contained in it ; the labour does not count as labour, and therefore creates no value. . . .

*The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret thereof*

A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that those properties are the product of human labour. It is as clear as noon-day, that man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than "table-turning" ever was.

The mystical character of commodities does not originate, therefore, in their use-value. Just as little does it proceed from the nature of the determining factors of value.

For, in the first place, however varied the useful kinds of labour, or productive activities, may be, it is a physiological fact that they are functions of the human organism, and that each such function, whatever may be its nature or form, is essentially the expenditure of human brain, nerves, muscles, etc. Secondly, with regard to that which forms the ground-work for the quantitative determination of value, namely, the duration of that expenditure, or the quantity of labour, it is quite clear that there is a palpable difference between its quantity and quality. In all states of society, the labour-time that it costs to produce the means of subsistence must necessarily be an object of interest to mankind, though not of equal interest in different stages of development. And lastly, from the moment that men in any way work for one another, their labour assumes a social form.

Whence, then, arises the enigmatical character of the product of labour, so soon as it assumes the form of commodities? Clearly from this form itself. The equality of all sorts of human labour is expressed objectively by their products all being equally values; the measure of the expenditure of labour-power by the duration of that expenditure, takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labour; and finally, the mutual relations of the producers, within which the social character of their labour affirms itself, take the form of a social relation between the products.

A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. This is the reason why the products of labour become commodities, social things whose qualities are at the same time perceptible and imperceptible by the senses. In the same way the light from an object is perceived by us not as the subjective excitation of our optic nerve, but as the objective form of something

outside the eye itself. But, in the act of seeing, there is at all events an actual passage of light from one thing to another, from the external object to the eye. There is a physical relation between physical things. But it is different with commodities. There, the existence of the things *quâ* commodities, and the value relation between the products of labour which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. There it is a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities.

This Fetishism of commodities has its origin, as the foregoing analysis has already shown, in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them.

As a general rule, articles of utility become commodities, only because they are products of the labour of private individuals or groups of individuals who carry on their work independently of each other. The sum total of the labour of all these private individuals forms the aggregate labour of society. Since the producers do not come into social contact with each other until they exchange their products, the specific social character of each producer's labour does not show itself except in the act of exchange. In other words, the labour of the individual asserts itself as a part of the labour of society, only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes directly between the products, and indirectly, through them, between the producers. To the latter, therefore, the relations connecting the labour of

one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things. It is only by being exchanged that the products of labour acquire, as values, one uniform social status, distinct from their varied forms of existence as objects of utility. This division of a product into a useful thing and a value becomes practically important, only when exchange has acquired such an extension that useful articles are produced for the purpose of being exchanged, and their character as values has therefore to be taken into account, beforehand, during production. From this moment the labour of the individual producer acquires socially a two-fold character. On the one hand, it must, as a definite useful kind of labour, satisfy a definite social want, and thus hold its place as part and parcel of the collective labour of all, as a branch of a social division of labour that has sprung up spontaneously. On the other hand, it can satisfy the manifold wants of the individual producer himself, only in so far as the mutual exchangeability of all kinds of useful private labour is an established social fact, and therefore the private useful labour of each producer ranks on an equality with that of all others. The equalisation of the most different kinds of labour can be the result only of an abstraction from their inequalities, or of reducing them to their common denominator, viz., expenditure of human labour power or human labour in the abstract. The two-fold social character of the labour of the individual appears to him, when reflected in his brain, only under those forms which are impressed upon that labour in everyday practice by the exchange of products. In this way, the character that his own labour possesses of being socially useful takes the form of the condition that the product must be not only useful, but useful for others, and the social character that his particular labour has of being the equal of all other particular kinds of labour takes the form that all the physically different articles that are the products of



labour have one common quality, viz., that of having value.

Hence, when we bring the products of our labour into relation with each other as values, it is not because we see in these articles the material receptacles of homogeneous human labour. Quite the contrary ; whenever, by an exchange, we equate as values our different products, by that very act we also equate, as human labour, the different kinds of labour expended upon them. We are not aware of this, nevertheless we do it. Value, therefore, does not stalk about with a label describing what it is. It is value, rather, that converts every product into a social hieroglyphic. Later on, we try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of our own social products ; for to stamp an object of utility as a value is just as much a social product as language. The recent scientific discovery that the products of labour, so far as they are values, are but material expressions of the human labour spent in their production marks, indeed, an epoch in the history of the development of the human race, but by no means dissipates the mist through which the social character of labour appears to us to be an objective character of the products themselves. The fact that in the particular form of production with which we are dealing, viz., the production of commodities, the specific social character of private labour carried on independently consists in the equality of every kind of that labour, by virtue of its being human labour, which character, therefore, assumes in the product the form of value—this fact appears to the producers, notwithstanding the discovery above referred to, to be just as real and final as the fact that, after the discovery by science of the component gases of air, the atmosphere itself remained unaltered.

What, first of all, practically concerns producers when they make an exchange is the question, how much of some other product they get for their own ? in what proportions the products are exchangeable ? When these proportions have, by custom, attained a certain stability, they appear to result from the nature of the products, so that, for

instance, one ton of iron and two ounces of gold appear as naturally to be of equal value, as a pound of gold and a pound of iron in spite of their different physical and chemical qualities appear to be of equal weight. The character of having value, when once impressed upon products, obtains fixity only by reason of their acting and re-acting upon each other as quantities of value. These quantities vary continually, independently of the will, foresight and action of the producers. To them, their own social action takes the form of the action of objects, which rule the producers instead of being ruled by them. It requires a fully developed production of commodities before, from accumulated experience alone, the scientific conviction springs up that all the different kinds of private labour, which are carried on independently of each other, and yet as spontaneously developed branches of the social division of labour, are continually being reduced to the quantitative proportions in which society requires them. And why? Because, in the midst of all the accidental and ever fluctuating exchange-relations between the products, the labour-time socially necessary for their production forcibly asserts itself like an over-riding law of nature. The law of gravity thus asserts itself when a house falls about our ears. The determination of the magnitude of value by labour-time is therefore a secret, hidden under the apparent fluctuations in the relative values of commodities. Its discovery, while removing all appearance of mere accidentality from the determination of the magnitude of the values of products, yet in no way alters the mode in which that determination takes place.

Man's reflections on the forms of social life, and consequently, also, his scientific analysis of those forms, take a course directly opposite to that of their actual historical development. He begins, post festum, with the results of the process of development ready to hand before him. The characters that stamp products as commodities, and whose establishment is a necessary preliminary to the circulation of commodities, have already acquired the stability of

natural, self-understood forms of social life, before man seeks to decipher, not their historical character, for in his eyes they are immutable, but their meaning. Consequently it was the analysis of the prices of commodities that alone led to the determination of the magnitude of value, and it was the common expression of all commodities in money that alone led to the establishment of their characters as values. It is, however, just this ultimate money form of the world of commodities that actually conceals, instead of disclosing, the social character of private labour, and the social relations between the individual producers. When I state that coats or boots stand in a relation to linen, because it is the universal incarnation of abstract human labour, the absurdity of the statement is self-evident. Nevertheless, when the producers of coats and boots compare those articles with linen, or, what is the same thing, with gold or silver, as the universal equivalent, they express the relation between their own private labour and the collective labour of society in the same absurd form.

The categories of bourgeois economy consist of such like forms. They are forms of thought expressing with social validity the conditions and relations of a definite, historically determined mode of production, viz., the production of commodities. The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labour as long as they take the form of commodities, vanishes therefore, so soon as we come to other forms of production.

Since Robinson Crusoe's experiences are a favourite theme with political economists, let us take a look at him on his island. Moderate though he be, yet some few wants he has to satisfy, and must therefore do a little useful work of various sorts, such as making tools and furniture, taming goats, fishing and hunting. Of his prayers and the like we take no account, since they are a source of pleasure to him, and he looks upon them as so much recreation. In spite of the variety of his work, he knows that his labour, whatever

its form, is but the activity of one and the same Robinson, and consequently, that it consists of nothing but different modes of human labour. Necessity itself compels him to apportion his time accurately between his different kinds of work. Whether one kind occupies a greater space in his general activity than another, depends on the difficulties, greater or less as the case may be, to be overcome in attaining the useful effect aimed at. This our friend Robinson soon learns by experience, and having rescued a watch, ledger, and pen and ink from the wreck, commences, like a true-born Briton, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a list of the objects of utility that belong to him, of the operations necessary for their production ; and lastly, of the labour time that definite quantities of those objects have, on an average, cost him. All the relations between Robinson and the objects that form this wealth of his own creation, are here so simple and clear as to be intelligible without exertion, even to Mr. Sedley Taylor. And yet those relations contain all that is essential to the determination of value.

Let us now transport ourselves from Robinson's island bathed in light to the European middle ages shrouded in darkness. Here, instead of the independent man, we find everyone dependent, serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy. Personal dependence here characterises the social relations of production just as much as it does the other spheres of life organised on the basis of that production. But for the very reason that personal dependence forms the ground-work of society, there is no necessity for labour and its products to assume a fantastic form different from their reality. They take the shape, in the transactions of society, of services in kind and payments in kind. Here the particular and natural form of labour, and not, as in a society based on production of commodities, its general abstract form is the immediate social form of labour. Compulsory labour is just as properly measured by time, as commodity-producing labour ; but every serf knows that

what he expends in the service of his lord is a definite quantity of his own personal labour-power. The tithe to be rendered to the priest is more matter of fact than his blessing. No matter, then, what we may think of the parts played by the different classes of people themselves in this society, the social relations between individuals in the performance of their labour, appear at all events as their own mutual personal relations, and are not disguised under the shape of social relations between the products of labour.

For an example of labour in common or directly associated labour, we have no occasion to go back to that spontaneously developed form which we find on the threshold of the history of all civilised races. We have one close at hand in the patriarchal industries of a peasant family, that produces corn, cattle, yarn, linen, and clothing for home use. These different articles are, as regards the family, so many products of its labour, but as between themselves, they are not commodities. The different kinds of labour, such as tillage, cattle tending, spinning, weaving and making clothes, which result in the various products, are in themselves, and such as they are, direct social functions, because functions of the family, which just as much as a society based on the production of commodities, possesses a spontaneously developed system of division of labour. The distribution of the work within the family, and the regulation of the labour-time of the several members, depend as well upon differences of age and sex as upon natural conditions varying with the seasons. The labour-power of each individual, by its very nature, operates in this case merely as a definite portion of the whole labour-power of the family, and therefore, the measure of the expenditure of individual labour-power by its duration, appears here by its very nature as a social character of their labour.

Let us now picture to ourselves, by way of change, a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the

combined labour-power of the community. All the characteristics of Robinson's labour are here repeated, but with this difference, that they are social, instead of individual. Everything produced by him was exclusively the result of his own personal labour, and therefore simply an object of use for himself. The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion amongst them is consequently necessary. The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organisation of the community, and the degree of historical development attained by the producers. We will assume, but merely for the sake of a parallel with the production of commodities, that the share of each individual producer in the means of subsistence is determined by his labour-time. Labour-time would, in that case, play a double part. Its apportionment in accordance with a definite social plan maintains the proper proportion between the different kinds of work to be done and the various wants of the community. On the other hand, it also serves as a measure of the portion of the common labour borne by each individual and of his share in the part of the total product destined for individual consumption. The social relations of the individual producers, with regard both to their labour and to its products, are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, and that with regard not only to production but also to distribution.

The religious world is but the reflex of the real world, and for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labour to the standard of homogeneous human labour—for such a society, Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc., is the most fitting form

of religion. In the ancient Asiatic and other ancient modes of production, we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and therefore the conversion of men into producers of commodities, holds a subordinate place, which, however, increases in importance as the primitive communities approach nearer and nearer to their dissolution. Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the *Intermundia*, or like Jews in the pores of Polish society. Those ancient social organisms of production are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellow men in a primitive tribal community, or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labour has not risen beyond a low stage, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and Nature, are correspondingly narrow. This narrowness is reflected in the ancient worship of Nature, and in the other elements of the popular religions. The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellow men and to nature.

The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan. This, however, demands for society a certain material ground-work or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development.

Political economy has indeed analysed, however incompletely, value and its magnitude, and has discovered what lies beneath these forms. But it has never once asked the

question why labour is represented by the value of its product and labour-time by the magnitude of that value. These formulæ, which bear stamped upon them in unmistakable letters, that they belong to a state of society, in which the process of production has the mastery over man, instead of being controlled by him, such formulæ appear to the bourgeois intellect to be as much a self-evident necessity imposed by nature as productive labour itself. Hence forms of social production that preceded the bourgeois form, are treated by the bourgeoisie in much the same way as the Fathers of the Church treated pre-Christian religions. . . .

#### MONEY, OR THE CIRCULATION OF COMMODITIES

(Vol. I, Ch. III)

##### *The Measure of Values*

Throughout this work, I assume, for the sake of simplicity, gold as the money-commodity.

The first chief function of money is to supply commodities with the material for the expression of their values, or to represent their values as magnitudes of the same denomination, qualitatively equal, and quantitatively comparable. It thus serves as a *universal measure of value*. And only by virtue of this function does gold, the equivalent commodity *par excellence*, become money.

It is not money that renders commodities commensurable. Just the contrary. It is because all commodities, as values, are realised human labour, and therefore commensurable, that their values can be measured by one and the same special commodity, and the latter be converted into the common measure of their values, i.e., into money. Money as a measure of value, is the phenomenal form that must of necessity be assumed by that measure of value which is immanent in commodities, labour-time.

The expression of the value of a commodity in gold—the commodity  $A = y$  money-commodity—is its money-form or price. A single equation, such as 1 ton of iron = 2 ounces of



gold, now suffices to express the value of the iron in a socially valid manner. There is no longer any need for this equation to figure as a link in the chain of equations that express the values of all other commodities, because the equivalent commodity, gold, now has the character of money. The general form of relative value has resumed its original shape of simple or isolated relative value. On the other hand, the expanded expression of relative value, the endless series of equations, has now become the form peculiar to the relative value of the money-commodity. The series itself, too, is now given, and has social recognition in the prices of actual commodities. We have only to read the quotations of a price-list backwards, to find the magnitude of the value of money expressed in all sorts of commodities. But money itself has no price. In order to put it on an equal footing with all other commodities in this respect, we should be obliged to equate it to itself as its own equivalent.

The price or money-form of commodities is, like their form of value generally, a form quite distinct from their palpable bodily form ; it is, therefore, a purely ideal or mental form. Although invisible, the value of iron, linen and corn has actual existence in these very articles : it is ideally made perceptible by their equality with gold, a relation that, so to say, exists only in their own heads. Their owner must, therefore, lend them his tongue, or hang a ticket on them, before their prices can be communicated to the outside world. Since the expression of the value of commodities in gold is a merely ideal act, we may use for this purpose imaginary or ideal money. Every trader knows, that he is far from having turned his goods into money, when he has expressed their value in a price or in imaginary money, and that it does not require the least bit of real gold, to estimate in that metal millions of pounds' worth of goods. When, therefore, money serves as a measure of value, it is employed only as imaginary or ideal money. This circumstance has given rise to the wildest theories. But, although the money that performs the functions of a

measure of value is only ideal money, price depends entirely upon the actual substance that is money. The value, or in other words, the quantity of human labour contained in a ton of iron, is expressed in imagination by such a quantity of the money-commodity as contains the same amount of labour as the iron. According, therefore, as the measure of value is gold, silver, or copper, the value of the ton of iron will be expressed by very different prices, or will be represented by very different quantities of those metals respectively.

If, therefore, two different commodities, such as gold and silver, are simultaneously measures of value, all commodities have two prices—one a gold-price, the other a silver-price. These exist quietly side by side, so long as the ratio of the value of silver to that of gold remains unchanged, say, at 15 : 1. Every change in their ratio disturbs the ratio which exists between the gold-prices and the silver-prices of commodities, and thus proves, by facts, that a double standard of value is inconsistent with the functions of a standard.

Commodities with definite prices present themselves under the form : a commodity  $A = x$  gold ; b commodity  $B = z$  gold ; c commodity  $C = y$  gold, etc., where  $a, b, c$ , represent definite quantities of the commodities  $A, B, C$  and  $x, z, y$ , definite quantities of gold. The values of these commodities are, therefore, changed in imagination into so many different quantities of gold. Hence, in spite of the confusing variety of the commodities themselves, their values become magnitudes of the same denomination, gold-magnitudes. They are now capable of being compared with each other and measured, and the want becomes technically felt of comparing them with some fixed quantity of gold as a unit measure. This unit, by subsequent division into aliquot parts, becomes itself the standard or scale. Before they become money, gold, silver, and copper already possess such standard measures in their standards of weight, so that, for example, a pound weight, while serving as the unit, is, on the one hand, divisible into ounces, and, on the

other, may be combined to make up hundredweights. It is owing to this that, in all metallic currencies, the names given to the standards of money or of price were originally taken from the pre-existing names of the standards of weight.

As *measure of value* and as *standard of price*, money has two entirely distinct functions to perform. It is the measure of value inasmuch as it is the socially recognised incarnation of human labour ; it is the standard of price inasmuch as it is a fixed weight of metal. As the measure of value it serves to convert the values of all the manifold commodities into prices, into imaginary quantities of gold ; as the standard of price it measures those quantities of gold. The measure of values measures commodities considered as values ; the standard of price measures, on the contrary, quantities of gold by a unit quantity of gold, not the value of one quantity of gold by the weight of another. In order to make gold a standard of price, a certain weight must be fixed upon as the unit. In this case, as in all cases of measuring quantities of the same denomination, the establishment of an unvarying unit of measure is all-important. Hence, the less the unit is subject to variation, so much the better does the standard of price fulfil its office. But only in so far as it is itself a product of labour, and, therefore, potentially variable in value, can gold serve as a measure of value.

It is, in the first place, quite clear that a change in the value of gold does not, in any way, affect its function as a standard of price. No matter how this value varies, the proportions between the values of different quantities of the metal remain constant. However great the fall in its value, 12 ounces of gold still have 12 times the value of 1 ounce ; and in prices, the only thing considered is the relation between different quantities of gold. Since, on the other hand, no rise or fall in the value of an ounce of gold can alter its weight, no alteration can take place in the weight of its aliquot parts. Thus gold always renders the same service as an invariable standard of price, however much its value may vary.

In the second place, a change in the value of gold does not interfere with its functions as a measure of value. The change affects all commodities simultaneously, and, therefore, *ceteris paribus*, leaves their relative values *inter se*, unaltered, although those values are now expressed in higher or lower gold-prices.

Just as when we estimate the value of any commodity by a definite quantity of the use-value of some other commodity, so in estimating the value of the former in gold, we assume nothing more than that the production of a given quantity of gold costs, at the given period, a given amount of labour. As regards the fluctuations of prices generally, they are subject to the laws of elementary relative value investigated in a former chapter.

A general rise in the prices of commodities can result only, either from a rise in their values—the value of money remaining constant—or from a fall in the value of money, the values of commodities remaining constant. On the other hand, a general fall in prices can result only, either from a fall in the values of commodities—the value of money remaining constant—or from a rise in the value of money, the values of commodities remaining constant. It therefore by no means follows, that a rise in the value of money necessarily implies a proportional fall in the prices of commodities ; or that a fall in the value of money implies a proportional rise in prices. Such change of price holds good only in the case of commodities whose value remains constant. With those, for example, whose value rises, simultaneously with, and proportionally to, that of money, there is no alteration in price. And if their value rise either slower or faster than that of money, the fall or rise in their prices will be determined by the difference between the change in their value and that of money ; and so on.

Let us now go back to the consideration of the price-form.

By degrees there arises a discrepancy between the current money names of the various weights of the precious metal figuring as money, and the actual weights which those

names originally represented. This discrepancy is the result of historical causes, among which the chief are : (1) The importation of foreign money into an imperfectly developed community. This happened in Rome in its early days, where gold and silver coins circulated at first as foreign commodities. The names of these foreign coins never coincide with those of the indigenous weights. (2) As wealth increases, the less precious metal is thrust out by the more precious from its place as a measure of value, copper by silver, silver by gold, however much this order of sequence may be in contradiction with poetical chronology. The word pound, for instance, was the money-name given to an actual pound weight of silver. When gold replaced silver as a measure of value, the same name was applied according to the ratio between the values of silver and gold, to perhaps one-fifteenth of a pound of gold. The word pound, as a money-name, thus becomes differentiated from the same word as a weight-name. (3) The debasing of money carried on for centuries by kings and princes to such an extent that, of the original weights of the coins, nothing in fact remained but the names.

These historical causes convert the separation of the money-name from the weight-name into an established habit with the community. Since the standard of money is on the one hand purely conventional, and must on the other hand find general acceptance, it is in the end regulated by law. A given weight of one of the precious metals, an ounce of gold, for instance, becomes officially divided into aliquot parts, with legally bestowed names, such as pound, dollar, etc. These aliquot parts, which henceforth serve as units of money, are then sub-divided into other aliquot parts with legal names, such as shilling, penny, etc. But, both before and after these divisions are made, a definite weight of metal is the standard of metallic money. The sole alteration consists in the sub-division and denomination.

The prices, or quantities of gold, into which the values of commodities are ideally changed, are therefore now

expressed in the names of coins, or in the legally valid names of the sub-divisions of the gold standard. Hence, instead of saying : A quarter of wheat is worth an ounce of gold ; we say, it is worth £3 17s. 10½d. In this way commodities express by their prices how much they are worth, and money serves as *money of account* whenever it is a question of fixing the value of an article in its money-form.

The name of a thing is something distinct from the qualities of that thing. I know nothing of a man, by knowing that his name is Jacob. In the same way with regard to money, every trace of a value-relation disappears in the names pound, dollar, franc, ducat, etc. The confusion caused by attributing a hidden meaning to these cabalistic signs is all the greater, because these money-names express both the values of commodities, and, at the same time, aliquot parts of the weight of the metal that is the standard of money. On the other hand, it is absolutely necessary that value, in order that it may be distinguished from the varied bodily forms of commodities, should assume this material and unmeaning, but, at the same time, purely social form.

Price is the money-name of the labour realised in a commodity. Hence the expression of the equivalence of a commodity with the sum of money constituting its price is a tautology, just as in general the expression of the relative value of a commodity is a statement of the equivalence of two commodities. But although price, being the exponent of the magnitude of a commodity's value, is the exponent of its exchange-ratio with money, it does not follow that the exponent of this exchange-ratio is necessarily the exponent of the magnitude of the commodity's value. Suppose two equal quantities of socially necessary labour to be respectively represented by 1 quarter of wheat and £2 (nearly ½ oz. of gold), £2 is the expression in money of the magnitude of the value of the quarter of wheat, or is its price. If now circumstances allow of this price being raised to £3, or compel it to be reduced to £1, then although £1 and £3

may be too small or too great properly to express the magnitude of the wheat's value, nevertheless they are its prices, for they are, in the first place, the form under which its value appears, i.e., money; and in the second place, the exponents of its exchange-ratio with money. If the conditions of production, in other words, if the productive power of labour remain constant, the same amount of social labour-time must, both before and after the change in price, be expended in the reproduction of a quarter of wheat. This circumstance depends, neither on the will of the wheat producer, nor on that of the owners of other commodities.

Magnitude of value expresses a relation of social production, it expresses the connection that necessarily exists between a certain article and the portion of the total labour-time of society required to produce it. As soon as magnitude of value is converted into price, the above necessary relation takes the shape of a more or less accidental exchange-ratio between a single commodity and another, the money-commodity. But this exchange-ratio may express either the real magnitude of that commodity's value, or the quantity of gold deviating from that value, for which, according to circumstances, it may be parted with. The possibility, therefore, of quantitative incongruity between price and magnitude of value, or the deviation of the former from the latter, is inherent in the price-form itself. This is no defect, but, on the contrary, admirably adapts the price-form to a mode of production whose inherent laws impose themselves only as the mean of apparently lawless irregularities that compensate one another.

The price-form, however, is not only compatible with the possibility of a quantitative incongruity between magnitude of value and price, i.e. between the former and its expression in money, but it may also conceal a qualitative inconsistency, so much so, that, although money is nothing but the value-form of commodities, price ceases altogether to express value. Objects that in themselves are no commodities, such as conscience, honour, etc., are capable of being offered

for sale by their holders, and of thus acquiring, through their price, the form of commodities. Hence an object may have a price without having value. The price in that case is imaginary, like certain quantities in mathematics. On the other hand, the imaginary price-form may sometimes conceal either a direct or indirect real value-relation; for instance, the price of uncultivated land, which is without value, because no human labour has been incorporated in it.

Price, like relative value in general, expresses the value of a commodity (e.g., a ton of iron), by stating that a given quantity of the equivalent (e.g., an ounce of gold), is directly exchangeable for iron. But it by no means states the converse, that iron is directly exchangeable for gold. In order, therefore, that a commodity may in practice act effectively as exchange value, it must quit its bodily shape, must transform itself from mere imaginary into real gold, although to the commodity such transubstantiation may be more difficult than to the Hegelian "concept," the transition from "necessity" to "freedom," or to a lobster the casting of his shell, or to Saint Jerome the putting off of the old Adam. Though a commodity may, side by side with its actual form (iron, for instance), take in our imagination the form of gold, yet it cannot at one and the same time actually be both iron and gold. To fix its price, it suffices to equate it to gold in imagination. But to enable it to render to its owner the service of a universal equivalent, it must be actually replaced by gold. If the owner of the iron were to go to the owner of some other commodity offered for exchange, and were to refer him to the price of the iron as proof that it was already money, he would get the same answer as St. Peter gave in heaven to Dante, when the latter recited the creed—

*Assai bene è trascorsa  
D'esta moneta già la lega e'l peso,  
Ma dimmi se tu l'hai nella tua borsa.*



A price therefore implies both that a commodity is exchangeable for money, and also that it must be so exchanged. On the other hand, gold serves as an ideal measure of value, only because it has already, in the process of exchange, established itself as the money-commodity. Under the ideal measure of values there lurks the hard cash. . . .

#### THE GENERAL FORMULA FOR CAPITAL

(Vol. I, Ch. IV)

The circulation of commodities is the starting point of capital. The production of commodities, their circulation, and that more developed form of their circulation called commerce, these form the historical ground-work from which it rises. The modern history of capital dates from the creation in the sixteenth century of a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market.

If we abstract from the material substance of the circulation of commodities, that is, from the exchange of the various use-values, and consider only the economic forms produced by this process of circulation, we find its final result to be money : this final product of the circulation of commodities is the first form in which capital appears.

As a matter of history, capital, as opposed to landed property, invariably takes the form at first of money ; it appears as moneyed wealth, as the capital of the merchant and of the usurer. But we have no need to refer to the origin of capital in order to discover that the first form of appearance of capital is money. We can see it daily under our very eyes. All new capital, to commence with, comes on the stage, that is, on the market, whether of commodities, labour, or money, even in our days, in the shape of money that by a definite process has to be transformed into capital.

The first distinction we notice between money that is money only, and money that is capital, is nothing more than a difference in their form of circulation.

The simplest form of the circulation of commodities is  $C-M-C$ , the transformation of commodities into money, and the change of the money back again into commodities ; or selling in order to buy. But alongside of this form we find another specifically different form :  $M-C-M$ , the transformation of money into commodities, and the change of commodities back again into money ; or buying in order to sell. Money that circulates in the latter manner is thereby transformed into, becomes capital, and is already potentially capital.

Now let us examine the circuit  $M-C-M$  a little closer. It consists, like the other, of two antithetical phases. In the first phase,  $M-C$ , or the purchase, the money is changed into a commodity. In the second phase,  $C-M$ , or the sale, the commodity is changed back again into money. The combination of these two phases constitutes the single movement whereby money is exchanged for a commodity and the same commodity is again exchanged for money ; whereby a commodity is bought in order to be sold, or, neglecting the distinction in form between buying and selling, whereby a commodity is bought with money, and then money is bought with a commodity. The result, in which the phases of the process vanish, is the exchange of money for money,  $M-M$ . If I purchase 2,000 lbs. of cotton for £100, and resell the 2,000 lbs. of cotton for £110, I have, in fact, exchanged £100 for £110, money for money.

Now it is evident that the circuit  $M-C-M$  would be absurd and without meaning if the intention were to exchange by this means two equal sums of money, £100 for £100. The miser's plan would be far simpler and surer ; he sticks to his £100 instead of exposing it to the dangers of circulation. And yet, whether the merchant who has paid £100 for his cotton sells it for £110, or lets it go for £100, or even £50, his money has, at all events, gone through a characteristic and original movement, quite different in kind from that which it goes through in the hands of the peasant who sells corn, and with the money thus set free

buys clothes. We have therefore to examine first the distinguishing characteristics of the forms of the circuits  $M-C-M$  and  $C-M-C$ , and in doing this the real difference that underlies the mere difference of form will reveal itself.

Let us see, in the first place, what the two forms have in common.

Both circuits are resolvable into the same two antithetical phases,  $C-M$ , a sale, and  $M-C$ , a purchase. In each of these phases the same material elements—a commodity, and money, and the same economical dramatis personæ, a buyer and a seller—confront one another. Each circuit is the unity of the same two antithetical phases, and in each case this unity is brought about by the intervention of three contracting parties, of whom one only sells, another only buys, while the third both buys and sells.

What, however, first and foremost distinguishes the circuit  $C-M-C$  from the circuit  $M-C-M$ , is the inverted order of succession of the two phases. The simple circulation of commodities begins with a sale and ends with a purchase, while the circulation of money as capital begins with a purchase and ends with a sale. In the one case both the starting-point and the goal are commodities, in the other they are money. In the first form the movement is brought about by the intervention of money, in the second by that of a commodity.

In the circulation  $C-M-C$ , the money is in the end converted into a commodity, that serves as a use-value ; it is spent once for all. In the inverted form,  $M-C-M$ , on the contrary, the buyer lays out money in order that, as a seller, he may recover money. By the purchase of his commodity he throws money into circulation, in order to withdraw it again by the sale of the same commodity. He lets the money go, but only with the sly intention of getting it back again. The money, therefore, is not spent, it is merely advanced.

In the circuit  $C-M-C$ , the same piece of money changes its place twice. The seller gets it from the buyer and pays it

away to another seller. The complete circulation, which begins with the receipt, concludes with the payment, of money for commodities. It is the very contrary in the circuit M—C—M. Here it is not the piece of money that changes its place twice, but the commodity. The buyer takes it from the hands of the seller and passes it into the hands of another buyer. Just as in the simple circulation of commodities the double change of place of the same piece of money effects its passage from one hand into another, so here the double change of place of the same commodity brings about the reflux of the money to its point of departure.

Such reflux is not dependent on the commodity being sold for more than was paid for it. This circumstance influences only the amount of the money that comes back. The reflux itself takes place, so soon as the purchased commodity is resold, in other words, so soon as the circuit M—C—M is completed. We have here, therefore, a palpable difference between the circulation of money as capital, and its circulation as mere money.

The circuit C—M—C comes completely to an end, so soon as the money brought in by the sale of one commodity is abstracted again by the purchase of another.

If, nevertheless, there follows a reflux of money to its starting point, this can only happen through a renewal or repetition of the operation. If I sell a quarter of corn for £3, and with this £3 buy clothes, the money, so far as I am concerned, is spent and done with. It belongs to the clothes merchant. If I now sell a second quarter of corn, money indeed flows back to me, not however as a sequel to the first transaction, but in consequence of its repetition. The money again leaves me, so soon as I complete this second transaction by a fresh purchase. Therefore, in the circuit C—M—C, the expenditure of money has nothing to do with its reflux. On the other hand, in M—C—M, the reflux of the money is conditioned by the very mode of its expenditure. Without this reflux, the operation fails, or the process is interrupted and incomplete, owing to the

absence of its complementary and final phase, the sale.

The circuit  $C-M-C$  starts with one commodity, and finishes with another, which falls out of circulation and into consumption. Consumption, the satisfaction of wants, in one word, use-value, is its end and aim. The circuit  $M-C-M$ , on the contrary, commences with money and ends with money. Its leading motive, and the goal that attracts it, is therefore mere exchange value.

In the simple circulation of commodities, the two extremes of the circuit have the same economic form. They are both commodities, and commodities of equal value. But they are also use-values differing in their qualities, as, for example, corn and clothes. The exchange of products, of the different materials in which the labour of society is embodied, forms here the basis of the movement. It is otherwise in the circulation  $M-C-M$ , which at first sight appears purposeless, because tautological. Both extremes have the same economic form. They are both money, and therefore are not qualitatively different use-values; for money is but the converted form of commodities, in which their particular use-values vanish. To exchange £100 for cotton, and then this same cotton again for £100, is merely a round-about way of exchanging money for money, the same for the same, and appears to be an operation just as purposeless as it is absurd. One sum of money is distinguishable from another only by its amount. The character and tendency of the process  $M-C-M$ , is therefore not due to any qualitative difference between its extremes, both being money, but solely to their quantitative difference. More money is withdrawn from circulation at the finish than was thrown into it at the start. The cotton that was bought for £100 is perhaps resold for £100 + £10 or £110. The exact form of this process is therefore  $M-C-M'$ , where  $M' = M + \Delta M$  = the original sum advanced, plus an increment. This increment or excess over the original value I call "surplus-value." The value originally advanced, therefore, not only remains intact while in circulation, but adds

to itself a surplus-value or expands itself. It is this movement that converts it into capital.

Of course it is also possible, that in  $C-M-C$ , the two extremes  $C-C$ , say corn and clothes, may represent different quantities of value. The farmer may sell his corn above its value, or may buy the clothes at less than their value. He may, on the other hand, "be done" by the clothes merchant. Yet, in the form of circulation now under consideration, such differences in value are purely accidental. The fact that the corn and the clothes are equivalents, does not deprive the process of all meaning, as it does in  $M-C-M$ . The equivalence of their values is rather a necessary condition to its normal course.

The repetition or renewal of the act of selling in order to buy, is kept within bounds by the very object it aims at, namely, consumption or the satisfaction of definite wants, an aim that lies altogether outside the sphere of circulation. But when we buy in order to sell, we, on the contrary, begin and end with the same thing, money, exchange-value; and thereby the movement becomes interminable. No doubt,  $M$  becomes  $M + \Delta M$ , £100 become £110. But when viewed in their qualitative aspect alone, £110 are the same as £100, namely money; and considered quantitatively, £110 is, like £100, a sum of definite and limited value. If now, the £110 be spent as money, they cease to play their part. They are no longer capital. Withdrawn from circulation, they become petrified into a hoard, and though they remained in that state till doomsday, not a single farthing would accrue to them. If, then, the expansion of value is once aimed at, there is just the same inducement to augment the value of the £110 as that of the £100; for both are but limited expressions for exchange-value, and therefore both have the same vocation to approach, by quantitative increase, as near as possible to absolute wealth. Momentarily, indeed, the value originally advanced, the £100 is distinguishable from the surplus value of £10 that is annexed to it during circulation; but the distinction vanishes immediately.

At the end of the process we do not receive with one hand the original £100, and with the other, the surplus value of £10. We simply get a value of £110, which is in exactly the same condition and fitness for commencing the expanding process, as the original £100 was. Money ends the movement only to begin it again. Therefore, the final result of every separate circuit, in which a purchase and consequent sale are completed, forms of itself the starting-point of a new circuit. The simple circulation of commodities—selling in order to buy—is a means of carrying out a purpose unconnected with circulation, namely, the appropriation of use-values, the satisfaction of wants. The circulation of money as capital is, on the contrary, an end in itself, for the expansion of value takes place only within this constantly renewed movement. The circulation of capital has therefore no limits. Thus the conscious representative of this movement, the possessor of money becomes a capitalist. His person, or rather his pocket, is the point from which the money starts and to which it returns. The expansion of value, which is the objective basis or main-spring of the circulation  $M-C-M$ , becomes his subjective aim, and it is only in so far as the appropriation of ever more and more wealth is the abstract becomes the sole motive of his operations, that he functions as a capitalist, that is, as capital personified and endowed with consciousness and a will. Use-values must therefore never be looked upon as the real aim of the capitalist ; neither must the profit on any single transaction. The restless never-ending process of profit-making alone is what he aims at. This boundless greed after riches, this passionate chase after exchange value, is common to the capitalist and the miser ; but while the miser is merely a capitalist gone mad, the capitalist is a rational miser. The never-ending augmentation of exchange value, which the miser strives after, by seeking to save his money from circulation, is attained by the more acute capitalist, by constantly throwing it afresh into circulation.

The independent form, i.e., the money-form, which the

value of commodities assumes in the case of simple circulation, serves only one purpose, namely, their exchange, and vanishes in the final result of the movement. On the other hand, in the circulation  $M-C-M$ , both the money and the commodity represent only different modes of existence of value itself, the money its general mode, and the commodity its particular, or, so to say, disguised mode. It is constantly changing from one form to the other without thereby becoming lost, and thus assumes an automatically active character. If now we take in turn each of the two different forms which self-expanding value successively assumes in the course of its life, we then arrive at these two propositions: Capital is money: Capital is commodities. In truth, however, value is here the active factor in a process, in which, while constantly assuming the form in turn of money and commodities, it at the same time changes in magnitude, differentiates itself by throwing off surplus value from itself; the original value, in other words, expands spontaneously. For the movement, in the course of which it adds surplus value, is its own movement, its expansion, therefore, is automatic expansion. Because it is value, it has acquired the occult quality of being able to add value to itself. It brings forth living offspring, or at the least, lays golden eggs.

Value, therefore, being the active factor in such a process, and assuming at one time the form of money, at another that of commodities, but through all these changes preserving itself and expanding, it requires some independent form, by means of which its identity may at any time be established. And this form it possesses only in the shape of money. It is under the form of money that value begins and ends, and begins again, every act of its own spontaneous generation. It began by being £100, it is now £110, and so on. But the money itself is only one of the two forms of value. Unless it takes the form of some commodity, it does not become capital. There is here no antagonism, as in the case of hoarding, between the money and commodities.



The capitalist knows that all commodities, however scurvy they may look, or however badly they may smell, are in faith and in truth money, inwardly circumcised Jews, and what is more, a wonderful means whereby out of money to make more money.

In simple circulation,  $C-M-C$ , the value of commodities attained at the most a form independent of their use-values, i.e., the form of money ; but that same value now in the circulation  $M-C-M$ , or the circulation of capital, suddenly presents itself as an independent substance, endowed with a motion of its own, passing through a life-process of its own, in which money and commodities are mere forms which it assumes and casts off in turn. Nay, more : instead of simply representing the relations of commodities, it enters now, so to say, into private relations with itself. It differentiates itself as original value from itself as surplus-value ; as the father differentiates himself from himself *quâ* the son, yet both are one and of one age : for only by the surplus value of £10 does the £100 originally advanced become capital, and so soon as this takes place, so soon as the son, and by the son, the father, is begotten, so soon does their difference vanish, and they again become one, £110.

Value therefore now becomes value in process, money in process, and, as such, capital. It comes out of circulation, enters into it again, preserves and multiplies itself within its circuit, comes back out of it with expanded bulk, and begins the same round ever afresh.  $M-M'$ , money which begets money, such is the description of Capital from the mouths of its first interpreters, the Mercantilists.

Buying in order to sell, or, more accurately, buying in order to sell dearer,  $M-C-M'$  appears certainly to be a form peculiar to one kind of capital alone, namely, merchants' capital. But industrial capital too is money, that is changed into commodities, and by the sale of these commodities, is reconverted into more money. The events that take place outside the sphere of circulation, in the interval

between the buying and selling, do not affect the form of this movement. Lastly, in the case of interest-bearing capital, the circulation  $M-C-M'$  appears abridged. We have its result without the intermediate stage, in the form  $M-M'$ , *en style lapidaire* so to say, money that is worth more money, value that is greater than itself.

$M-C-M'$  is therefore in reality the general formula of capital as it appears *prima facie* within the sphere of circulation. . . .

#### CONTRADICTIONS IN THE GENERAL FORMULA OF CAPITAL

(Vol. I, Ch. V)

The form which circulation takes when money becomes capital, is opposed to all the laws we have hitherto investigated bearing on the nature of commodities, value and money, and even of circulation itself. What distinguishes this form from that of the simple circulation of commodities is the inverted order of succession of the two antithetical processes, sale and purchase. How can this purely formal distinction between these processes change their character as it were by magic?

But that is not all. This inversion has no existence for two out of the three persons who transact business together. As capitalist, I buy commodities from A and sell them again to B, but as a simple owner of commodities, I sell them to B and then purchase fresh ones from A. A and B see no difference between the two sets of transactions. They are merely buyers or sellers. And I on each occasion meet them as a mere owner of either money or commodities, as a buyer or a seller, and, what is more, in both sets of transactions, I am opposed to A only as a buyer and to B only as a seller, to the one only as money, to the other only as commodities, and to either of them as capital or a capitalist, or as representative of anything that is more than money or commodities, or that can produce any effect beyond what money and commodities can. For me the purchase from A and the

sale to B are part of a series. But the connection between the two acts exists for me alone. A does not trouble himself about my transaction with B, nor does B about my business with A. And if I offered to explain to them the meritorious nature of my action in inverting the order of succession, they would probably point out to me that I was mistaken as to that order of succession, and that the whole transaction, instead of beginning with a purchase and ending with a sale, began, on the contrary, with a sale and was concluded with a purchase. In truth, my first act, the purchase, was from the standpoint of A, a sale, and my second act, the sale, was from the standpoint of B, a purchase. Not content with that, A and B would declare that the whole series was superfluous and nothing but hokus pokus ; that for the future A would buy direct from B, and B sell direct to A. Thus the whole transaction would be reduced to a single act forming an isolated, non-complemented phase in the ordinary circulation of commodities, a mere sale from A's point of view, and from B's, a mere purchase. The inversion, therefore, of the order of succession, does not take us outside the sphere of the simple circulation of commodities, and we must rather look, whether there is in this simple circulation anything permitting an expansion of the value that enters into circulation, and, consequently, a creation of surplus value.

Let us take the process of circulation in a form under which it presents itself as a simple and direct exchange of commodities. This is always the case when two owners of commodities buy from each other, and on the settling day the amounts mutually owing are equal and cancel each other. The money in this case is money of account and serves to express the value of the commodities by their prices, but is not, itself, in the shape of hard cash, confronted with them. So far as regards use-values, it is clear that both parties may gain some advantage. Both part with goods that, as use-values, are of no service to them, and receive others that they can make use of. And there may

also be a further gain. A, who sells wine and buys corn, possibly produces more wine, with given labour-time, than farmer B could, and B, on the other hand, more corn than wine-grower A could. A, therefore, may get, for the same exchange value, more corn, and B more wine, than each would respectively get without any exchange by producing his own corn and wine. With reference, therefore, to use-value, there is good ground for saying that "exchange is a transaction by which both sides gain." It is otherwise with exchange value. "A man who has plenty of wine and no corn treats with a man who has plenty of corn and no wine; an exchange takes place between them of corn to the value of 50, for wine of the same value. This act produces no increase of exchange value either for the one or the other; for each of them already possessed, before the exchange, a value equal to that which he acquired by means of that operation." The result is not altered by introducing money, as a medium of circulation, between the commodities, and making the sale and the purchase two distinct acts. The value of a commodity is expressed in its price before it goes into circulation, and is therefore a precedent condition of circulation, not its result.

Abstractedly considered, that is, apart from circumstances not immediately flowing from the laws of the simple circulation of commodities, there is in an exchange nothing (if we except the replacing of one use-value by another) but a metamorphosis, a mere change in the form of the commodity. The same exchange value, i.e., the same quantity of incorporated social labour, remains throughout in the hands of the owner of the commodity first in the shape of his own commodity, then in the form of the money for which he exchanged it, and lastly, in the shape of the commodity he buys with that money. This change of form does not imply a change in the magnitude of the value. But the change, which the value of the commodity undergoes in this process, is limited to a change in its money form. This form exists first as the price of the commodity offered for sale, then as

an actual sum of money, which, however, was already expressed in the price, and lastly, as the price of an equivalent commodity. This change of form no more implies, taken alone, a change in the quantity of value, than does the change of a £5 note into sovereigns, half sovereigns and shillings. So far therefore as the circulation of commodities effects a change in the form alone of their values, and is free from disturbing influences, it must be the exchange of equivalents. Little as Vulgar-Economy knows about the nature of value, yet whenever it wishes to consider the phenomena of circulation in their purity, it assumes that supply and demand are equal, which amounts to this, that their effect is nil. If therefore, as regards the use-values exchanged, both buyer and seller may possibly gain something, this is not the case as regards the exchange values. Here we must rather say, "Where equality exists there can be no gain." It is true, commodities may be sold at prices deviating from their values, but these deviations are to be considered as infractions of the laws of the exchange of commodities, which in its normal state is an exchange of equivalents, consequently, no method for increasing value.

Hence, we see that behind all attempts to represent the circulation of commodities as a source of surplus value, there lurks a *quid pro quo*, a mixing up of use-value and exchange value. For instance, Condillac says : "It is not true that on an exchange of commodities we give value for value. On the contrary, each of the two contracting parties in every case, gives a less for a greater value. . . . If we really exchanged equal values, neither party could make a profit. And yet, they both gain, or ought to gain. Why? The value of a thing consists solely in its relation to our wants. What is more to the one is less to the other, and vice versa. . . . It is not to be assumed that we offer for sale articles required for our own consumption. . . . We wish to part with a useless thing, in order to get one that we need ; we want to give less for more. . . . It was natural to think that, in an

exchange, value was given for value, whenever each of the articles exchanged was of equal value with the same quantity of gold. . . . But there is another point to be considered in our calculation. The question is, whether we both exchange something superfluous for something necessary." We see in this passage, how Condillac not only confuses use-value with exchange value, but in a really childish manner assumes, that in a society, in which the production of commodities is well developed, each producer produces his own means of subsistence, and throws into circulation only the excess over his own requirements. Still, Condillac's argument is frequently used by modern economists, more especially when the point is to show that the exchange of commodities in its developed form, commerce, is productive of surplus value. For instance, "Commerce . . . adds value to products, for the same products in the hands of consumers, are worth more than in the hands of producers, and it may strictly be considered an act of production." But commodities are not paid for twice over, once on account of their use-value, and again on account of their value. And though the use-value of a commodity is more serviceable to the buyer than to the seller, its money form is more serviceable to the seller. Would he otherwise sell it? We might therefore just as well say that the buyer performs "strictly an act of production," by converting stockings, for example, into money.

If commodities, or commodities and money, of equal exchange value, and consequently equivalents, are exchanged, it is plain that no one abstracts more value from, than he throws into, circulation. There is no creation of surplus value. And, in its normal form, the circulation of commodities demands the exchange of equivalents. But in actual practice, the process does not retain its normal form. Let us, therefore, assume an exchange of non-equivalents.

In any case the market for commodities is only frequented by owners of commodities, and the power which these persons exercise over each other, is no other than the power of

their commodities. The material variety of these commodities is the material incentive to the act of exchange, and makes buyers and sellers mutually dependent, because none of them possesses the object of his own wants, and each holds in his hand the object of another's wants. Besides these material differences of their use-values, there is only one other difference between commodities, namely, that between their bodily form and the form into which they are converted by sale, the difference between commodities and money. And consequently the owners of commodities are distinguishable only as sellers, those who own commodities, and buyers, those who own money.

Suppose then, that by some inexplicable privilege, the seller is enabled to sell his commodities above their value, what is worth 100 for 110, in which case the price is nominally raised 10 per cent. The seller therefore pockets a surplus value of 10. But after he has sold he becomes a buyer. A third owner of commodities comes to him now as seller, who in this capacity also enjoys the privilege of selling his commodities 10 per cent too dear. Our friend gained 10 as a seller only to lose it again as a buyer. The nett result is, that all owners of commodities sell their goods to one another at 10 per cent above their value, which comes precisely to the same as if they sold them at their true value. Such a general and nominal rise of prices has the same effect as if the values had been expressed in weight of silver instead of in weight of gold. The nominal prices of commodities would rise, but the real relation between their values would remain unchanged.

Let us make the opposite assumption, that the buyer has the privilege of purchasing commodities under their value. In this case it is no longer necessary to bear in mind that he in his turn will become a seller. He was so before he became buyer; he had already lost 10 per cent in selling before he gained 10 per cent as buyer. Everything is just as it was.

The creation of surplus value, and therefore the conversion of money into capital, can consequently be explained

neither on the assumption that commodities are sold above their value, nor that they are bought below their value.

The problem is in no way simplified by introducing irrelevant matters after the manner of Col. Torrens : " Effectual demand consists in the power and inclination (!), on the part of consumers, to give for commodities, either by immediate or circuitous barter, some greater portion of . . . capital than their production costs." In relation to circulation, producers and consumers meet only as buyers and sellers. To assert that the surplus value acquired by the producer has its origin in the fact that consumers pay for commodities more than their value, is only to say in other words : The owner of commodities possesses, as a seller, the privilege of selling too dear. The seller has himself produced the commodities or represents their producer, but the buyer has to no less extent produced the commodities represented by his money, or represents their producer. The distinction between them is, that one buys and the other sells. The fact that the owner of the commodities, under the designation of producer, sells them over their value, and under the designation of consumer, pays too much for them, does not carry us a single step further.

To be consistent therefore, the upholders of the delusion that surplus value has its origin in a nominal rise of prices or in the privilege which the seller has of selling too dear, must assume the existence of a class that only buys and does not sell, i.e., only consumes and does not produce. The existence of such a class is inexplicable from the standpoint we have so far reached, viz., that of simple circulation. But let us anticipate. The money with which such a class is constantly making purchases, must constantly flow into their pockets, without any exchange, gratis, by might or right, from the pockets of the commodity-owners themselves. To sell commodities above their value to such a class, is only to crib back again a part of the money previously given to it. The towns of Asia Minor thus paid a yearly money tribute to ancient Rome. With this money Rome



purchased from them commodities, and purchased them too dear. The provincials cheated the Romans, and thus got back from their conquerors, in the course of trade, a portion of the tribute. Yet, for all that, the conquered were the really cheated. Their goods were still paid for with their own money. That is not the way to get rich or to create surplus value.

Let us therefore keep within the bounds of exchange where sellers are also buyers, and buyers, sellers. Our difficulty may perhaps have arisen from treating the actors as personifications instead of as individuals.

A may be clever enough to get the advantage of B or C without their being able to retaliate. A sells wine worth £40 to B, and obtains from him in exchange corn to the value of £50. A has converted his £40 into £50, has made more money out of less, and has converted his commodities into capital. Let us examine this a little more closely. Before the exchange we had £40 worth of wine in the hands of A, and £50 worth of corn in those of B, a total value of £90. After the exchange we have still the same total value of £90. The value in circulation has not increased by one iota, it is only distributed differently between A and B. What is a loss of value to B is surplus value to A ; what is " minus " to one is " plus " to the other. The same change would have taken place if A, without the formality of an exchange, had directly stolen the £10 from B. The sum of the values in circulation can clearly not be augmented by any change in their distribution, any more than the quantity of the precious metals in a country by a Jew selling a Queen Ann's farthing for a guinea. The capitalist class, as a whole, in any country, cannot overreach themselves.

Turn and twist then as we may, the fact remains unaltered. If equivalents are exchanged, no surplus value results, and if non-equivalents are exchanged, still no surplus value. Circulation, or the exchange of commodities, begets no value.

The reason is now therefore plain why, in analysing the

standard form of capital, the form under which it determines the economical organisation of modern society, we entirely left out of consideration its most popular, and, so to say, antediluvian forms, merchants' capital and moneylenders' capital.

The circuit  $M-C-M'$ , buying in order to sell dearer, is seen most clearly in genuine merchants' capital. But the movement takes place entirely within the sphere of circulation. Since, however, it is impossible, by circulation alone, to account for the conversion of money into capital, for the formation of surplus value, it would appear, that merchants' capital is an impossibility, so long as equivalents are exchanged; that, therefore, it can only have its origin in the twofold advantage gained, over both the selling and the buying producers, by the merchant who parasitically shoves himself in between them. It is in this sense that Franklin says, "war is robbery, commerce is generally cheating." If the transformation of merchants' money into capital is to be explained otherwise than by the producers being simply cheated, a long series of intermediate steps would be necessary, which, at present, when the simple circulation of commodities forms our only assumption, are entirely wanting.

What we have said with reference to merchants' capital, applies still more to moneylenders' capital. In merchants' capital, the two extremes, the money that is thrown upon the market, and the augmented money that is withdrawn from the market, are at least connected by a purchase and a sale, in other words by the movement of the circulation. In moneylenders' capital the form  $M-C-M'$  is reduced to the two extremes without a mean,  $M-M'$ , money exchanged for more money, a form that is incompatible with the nature of money, and therefore remains inexplicable from the standpoint of the circulation of commodities. Hence Aristotle: "since chrematistic is a double science, one part belonging to commerce, the other to economic, the latter being necessary and praiseworthy, the former based on circulation and with justice disapproved (for it is

not based on Nature, but on mutual cheating), therefore the usurer is most rightly hated, because money itself is the source of his gain, and is not used for the purposes for which it was invented. For it originated for the exchange of commodities, but interest makes out of money, more money. Hence its name (τόκος interest and offspring). For the begotten are like those who beget them. But interest is money of money, so that of all modes of making a living, this is the most contrary to nature."

In the course of our investigation, we shall find that both merchants' capital and interest-bearing capital are derivative forms, and at the same time it will become clear, why these two forms appear in the course of history before the modern standard form of capital.

We have shown that surplus value cannot be created by circulation, and, therefore, that in its formation, something must take place in the background, which is not apparent in the circulation itself. But can surplus value possibly originate anywhere else than in circulation, which is the sum total of all the mutual relations of commodity-owners, as far as they are determined by their commodities? Apart from circulation, the commodity-owner is in relation only with his own commodity. So far as regards value, that relation is limited to this, that the commodity contains a quantity of his labour, that quantity being measured by a definite social standard. This quantity is expressed by the value of the commodity, and since the value is reckoned in money of account, this quantity is also expressed by the price, which we will suppose to be £10. But his labour is not represented both by the value of the commodity, and by a surplus over that value, not by a price of 10 that is also a price of 11, not by a value that is greater than itself. The commodity-owner can, by his labour, create value, but not self-expanding value. He can increase the value of his commodity, by adding fresh labour, and therefore more value to the value in hand, by making, for instance, leather into boots. The same material has now more value, because it contains a greater

quantity of labour. The boots have therefore more value than the leather, but the value of the leather remains what it was ; it has not expanded itself, has not, during the making of the boots, annexed surplus value. It is therefore impossible that outside the sphere of circulation, a producer of commodities can, without coming into contact with other commodity-owners, expand value, and consequently convert money or commodities into capital.

It is therefore impossible for capital to be produced by circulation, and it is equally impossible for it to originate apart from circulation. It must have its origin both in circulation and yet not in circulation.

We have, therefore, got a double result.

The conversion of money into capital has to be explained on the basis of the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities, in such a way that the starting-point is the exchange of equivalents. Our friend, Montybags, who as yet is only an embryo capitalist, must buy his commodities at their value, must sell them at their value, and yet at the end of the process must withdraw more value from circulation than he threw into it at starting. His development into a full-grown capitalist must take place, both within the sphere of circulation and without it. These are the conditions of the problem. *Hic Rhodus, hic salta !*

#### THE BUYING AND SELLING OF LABOUR-POWER

(Vol. I, Ch. VI)

The change of value that occurs in the case of money intended to be converted into capital, cannot take place in the money itself, since in its function of means of purchase and of payment, it does no more than realise the price of the commodity it buys or pays for ; and, as hard cash, it is value petrified, never varying. Just as little can it originate in the second act of circulation, the re-sale of the commodity, which does no more than transform the article from its bodily form back again into its money form. The

change must, therefore, take place in the commodity bought by the first act,  $M-C$ , but not in its value, for equivalents are exchanged, and the commodity is paid for at its full value. We are, therefore, forced to the conclusion that the change originates in the use-value, as such, of the commodity, i.e., in its consumption. In order to be able to extract value from the consumption of a commodity, our friend, Moneybags, must be so lucky as to find, within the sphere of circulation, in the market, a commodity, whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value, whose actual consumption, therefore, is itself an embodiment of labour, and, consequently, a creation of value. The possessor of money does find on the market such a special commodity in capacity for labour or labour-power.

By labour-power or capacity for labour is to be understood the aggregate of these mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use-value of any description.

But in order that our owner of money may be able to find labour-power offered for sale as a commodity, various conditions must first be fulfilled. The exchange of commodities of itself implies no other relations of dependence than those which result from its own nature. On this assumption, labour-power can appear upon the market as a commodity only if, and so far as, its possessor, the individual whose labour-power it is, offers it for sale, or sells it, as a commodity. In order that he may be able to do this, he must have it at his disposal, must be the untrammelled owner of his capacity for labour, i.e., of his person. He and the owner of money meet in the market, and deal with each other as on the basis of equal rights, with this difference alone, that one is buyer, the other seller ; both, therefore, equal in the eyes of the law. The continuance of this relation demands that the owner of the labour-power should sell it only for a definite period, for if he were to sell it rump and stump, once for all, he would be selling himself, converting himself from a free man into a slave, from an owner

of a commodity into a commodity. He must constantly look upon his labour-power as his own property, his own commodity, and this he can only do by placing it at the disposal of the buyer temporarily, for a definite period of time. By this means alone can he avoid renouncing his rights of ownership over it.

The second essential condition to the owner of money finding labour-power in the market as a commodity in this—that the labourer instead of being in the position to sell commodities in which his labour is incorporated, must be obliged to offer for sale as a commodity that very labour-power, which exists only in his living self.

In order that a man may be able to sell commodities other than labour-power, he must of course have the means of production, as raw material, implements, etc. No boots can be made without leather. He requires also the means of subsistence. Nobody—not even “a musician of the future” can live upon future products, or upon use-values in an unfinished state ; and ever since the first moment of his appearance on the world’s stage, man always has been, and must still be a consumer, both before and while he is producing. In a society where all products assume the form of commodities, these commodities must be sold after they have been produced ; it is only after their sale that they can serve in satisfying the requirements of their producer. The time necessary for their sale is superadded to that necessary for their production.

For the conversion of his money into capital, therefore, the owner of money must meet in the market with the free labourer, free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realisation of his labour-power.

The question why this free labourer confronts him in the market has no interest for the owner of money, who regards the labour market as a branch of the general market for

commodities. And for the present it interests us just as little. We cling to the fact theoretically, as he does practically. One thing, however, is clear—nature does not produce on the one side owners of money or commodities, and on the other men possessing nothing but their own labour-power. This relation has no natural basis, neither is its social basis one that is common to all historical periods. It is clearly the result of a past historical development, the product of many economical revolutions, of the extinction of a whole series or older forms of social production.

So, too, the economical categories, already discussed by us, bear the stamp of history. Definite historical conditions are necessary that a product may become a commodity. It must not be produced as the immediate means of subsistence of the producer himself. Had we gone further, and inquired under what circumstances all, or even the majority of products take the form of commodities, we should have found that this can only happen with production of a very specific kind, capitalist production. Such an inquiry, however, would have been foreign to the analysis of commodities. Production and circulation of commodities can take place, although the great mass of the objects produced are intended for the immediate requirements of their producers, are not turned into commodities, and consequently social production is not yet by a long way dominated in its length and breadth by exchange value, the appearance of products as commodities presupposed such a development of the social division of labour, that the separation of use-value from exchange value, a separation which first begins with barter, must already have been completed. But such a degree of development is common to many forms of society, which in other respects present the most varying historical features. On the other hand, if we consider money, its existence implies a definite stage in the exchange of commodities. The particular functions of money which it performs, either as the mere equivalent of commodities, or as means of circulation, or means of payment, as hoard or as

universal money, point, according to the extent and relative preponderance of the one function or the other, to very different stages in the process of social production. Yet we know by experience that a circulation of commodities relatively primitive, suffices for the production of all these forms. Otherwise with capital. The historical conditions of its existence are by no means given with the mere circulation of money and commodities. It can spring into life, only when the owner of the means of production and subsistence meets in the market with the free labourer selling his labour-power. And this one historical condition comprises a world's history. Capital, therefore, announces from its first appearance a new epoch in the process of social production.

We must now examine more closely this peculiar commodity, labour-power. Like all others it has a value. How is that value determined?

The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this special article. So far as it has value, it represents no more than a definite quantity of the average labour of society incorporated in it. Labour-power exists only as a capacity, or power of the living individual. Its production consequently presupposes his existence. Given the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. For his maintenance he requires a given quantity of the means of subsistence. Therefore the labour-time requisite for the production of labour-power reduces itself to that necessary for the production of those means of subsistence; in other words, the value of labour-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of the labourer. Labour-power, however, becomes a reality only by its exercise; it sets itself in action only by working. But thereby a definite quantity of human muscle, nerve, brain, etc., is wasted, and these require to be restored. This increased expenditure demands a larger income. If the owner of labour-power works



to-day, to-morrow he must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions as regards health and strength. His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a labouring individual. His natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel, and housing, vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them, are themselves the product of historical development, and depend therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilisation of a country, more particularly on the conditions under which, and consequently on the habits and degree of comfort in which, the class of free labourers has been formed. In contradistinction therefore to the case of other commodities, there enters into the determination of the value of labour-power a historical and moral element. Nevertheless, in a given country, at a given period, the average quantity of the means of subsistence necessary for the labourer is practically known.

The owner of labour-power is mortal. If then his appearance in the market is to be continuous, and the continuous conversion of money into capital assumes this, the seller of labour-power must perpetuate himself, "in the way that every living individual perpetuates himself, by procreation." The labour-power withdrawn from the market by wear and tear and death, must be continually replaced by, at the very least, an equal amount of fresh labour-power. Hence the sum of the means of subsistence necessary for the production of labour-power must include the means necessary for the labourer's substitutes, i.e., his children, in order that this race of peculiar commodity-owners may perpetuate its appearance in the market.

In order to modify the human organism, so that it may acquire skill and handiness in a given branch of industry, and become labour-power of a special kind, a special education or training is requisite, and this, on its part, costs an equivalent in commodities of a greater or less amount. This

amount varies according to the more or less complicated character of the labour-power. The expenses of this education (excessively small in the case of ordinary labour-power), enter *pro tanto* into the total value spent in its production.

The value of labour-power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence. It therefore varies with the value of these means or with the quantity of labour requisite for their production.

Some of the means of subsistence, such as food and fuel, are consumed daily, and a fresh supply must be provided daily. Others such as clothes and furniture last for longer periods and require to be replaced only at longer intervals. One article must be bought or paid for daily, another weekly, another quarterly, and so on. But in whatever way the sum total of these outlays may be spread over the year, they must be covered by the average income, taking one day with another. If the total of the commodities required daily for the production of labour-power=A, and those required weekly=B, and those required quarterly=C, and so on, the daily average of these commodities= $\frac{365A + 52B + 4C + \text{etc.}}{365}$

Suppose that in this mass of commodities requisite for the average day there are embodied six hours of social labour, then there is incorporated daily in labour-power half a day's average social labour, in other words, half a day's labour is requisite for the daily production of labour-power. This quantity of labour forms the value of a day's labour-power or the value of the labour-power daily reproduced. If half a day's average social labour is incorporated in three shillings, then three shillings is the price corresponding to the value of a day's labour-power. If its owner therefore offers it for sale at three shillings a day, its selling price is equal to its value, and according to our supposition, our friend Moneybags, who is intent upon converting his three shillings into capital, pays this value.

The minimum limit of the value of labour-power is determined by the value of the commodities, without the daily

supply of which the labourer cannot renew his vital energy, consequently by the value of those means of subsistence that are physically indispensable. If the price of labour-power fall to this minimum, it falls below its value, since under such circumstances it can be maintained and developed only in a crippled state. But the value of every commodity is determined by the labour-time requisite to turn it out so as to be of normal quality. . . .

We now know how the value paid by the purchaser to the possessor of this peculiar commodity, labour-power, is determined. The use-value which the former gets in exchange, manifests itself only in the actual usufruct, in the consumption of the labour-power. The money owner buys everything necessary for this purpose, such as raw material, in the market, and pays for it at its full value. The consumption of labour-power is at one and the same time the production of commodities and of surplus value. The consumption of labour-power is completed, as in the case of every other commodity, outside the limits of the market or of the sphere of circulation. Accompanied by Mr. Moneybags and by the possessor of labour-power, we therefore take leave for a time of this noisy sphere, where everything takes place on the surface and in view of all men, and follow them both into the hidden abode of production, on whose threshold there stares us in the face "No admittance except on business." Here we shall see, not only how capital produces, but how capital is produced. We shall at last force the secret of profit making.

This sphere that we are deserting, within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour-power goes, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and

they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself. The only force that brings them together and puts them in relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interests of each. Each looks to himself only, and no one troubles himself about the rest, and just because they do so, do they all, in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an all-shrewd providence, work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal and in the interest of all.

On leaving this sphere of simple circulation or of exchange of commodities, which furnishes the "Free-trader Vulgaris" with his views and ideas, and with the standard by which he judges a society based on capital and wages, we think we can perceive a change in the physiognomy of our dramatis personæ. He who before was the money owner now strides in front as capitalist; the possessor of labour-power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but—a hiding.

#### THE LABOUR PROCESS AND THE PROCESS OF PRODUCING SURPLUS VALUE

(Vol. I, Ch. VII)

##### *The Labour Process or the Production of Use-Values*

... Let us now return to our would-be capitalist. We left him just after he had purchased, in the open market, all the necessary factors of the labour-process; its objective factors, the means of production, as well as its subjective factor, labour-power. With the keen eye of an expert, he had selected the means of production and the kind of labour-power best adapted to his particular trade, be it spinning, bootmaking, or any other kind. He then proceeds to

consume the commodity, the labour-power that he has just bought, by causing the labourer, the impersonation of that labour-power, to consume the means of production by his labour. The general character of the labour-process is evidently not changed by the fact that the labourer works for the capitalist instead of for himself ; moreover, the particular methods and operations employed in bootmaking or spinning are not immediately changed by the intervention of the capitalist. He must begin by taking the labour-power as he finds it in the market, and consequently be satisfied with labour of such a kind as would be found in the period immediately preceding the rise of the capitalists. Changes in the methods of production by the subordination of labour to capital, can take place only at a later period, and therefore will have to be treated of in a later chapter.

The labour-process, turned into the process by which the capitalist consumes labour-power, exhibits two characteristic phenomena. First, the labourer works under the control of the capitalist to whom his labour belongs ; the capitalist taking good care that the work is done in a proper manner, and that the means of production are used with intelligence, so that there is no unnecessary waste of raw material, and no wear and tear of the implements beyond what is necessarily caused by the work.

Secondly, the product is the property of the capitalist and not that of the labourer, its immediate producer. Suppose that a capitalist pays for a day's labour-power at its value ; then the right to use that power for a day belongs to him, just as much as the right to use any other commodity, such as a horse that he has hired for the day. To the purchaser of a commodity belongs its use, and the seller of labour-power, by giving his labour, does no more, in reality, than part with the use-value that he has sold. From the instant he steps into the workshop, the use-value of his labour-power, and therefore also its use, which is labour, belongs to the capitalist. By the purchase of labour-power, the capitalist incorporates labour, as a living ferment, with the lifeless

constituents of the product. From his point of view, the labour-process is nothing more than the consumption of the commodity purchased, i.e., of labour-power ; but this consumption cannot be effected except by supplying the labour-power with the means of production. The labour-process is a process between things that the capitalist has purchased, things that have become his property. The product of this process also belongs, therefore, to him, just as much as does the wine which is the product of a process of fermentation completed in his cellar.

### *The Production of Surplus Value*

The product appropriated by the capitalist is a use-value, as yarn, for example, or boots. But, although boots are, in one sense, the basis of all social progress, and our capitalist is a decided "progressist," yet he does not manufacture boots for their own sake. Use-value is, by no means, the thing "qu'on aime pour lui-même" in the production of commodities. Use-values are only produced by capitalists, because, and in so far as, they are the material substratum, the depositaries of exchange value. Our capitalist has two objects in view : in the first place, he wants to produce a use-value that has a value in exchange, that is to say, an article destined to be sold, a commodity ; and secondly, he desires to produce a commodity whose value shall be greater than the sum of the values of the commodities used in its production, that is, of the means of production and the labour-power, that he purchased with his good money in the open market. His aim is to produce not only a use-value, but a commodity also ; not only use-value, but value ; not only value, but at the same time surplus value.

It must be borne in mind, that we are now dealing with the production of commodities, and that, up to this point, we have only considered one aspect of the process. Just as commodities are, at the same time, use-values and values,

so the process of producing them must be a labour-process, and at the same time, a process of creating value.

Let us now examine production as a creation of value.

We know that the value of each commodity is determined by the quantity of labour expended on and materialised in it, by the working-time necessary, under given social conditions, for its production. This rule also holds good in the case of the product that accrued to our capitalist, as the result of the labour-process carried on for him. Assuming this product to be 10 lbs. of yarn, our first step is to calculate the quantity of labour realised in it.

For spinning the yarn, raw material is required ; suppose in this case 10 lbs. of cotton. We have no need at present to investigate the value of this cotton, for our capitalist has, we will assume, bought it at its full value, say of ten shillings. In this price the labour required for the production of the cotton is already expressed in terms of the average labour of society. We will further assume that the wear and tear of the spindle, which, for our present purpose, may represent all other instruments of labour employed, amounts to the value of two shillings. If, then, twenty-four hours' labour, or two working days, are required to produce the quantity of gold represented by twelve shillings, we have here, to begin with, two days' labour already incorporated in the yarn.

We must not let ourselves be misled by the circumstance that the cotton has taken a new shape while the substance of the spindle has to a certain extent been used up. By the general law of value, if the value of 40 lbs. of yarn = the value of 40 lbs. of cotton + the value of a whole spindle, i.e., if the same working time is required to produce the commodities on either side of this equation, then 10 lbs. of yarn are an equivalent for 10 lbs. of cotton, together with one-fourth of a spindle. In the case we are considering the same working time is materialised in the 10 lbs. of yarn on the one hand, and in the 10 lbs. of cotton and the fraction of a spindle on the other. Therefore, whether value appears in cotton, in a spindle, or in yarn, makes no difference in the

amount of that value. The spindle and cotton, instead of resting quietly side by side, join together in the process, their forms are altered, and they are turned into yarn ; but their value is no more affected by this fact than it would be if they had been simply exchanged for their equivalent in yarn.

The labour required for the production of the cotton, the raw material of the yarn, is part of the labour necessary to produce the yarn, and is therefore contained in the yarn. The same applies to the labour embodied in the spindle, without whose wear and tear the cotton could not be spun.

Hence, in determining the value of the yarn, or the labour-time required for its production, all the special processes carried on at various times and in different places, which were necessary, first to produce the cotton and the wasted portion of the spindle, and then with the cotton and spindle to spin the yarn, may together be looked on as different and successive phases of one and the same process. The whole of the labour in the yarn is past labour ; and it is a matter of no importance that the operations necessary for the production of its constituent elements were carried on at times which, referred to the present, are more remote than the final operation of spinning. If a definite quantity of labour, say thirty days, is requisite to build a house, the total amount of labour incorporated in it is not altered by the fact that the work of the last day is done twenty-nine days later than that of the first. Therefore the labour contained in the raw material and the instruments of labour can be treated just as if it were labour expended in an earlier stage of the spinning process, before the labour of actual spinning commenced.

The values of the means of production, i.e., the cotton and the spindle, which values are expressed in the price of twelve shillings, are therefore constituent parts of the value of the yarn, or, in other words, of the value of the product.

Two conditions must nevertheless be fulfilled. First, the cotton and spindle must concur in the production of a use-value ; they must in the present case become yarn. Value is



independent of the particular use-value by which it is borne, but it must be embodied in a use-value of some kind. Secondly, the time occupied in the labour of production must not exceed the time really necessary under the given social conditions of the case. Therefore, if no more than 1 lb. of cotton be requisite to spin 1 lb. of yarn, care must be taken that no more than this weight of cotton is consumed in the production of 1 lb. of yarn ; and similarly with regard to the spindle. Though the capitalists have a hobby, and use a gold instead of a steel spindle, yet the only labour that counts for anything in the value of the yarn is that which would be required to produce a steel spindle, because no more is necessary under the given social conditions.

We now know what portion of the value of the yarn is owing to the cotton and the spindle. It amounts to twelve shillings or the value of two days' work. The next point for our consideration is, what portion of the value of the yarn is added to the cotton by the labour of the spinner.

We have now to consider this labour under a very different aspect from that which it had during the labour-process ; there, we viewed it solely as that particular kind of human activity which changes cotton into yarn ; there, the more the labour was suited to the work, the better the yarn, other circumstances remaining the same. The labour of the spinner was then viewed as specifically different from other kinds of productive labour, different on the one hand in its special aim, viz., spinning, different, on the other hand, in the special character of its operations, in the special nature of its means of production and in the special use-value of its product. For the operation of spinning, cotton and spindles are a necessity, but for making rifled cannon they would be of no use whatever. Here, on the contrary, where we consider the labour of the spinner only so far as it is value-creating, i.e., a source of value, his labour differs in no respect from the labour of the man who bores cannon, or (what here more nearly concerns us), from the labour of the cotton-planter and spindle-maker incorporated in the

means of production. It is solely by reason of this identity, that cotton planting, spindle making and spinning, are capable of forming the component parts, differing only quantitatively from each other, of one whole, namely, the value of the yarn. Here, we have nothing more to do with the quality, the nature and the specific character of the labour, but merely with its quantity. And this simply requires to be calculated. We proceed upon the assumption that spinning is simple, unskilled labour, the average labour of a given state of society. Hereafter we shall see that the contrary assumption would make no difference.

While the labourer is at work his labour constantly undergoes a transformation : from being motion, it becomes an object without motion ; from being the labourer working, it becomes the thing produced. At the end of one hour's spinning, that act is represented by a definite quantity of yarn ; in other words, a definite quantity of labour, namely that of one hour, has become embodied in the cotton. We say labour, i.e., the expenditure of his vital force by the spinner, and not spinning labour, because the special work of spinning counts here, only so far as it is the expenditure of labour-power in general, and not in so far as it is the specific work of the spinner.

In the process we are now considering it is of extreme importance that no more time be consumed in the work of transforming the cotton into yarn than is necessary under the given social conditions. If under normal, i.e., average social conditions of production,  $a$  pounds of cotton ought to be made into  $b$  pounds of yarn by one hour's labour, then a day's labour does not count as 12 hours' labour unless 12  $a$  pounds of cotton have been made into 12  $b$  pounds of yarn ; for in the creation of value, the time that is socially necessary alone counts.

Not only the labour, but also the raw material and the product now appear in quite a new light, very different from that in which we viewed them in the labour-process pure and simple. The raw material serves now merely as

an absorbent of a definite quantity of labour. By this absorption it is in fact changed into yarn, because it is spun, because labour-power in the form of spinning is added to it ; but the product, the yarn, is now nothing more than a measure of the labour absorbed by the cotton. If in one hour  $1\frac{2}{3}$  lbs. of cotton can be spun into  $1\frac{2}{3}$  lbs. of yarn, then 10 lbs. of yarn indicate the absorption of six hours' labour. Definite quantities of product, these quantities being determined by experience, now represent nothing but definite quantities of labour, definite masses of crystallised labour-time. They are nothing more than the materialisation of so many hours or so many days of social labour.

We are here no more concerned about the facts, that the labour is the specific work of spinning, that its subject is cotton and its product yarn, than we are about the fact that the subject itself is already a product and therefore raw material. If the spinner, instead of spinning, were working in a coal-mine, the subject of his labour, the coal, would be supplied by Nature ; nevertheless, a definite quantity of extracted coal, a hundredweight, for example, would represent a definite quantity of absorbed labour.

We assumed, on the occasion of its sale, that the value of a day's labour-power is three shillings, and that six hours' labour are incorporated in that sum ; and consequently that this amount of labour is requisite to produce the necessities of life daily required on an average by the labourer. If now our spinner by working for one hour, can convert  $1\frac{2}{3}$  lbs. of cotton into  $1\frac{2}{3}$  lbs. of yarn, it follows that in six hours he will convert 10 lbs. of cotton into 10 lbs. of yarn. Hence, during the spinning process, the cotton absorbs six hours' labour. The same quantity of labour is also embodied in a piece of gold of the value of three shillings. Consequently by the mere labour of spinning, a value of three shillings is added to the cotton.

Let us now consider the total value of the product, the 10 lbs. of yarn. Two and a half days' labour have been embodied in it, of which two days were contained in the

cotton and in the substance of the spindle worn away, and half a day was absorbed during the process of spinning. This two and a half days' labour is also represented by a piece of gold of the value of fifteen shillings. Hence, fifteen shillings is an adequate price for the 10 lbs. of yarn, or the price of one pound is eighteenpence.

Our capitalist stares in astonishment. The value of the product is exactly equal to the value of the capital advanced. The value so advanced has not expanded, no surplus value has been created, and consequently money has not been converted into capital. The price of the yarn is fifteen shillings, and fifteen shillings were spent in the open market upon the constituent elements of the product, or, what amounts to the same thing, upon the factors of the labour-process ; ten shillings were paid for the cotton, two shillings for the substance of the spindle worn away, and three shillings for the labour-power. The swollen value of the yarn is of no avail, for it is merely the sum of the values formerly existing in the cotton, the spindle, and the labour-power ; out of such a simple addition of existing values, no surplus value can possibly arise. These separate values are now all concentrated in one thing ; but so they were also in the sum of fifteen shillings, before it was split up into three parts, by the purchase of the commodities.

There is in reality nothing very strange in this result. The value of one pound of yarn being eighteenpence, if our capitalist buys 10 lbs. of yarn in the market, he must pay fifteen shillings for them. It is clear that, whether a man buys his house ready built, or gets it built for him, in neither case will the mode of acquisition increase the amount of money laid out on the house.

Our capitalist, who is at home in his vulgar economy, exclaims : " Oh ! but I advanced my money for the express purpose of making more money." The way to Hell is paved with good intentions, and he might just as easily have intended to make money, without producing at all. He threatens all sorts of things. He won't be caught napping

again. In future he will buy the commodities in the market, instead of manufacturing them himself. But if all his brother capitalists were to do the same, where would he find his commodities in the market ? And his money he cannot eat. He tries persuasion. " Consider my abstinence ; I might have played ducks and drakes with the fifteen shillings ; but instead of that I consumed it productively, and made yarn with it." Very well, and by way of reward he is now in possession of good yarn instead of a bad conscience ; and as for playing the part of a miser, it would never do for him to relapse into such bad ways as that ; we have seen before to what results such asceticism leads. Besides, where nothing is, the king has lost his rights : whatever may be the merit of his abstinence, there is nothing wherewith specially to remunerate it, because the value of the product is merely the sum of the values of the commodities that were thrown into the process of production. Let him therefore console himself with the reflection that virtue is its own reward. But no, he becomes importunate. He says : " The yarn is of no use to me : I produced it for sale." In that case let him sell it, or, still better, let him for the future produce only things for satisfying his personal wants, a remedy that his physician M'Culloch has already prescribed as infallible against an epidemic of over-production. He now gets obstinate. " Can the labourer," he asks, " merely with his arms and legs, produce commodities out of nothing ? Did I not supply him with the materials, by means of which, and in which alone, his labour could be embodied ? And as the greater part of society consists of such ne'er-do-weels, have I not rendered society incalculable service by my instruments of production, my cotton and my spindle, and not only society, but the labourer also, whom in addition I have provided with the necessities of life ? And am I to be allowed nothing in return for all this service ? " Well, but has not the labourer rendered him the equivalent service of changing his cotton and spindle into yarn ? Moreover, there is here no question of service. A service is nothing more

than the useful effect of a use-value, be it of a commodity, or be it of labour. But here we are dealing with exchange value. The capitalist paid to the labourer a value of three shillings, and the labourer gave him back an exact equivalent in the value of three shillings, added by him to the cotton : he gave him value for value. Our friend, up to this time so purse-proud, suddenly assumes the modest demeanour of his own workman, and exclaims : " Have I myself not worked ? Have I not performed the labour of superintendence and of overlooking the spinner ? And does not this labour, too, create value ? " His overlooker and his manager try to hide their smiles. Meanwhile, after a hearty laugh, he re-assumes his usual mien. Though he chanted to us the whole creed of the economists, in reality, he says, he would not give a brass farthing for it. He leaves this and all suchlike subterfuges and juggling tricks to the professors of political economy, who are paid for it. He himself is a practical man ; and though he does not always consider what he says outside his business, yet in his business he knows what he is about.

Let us examine the matter more closely. The value of a day's labour-power amounts to three shillings, because on our assumption half a day's labour is embodied in that quantity of labour-power, i.e., because the means of subsistence that are daily required for the production of labour-power, cost half a day's labour. But the past labour that is embodied in the labour-power, and the living labour that it can call into action ; the daily cost of maintaining it, and its daily expenditure in work, are two totally different things. The former determines the exchange value of the labour-power, the latter is its use-value. The fact that half a day's labour is necessary to keep the labourer alive during twenty-four hours, does not in any way prevent him from working a whole day. Therefore, the value of labour-power, and the value which that labour-power creates in the labour-process, are two entirely different magnitudes ; and this difference of the two values was what the capitalist

had in view, when he was purchasing the labour-power. The useful qualities that labour-power possesses, and by virtue of which it makes yarn or boots, were to him nothing more than a *conditio sine qua non* ; for in order to create value, labour must be expended in a useful manner. What really influenced him was the specific use-value which this commodity possesses of being *a source not only of value, but of more value than it has itself*. This is the special service that the capitalist expects from labour-power, and in this transaction he acts in accordance with the "eternal laws" of the exchange of commodities. The seller of labour-power, like the seller of any other commodity, realises its exchange value, and parts with its use-value. He cannot take the one without giving the other. The use-value of labour-power, or in other words, labour, belongs just as little to its seller, as the use-value of oil after it has been sold belongs to the dealer who has sold it. The owner of the money has paid the value of a day's labour-power ; his, therefore, is the use of it for a day ; a day's labour belongs to him. The circumstance, that on the one hand the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half a day's labour, while on the other hand the very same labour-power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which its use during one day creates, is double what he pays for that use, this circumstance is, without doubt, a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injury to the seller.

Our capitalist foresaw this state of things, and that was the cause of his laughter. The labourer therefore finds, in the workshop, the means of production necessary for working, not only during six, but during twelve hours. Just as during the six hours' process our 10 lbs. of cotton absorbed six hours' labour, and became 10 lbs. of yarn, so now, 20 lbs. of cotton will absorb twelve hours' labour and be changed into 20 lbs. of yarn. Let us now examine the product of this prolonged process. There is now materialised in this 20 lbs. of yarn the labour of five days, of which four days are due to the cotton and the lost steel of the spindle, the remaining

day having been absorbed by the cotton during the spinning process. Expressed in gold, the labour of five days is thirty shillings. This is therefore the price of the 20 lbs. of yarn, giving, as before, eighteenpence as the price of a pound. But the sum of the values of the commodities that entered into the process amounts to twenty-seven shillings. The value of the yarn is thirty shillings. Therefore the value of the product is one-ninth greater than the value advanced for its production ; twenty-seven shillings have been transformed into thirty shillings ; a surplus value of three shillings has been created. The trick has at last succeeded ; money has been converted into capital.

Every condition of the problem is satisfied, while the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities have been in no way violated. Equivalent has been exchanged for equivalent. For the capitalist as buyer paid for each commodity, for the cotton, the spindle and the labour-power, its full value. He then did what is done by every purchaser of commodities ; he consumed their use-value. The consumption of the labour-power, which was also the process of producing commodities, resulted in 20 lbs. of yarn, having a value of thirty shillings. The capitalist, formerly a buyer, now returns to market as a seller, of commodities. He sells his yarn at eighteenpence a pound, which is its exact value. Yet for all that he withdraws three shillings more from circulation than he originally threw into it. This metamorphosis, this conversion of money into capital, takes place both within the sphere of circulation and also outside it ; within the circulation, because conditioned by the purchase of the labour-power in the market ; outside the circulation because what is done within it is only a stepping-stone to the production of surplus value, a process which is entirely confined to the sphere of production. Thus "*tout est pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes possibles.*"

By turning his money into commodities that serve as the material elements of a new product, and as factors in the labour-process, by incorporating living labour with their



dead substance, the capitalist at the same time converts value, i.e., past, materialised, and dead labour into capital, into value big with value, a live monster that is fruitful and multiplies.

## CONSTANT CAPITAL AND VARIABLE CAPITAL

(Vol. I, Ch. VIII)

... While productive labour is changing the means of production into constituent elements of a new product, their value undergoes a metempsychosis. It deserts the consumed body, to occupy the newly created one. But this transmigration takes place, as it were, behind the back of the labourer. He is unable to add new labour, to create new value, without at the same time preserving old values, and this, because the labour he adds must be of a specific useful kind ; and he cannot do work of a useful kind, without employing products as the means of production of a new product, and thereby transferring their value to the new product. The property therefore which labour-power in action, living labour, possesses of preserving value, at the same time that it adds it, is a gift of Nature which costs the labourer nothing, but which is very advantageous to the capitalist inasmuch as it preserves the existing value of his capital. So long as trade is good, the capitalist is too much absorbed in money-grubbing to take notice of this gratuitous gift of labour. A violent interruption of the labour-process by a crisis makes him sensitively aware of it.

As regards the means of production, what is really consumed is their use-value, and the consumption of this use-value by labour results in the product. There is no consumption of their value, and it would therefore be inaccurate to say that it is reproduced. It is rather preserved ; not by reason of any operation it undergoes itself in the process ; but because the article in which it originally exists, vanishes, it is true, but vanishes into some other article. Hence, in the value of the product, there is a re-appearance

of the value of the means of production, but there is, strictly speaking, no reproduction of that value. That which is produced is a new use-value in which the old exchange value re-appears.

It is otherwise with the subjective factor of the labour-process, with labour-power in action. While the labourer, by virtue of his labour being of a specialised kind that has a special object, preserves and transfers to the product the value of the means of production, he at the same time, by the mere act of working, creates each instant an additional or new value. Suppose the process of production to be stopped just when the workman has produced an equivalent for the value of his own labour-power, when, for example, by six hours' labour, he has added a value of three shillings. This value is the surplus, of the total value of the product, over the portion of its value that is due to the means of production. It is the only original bit of value formed during this process, the only portion of the value of the product created by this process. Of course, we do not forget that this new value only replaces the money advanced by the capitalist in the purchase of the labour-power, and spent by the labourer on the necessities of life. With regard to the money spent, the new value is merely a reproduction ; but, nevertheless, it is an actual, and not, as in the case of the value of the means of production, only an apparent, reproduction. The substitution of one value for another is here effected by the creation of new value.

We know, however, from what has gone before, that the labour-process may continue beyond the time necessary to reproduce and incorporate in the product a mere equivalent for the value of the labour-power. Instead of the six hours that are sufficient for the latter purpose, the process may continue for twelve hours. The action of labour-power, therefore, not only reproduces its own value, but produces value over and above it. This surplus value is the difference between the value of the product and the value of the elements consumed in the formation of that product, in other

words, of the means of production and the labour-power.

By our explanation of the different parts played by the various factors of the labour-process in the formation of the product's value, we have, in fact, disclosed the characters of the different functions allotted to the different elements of capital in the process of expanding its own value. The surplus of the total value of the product, over the sum of the values of its constituent factors, is the surplus of the expanded capital over the capital originally advanced. The means of production on the one hand, labour-power on the other, are merely the different modes of existence which the value of the original capital assumed when from being money it was transformed into the various factors of the labour-process. That part of capital then, which is represented by the means of production, by the raw material, auxiliary material and the instruments of labour, does not, in the process of production, undergo any quantitative alteration of value. I therefore call it the constant part of capital, or, more shortly, *constant capital*.

On the other hand, that part of capital, represented by labour-power, does, in the process of production, undergo an alteration of value. It both reproduces the equivalent of its own value, and also produces an excess, a surplus value, which may itself vary, may be more or less according to circumstances. This part of capital is continually being transformed from a constant into a variable magnitude. I therefore call it the variable part of capital, or, shortly, *variable capital*. The same elements of capital which, from the point of view of the labour-process, present themselves respectively as the objective and subjective factors, as means of production and labour-power, present themselves, from the point of view of the process of creating surplus value, as constant and variable capital.

The definition of constant capital given above by no means excludes the possibility of a change of value in its elements. Suppose the price of cotton to be one day sixpence a pound, and the next day, in consequence of a failure

of the cotton crop, a shilling a pound. Each pound of the cotton bought at sixpence, and worked up after the rise in value, transfers to the product a value of one shilling ; and the cotton already spun before the rise, and perhaps circulating in the markets as yarn, likewise transfers to the product twice its original value. It is plain, however, that these changes of value are independent of the increment or surplus value added to the value of the cotton by the spinning itself. If the old cotton had never been spun, it could, after the rise, be resold at a shilling a pound instead of at sixpence. Further, the fewer the processes the cotton has gone through, the more certain is this result. We therefore find that speculators make it a rule when such sudden changes in value occur to speculate in that material on which the least possible quantity of labour has been spent : to speculate, therefore, in yarn rather than in cloth, in cotton itself, rather than in yarn. The change of value in the case we have been considering, originates, not in the process in which the cotton plays the part of a means of production, and in which it therefore functions as constant capital, but in the process in which the cotton itself is produced. The value of a commodity, it is true, is determined by the quantity of labour contained in it, but this quantity is itself limited by social conditions. If the time socially necessary for the production of any commodity alters—and a given weight of cotton represents, after a bad harvest, more labour than after a good one—all previously existing commodities of the same class are affected, because they are, as it were, only individuals of the species, and their value at any given time is measured by the labour socially necessary, i.e., by the labour necessary for their production under the then existing social conditions.

As the value of the raw material may change, so, too, may that of the instruments of labour, of the machinery, etc., employed in the process ; and consequently that portion of the value of the product transferred to it from them, may also change. If in consequence of a new invention,

machinery of a particular kind can be produced by a diminished expenditure of labour, the old machinery becomes depreciated more or less and consequently transfers so much less value to the product. But here again, the change in value originates outside the process in which the machine is acting as a means of production. Once engaged in this process, the machine cannot transfer more value than it possesses apart from the process.

Just as a change in the value of the means of production, even after they have commenced to take a part in the labour process, does not alter their character as constant capital, so, too, a change in the proportion of constant to variable capital does not affect the respective functions of these two kinds of capital. The technical conditions of the labour-process may be revolutionised to such an extent that, where formerly ten men using ten implements of small value worked up a relatively small quantity of raw material, one man may now, with the aid of one expensive machine, work up one hundred times as much raw material. In the latter case we have an enormous increase in the constant capital, that is represented by the total value of the means of production used, and at the same time a great reduction in the variable capital, invested in labour-power. Such a revolution, however, alters only the quantitative relation between the constant and the variable capital, or the proportions in which the total capital is split up into its constant and variable constituents; it has not in the least degree affected the essential difference between the two.

#### SIMPLE REPRODUCTION

(Vol. II, Ch. XX)

##### *The Formulation of the Question*

... So long as we looked upon the production of value and the value of products from the point of view of individual capital, it was immaterial for the analysis which was the natural form of the product in commodities, whether it was,

for instance, that of a machine, of corn, or of looking-glasses. It was always but a matter of illustration, and any line of production could serve that purpose. What we had to consider was the immediate process of production itself, which presented itself at every point as the process of some individual capital. So far as reproduction was concerned, it was sufficient to assume that that portion of the product in commodities, which represented capital in the sphere of circulation, found an opportunity to reconvert itself into its elements of production and thus into its form of productive capital. It likewise sufficed to assume that both the labourer and the capitalist found in the market those commodities for which they spend their wages and surplus-value. This merely formal manner of presentation does not suffice in the study of the total social capital and of the value of its products. The reversion of one portion of the value of the product into capital, the passing of another portion into the individual consumption of the capitalist and working classes, form a movement within the value of the product itself which is created by the total capital ; and this movement is not only a reproduction of value, but also of material, and is, therefore, as much conditioned on the relative proportions of the elements of value of the total social product as on its use-value, its material substance.

Simple reproduction on the same scale appears as an abstraction, inasmuch as the absence of all accumulation or reproduction on an enlarged scale is an irrelevant assumption in capitalist society, and, on the other hand, conditions of production do not remain exactly the same in different years (as was assumed). The assumption is that a social capital of a given magnitude produces the same quantity of value in commodities this year as last, and supplies the same quantity of wants, although the forms of the commodities may be changed in the process of reproduction. However, while accumulation does take place, simple reproduction is always a part of it and may, therefore, be studied in itself, being an actual factor in accumulation. . . .

### *The Two Departments of Social Production*

The total product, and therefore the total production, of society, is divided into two great sections :

I. *Means of Production*, commodities having a form in which they must, or at least may, pass over into productive consumption.

II. *Means of Consumption*, commodities having a form in which they pass into the individual consumption of the capitalist and working classes.

In each of these two departments, all the various lines of production belonging to them form one single great line of production, the one that of the means of production, the other that of articles of consumption. The aggregate capital invested in each of these two departments of production constitutes a separate section of the entire social capital.

In each department, the capital consists of two parts :

(1) *Variable Capital*. This capital, so far as its value is concerned, is equal to the value of the social labour-power employed in this line of production, in other words equal to the sum of the wages paid for this labour-power. So far as its substance is concerned, it consists of the active labour-power itself, that is to say, of the living labour set in motion by this value of capital.

(2) *Constant Capital*. This is the value of all the means of production employed in this line. These, again, are divided into *fixed* capital, such as machines, instruments of labour, buildings, labouring animals, etc., and *circulating* capital, such as materials of production, raw and auxiliary materials, half-wrought articles, etc.

The value of the total annual product created with the capital of each of the two great departments of production consists of one portion representing the constant capital  $c$  consumed in the process of production and transferred to the product, and of another portion added by the entire labour of the year. This latter portion, again, consists of one part reproducing the advanced variable capital  $v$ , and of another

representing an excess over the variable capital, the surplus-value  $s$ . And just as the value of every individual commodity, so that of the entire annual product of each department consists of  $c + v + s$ .

The portion  $c$  of the value, representing the constant capital *consumed* in production, is not identical with the value of the constant capital *invested* in production. It is true that the materials of production are entirely consumed and their values completely transferred to the product. But of the invested *fixed* capital, only a portion is consumed and its value transferred to the product. Another portion of the fixed capital, such as machines, buildings, etc., continues to exist and serve the same as before, merely depreciating to the extent of the annual wear and tear. This persistent portion of the fixed capital does not exist for us, when we consider the value of the product. It is a portion of the value of capital existing independently beside the new value in commodities produced by this capital. This was shown previously in the analysis of the value of the product of some individual capital (Volume I, Chapter VI). However, for the present we must leave aside the method of analysis employed there. We saw in the study of the value of the product of individual capital that the value withdrawn from the fixed capital by wear and tear was transferred to the product in commodities created during the time of wear, no matter whether any portion of this fixed capital is reproduced in its natural form out of the value thus transferred or not. At this point, however, in the study of the social product as a whole and of its value, we must for the present leave out of consideration that portion of value which is transferred from the fixed capital to the annual product by wear and tear, unless this fixed capital is reproduced *in natura* during the year. In one of the following sections of this chapter we shall return to this point.

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We shall base our analysis of simple reproduction on the following diagram, in which  $c$  stands for constant capital,



v for variable capital, and s for surplus value, the rate of surplus value between v and s being assumed at 100 per cent. The figures may indicate millions of francs, marks, pounds sterling, or dollars.

### I. Production of Means of Production.

Capital.....4000 c + 1000 v = 5000.

Product in Commodities..4000 c + 1000 v + 1000 s = 6000.

These exist in the form of means of production.

### II. Production of Means of Consumption.

Capital.....2000 c + 500 v = 2500.

Product in Commodities..2000 c + 500 v + 500 s = 3000.

These exist in articles of consumption.

Recapitulation : Total annual product in commodities :

I. 4000 c + 1000 v + 1000 s = 6000 means of production.

II. 2000 c + 500 v + 500 s = 3000 articles of consumption.

Total value 9000, exclusive of the fixed capital persisting in its natural form, according to our assumption.

Now, if we examine the transactions required on the basis of simple reproduction, where the entire surplus value is unproductively consumed, leaving aside for the present the mediation of the money circulation, we obtain at the outset three great points of vantage.

(1) The 500 v, representing wages of the labourers, and 500 s, representing surplus value of the capitalists, in department II, must be spent for articles of consumption. But their value exists in the articles of consumption to the amount of 1000, held by the capitalists of department II, which reproduce the 500 v and represent the 500 s. The wages and surplus value of department II, then, are exchanged within this department for products of this same department. By this means, a quantity of articles of consumption equal to 1000 (500 v + 500 s) disappear out of the total product of department II.

(2) The 1000 v and 1000 s of department I must likewise

be spent for articles of consumption, in other words, for some of the products of department II. Hence they must be exchanged for the remaining 2000 c of constant value, which is equal in amount to them. Department II receives in return an equal quantity of means of production, the product of I, in which the value of 1000 v and 1000 s of I is incorporated. By this means, 2000 c of II and (1000 v + 1000 s) of I disappear out of the calculation.

(3) Nothing remains now but 4000 c of I. These consist of means of production which can be used up only in department I. They serve for the reproduction of its consumed constant capital, and are disposed of by the mutual exchange between the individual capitalists of I, just as are the (500 v + 500 s) in II by an exchange between the capitalists and labourers, or between the individual capitalists, of II. . . .

#### ACCUMULATION AND REPRODUCTION ON AN ENLARGED SCALE

(Vol. II, Ch. XXI)

It has been shown in Volume I, how accumulation works in the case of the individual capitalist. By the conversion of the commodity-capital into money, the surplus-product, in which the surplus value is incorporated, is also monetised. The capitalist reconverts the surplus value thus monetised into additional natural elements of his productive capital. In the next cycle of production the increased capital furnishes an increased product. But what happens in the case of the individual capital, must also show in the annual reproduction of society as a whole, just as we have seen it done in the case of reproduction on a simple scale, where the successive precipitation of the depreciated elements of fixed capitals in the form of money, accumulated as a hoard, also makes itself felt in the annual reproduction of society.

If a certain individual capital amounts to 400 c + 100 v,

with an annual surplus value of 100 s, then the product in commodities amounts to  $400 c + 100 v + 100 s$ . This amount of 600 is converted into money. Of this money, again, 400 c are converted into the natural form of constant capital, 100 v into labour power, and—provided that the entire surplus value is accumulated—100 s are converted into additional constant capital by their transformation into natural elements of productive capital. The following assumptions go with this case: (1) That this amount is sufficient under the given technical conditions either to expand the existing constant capital, or to establish a new industrial business. But it may also happen that surplus value must be converted into money and this money hoarded for a much longer time, before these steps may be taken, before actual accumulation, or expansion of production, can take place. (2) It is furthermore assumed that production on an enlarged scale has actually been in process previously. For in order that the money (the surplus value hoarded as money) may be converted into elements of productive capital, these elements must be available on the market as commodities. It makes no difference whether they are bought as finished products, or made to order. They are not paid for until they are finished, and at any rate, until actual reproduction on an enlarged scale, an expansion of hitherto normal production, has taken place so far as they are concerned. They had to be present potentially, that is to say, in their elements, for it required only an impulse in the form of an order, that is to say, a purchase preceding their actual existence and anticipating their sale, in order to stimulate their production. The money on one side in that case calls forth expanded reproduction on the other, because the possibility for it exists without the money. For money in itself is not an element of actual reproduction. . . .

*A. Diagram of Simple Reproduction.*

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{I. } 4000 c + 1000 v + 1000 s = 6000 \\ \text{II. } 2000 c + 500 v + 500 s = 3000 \end{array} \right\} \text{Total, 9000.}$$

Q<sub>M</sub>

*B. Initial Diagram for Accumulation on an Expanded Scale.*

- |                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| I. 4000 c + 1000 v + 1000 s = 6000 | } Total, 9000. |
| II. 1500 c + 750 v + 750 s = 3000  |                |

Assuming that in diagram B one half of the surplus value of I, amounting to 500, is accumulated, we have first to accomplish the change of place between (1000 v + 500 s) I, or 1500 I (v + s), and 1500 II c. Department I then keeps 4000 c and 500 s, the last sum being accumulated. The exchange between (1000 v + 500 s) I and 1500 II c is a process of simple reproduction, which has been examined previously.

Let us now assume that 400 of the 500 I s are to be converted into constant capital, and 100 into variable capital. The transactions within the 400 s of I, which are to be capitalised, have already been discussed. They can be immediately annexed to I c, and in that case we get in department I

4400 c + 1000 v + 100 s (these last to be converted into 100 v).

Department II buys from I for the purpose of accumulation the 100 I s (existing in means of production), which thus become additional constant capital in department II, while the 100 in money, which this department pays for them, are converted into the money-form of the additional variable capital of I. We then have for I a capital of 4400 c + 1100 v (these last in money), a total of 5500.

Department II has now 1600 c for its constant capital. In order to be able to operate this, it must advance 50 v in money for the purchase of new labour power, so that its variable capital grows from 750 to 800. This expansion of the constant and variable capital of II by a total of 150 is supplied out of its surplus value. Hence only 600 of the 750 II s remain for the consumption of the capitalists of II, whose annual product is now distributed as follows :

II. 1600 c + 800 v + 600 s (fund for consumption), a total of 3000. The 150 s, produced in articles of consumption,

which have been converted into (100 c + 50 v) II, pass entirely into the consumption of the labourers in this form, 100 being consumed by the labourers of I (100 I v), and 50 by the labourers of II (50 II v), as explained above. Department II, where the total product is prepared in a form suitable for accumulation, must indeed reproduce surplus value in the form of necessary articles of consumption exceeding the other portions by 100. If reproduction really starts on an expanded scale, then the 100 of variable money capital of I flow back to II through the hands of the labourers of I, while II transfers 100 s in commodities to I and at the same time 50 in commodities to its own labourers.

The change made in the arrangement for the purpose of accumulation now presents the following aspect :

- I. 4400 c + 1100 v + 500 fund for consumption = 6000  
 II. 1600 c + 800 v + 600 fund for consumption = 3000

Total, as before, 9000

Of these amounts, the following are capital :

- I. 4400 c + 1100 v (money) = 5500 }  
 II. 1600 c + 800 v (money) = 2400 } Total, 7900

while production started out with

- I. 4000 c + 1000 v = 5000 }  
 II. 1500 c + 750 v = 2250 } Total, 7250

Now, if actual accumulation takes place on this basis, that is to say, if reproduction is actually undertaken with this increased capital, we obtained at the end of next year :

- I. 4400 c + 1100 v + 1100 s = 6600 }  
 II. 1600 c + 800 v + 800 s = 3200 } Total, 9800.

#### MARKET PRICES AND MARKET VALUES

(Vol. III, Ch. X)

... Whatever may be the way in which the prices of the various commodities are first fixed or mutually regulated,

the law of value always dominates their movements. If the labour time required for the production of these commodities is reduced, prices fall ; if it is increased, prices rise, other circumstances remaining the same.

Aside from the fact that prices and their movements are dominated by the law of value, it is quite appropriate, under these circumstances, to regard the value of commodities not only theoretically, but also historically, as existing prior to the prices of production. This applies to conditions, in which the labourer owns his means of production, and this is the condition of the land-owning farmer and of the craftsman in the old world as well as the new. This agrees also with the view formerly expressed by me that the development of products into commodities arises through the exchange between different communes, not through that between the members of the same commune. It applies not only to this primitive condition, but also to subsequent conditions based on slavery or serfdom, and to the guild organisation of handicrafts, so long as the means of production installed in one line of production cannot be transferred to another line except under difficulties, so that the various lines of production maintain, to a certain degree, the same mutual relations as foreign countries or communistic groups.

In order that the prices at which commodities are exchanged with one another may correspond approximately to their values, no other conditions are required but the following : (1) The exchange of the various commodities must no longer be accidental or occasional ; (2) So far as the direct exchange of commodities is concerned, these commodities must be produced on both sides in sufficient quantities to meet mutual requirements, a thing easily learned by experience in trading, and therefore a natural outgrowth of continued trading ; (3) So far as selling is concerned, there must be no accidental or artificial monopoly which may enable either of the contracting sides to sell commodities above their value or compel others to sell below value. An accidental monopoly is one which a buyer or seller

acquires by an accidental proportion of supply to demand.

The assumption that the commodities of the various spheres of production are sold at their value implies, of course, only that their value is the centre of gravity around which prices fluctuate, and around which their rise and fall tends to an equilibrium. We shall also have to note a *market value*, which must be distinguished from the individual value of the commodities produced by the various producers. Of this more anon. The individual value of some of these commodities will be below the market value, that is to say, they require less labour-time for their production than is expressed in the market value, while that of others will be above the market value. We shall have to regard the market-value on one side as the average value of the commodities produced in a certain sphere, and on the other side as the individual value of commodities produced under the average conditions of their respective sphere of production and constituting the bulk of the products of that sphere. It is only extraordinary combinations of circumstances under which commodities produced under the least or most favourable conditions regulate the market value, which forms the centre of fluctuation for the market prices, which are the same, however, for the same kind of commodities. If the ordinary demand is satisfied by the supply of commodities of average value, that is to say, of a value midway between the two extremes, then those commodities, whose individual value stands below the market value, realise an extra surplus-value, or surplus-profit, while those, whose individual value stands above the market value, cannot realise a portion of the surplus value contained in them. . . .

No matter what may be the way in which prices are regulated, the result always is the following :

(1) The law of value dominates the movements of prices, since a reduction or increase of the labour time required for production causes the prices of production to fall or to rise. It is in this sense that Ricardo (who doubtless realised that

his prices of production differed from the value of commodities) says that "the inquiry to which he wishes to draw the reader's attention relates to the effect of the variations in the relative value of commodities, and not in their absolute value."

(2) The average profit which determines the prices of production must always be approximately equal to that quantity of surplus value which falls to the share of a certain individual capital in its capacity as an aliquot part of the total social capital. Take it that the average rate of profit, and therefore the average profit, are expressed by an amount of money of a higher value than the money value of the actual average surplus value. So far as the capitalists are concerned in that case, it is immaterial whether they charge one another a profit of 10 or of 15 per cent. The one of these percentages does not cover any more actual commodity value than the other, since the overcharge in money is mutual. But so far as the labourer is concerned (the assumption being that he receives the normal wages, so that the raising of the average profit does not imply an actual deduction from his wages, in other words, does not express something entirely different from the normal surplus value of the capitalist), the rise in the price of commodities due to a raising of the average profit must be accompanied by a corresponding rise of the money expression for the variable capital. As a matter of fact, such a general nominal raising of the rate of profit and the average profit above the limit provided by the proportion of the actual surplus value to the total invested capital is not possible without carrying in its wake an increase of wages, and also an increase in the prices of the commodities which constitute the constant capital. The same is true of the opposite case, that of a reduction of the rate of profit in this way. Now, since the total value of the commodities regulates the total surplus value, and this the level of the average profit and the average rate of profit—always understanding this as a general law, as a principle regulating the fluctuations—it



follows that the law of value regulates the prices of production.

Competition first brings about, in a certain individual sphere, the establishment of an equal market value and market price by averaging the various individual values of the commodities. The competition of the capitals in the different spheres then results in the price of production which equalises the rates of profit between the different spheres. This last process requires a higher development of capitalist production than the previous process.

In order that commodities of the same sphere of production, the same kind, and approximately the same quality may be sold at their value, the following two requirements must be fulfilled :

(1) The different individual values must have been averaged into *one* social value, the above-named market value, and this implies a competition between the producers of the same kind of commodities, and also the existence of a common market, on which they offer their articles for sale. In order that the market price of identical commodities, which however are produced under different individual circumstances, may correspond to the market value, may not differ from it by exceeding it or falling below it, it is necessary that the different sellers should exert sufficient pressure upon one another to bring that quantity of commodities on the market which social requirements demand, in other words, that quantity of commodities whose market value society can pay. If the quantity of products exceeds this demand, then the commodities must be sold below their market value ; vice versa, if the quantity of products is not large enough to meet this demand, or, what amounts to the same, if the pressure of competition among the sellers is not strong enough to bring this quantity of products to market, then the commodities are sold above their market value. If the market value is changed, then there will also be a change in the conditions under which the total quantity of commodities can be sold. If the market value falls, then

the average social demand increases (always referring to the solvent demand) and can absorb a larger quantity of commodities within certain limits. If the market value rises, then the solvent social demand for commodities is reduced and smaller quantities of them are absorbed. Hence if supply and demand regulate the market price, or rather the deviations of market prices from market values, it is true, on the other hand, that the market value regulates the proportions of supply and demand, or the centre around which supply and demand cause the market prices to fluctuate.

If we look closer at the matter, we find that the conditions determining the value of some individual commodity become effective, in this instance, as conditions determining the value of the total quantities of a certain kind. For, generally speaking, capitalist production is from the outset a mass production. And even other, less developed, modes of production carry small quantities of products, the result of the work of many small producers, to market as co-operative products, at least in the main lines of production, concentrating and accumulating them for sale in the hands of relatively few merchants. Such commodities are regarded as co-operative products of an entire line of production, or of a greater or smaller part of this line.

We remark by the way that the "social demand," in other words, that which regulates the principle of demand, is essentially conditioned on the mutual relations of the different economic classes and their relative economic positions, that is to say, first, on the proportion of the total surplus value to the wages, and secondly, on the proportion of the various parts into which surplus value is divided (profit, interest, ground-rent, taxes, etc.). And this shows once more that absolutely nothing can be explained by the relation of supply and demand, unless the basis has first been ascertained, on which this relation rests. . . .

(2) To say that a commodity has a use-value is merely to say that it satisfies some social want. So long as we were dealing simply with individual commodities, we could

assume that the demand for any one commodity—its price implying its quantity—existed without inquiring into the extent to which this demand required satisfaction. But this question of the extent of a certain demand becomes essential, whenever the product of some entire line of production is placed on one side, and the social demand for it on the other. In that case it becomes necessary to consider the amount, the quantity, of this social demand.

In the foregoing statements referring to market value, the assumption was that the mass of the produced commodities remains the same given quantity, and that a change takes place only in the proportions of the elements constituting this mass and produced under different conditions, so that the market value of the same mass of commodities is differently regulated. Let us suppose that this mass is of a quantity equal to the ordinary supply, leaving aside the possibility that a portion of the produced commodities may be temporarily withdrawn from the market. Now, if the demand for this mass also remains the same, then this commodity will be sold at its market value ; no matter which one of the three aforementioned cases may regulate this market value. This mass of commodities does not only satisfy a demand, but satisfies it to its full social extent. On the other hand, if the quantity is smaller than the demand for it, then the market prices differ from the market values. And the first differentiation is that the market value is always regulated by the commodity produced under the least favourable circumstances, if the supply is too small, and by the commodity produced under the most favourable conditions, if the supply is too large. In other words, one of the extremes determines the market value, in spite of the fact that the proportion of the masses produced under different conditions ought to bring about a different result. If the difference between demand and supply of the product is very considerable, then the market price will likewise differ considerably from the market value in either direction. Now, the difference between the quantity of the

produced commodities and the quantity of commodities which fixes their sale at their market value may be due to two reasons. Either the quantity itself varies, by decreasing or increasing, so that there would be a reproduction on a different scale than the one which regulated a certain market value. If so, then the supply changes while the demand remains unchanged, and we have a relative over-production or under-production. Or, the reproduction, and the supply, remain the same, while the demand is reduced or increased, which may take place for several reasons. If so, then the absolute magnitude of the supply is unchanged, while its relative magnitude, compared to the demand, has changed. The effect is the same as in the first case, only it acts in the opposite direction. Finally, if changes take place on both sides, either in opposite directions, or, if in the same direction, not to the same extent, in other words, if changes take place on both sides which alter the former proportion between these sides, then the final result must always lead to one of the two above-mentioned cases.

The real difficulty in determining the meaning of the concepts supply and demand is that they seem to amount to a tautology. Consider first the supply, either the product on the market, or the product which can be supplied to the market. In order to avoid useless details, we shall consider only the mass annually reproduced in every given line of production and leave out of the question the varying faculty of some commodities to withdraw from the market and go into storage for consumption at a later time, for instance next year. This annual reproduction is expressed in a certain quantity, in weight or numbers, according to whether this mass of commodities is measured continuously or discontinuously. They represent not only use-value satisfying human wants, but these use-values are on the market in definite quantities. In the second place, this quantity of commodities has a definite market value, which may be expressed by a multiple of the market value of the individual

commodity, or of the measure, which serve as units. There is, then, no necessary connection between the quantitative volume of the commodities on the market and their market value, since many commodities have, for instance, a high specific value, others a low specific value, so that a given sum of values may be represented by a very large quantity of some, and a very small quantity of other commodities. There is only this connection between the quantity of articles on the market and the market value of these articles : Given a certain basis for the productivity of labour in every particular sphere of production, the production of a certain quantity of articles requires a definite quantity of social labour time ; but this proportion differs in different spheres of production and stands in no internal relation to the usefulness of these articles or the particular nature of their use-values. Assuming all other circumstances to be equal, and a certain quantity  $a$  of some commodity to cost  $b$  labour time, a quantity  $na$  of the same commodity will cost  $nb$  labour time. Furthermore, if society wants to satisfy some demand and have articles produced for this purpose, it must pay for them. Since the production of commodities is accompanied by a division of labour, society buys these articles by devoting to their production a portion of its available labour time. Society buys them by spending a definite quantity of the labour time over which it disposes. That part of society, to which the division of labour assigns the task of employing its labour in the production of the desired article, must be given an equivalent for it by other social labour incorporated in articles which *it* wants. There is, however, no necessary, but only an accidental, connection between the volume of society's demand for a certain article and the volume represented by the production of this article in the total production, or the quantity of social labour spent on this article, the aliquot part of the total labour power spent by society in the production of this article. True, every individual article, or every definite quantity of any kind of commodities, contains,

perhaps, only the social labour required for its production, and from this point of view the market value of this entire mass of commodities of a certain kind represents only necessary labour. Nevertheless, if this commodity has been produced in excess of the temporary demand of society for it, so much of the social labour has been wasted, and in that case this mass of commodities represents a much smaller quantity of labour on the market than is actually incorporated in it. (Only when production will be under the conscious and prearranged control of society, will society establish a direct relation between the quantity of social labour time employed in the production of definite articles and the quantity of the demand of society for them.) The commodities must then be sold below their market value, and a portion of them may even become unsaleable. The opposite takes place if the quantity of social labour employed in the production of a certain kind of commodities is too small to meet the social demand for them. But if the quantity of social labour spent in the production of a certain article corresponds to the social demand for it, so that the quantity produced is that which is the ordinary on that scale of production and for that same demand, then the article is sold at its market value. The exchange, or sale, of commodities at their value is the rational way, the natural law of their equilibrium. It must be the point of departure for the explanation of deviations from it, not vice versa the deviations the basis on which this law is explained.

Now let us look at the other side, the demand.

Commodities are bought either as means of production or means of subsistence, in order to be used for productive or individual consumption. It does not alter matters that some commodities may serve both ends. There is, then, a demand for them on the part of the producers (who are capitalists in this case, since we have assumed that the means of production have been transformed into capital) and on the part of the consumers. It appears at first sight as though these

two sides ought to have a corresponding quantity of social demands offset by a corresponding quantity of social supplies in the various lines of production. If the cotton industry is to accomplish its annual reproduction on a given scale, it must produce the usual quantity of cotton and an additional quantity determined by the annual extension of reproduction through the necessities of accumulating capital, always assuming other circumstances to remain the same. This is also true of means of subsistence. The working class must find at least the same quantity of necessities on hand, if it is to continue living in the accustomed way, although these necessities may be of different kinds and differently distributed. And there must be an additional quantity to allow for the annual increase of population. This applies with more or less modification to the other classes.

It would seem, then, that there is on the side of demand a definite magnitude of social wants which require for their satisfaction a definite quantity of certain articles on the market. But the quantity demanded by these wants is very elastic and changing. Its fixedness is but apparent. If the means of subsistence were cheaper, or money wages higher, the labourers would buy more of them, and a greater "social demand" would be manifested for this kind of commodities, leaving aside the question of paupers, whose "demand" is even below the narrowest limits of their physical wants. On the other hand, if cotton were cheaper, the demand of the capitalists for it would increase, more additional capital would be thrown into the cotton industry, etc. It must never be forgotten that the demand for productive consumption is a demand of capitalists, under our assumption, and that its essential purpose is the production of surplus value, so that commodities are produced only to this end. Still this does not argue against the fact that the capitalist as a buyer, for instance of cotton, represents the demand for this cotton. Moreover it is immaterial to the seller of cotton, whether the buyer converts it into

shirting or into guncotton, or whether he intends to make it into wads for his and the world's ears. But it *does* exert a considerable influence on the way in which the capitalist acts as a buyer. His demand for cotton is essentially modified by the fact that he disguises thereby his real demand, that of making profits. The limits within which the *need for commodities on the market*, the demand, differs quantitatively from the *actual social need*, varies naturally considerably for different commodities; in other words, the difference between the demanded quantity of commodities and that quantity which would be demanded, if the money prices of the commodities, or other conditions concerning the money or living of the buyers, were different. . . .

THE LAW OF THE FALLING TENDENCY OF THE  
RATE OF PROFIT: THE THEORY OF THE LAW

(Vol. III, Ch. XIII)

With a given wage and working day, a certain variable capital, for instance of 100, represents a certain number of employed labourers. It is the index of this number. For instance, let 100 p.st. be the wages of 100 labourers for one week. If these labourers perform the same amount of necessary as of surplus labour, in other words, if they work daily as much time for themselves as they do for the capitalist, or, in still other words, if they require as much time for the reproduction of their wages as they do for the production of surplus value for the capitalist, then they would produce a total value of 200 p.st., and the surplus value would amount to 100 p.st. The rate of surplus value,  $\frac{100}{100}$ , would be 100 per cent. But we have seen that this rate of surplus value would express itself in considerably different rates of profit, according to the different volumes of constant capitals  $c$  and consequently of total capitals  $C$ . For the rate of profit is calculated by the formula  $\frac{s}{C}$ .

Take it that the rate of surplus value is 100 per cent. Now, if



$c=50$ , and  $v=100$ , then  $p'=\frac{100}{150}$ , or  $66\frac{2}{3}\%$ .

$c=100$ , and  $v=100$ , then  $p'=\frac{100}{200}$ , or  $50\%$ .

$c=200$ , and  $v=100$ , then  $p'=\frac{100}{300}$ , or  $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ .

$c=300$ , and  $v=100$ , then  $p'=\frac{100}{400}$ , or  $25\%$ .

$c=400$ , and  $v=100$ , then  $p'=\frac{100}{500}$ , or  $20\%$ .

In this way, the same rate of surplus value, with the same degree of labour exploitation, would express itself in a falling rate of profit, because the material growth of the constant capital, and consequently of the total capital, implies their growth in value, although not in the same proportion.

If it is furthermore assumed that this gradual change in the composition of capital is not confined to some individual spheres of production, but occurs more or less in all, or at least in the most important ones, so that they imply changes in the organic average composition of the total capital of a certain society, then the gradual and relative growth of the constant over the variable capital must necessarily lead to a *gradual fall of the average rate of profit*, so long as the rate of surplus value, or the intensity of exploitation of labour by capital, remain the same. Now we have seen that it is one of the laws of capitalist production that its development carries with it a relative decrease of variable as compared with constant capital, and consequently as compared to the total capital, which it sets in motion. This is only another way of saying that the same number of labourers, the same quantity of labour power set in motion by a variable capital of a given value, consume in production an ever increasing quantity of means of production, such as machinery and all sorts of fixed capital, raw and auxiliary materials, and consequently a constant capital of ever increasing value and volume, during the same period of time, owing to the peculiar methods of production developing within the capitalist system. This progressive relative decrease of the variable capital as compared to the constant, and consequently to the total, capital is identical

with the progressive higher organic composition of the average social capital. It is, in another way, but an expression of the progressive development of the productive powers of society, which is manifested by the fact that the same number of labourers, in the same time, convert an ever growing quantity of raw and auxiliary materials into products, thanks to the growing application of machinery and fixed capital in general, so that less labour is needed for the production of the same, or of more, commodities. This growing value and volume of constant capital corresponds to a progressive cheapening of products, although the increase in the value of the constant capital indicates but imperfectly the growth in the actual mass of use-values represented by the material of the constant capital. Every individual product, taken by itself, contains a smaller quantity of labour than the same product did on a lower scale of production, in which the capital invested in wages occupies a far greater space compared to the capital invested in means of production. The hypothetical series placed at the beginning of this chapter expresses, therefore, the actual tendency of capitalist production. This mode of production produces a progressive decrease of the variable capital as compared to the constant capital, and consequently a continuously rising organic composition of the total capital. The immediate result of this is that the rate of surplus value, at the same degree of labour exploitation, expresses itself in a continually falling average rate of profit. (We shall see later why this fall does not manifest itself in an absolute form, but rather as a tendency toward a progressive fall.) This progressive tendency of the average rate of profit to fall is, therefore, but a peculiar expression of capitalist production for the fact that the social productivity of labour is progressively increasing. This is not saying that the rate of profit may not fall temporarily for other reasons. But it demonstrates at least that it is the nature of the capitalist mode of production, and a logical necessity of its development, to give expression to the average rate

of surplus value by a falling rate of average profit. Since the mass of the employed living labour is continually on the decline compared to the mass of materialised labour incorporated in productively consumed means of production, it follows that that portion of living labour, which is unpaid and represents surplus value, must also be continually on the decrease compared to the volume and value of the invested total capital. Seeing that the proportion of the mass of surplus value to the value of the invested total capital forms the rate of profit, this rate must fall continuously. . . .

The law of the falling tendency of the rate of profit, or of the relative decline of the appropriated surplus labour compared to the mass of materialised labour set in motion by living labour does not argue in any way against the fact that the absolute mass of the employed and exploited labour set in motion by the social capital, and consequently the absolute mass of the surplus labour appropriated by it, may grow. Nor does it argue against the fact that the capitals controlled by individual capitalists may dispose of a growing mass of labour and surplus labour, even though the number of the labourers employed by them may not grow.

Take for illustration's sake a certain population of working people, for instance, two millions. Assume, furthermore, that the length and intensity of the average working day, and the level of wages, and thereby the proportion between necessary and surplus labour, are given. In that case the aggregate labour of these two millions, and their surplus labour expressed in surplus value, represent always the same magnitude of values. But with the growth of the mass of the constant (fixed and circulating) capital, which this labour manipulates, the proportion of this produced quantity of values declines as compared to the value of this total capital. And the value of this capital grows with its mass, although not in the same proportion. This proportion, and consequently the rate of profit, falls in spite of the fact that the same mass of living labour is controlled as before, and

the same amount of surplus labour absorbed by the capital. This proportion changes, not because the mass of living labour decreases, but because the mass of the materialised labour set in motion by living labour increases. It is a relative decrease, not an absolute one, and has really nothing to do with the absolute magnitude of the labour and surplus labour set in motion. The fall of the rate of profit is not due to an absolute, but only to a relative decrease of the variable part of the total capital, that is, its decrease as compared with the constant part.

The same thing which applies to any given mass of labour and surplus labour, applies also to a growing number of labourers, and thus under the above assumptions, to any growing mass of the controlled labour in general and to its unpaid part, the surplus labour, in particular. If the labouring population increases from two million to three million, if, furthermore, the variable capital invested in wages also rises to three million from its former amount of two million, while the constant capital rises from four million to fifteen million, then the mass of surplus labour, and of surplus value, under the above assumption of a constant working day and a constant rate of surplus value, rises by 50 per cent, that is, from two million to three million. Nevertheless, in spite of this growth in the absolute mass of surplus labour and surplus value by 50 per cent, the proportion of the variable to the constant capital would fall from 2 : 4 to 3 : 15, and the proportion of the surplus value to the total capital, expressed in millions, would be

$$\text{I. } 4c + 2v + 2s; C = 6, p' = 33\frac{1}{3}\%.$$

$$\text{II. } 15c + 3v + 3s; C = 18, p' = 16\frac{2}{3}\%.$$

While the mass of surplus value has increased by one-half, the rate of profit has fallen by one-half. However, the profit is only the surplus value calculated on the total social capital, so that its absolute magnitude, socially considered, is the same as the absolute magnitude of the surplus value. In this case, the absolute magnitude of the profit would

have grown by 50 per cent, in spite of its enormous relative decrease compared to the advanced total capital, or in spite of the enormous fall of the average rate of profit. We see, then, that in spite of the progressive fall of the rate of profit, there may be an absolute increase of the number of labourers employed by capital, an absolute increase of the labour set in motion by it, an absolute increase of the mass of surplus labour absorbed, a resulting absolute increase of the produced surplus value, and consequently an absolute increase in the mass of the produced profit. And this increase may be progressive. And it *may* not only be so. On the basis of capitalist production, it *must* be so, aside from temporary fluctuations. . . .

#### COUNTERACTING CAUSES

(Vol. III, Ch. XIV)

If we consider the enormous development of the productive powers of labour, even comparing but the last thirty years with all former periods ; if we consider in particular the enormous mass of fixed capital, aside from machinery in the strict meaning of the term, passing into the process of social production as a whole, then the difficulty, which has hitherto troubled the vulgar economists, namely that of finding an explanation for the falling rate of profit, gives way to its opposite, namely to the question : How is it that this fall is not greater and more rapid ? There must be some counteracting influences at work, which thwart and annul the effects of this general law, leaving to it merely the character of a tendency. For this reason we have referred to the fall of the average rate of profit as a tendency to fall.

The following are the general counterbalancing causes :

##### I. *Raising the Intensity of Exploitation*

The rate at which labour is exploited, the appropriation of surplus labour and surplus value, is raised by a prolongation of the working day and an intensification of labour.

These two points have been fully discussed in Volume I as incidents to the production of absolute and relative surplus value. There are many ways of intensifying labour, which imply an increase of the constant capital as compared to the variable, and consequently a fall in the rate of profit, for instance setting a labourer to watch a larger number of machines. In such cases—and in the majority of manipulations serving to produce relative surplus value—the same causes, which bring about an increase in the rate of surplus value, may also imply a fall in the mass of surplus value, looking upon the matter from the point of view of the total quantities of invested capital. But there are other means of intensification, such as increasing the speed of machinery, which, although consuming more raw material, and, so far as the fixed capital is concerned, wearing out the machinery so much faster, nevertheless do not affect the relation of its value to the price of labour set in motion by it. It is particularly the prolongation of the working day, this invention of modern industry, which increases the mass of appropriated surplus labour without essentially altering the proportion of the employed labour power to the constant capital set in motion by it, and which tends to reduce this capital relatively, if anything. For the rest, we have already demonstrated—what constitutes the real secret of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall—that the manipulations made for the purpose of producing relative surplus value amount on the whole to this : That on one side as much as possible of a certain quantity of labour is transformed into surplus value, and that on the other hand as little labour as possible is employed in proportion to the invested capital, so that the same causes, which permit the raising of the intensity of exploitation, forbid the exploitation of the same quantity of labour by the same capital as before. These are the warring tendencies, which, while aiming at a raise in the rate of surplus value, have at the same time a tendency to bring about a fall in the mass of surplus value, and therefore of the rate of surplus value

produced by a certain capital. It is furthermore appropriate to mention at this point the extensive introduction of female and child labour, in so far as the whole family must produce a larger quantity of surplus value for a certain capital than before, even in case the total amount of their wages should increase, which is by no means general.

Whatever tends to promote the production of relative surplus value by mere improvements in methods, for instance in agriculture, without altering the magnitude of the invested capital, has the same effect. While the constant capital does not increase relatively to the variable in such cases, taking the variable capital as an index of the amount of labour power employed, the mass of the product *does* increase in proportion to the labour power employed. The same takes place, when the productive power of labour (whether its product passes into the consumption of the labourer or into the elements of constant capital) is freed from obstacles of circulation, of arbitrary or other restrictions which become obstacles in course of time, in short, of fetters of all kinds, without touching directly the proportion between the variable and the constant capital.

It might be asked, whether the causes checking the fall of the rate of profit, but always hastening it in the last analysis, include the temporary rise in surplus value above the average level, which recurs now in this, now in that line of production for the benefit of those individual capitalists, who make use of inventions, etc., before they are generally introduced. This question must be answered in the affirmative.

The mass of surplus value produced by a capital of a certain magnitude is the product of two factors, namely of the rate of surplus value multiplied by the number of labourers employed at this rate. Hence it depends on the number of labourers, when the rate of surplus value is given, and on the rate of surplus value, when the number of labourers is given. In short, it depends on the composite proportion of the absolute magnitudes of the variable

capital and the rate of surplus value. Now we have seen, that on an average the same causes, which raise the rate of relative surplus value, lower the mass of the employed labour power. It is evident, however, that there will be a more or less in this according to the definite proportion, in which the opposite movements exert themselves, and that the tendency to reduce the rate of profit will be particularly checked by a raise in the rate of absolute surplus value due to a prolongation of the working day.

We saw in the case of the rate of profit, that a fall in the rate was generally accompanied by an increase in the mass of profit, on account of the increasing mass of the total capital employed. From the point of view of the total variable capital of society, the surplus value produced by it is equal to the profit produced by it. Both the absolute mass and the absolute rate of surplus value have thus increased. The one has increased, because the quantity of labour power employed by society has grown, the other, because the intensity of exploitation of this labour power has increased. But in the case of a capital of a given magnitude, for instance 100, the rate of surplus value may increase, while the mass may decrease on an average; for the rate is determined by the proportion, in which the variable capital produces value, while its mass is determined by the proportional part which the variable capital constitutes in the total capital.

The rise in the rate of surplus value is a factor, which determines also the mass of surplus value and thereby the rate of profit, for it takes place especially under conditions, in which, as we have seen, the constant capital is either not increased at all relatively to the variable capital, or not increased in proportion. This factor does not suspend the general law. But it causes that law to become more of a tendency, that is a law whose absolute enforcement is checked, retarded, weakened, by counteracting influences. Since the same causes, which raise the rate of surplus value (even a prolongation of the working time is a result of large



scale industry), also tend to decrease the labour power employed by a certain capital, it follows that these same causes also tend to reduce the rate of profit and to check the speed of this fall. If one labourer is compelled to perform as much labour as would be rationally performed by two, and if this is done under circumstances, in which this one labourer can replace three, then this one will produce as much surplus labour as was formerly produced by two, and to that extent the rate of surplus value will have risen. But this one will not produce as much as formerly three, and to that extent the mass of surplus value will have decreased. But this reduction in mass will be compensated, or limited, by the rise in the rate of surplus value. If the entire population is employed at a higher rate of surplus value, the mass of surplus value will increase, although the population may remain the same. It will increase still more if the population increases at the same time. And although this goes hand in hand with a relative reduction of the number of labourers employed in proportion to the magnitude of the total capital, yet this reduction is checked or moderated by the rise in the rate of surplus value.

Before leaving this point, we wish to emphasise once more that, with a capital of a certain magnitude, the *rate* of surplus value may rise, while its *mass* is decreasing, and vice versa. The mass of surplus value is equal to the rate multiplied by the number of labourers; however, this rate is never calculated on the total, but only on the variable capital, actually only for a day at a time. On the other hand, with a given magnitude of a certain capital, the *rate of profit* can never fall or rise, without a simultaneous fall or rise in the *mass of surplus value*.

## II. Depression of Wages Below their Value

This is mentioned only empirically at this place, since it, like many other things, which might be enumerated here, has nothing to do with the general analysis of capital, but

belongs in a presentation of competition, which is not given in this work. However, it is one of the most important causes checking the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

### III. *Cheapening of the Elements of Constant Capital*

Everything that has been said in the first part of this volume about the causes, which raise the rate of profit while the rate of surplus value remains the same, or independently of the rate of surplus value, belongs here. This applies particularly to the fact that, from the point of view of the total capital, the value of the constant capital does not increase in the same proportion as its material volume. For instance, the quantity of cotton, which a single European spinning operator works up in a modern factory, has grown in a colossal degree compared to the quantity formerly worked up by a European operator with a spinning wheel. But the value of the worked-up cotton has not grown in proportion to its mass. The same holds good of machinery and other fixed capital. In short, the same development, which increases the mass of the constant capital relatively over that of the variable, reduces the value of its elements as a result of the increased productivity of labour. In this way the value of the constant capital, although continually increasing, is prevented from increasing at the same rate as its material volume, that is, the material volume of the means of production set in motion by the same amount of labour power. In exceptional cases the mass of the elements of constant capital may even increase, while its value remains the same or even falls.

The foregoing bears upon the depreciation of existing capital (that is, of its material elements) which comes with the development of industry. This is another one of the causes which by their constant effects tend to check the fall of the rate of profit, although it may under certain circumstances reduce the mass of profit by reducing the mass of capital yielding a profit. This shows once more that the

same causes, which bring about a tendency of the rate of profit to fall, also check the realisation of this tendency.

#### IV. *Relative Overpopulation*

The production of a relative surplus population is inseparable from the development of the productivity of labour expressed by a fall in the rate of profit, and the two go hand in hand. The relative over-population becomes so much more apparent in a certain country, the more the capitalist mode of production is developed in it. This, again, is on the one hand a reason, which explains why the imperfect subordination of labour to capital continues in many lines of production, and continues longer than seems at first glance compatible with the general stage of development. This is due to the cheapness and mass of the disposable or unemployed wage labourers, and to the greater resistance, which some lines of production, by their nature, oppose to a transformation of manufacture into machine production. On the other hand, new lines of production are opened up, especially for the production of luxuries, and these lines take for their basis this relative over-population set free in other lines of production by the increase of their constant capital. These new lines start out with living labour as their predominating element, and go by degrees through the same evolution as the other lines of production. In either case the variable capital constitutes a considerable proportion of the total capital and wages are below the average, so that both the rate and mass of surplus value are exceptionally high. Since the average rate of profit is formed by levelling the rates of profit in the individual lines of production, the same cause, which brings about a falling tendency of the rate of profit, once more produces a counterbalance to this tendency and paralyses its effects more or less.

### V. *Foreign Trade*

To the extent that foreign trade cheapens partly the elements of constant capital, partly the necessities of life for which the variable capital is exchanged, it tends to raise the rate of profit by raising the rate of surplus value and lowering the value of the constant capital. It exerts itself generally in this direction by permitting an expansion of the scale of production. But by this means it hastens on one hand the process of accumulation, on the other the reduction of the variable as compared to the constant capital, and thus a fall in the rate of profit. In the same way the expansion of foreign trade, which is the basis of the capitalist mode of production in its stages of infancy, has become its own product in the further progress of capitalist development through its innate necessities, through its need of an ever expanding market. Here we see once more the dual nature of these effects. (Ricardo entirely overlooked this side of foreign trade.)

Another question, which by its special nature is really beyond the scope of our analysis, is the following : Is the average rate of profit raised by the higher rate of profit, which capital invested in foreign, and particularly in colonial, trade realises ?

Capitals invested in foreign trade are in a position to yield a higher rate of profit, because, in the first place, they come in competition with commodities produced in other countries with lesser facilities of production, so that an advanced country is enabled to sell its goods above their value even when it sells them cheaper than the competing countries. To the extent that the labour of the advanced countries is here exploited as a labour of a higher specific weight, the rate of profit rises, because labour which has not been paid as being of a higher quality is sold as such. The same condition may obtain in the relations with a certain country, into which commodities are exported and from which commodities are imported. This country may offer more

materialised labour in goods than it receives, and yet it may receive in return commodities cheaper than it could produce them. In the same way a manufacturer, who exploits a new invention before it has become general, undersells his competitors and yet sells his commodities above their individual values, that is to say, he exploits the specifically higher productive power of the labour employed by him as surplus value. By this means he secures a surplus profit. On the other hand, capitals invested in colonies, etc., may yield a higher rate of profit for the simple reason that the rate of profit is higher there on account of the backward development, and for the added reason, that slaves, coolies, etc., permit a better exploitation of labour. We see no reason, why these higher rates of profit realised by capitals invested in certain lines and sent home by them should not enter as elements into the average rate of profit and tend to keep it up to that extent. We see so much less reason for the contrary opinion, when it is assumed that such favoured lines of investment are subject to the laws of free competition. What Ricardo has in mind as objections, is mainly this : With the higher prices realised in foreign trade, commodities are bought abroad and sent home. These commodities are sold on the home market, and this can constitute at best but a temporary advantage of the favoured spheres of production over others. This aspect of the matter is changed, when we no longer look upon it from the point of view of money. The favoured country recovers more labour in exchange for less labour, although this difference, this surplus, is pocketed by a certain class, as it is in any exchange between labour and capital. So far as the rate of profit is higher, because it is generally higher in the colonial country, it may go hand in hand with a low level of prices, if the natural conditions are favourable. It is true that a compensation takes place, but it is not a compensation on the old level, as Ricardo thinks.

However, this same foreign trade develops the capitalist

mode of production in the home country. And this implies the relative decrease of the variable as compared to the constant capital, while it produces, on the other hand, an overproduction for the foreign market, so that it has once more the opposite effect in its further course.

And so we have seen in a general way, that the same causes, which produce a falling tendency in the rate of profit, also call forth counter-effects, which check and partly paralyse this fall. This law is not suspended, but its effect is weakened. Otherwise it would not be the fall of the average rate of profit, which would be unintelligible, but rather the relative slowness of this fall. The law therefore shows itself only as a tendency, whose effects become clearly marked only under certain conditions and in the course of long periods. . . .

#### UNRAVELLING THE INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS OF THE LAW

(Vol. III, Ch. XV)

. . . A fall in the rate of profit and a hastening of accumulation are in so far only different expressions of the same process as both of them indicate the development of the productive power. Accumulation in its turn hastens the fall of the rate of profit, inasmuch as it implies the concentration of labour on a large scale and thereby a higher composition of capital. On the other hand, a fall in the rate of profit hastens the concentration of capital and its centralisation through the expropriation of the smaller capitalists, the expropriation of the last survivors of the direct producers who still have anything to give up. This accelerates on one hand the accumulation, so far as mass is concerned, although the rate of accumulation falls with the rate of profit.

On the other hand, so far as the rate of self-expansion of the total capital, the rate of profit, is the incentive of capitalist production (just as this self-expression of capital is its

only purpose), its fall checks the formation of new independent capitals and thus seems to threaten the development of the process of capitalist production. It promotes overproduction, speculation, crises, surplus capital, along with surplus population. Those economists who, like Ricardo, regard the capitalist mode of production as absolute, feel, nevertheless, that this mode of production creates its own limits, and therefore they attribute this limit, not to production, but to nature (in their theory of rent). But the main point in their horror over the falling rate of profit is the feeling, that capitalist production meets in the development of productive forces a barrier, which has nothing to do with the production of wealth as such ; and this peculiar barrier testifies to the finiteness and the historical, merely transitory character of capitalist production. It demonstrates that this is not an absolute mode for the production of wealth, but rather comes in conflict with the further development of wealth at a certain stage. . . .

The creation of surplus value, assuming the necessary means of production, or sufficient accumulation of capital, to be existing, finds no other limit but the labouring population, when the rate of surplus value, that is, the intensity of exploitation, is given ; and no other limit but the intensity of exploitation, when the labouring population is given. And the capitalist process of production consists essentially of the production of surplus value, materialised in the surplus product, which is that aliquot portion of the produced commodities, in which unpaid labour is materialised. It must never be forgotten, that the production of this surplus value—and the reconversion of a portion of it into capital, or accumulation, forms an indispensable part of this production of surplus value—is the immediate purpose and the compelling motive of capitalist production. It will not do to represent capitalist production as something which it is not, that is to say, as a production having for its immediate purpose the consumption of goods, or the production

of means of enjoyment for capitalists. This would be overlooking the specific character of capitalist production, which reveals itself in its innermost essence.

The creation of this surplus value is the object of the direct process of production, and this process has no other limits but those mentioned above. As soon as the available quantity of surplus value has been materialised in commodities, surplus value has been produced. But this production of surplus value is but the first act of the capitalist process of production, it merely terminates the act of direct production. Capital has absorbed so much unpaid labour. With the development of the process, which expresses itself through a falling tendency of the rate of profit, the mass of surplus value thus produced is swelled to immense dimensions. Now comes the second act of the process. The entire mass of commodities, the total product, which contains a portion which is to reproduce the constant and variable capital as well as a portion representing surplus value, must be sold. If this is not done, or only partly accomplished, or only at prices which are below the prices of production, the labourer has been none the less exploited, but his exploitation does not realise as much for the capitalist. It may yield no surplus value at all for him, or only realise a portion of the produced surplus value, or it may even mean a partial or complete loss of his capital. The conditions of direct exploitation and those of the realisation of surplus value are not identical. They are separated logically as well as by time and space. The first are only limited by the productive power of society, the last by the proportional relations of the various lines of production and by the consuming power of society. This last-named power is not determined either by the absolute productive power nor by the absolute consuming power, but by the consuming power based on antagonistic conditions of distribution, which reduces the consumption of the great mass of the population to a variable minimum within more or less narrow limits. The consuming power is furthermore



restricted by the tendency to accumulate, the greed for an expansion of capital and a production of surplus value on an enlarged scale. This is a law of capitalist production imposed by incessant revolutions in the methods of production themselves, the resulting depreciation of existing capital, the general competitive struggle and the necessity of improving the product and expanding the scale of production, for the sake of self-preservation and on penalty of failure. The market must, therefore, be continually extended, so that its interrelations and the conditions regulating them assume more and more the form of a natural law independent of the producers and become ever more uncontrollable. This internal contradiction seeks to balance itself by an expansion of the outlying fields of production. But to the extent that the productive power develops, it finds itself at variance with the narrow basis on which the conditions of consumption rest. On this self-contradictory basis it is no contradiction at all that there should be an excess of capital simultaneously with an excess of population. For while a combination of these two would indeed increase the mass of the produced surplus value, it would at the same time intensify the contradiction between the conditions under which this surplus value is produced and those under which it is realised. . . .

*Conflict between the Expansion of Production and the Creation of Values*

The development of the productive power of labour shows itself in two ways : First, in the magnitude of the already produced productive powers, in the volume of values and masses of requirements of production, under which new production is carried on, and in the absolute magnitude of the already accumulated productive capital ; secondly, in the relative smallness of the capital invested in wages as compared to the total capital, that is, in the relatively small quantity of living labour required for the

reproduction and self-expansion of a given capital as compared to mass production. It is at the same time conditioned on the concentration of capital.

So far as the employed labour-power is concerned, the development of the productive powers shows itself once more in two ways : First, in the increase of surplus labour, that is, the reduction of the necessary labour time required for the reproduction of labour power ; secondly, in the decrease of the quantity of labour power (the number of labourers) employed in general for the purpose of setting in motion a given capital.

Both movements do not only go hand in hand, but are mutually conditioned on one another. They are different phenomena, through which the same law expresses itself. However, they affect the rate of profit in opposite ways. The total mass of profits is equal to the total mass of surplus values, the rate of profit  $= \frac{s}{c} = \frac{\text{surplus value}}{\text{advanced total capital}}$ . Now, surplus value, as a total, is determined first by its rate, secondly by the mass of labour simultaneously employed at this rate, or what amounts to the same, by the magnitude of the variable capital. One of these factors, the rate of surplus value, rises in one direction, the other factor, the number of labourers, falls in the opposite direction (relatively or absolutely). To the extent that the development of the productive power reduces the paid portion of the employed labour, it raises the surplus value by raising its rate ; but to the extent that it reduces the total mass of labour employed by a certain capital, it reduces the factor of numbers with which the rate of surplus value is multiplied in order to calculate its mass. Two labourers, each working 12 hours daily, cannot produce the same mass of surplus value as 24 labourers each working only 2 hours, even if they could live on air and did not have to work for themselves at all. In this respect, then, the compensation of the reduction in the number of labourers by means of an intensification of exploitation has certain impassable limits.

It may, for this reason, check the fall of the rate of profit, but cannot prevent it entirely.

With the development of the capitalist mode of production, the rate of profit therefore falls, while its mass increases with the growing mass of the employed capital. Given the rate, the absolute increase in the mass of capital depends on its existing magnitude. But on the other hand, if this magnitude is given, the proportion of its growth, the rate of its increment, depends on the rate of profit. The increase in the productive power (which, we repeat, always goes hand in hand with a depreciation of the productive capital) cannot directly increase the value of the existing capital, unless it increases, by raising the rate of profit, that portion of the value of the annual product which is reconverted into capital. So far as the productive power is concerned (since it has no direct bearing upon the *value* of the existing capital), it can accomplish this only by raising the relative surplus value, or reducing the value of the constant capital, so that those commodities which enter either into the reproduction of labour power or into the elements of constant capital are cheapened. Both of these things imply a depreciation of the existing capital, and both of them go hand in hand with a relative reduction of the variable as compared to the constant capital. Both things imply a fall in the rate of profit, and both of them check it. Furthermore, so far as an increased rate of profit causes a greater demand for labour, it tends to increase the working population and thus the material, whose exploitation gives to capital its real nature of capital.

Indirectly, however, the development of the productive power of labour contributes to the increase of the value of the existing capital, by increasing the mass and variety of use-values, in which the same exchange value presents itself and which form the material substance, the objective elements, of capital, the material objects of which the constant capital is directly composed and the variable capital at least indirectly. With the same capital and the

same labour more things are produced, which may be converted into capital, aside from their exchange value. Things which may serve for the absorption of additional labour, and consequently of additional surplus labour, and which therefore may become additional capital. The amount of labour, which a certain capital may command, does not depend on its value, but on the mass of raw and auxiliary materials, of machinery and elements of fixed capital, of necessities of life, of which it is composed, whatever may be their value. As the mass of the employed labour, and thus of surplus labour, increases, so does the value of the reproduced capital and the surplus value newly added to it grow.

These two elements playing their rôle in the process of accumulation should not, however, be observed in their quiet existence side by side, as Ricardo does. They imply a contradiction, which expresses itself in antagonistic tendencies and phenomena. These antagonistic agencies oppose each other simultaneously.

Together with the incentives for an actual increase of the labouring population, which originates in the augmentation of that portion of the total social product which serves as capital, there are the effects of other agencies, which create merely a relative over-population.

Together with the fall of the rate of profit grows the mass of capitals, and hand in hand with it goes a depreciation of the existing capitals, which checks this fall and gives an accelerating push to the accumulation of capital values.

Together with the development of the productive power grows the higher composition of capital, the relative decrease of the variable as compared to the constant capital. These different influences make themselves felt, now more side by side in space, now more successively in time. Periodically the conflict of antagonistic agencies seeks vent in crises. The crises are always but momentary and forcible solutions of the existing contradictions, violent eruptions, which restore the disturbed equilibrium for a while.

The contradiction, generally speaking, consists in this that the capitalist mode of production has a tendency to develop the productive forces absolutely, regardless of value and of the surplus value contained in it and regardless of the social conditions under which capitalist production takes place ; while it has on the other hand for its aim the preservation of the value of the existing capital and its self-expansion to the highest limit (that is, an ever accelerated growth of this value). Its specific character is directed at the existing value of capital as a means of increasing this value to the utmost. The methods by which it aims to accomplish this comprise a fall of the rate of profit, a depreciation of the existing capital, and a development of the productive forces of labour at the expense of the already created productive forces.

The periodical depreciation of the existing capital, which is one of the immanent means of capitalist production by which the fall in the rate of profit is checked and the accumulation of capital value through the formation of new capital promoted, disturbs the existing conditions, within which the process of circulation and reproduction of capital takes place, and is therefore accompanied by sudden stagnations and crises in the process of production.

The relative decrease of variable capital as compared to the constant, which goes hand in hand with the development of the productive forces, gives an impulse to the growth of the labouring population, while it continually creates an artificial over-population. The accumulation of capital, so far as its value is concerned, is checked by the falling rate of profit, in order to hasten still more the accumulation of its use-value, and this, in its turn, adds new speed to the accumulation of its value.

Capitalist production is continually engaged in the attempt to overcome these immanent barriers, but it overcomes them only by means which again place the same barriers in its way in a more formidable size.

*The real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself.* It is the fact that capital and its self-expansion appear as the

starting and closing point, as the motive and aim of production ; that production is merely production for *capital*, and not vice versa, the means of production mere means for an ever expanding system of the life process for the benefit of the *society* of producers. The barriers, within which the preservation and self-expansion of the value of capital resting on the expropriation and pauperisation of the great mass of producers can alone move, these barriers come continually in collision with the methods of production, which capital must employ for its purposes, and which steer straight toward an unrestricted extension of production, toward production for its own self, toward an unconditional development of the productive forces of society. The means, this unconditional development of the productive forces of society, comes continually into conflict with the limited end, the self-expansion of the existing capital. Thus, while the capitalist mode of production is one of the historical means by which the material forces of production are developed and the world-market required for them created, it is at the same time in continual conflict with this historical task and the conditions of social production corresponding to it.

#### *Surplus of Capital and Surplus of Population*

With the fall of the rate of profit grows the lowest limit of capital required in the hands of the individual capitalist for the productive employment of labour, required both for the exploitation of labour and for bringing the consumed labour time within the limits of the labour time necessary for the production of the commodities, the limits of the average social labour time required for the production of the commodities. Simultaneously with it grows the concentration, because there comes a certain limit where large capital with a small rate of profit accumulates faster than small capital with a large rate of profit. This increasing concentration in its turn brings about a new fall in the rate

of profit at a certain climax. The mass of the small divided capitals is thereby pushed into adventurous channels, speculation, fraudulent credit, fraudulent stocks, crises. The so-called plethora of capital refers always essentially to a plethora of that class of capital which finds no compensation in its mass for the fall in the rate of profit—and this applies always to the newly formed sprouts of capital—or to a plethora of capitals incapable of self-dependent action and placed at the disposal of the managers of large lines of industry in the form of credit. This plethora of capital proceeds from the same causes which call forth a relative over-population. It is therefore a phenomenon supplementing this last one, although they are found at opposite poles, unemployed capital on the one hand, and unemployed labouring population on the other.

An over-production of capital, not of individual commodities, signifies therefore simply an over-accumulation of capital—although the over-production of capital always includes the over-production of commodities. In order to understand what this over-accumulation is (its detailed analysis follows later), it is but necessary to assume it to be absolute. When would an over-production of capital be absolute? When would it be an over-production which would not affect merely a few important lines of production, but which would be so absolute as to extend to every field of production?

There would be an absolute over-production of capital as soon as the additional capital for purposes of capitalist production would be equal to zero. The purpose of capitalist production is the self-expansion of capital, that is, the appropriation of surplus labour, the production of surplus value, of profit. As soon as capital would have grown to such a proportion compared with the labouring population, that neither the absolute labour time nor the relative surplus labour time could be extended any further (this last named extension would be out of the question even in the mere case that the demand for labour would be very strong, so that

there would be a tendency for wages to rise) ; as soon as a point is reached where the increased capital produces no larger, or even smaller, quantities of surplus value than it did before its increase, there would be an absolute overproduction of capital. That is to say, the increased capital  $C + \Delta C$  would not produce any more profit, or even less profit, than capital  $C$  before its expansion by  $\Delta C$ . In both cases there would be a strong and sudden fall in the average rate of profit, but it would be due to a change in the composition of capital which would not be caused by the development of the productive forces, but by a rise in the money-value of the variable capital (on account of the increased wages) and the corresponding reduction in the proportion of surplus labour to necessary labour.

In reality the matter would amount to this, that a portion of the capital would lie fallow completely or partially (because it would first have to crowd some of the active capital out before it could take part in the process of self-expansion), while the active portion would produce values at a lower rate of profit, owing to the pressure of the unemployed or but partly employed capital. Matters would not be altered in this respect, if a part of the additional capital were to take the place of some old capital, crowding this into the position of additional capital. We should always have on one side the sum of old capitals, on the other that of the additional capitals. The fall in the rate of profit would then be accompanied by an absolute decrease in the mass of profits, since under the conditions assumed by us the mass of the employed labour power could not be increased and the rate of surplus value not raised, so that there could be no raising of the mass of surplus value. And the reduced mass of profits would have to be calculated on an increased total capital. But even assuming that the employed capital were to continue producing value at the old rate, the mass of profits, remaining the same, this mass would still be calculated on an increased total capital, and this would likewise imply a fall in the rate of profits. If a total capital of 1,000 yielded



a profit of 100, and after its increase to 1,500 still yielded 100, then 1,000 in the second case would yield only 66⅔. The self-expansion of the old capital would have been reduced absolutely. A capital of 1,000 would not yield any more under the new circumstances than formerly a capital of 666⅔.

It is evident that this actual depreciation of the old capital could not take place without a struggle, that the additional capital  $\Delta C$  could not assume the functions of capital without an effort. The rate of profit would not fall on account of competition due to the over-production of capital. The competitive struggle would rather begin, because the fall of the rate of profit and the over-production of capital are caused by the same conditions. The capitalists who are actively engaged with their old capitals would keep as much of the new additional capitals as would be, in their hands in a fallow state, in order to prevent a depreciation of their original capital and a crowding of its space within the field of production. Or they would employ it for the purpose of loading, even at a momentary loss, the necessity of keeping additional capital fallow upon the shoulders of new intruders and other competitors in general.

That portion of  $\Delta C$  which would be in new hands would seek to make room for itself at the expense of the old capital, and would accomplish this in part by forcing a portion of the old capital into a fallow state. The old capital would have to give up its place to the new and retire to the place of the completely or partially unemployed additional capital.

Under all circumstances, a portion of the old capital would be compelled to lie fallow, to give up its capacity of capital and stop acting and producing value as such. The competitive struggle would decide what part would have to go into this fallow state. So long as everything goes well, competition effects a practical brotherhood of the capitalist class, as we have seen in the case of the average rate of profit, so that each shares in the common loot in proportion to the magnitude of his share of investment. But as soon as

it is no longer a question of sharing profits, but of sharing losses, everyone tries to reduce his own share to a minimum and load as much as possible upon the shoulders of some other competitor. However, the class must inevitably lose. How much the individual capitalist must bear of the loss, to what extent he must share in it at all, is decided by power and craftiness, and competition then transforms itself into a fight of hostile brothers. The antagonism of the interests of the individual capitalists and those of the capitalist class as a whole then makes itself felt just as previously the identity of these interests impressed itself practically on competition.

How would this conflict be settled and the "healthy" movement of capitalist production resumed under normal conditions? The mode of settlement is already indicated by the mere statement of the conflict whose settlement is under discussion. It implies the necessity of making unproductive, or even partially destroying, some capital, amounting either to the complete value of the additional capital  $\Delta C$ , or to a part of it. But a graphic presentation of this conflict shows that the loss is not equally distributed over all the individual capitals, but according to the fortunes of the competitive struggle, which assigns the loss in very different proportions and in various shapes by grace of previously captured advantages or positions, so that one capital is rendered unproductive, another destroyed, a third but relatively injured or but momentarily depreciated, etc.

But under all circumstances the equilibrium is restored by making more or less capital unproductive or destroying it. This would affect to some extent the material substance of capital, that is, a part of the means of production, fixed and circulating capital, would not perform any service as capital; a portion of the running establishments would then close down. Of course, time would corrode and depreciate all means of production (except land), but this particular stagnation would cause a far more serious destruction of means of production. However, the main effect in this case would be to suspend the functions of some means of

production and prevent them for a shorter or longer time from serving as means of production.

The principal work of destruction would show its most dire effects in a slaughtering of the *values* of capitals. That portion of the value of capital which exists only in the form of claims on future shares of surplus value of profit, which consists in fact of creditor's notes on production in its various forms, would be immediately depreciated by the reduction of the receipts on which it is calculated. One portion of the gold and silver money is rendered unproductive, cannot serve as capital. One portion of the commodities on the market can complete its process of circulation and reproduction only by means of an immense contraction of its prices, which means a depreciation of the capital represented by it. In the same way the elements of fixed capital are more or less depreciated. Then there is the added complication that the process of reproduction is based on definite assumptions as to prices, so that a general fall in prices checks and disturbs the process of reproduction. This interference and stagnation paralyses the function of money as a medium of payment, which is conditioned on the development of capital and the resulting price relations. The chain of payments due at certain times is broken in a hundred places, and the disaster is intensified by the collapse of the credit system. Thus violent and acute crises are brought about, sudden and forcible depreciations, an actual stagnation and collapse of the process of reproduction, and finally a real falling off in reproduction.

At the same time still other agencies would have been at work. The stagnation of production would have laid off a part of the labouring class and thereby placed the employed part in a condition in which they would have to submit to a reduction of wages, even below the average. This operation has the same effect on capital as though the relative or absolute surplus value had been increased at average wages. The time of prosperity would have promoted marriages among the labourers and reduced the decimation of the

offspring. These circumstances, while implying a real increase in population, do not signify an increase in the actual working population, but they nevertheless affect the relations of the labourers to capital in the same way as though the number of the actually working labourers had increased. On the other hand, the fall in prices and the competitive struggle would have given to every capitalist an impulse to raise the individual value of his total product above its average value by means of new machines, new and improved working methods, new combinations, which means, to increase the productive power of a certain quantity of labour, to lower the proportion of the variable to the constant capital, and thereby to release some labourers, in short, to create an artificial over-population. The depreciation of the elements of constant capital itself would be another factor tending to raise the rate of profit. The mass of the employed constant capital, compared to the variable, would have increased, but the value of this mass might have fallen. The present stagnation of production would have prepared an expansion of production later on, within capitalistic limits.

And in this way the cycle would be run once more. One portion of the capital which had been depreciated by the stagnation of its function would recover its old value. For the rest, the same vicious circle would be described once more under expanded conditions of production, in an expanded market, and with increased productive forces.

However, even under the extreme conditions assumed by us this absolute over-production of capital would not be an absolute over-production in the sense that it would be an absolute over-production of means of production. It would be an over-production of means of production *only to the extent that they serve as capital*, so that the increased value of its increased mass would also imply a utilisation for the production of more value.

Yet it would be an over-production, because capital would be unable to exploit labour to a degree required by

the "healthy, normal" development of the process of capitalist production, a degree of exploitation which would increase at least the mass of profit to the extent that the mass of the employed capital would grow ; which would therefore exclude any possibility of the rate of profit falling to the same extent that capital grows, or of the rate of profits falling even more rapidly than capital grows.

Over-production of capital never signifies anything else but over-production of means of production—means of production and necessities of life—which may serve as capital, that is, serve for the exploitation of labour at a given degree of exploitation ; for a fall in the intensity of exploitation below a certain point calls forth disturbances and stagnations in the process of capitalist production, crises, destruction of capital. It is no contradiction that this over-production of capital is accompanied by a more or less considerable relative over-population. The same circumstances, which have increased the productive power of labour, augmented the mass of produced commodities, expanded the markets, accelerated the accumulation of capital both as concerns its mass and its value, and lowered the rate of profit, these same circumstances have also created a relative over-population, and continue to create it all the time, an over-population of labourers who are not employed by the surplus capital on account of the low degree of exploitation at which they might be employed, or at least on account of the low rate of profit, which they would yield with the given rate of exploitation.

If capital is sent to foreign countries, it is not done because there is absolutely no employment to be had for it at home. It is done, because it can be employed at a higher rate of profit in a foreign country. But such capital is absolute surplus capital for the employed labouring population and for the home country in general. It exists as such together with the relative over-population, and this is an illustration of the way in which both of them exist side by side and are conditioned on one another.

On the other hand, the fall in the rate of profit connected with accumulation necessarily creates a competitive struggle. The compensation of the fall in the rate of profit by a rise in the mass of profit applies only to the total social capital and to the great capitalists who are firmly installed. The new additional capital, which enters upon its functions, does not enjoy any such compensating conditions. It must conquer them for itself, and so the fall in the rate of profit calls forth the competitive struggle among capitalists, not vice versa. This competitive struggle is indeed accompanied by a transient rise in wages and a resulting further fall of the rate of profit for a short time. The same thing is seen in the over-production of commodities, the overstocking of markets. Since the aim of capital is not to minister to certain wants, but to produce profits, and since it accomplishes this purpose by methods which adapt the mass of production to the scale of production, not vice versa, conflict must continually ensue between the limited conditions of consumption on a capitalist basis and a production which for ever tends to exceed its immanent barriers. Moreover, capital consists of commodities, and therefore the over-production of capital implies an over-production of commodities. Hence we meet with the peculiar phenomenon that the same economists, who deny the over-production of commodities, admit that of capital. If it is said that there is no general over-production, but that a disproportion grows up between various lines of production, then this is tantamount to saying that within capitalist production the proportionality of the individual lines of production is brought about through a continual process of disproportionality, that is, the interrelations of production as a whole enforce themselves as a blind law upon the agents of production instead of having brought the productive process under their common control as a law understood by the social mind. It amounts furthermore to demanding that countries, in which capitalist production is not yet developed, should consume and produce at the same rate

as that adapted to countries with capitalist production. If it is said that over-production is only relative, then the statement is correct ; but the entire mode of production is only a relative one, whose barriers are not absolute, but have absoluteness only in so far as it is capitalistic. Otherwise, how could there be a lack of demand for the very commodities which the mass of the people want, and how would it be possible that this demand must be sought in foreign countries, in foreign markets, in order that the labourers at home might receive in payment the average amount of necessities of life ? This is possible only because in this specific capitalist inter-relation the surplus product assumes a form, in which its owner cannot offer it for consumption, unless it first reconverts itself into capital for him. Finally, if it is said that the capitalists would only have to exchange and consume those commodities among themselves, then the nature of the capitalist mode of production is forgotten, it is forgotten that the question is merely one of expanding the value of the capital, not of consuming it. In short, all these objections to the obvious phenomena of over-production (phenomena which do not pay any attention to these objections) amount to this, that the barriers of capitalist production are not absolute barriers of production itself and therefore no barriers of this specific, capitalistic, production. But the contradiction of this capitalist mode of production consists precisely in its tendency to an absolute development of productive forces, a development, which comes continually in conflict with the specific conditions of production in which capital moves and alone can move.

It is not a fact that too many necessities of life are produced in proportion to the existing population. The reverse is true. Not enough is produced to satisfy the wants of the great mass decently and humanely.

It is not a fact that too many means of production are produced to employ the able-bodied portion of the population. The reverse is the case. In the first place, too large a

portion of the population is produced consisting of people who are really not capable of working, who are dependent through force of circumstances on the exploitation of the labour of others, or compelled to perform certain kinds of labour which can be dignified with this name only under a miserable mode of production. In the second place, not enough means of production are produced to permit the employment of the entire able-bodied population under the most productive conditions, so that their absolute labour time would be shortened by the mass and effectiveness of the constant capital employed during working hours.

On the other hand, there is periodically a production of too many means of production and necessities of life to permit of their serving as means for the exploitation of the labourers at a certain rate of profit. Too many commodities are produced to permit of a realisation of the value and surplus value contained in them under the conditions of distribution and consumption peculiar to capitalist production, that is, too many to permit of the continuation of this process without ever recurring explosions.

It is not a fact that too much wealth is produced. But it is true that there is periodical over-production of wealth in its capitalistic and self-contradictory form.

The barrier of the capitalist mode of production becomes apparent :

(1) In the fact that the development of the productive power of labour creates in the falling rate of profit a law which turns into an antagonism of this mode of production at a certain point and requires for its defeat periodical crises.

(2) In the fact that the expansion or contraction of production is determined by the appropriation of unpaid labour, and by the proportion of this unpaid labour to materialised labour in general, or, to speak the language of the capitalists, is determined by profit and by the proportion of this profit to the employed capital, by a definite rate of profit, instead of being determined by the relations of production to social wants, to the wants of socially developed



human beings. The capitalist mode of production, for this reason, meets with barriers at a certain scale of production which would be inadequate under different conditions. It comes to a standstill at a point determined by the production and realisation of profit, not by the satisfaction of social needs.

If the rate of profit falls, there follows on one hand an exertion of capital, in order that the capitalist may be enabled to depress the individual value of his commodities below the social average level and thereby realise an extra profit at the prevailing market prices. On the other hand, there follows swindle and a general promotion of swindle by frenzied attempts at new methods of production, new investments of capital, new adventures, for the sake of securing some shred of extra profit, which shall be independent of the general average and above it.

The rate of profit, that is, the relative increment of capital, is above all important for all new off-shoots of capital seeking an independent location. And as soon as the formation of capital were to fall into the hands of a few established great capitals, which are compensated by the mass of profits for the loss through a fall in the rate of profits, the vital fire of production would be extinguished. It would fall into a dormant state. The rate of profit is the compelling power of capitalist production, and only such things are produced as yield a profit. Hence the fright of the English economists over the decline of the rate of profit. That the bare possibility of such a thing should worry Ricardo, shows his profound understanding of the conditions of capitalist production. The reproach moved against him, that he has an eye only to the development of the productive forces regardless of "human beings," regardless of the sacrifices in human beings and capital *values* incurred, strikes precisely his strong point. The development of the productive forces of social labour is the historical task and privilege of capital. It is precisely in this way that it unconsciously creates the material requirements of a higher

mode of production. What worries Ricardo is the fact that that rate of profit, the stimulating principle of capitalist production, the fundamental premise and driving force of accumulation, should be endangered by the development of production itself. And the quantitative proportion means everything here. There is indeed something deeper than this hidden at this point, which he vaguely feels. It is here demonstrated in a purely economic way, that is, from a bourgeois point of view, within the confines of capitalist understanding, from the standpoint of capitalist production itself, that it has a barrier, that it is relative, that it is not an absolute, but only a historical mode of production corresponding to a definite and limited epoch in the development of the material conditions of production. . . .

#### CONDITIONS OF DISTRIBUTION AND PRODUCTION

(Vol. III, Ch. LI)

The new value added by the annual new labour—and thus also that portion of the annual product, in which this value is represented and may be drawn out of the total fund and separated from it—is divided into three parts, which assume three different forms of revenue. These forms indicate that one portion of this value belongs, or goes to, the owner of labour power, another portion to the owner of capital, and a third portion to the owner of land. These, then, are forms, or conditions, of distribution, for they express conditions, under which the newly produced total value is distributed among the owners of the different agencies of production.

To the ordinary mind these conditions of distribution appear as natural conditions, as conditions arising from the nature of all social production, from the laws of human production in general. While it cannot be denied that pre-capitalist societies show other modes of distribution, yet those modes are interpreted as undeveloped, imperfect, disguised, differently coloured modes of these natural

conditions of distribution, which have not reached their purest expression and their highest form.

The only correct thing in this conception is this : Assuming some form of social production to exist (for instance, that of the primitive Indian communes, or that of the more artificially developed communism of the Peruvians), a distinction can always be made between that portion of labour, which supplies products directly for the individual consumption of the producers and their families—aside from the part which is productively consumed—and that portion of labour, which produces surplus products, which always serve for the satisfaction of social needs, no matter what may be the mode of distribution of this surplus product, and whoever may perform the function of a representative of these social needs. The identity of the various modes of distribution amounts merely to this, that they are identical, if we leave out of consideration their differences and specific forms and keep in mind only their common features as distinguished from their differences.

A more advanced, more critical mind, however, admits the historically developed character of the condition of distribution, but clings on the other hand so much more tenaciously to the unaltering character of the conditions of production arising from human nature and thus independent of all historical development.

On the other hand, the scientific analysis of the capitalist mode of production demonstrates that it is a peculiar mode of production, specifically defined by historical development ; that it, like any other definite mode of production, is conditioned upon a certain stage of social productivity and upon the historically developed form of the forces of production. This historical pre-requisite is itself the historical result and product of a preceding process, from which the new mode of production takes its departure as from its given foundation. The conditions of production corresponding to this specific, historically determined, mode of production have a specific, historical, passing character, and men enter

into them as into their process of social life, the process by which they create their social life. The conditions of distribution are essentially identical with these conditions of production, being their reverse side, so that both conditions share the same historical and passing character.

In the study of conditions of distribution, the start is made from the alleged fact, that the annual product is distributed among wages, profit and rent. But if so expressed, it is a misstatement. The product is assigned on one side to capital, on the other to revenues. One of these revenues, wages, never assumes the form of a revenue, a revenue of the labourer, until it has first faced this labourer in the form of capital. The meeting of the produced requirement of labour and of the general products of labour as capital, in opposition to the direct producers, includes from the outset a definite social character of the material requirements of labour as compared to the labourers, and with it a definite relation, into which they enter in production itself with the owners of the means of production and among themselves. The transformation of these means of production into capital implies on their part the expropriation of the direct producers from the soil, and thus a definite form of property in land.

If one portion of the product were not transformed into capital, the other would not assume the form of wages, profit and rent.

On the other hand, just as the capitalist mode of production is conditioned upon this definite social form of the conditions of production, so it reproduces them continually. It produces not merely the material products, but reproduces continually the conditions of production, in which the others are produced, and with them the corresponding conditions of distribution.

It may indeed be said that capital (and the ownership of land implied by it) is itself conditioned upon a certain mode of distribution, namely the expropriation of the labourers from the means of production, the concentration of these

means in the hands of a minority of individuals, the exclusive ownership of land by other individuals, in short all those conditions, which have been described in the Part dealing with Primitive Accumulation (Volume I, Chapter XXVI). But this distribution differs considerably from the meaning of "conditions of distribution," provided we invest them with a historical character in opposition to conditions of production. By the first kind of distribution is meant the various titles to that portion of the product, which goes into individual consumption. By conditions of distribution, on the other hand, we mean the foundations of specific social functions performed within the conditions of production themselves by special agents in opposition to the direct producers. They imbue the conditions of production themselves and their representatives with a specific social quality. They determine the entire character and the entire movement of production.

Capitalist production is marked from the outset by two peculiar traits.

(1) It produces its products as commodities. The fact that it produces commodities does not distinguish it from other modes of production. Its peculiar mark is that the prevailing and determining character of its products is that of being commodities. This implies, in the first place, that the labourer himself acts in the rôle of a seller of commodities, as a free wage worker, so that wage labour is the typical character of labour. In view of the foregoing analyses it is not necessary to demonstrate again, that the relation between wage labour and capital determines the entire character of the mode of production. The principal agents of this mode of production itself, the capitalist and the wage worker, are to that extent merely personifications of capital and wage labour. They are definite social characters, assigned to individuals by the process of social production. They are products of these definite social conditions of production.

The character, first of the product as a commodity,

secondly of the commodity as a product of capital, implies all conditions of circulation, that is, a definite social process through which the products must pass and in which they assume definite social forms. It also implies definite relations of the agents in production, by which the formation of value in the product and its reconversion, either into means of subsistence or into means of production, is determined. But aside from this, the two above-named characters of the product as commodities, and of commodities as products of capital, dominate the entire determination of value and the regulation of the whole production by value. In this specific form of value, labour appears on the one hand only as social labour ; on the other hand, the distribution of this social labour and the mutual supplementing and circulation of matter in the products, the subordination under the social activity and the entrance into it, are left to the accidental and mutually nullifying initiative of the individual capitalists. Since these meet one another only as owners of commodities, and every one seeks to sell his commodity as dearly as possible (being apparently guided in the regulation of his production by his own arbitrary will), the internal law enforces itself merely by means of their competition, by their mutual pressure upon each other, by means of which the various deviations are balanced. Only as an internal law, and from the point of view of the individual agents as a blind law, does the law of value exert its influence here and maintain the social equilibrium of production in the turmoil of its accidental fluctuations.

Furthermore, the existence of commodities, and still more of commodities as products of capital, implies the externalisation of the conditions of social production and the personification of the material foundations of production, which characterise the entire capitalist mode of production.

(2) The other specific mark of the capitalist mode of production is the production of surplus value as the direct aim and determining incentive of production. Capital produces essentially capital, and does so only to the extent that it

produces surplus value. We have seen in our discussion of relative surplus value, and in the discussion of the transformation of surplus value into profit, that a mode of production peculiar to the capitalist period is founded upon this. This is a special form in the development of the productive powers of labour, in such a way that these powers appear as self-dependent powers of capital lording it over labour and standing in direct opposition to the labourer's own development. Production which has for its incentive value and surplus value implies, as we have shown in the course of our analyses, the perpetually effective tendency to reduce the labour necessary for the production of a commodity, in other words, to reduce its value, below the prevailing social average. The effort to reduce the cost price to its minimum becomes the strongest lever for the raising of the social productivity of labour, which, however, appears under these conditions as a continual increase of the productive power of capital.

The authority assumed by the capitalist by his personification of capital in the direct process of production, the social function performed by him in his capacity as a manager and ruler of production, is essentially different from the authority exercised upon the basis of production by means of slaves, serfs, etc.

Upon the basis of capitalist production, the social character of their production impresses itself upon the mass of direct producers as a strictly regulating authority and as a social mechanism of the labour process graduated into a complete hierarchy. This authority is vested in its bearers only as a personification of the requirements of labour standing above the labourer. It is not vested in them in their capacity as political or theoretical rulers, in the way that it used to be under former modes of production. Among the bearers of this authority, on the other hand, the capitalists themselves, complete anarchy reigns, since they face each other only as owners of commodities, while the social inter-relations of production manifest themselves to these

capitalists only as an overwhelming natural law, which curbs their individual license.

It is only because labour is presumed as wage labour, and the means of production in the form of capital, only on account of this specific social form of these two essential agencies in production, that a part of the value (product) presents itself as surplus value and this surplus value as profit (rent), as a gain of the capitalists, as additional available wealth belonging to the capitalist. But only because they present themselves as his profit, do the additional means of production, which are intended for the expansion of reproduction, and which form a part of this profit, present themselves as new additional capital, and only for this reason does the expansion of the process of reproduction present itself as a process of capitalist accumulation.

Although the form of labour, as wage labour, determines the shape of the entire process and the specific mode of production itself, it is not wage labour which determines value. In the determination of value the question turns around social labour time in general, about that quantity of labour, which society in general has at its disposal, and the relative absorption of which by the various products determines, as it were, their respective social weights. The definite form, in which the social labour time enforces itself in the determination of the value of commodities, is indeed connected with the wage form of labour and with the corresponding form of the means of production as capital, inasmuch as the production of commodities becomes the general form of production only upon this basis.

Now let us consider the so-called conditions of distribution themselves. Wages are conditioned upon wage labour, profit upon capital. These definite forms of distribution have for their pre-requisites definite social characters on the part of the conditions of production, and definite social relations of the agents in production. The definite condition of distribution, therefore, is merely the expression of the historically determined condition of production.



And now let us take profit. This definite form of surplus value is a pre-requisite for the new creation of means of production by means of capitalist production. It is a relation which dominates reproduction, although it seems to the individual capitalist as though he could consume his entire profit as his revenue. But he meets barriers which hamper him even in the form of insurance and reserve funds, laws of competition, etc. These demonstrate to him by practice that profit is not a mere category in the distribution of the product for individual consumption. Furthermore, the entire process of capitalist production is regulated by the prices of products. But the regulating prices of production are in their turn regulated by the equalisation of the rate of profit and by the distribution of capital among the various social spheres of production in correspondence with this equalisation. Profit, then, appears here as the main factor, not of the distribution of products, but of their production itself, as a part in the distribution of capitals and of labour among the various spheres of production. The division of profit into profit of enterprise and interest appears as the distribution of the same revenue. But it arises primarily from the development of capital in its capacity as a self-expanding value, creating surplus value, it arises from this definite social form of the prevailing process of production. It develops credit and credit institutions out of itself, and with them the shape of production. In interest, etc., the alleged forms of distribution enter as determining elements of production into the price.

Ground-rent might seem to be a mere form of distribution, because private land as such does not perform any, or at least no normal, function in the process of production itself. But the fact that, first, rent is limited to the excess above the average profit, and, secondly, that the landlord is depressed by the ruler and manager of the process of production and of the entire social life's process to the position of a mere holder of land for rent, a usurer in land and collector of rent, is a specific historical result of the

capitalist mode of production. The fact that the earth received the form of private property is a historical requirement for this mode of production. The fact that private ownership of land assumes forms, which permit the capitalist mode of production in agriculture, is a product of the specific character of this mode of production. The income of the landlord may be called rent, even under other forms of society. But it differs essentially from the rent as it appears under the capitalist mode of production.

The so-called conditions of distribution, then, correspond to and arise from historically defined and specifically social forms of the process of production and of conditions, into which human beings enter in the process by which they reproduce their lives. The historical character of these conditions of distribution is the same as that of the conditions of production, one side of which they express. Capitalist distribution differs from those forms of distribution, which arise from other modes of production, and every mode of distribution disappears with the peculiar mode of production, from which it arose and to which it belongs.

The conception which regards only the conditions of distribution historically, but not the conditions of production, is, on the one hand, merely an idea begotten by the incipient, but still handicapped, critique of bourgeois economy. On the other hand it rests upon a misconception, an identification of the process of social production with the simple labour process, such as might be performed by any abnormally situated human being without any social assistance. To the extent that the labour process is a simple process between man and nature, its simple elements remain the same in all social forms of development. But every definite historical form of this process develops more and more its material foundations and social forms. Whenever a certain maturity is reached, one definite social form is discarded and displaced by a higher one. The time for the coming of such a crisis is announced by the depth and breadth of the contradictions and antagonisms, which

separate the conditions of distribution, and with them the definite historical form of the corresponding conditions of production, from the productive forces, the productivity, and development of their agencies. A conflict then arises between the material development of production and its social form.

*V. I. Lenin*

## THE TEACHINGS OF KARL MARX

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[This was an essay written for an encyclopædia. It is therefore extremely brief, but at the same time it is the most comprehensive summary of Marxism. Owing to the censorship, many vital passages were omitted when it was first published. The essay is in three parts; the first deals with the life of Marx, and the third is a bibliography of Marxism. Only the second section, covering the whole range of Marx's theories, is reprinted here.]

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## THE TEACHINGS OF KARL MARX

**M**ARXISM is the system of the views and teachings of Marx. Marx was the genius who continued and completed the three chief ideological currents of the nineteenth century, represented respectively by the three most advanced countries of humanity: classical German philosophy, classical English political economy, and French

Socialism combined with French revolutionary doctrines. The remarkable consistency and unity of conception of Marx's views, acknowledged even by his opponents, which in their totality constitute modern materialism and modern scientific Socialism as the theory and programme of the labour movement in all the civilised countries of the world, make it necessary that we present a brief outline of his world conception in general before proceeding to the chief contents of Marxism, namely, the economic doctrine of Marx.

#### PHILOSOPHIC MATERIALISM

Beginning with the years 1844-1845, when his views were definitely formed, Marx was a materialist, and especially a follower of Feuerbach; even in later times, he saw Feuerbach's weak side only in this, that his materialism was not sufficiently consistent and comprehensive. For Marx, Feuerbach's world-historic and "epoch-making" significance consisted in his having decisively broken away from the idealism of Hegel, and in his proclamation of materialism, which even in the eighteenth century, especially in France, had become "a struggle not only against the existing political institutions, and against . . . religion and theology, but also . . . against every form of metaphysics" (as "intoxicated speculation" in contradistinction to "sober philosophy"). [*Die Heilige Familie* in the *Literarischer Nachlass*.]

For Hegel—wrote Marx, in the preface to the second edition of the first volume of *Capital*—the thought process (which he actually transforms into an independent subject, giving to it the name of "idea") is the demiurge [creator] of the real. . . . In my view, on the other hand, the ideal is nothing other than the material when it has been transposed and translated inside the human head. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]

In full conformity with Marx's materialist philosophy, and expounding it, Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring* (which Marx read in the manuscript):

The unity of the world does not consist in its existence. . . . The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved . . . by the long and laborious development of philosophy and natural science. . . . Motion is the form of existence of matter. Never and nowhere has there been or can there be matter without motion. . . . Matter without motion is just as unthinkable as motion without matter. . . . If we enquire . . . what thought and consciousness are, whence they come, we find that they are products of the human brain, and that man himself is a product of nature, developing in and along with his environment. Obviously, therefore, the products of the human brain, being in the last analysis likewise products of nature, do not contradict the rest of nature, but correspond to it.

Again : "Hegel was an idealist ; that is to say, for him the thoughts in his head were not more or less abstract reflections [in the original : *Abbilder*, images, copies ; sometimes Engels speaks of "imprints"] of real things and processes ; but, on the contrary, things and their evolution were, for Hegel, only reflections in reality of the idea that existed somewhere even prior to the world."

In his *Ludwig Feuerbach*—in which Engels expounds his own and Marx's views on Feuerbach's philosophy, and which Engels sent to the press after re-reading an old manuscript, written by Marx and himself in 1844-1845, on Hegel, Feuerbach, and the materialist conception of history—Engels writes :

The great basic question of all, and especially of recent, philosophy, is the question of the relationship between thought and existence, between spirit and nature. . . . Which is prior to the other : spirit or nature ? Philosophers are divided into two great camps, according to the way in which they have answered this question. Those who declare that spirit existed before nature, and who, in the last analysis, therefore, assume in one way or another that the world was created . . . have formed the idealist camp. The others, who regard nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism.

Any other use (in a philosophic sense) of the terms idealism and materialism is only confusing. Marx decidedly

rejected not only idealism, always connected in one way or another with religion, but also the views of Hume and Kant, that are especially widespread in our day, as well as agnosticism, criticism, positivism in various forms ; he considered such philosophy as a "reactionary" concession to idealism, at best as a "shamefaced manner of admitting materialism through the back door while denying it before the world." (On this question see, besides the above-mentioned works of Engels and Marx, a letter of Marx to Engels, dated December 12, 1866, in which Marx, taking cognisance of an utterance of the well-known naturalist, T. Huxley, who "in a more materialistic spirit than he has manifested in recent years" declared that "as long as we actually observe and think, we cannot get away from materialism," reproaches him for once more leaving a new "back door" open to agnosticism and Humeism.) It is especially important that we should note Marx's opinion concerning the relation between freedom and necessity : "Freedom is the recognition of necessity. Necessity is blind only in so far as it is not understood" (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*). This means acknowledgment of the objective reign of law in nature and of the dialectical transformation of necessity into freedom (at the same time, an acknowledgment of the transformation of the unknown but knowable "thing-in-itself" into the "thing-for-us," of the "essence of things" into "phenomena"). Marx and Engels pointed out the following major shortcomings of the "old" materialism, including Feuerbach's (and, *a fortiori*, the "vulgar" materialism of Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott) : (1) it was "predominantly mechanical," not taking into account the latest developments of chemistry and biology (in our day it would be necessary to add the electric theory of matter) ; (2) it was non-historical, non-dialectical (was metaphysical, in the sense of being anti-dialectical), and did not apply the standpoint of evolution consistently and all-sidedly ; (3) it regarded "human nature" abstractly, and not as a "synthesis" of (definite,

concrete-historical) "social relationships"—and thus only "interpreted" the world, whereas it was a question of "changing" it, that is, it did not grasp the significance of "practical revolutionary activity."

#### DIALECTICS

Marx and Engels regarded Hegelian dialectics, the theory of evolution most comprehensive, rich in content and profound, as the greatest achievement of classical German philosophy. All other formulations of the principle of development, of evolution, they considered to be one-sided, poor in content, distorting and mutilating the actual course of development of nature and society (a course often consummated in leaps and bounds, catastrophes, revolutions).

Marx and I were almost the only persons who rescued conscious dialectics . . . [from the swamp of idealism, including Hegelianism] by transforming it into the materialist conception of nature. . . . Nature is the test of dialectics, and we must say that science has supplied a vast and daily increasing mass of material for this test, thereby proving that, in the last analysis, nature proceeds dialectically and not metaphysically [this was written before the discovery of radium, electrons, the transmutation of elements, etc.].

Again, Engels writes :

The great basic idea that the world is not to be viewed as a complex of fully fashioned objects, but as a complex of processes, in which apparently stable objects, no less than the images of them inside our heads (our concepts), are undergoing incessant changes, arising here and disappearing there, and which with all apparent accident and in spite of all momentary retrogression, ultimately constitutes a progressive development—this great basic idea has, particularly since the time of Hegel, so deeply penetrated the general consciousness that hardly any one will now venture to dispute it in its general form. But it is one thing to accept it in words, quite another thing to put it in practice on every occasion and in every field of investigation.

In the eyes of dialectic philosophy, nothing is established for all time, nothing is absolute or sacred. On everything and in

everything it sees the stamp of inevitable decline ; nothing can resist it save the unceasing process of formation and destruction, the unending ascent from the lower to the higher—a process of which that philosophy itself is only a simple reflection within the thinking brain.

Thus dialectics, according to Marx, is “ the science of the general laws of motion both of the external world and of human thinking.”

This revolutionary side of Hegel's philosophy was adopted and developed by Marx. Dialectical materialism “ does not need any philosophy towering above the other sciences.” Of former philosophies there remain “ the science of thinking and its laws—formal logic and dialectics.” Dialectics, as the term is used by Marx in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of cognition, or epistemology, or gnoseology, a science that must contemplate its subject matter in the same way—historically, studying and generalising the origin and development of cognition, the transition from *non-consciousness* to consciousness. In our times, the idea of development, of evolution, has almost fully penetrated social consciousness, but it has done so in other ways, not through Hegel's philosophy. Still, the same idea, as formulated by Marx and Engels on the basis of Hegel's philosophy, is much more comprehensive, much more abundant in content than the current theory of evolution. A development that repeats, as it were, the stages already passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher plane (“ negation of negation ”) ; a development, so to speak, in spirals, not in a straight line ; a development in leaps and bounds, catastrophes, revolutions ; “ intervals of gradualness ” ; transformation of quantity into quality ; inner impulses for development, imparted by the contradiction, the conflict of different forces and tendencies reacting on a given body or inside a given phenomenon or within a given society ; interdependence, and the closest, indissoluble connection between *all* sides of every phenomenon (history



disclosing ever new sides), a connection that provides the one world-process of motion proceeding according to law—such are some of the features of dialectics as a doctrine of evolution more full of meaning than the current one. (See letter of Marx to Engels, dated January 8, 1868, in which he ridicules Stein's "wooden trichotomies," which it is absurd to confuse with materialist dialectics.)

#### MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Realising the inconsistency, the incompleteness, and the one-sidedness of the old materialism, Marx became convinced that it was necessary "to harmonise the science of society with the materialist basis, and to reconstruct it in accordance with this basis." If, speaking generally, materialism explains consciousness as the outcome of existence, and not conversely, then, applied to the social life of mankind, materialism must explain *social* consciousness as the outcome of *social* existence. "Technology," writes Marx in the first volume of *Capital*, "reveals man's dealings with nature, discloses the direct productive activities of his life, thus throwing light upon social relations and the resultant mental conceptions." In the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx gives an integral formulation of the fundamental principles of materialism as applied to human society and its history, in the following words :

In the social production of the means of life, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will—production relations which correspond to a definite stage of the development of their productive forces. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political superstructure arises and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material means of life, determines, in general, the social, political, and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of human beings that determines their existence, but, conversely, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain

stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing production relationships, or, what is but a legal expression for the same thing, with the property relationships within which they have hitherto moved. From forms of development of the productive forces, these relationships turn into their fetters. A period of social revolution then begins. With the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic conditions of production, changes which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, æsthetic, or philosophic, in short, ideological forms, in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out to an issue.

Just as little as we judge an individual by what he thinks of himself, just so little can we appraise such a revolutionary epoch in accordance with its own consciousness of itself. On the contrary, we have to explain this consciousness as the outcome of the contradictions of material life, of the conflict existing between social productive forces and production relationships. . . . In broad outline we can designate the Asiatic, the classical, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois forms of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. [Compare Marx's brief formulation in a letter to Engels, dated July 7, 1866 : " Our theory about the organisation of labour being determined by the means of production." ]

The discovery of the materialist conception of history, or, more correctly, the consistent extension of materialism to the domain of social phenomena, obviated the two chief defects in earlier historical theories. For, in the first place, those theories, at best, examined only the ideological motives of the historical activity of human beings without investigating the origin of these ideological motives, or grasping the objective conformity to law in the development of the system of social relationships, or discerning the roots of these social relationships in the degree of development of material production. In the second place, the earlier historical theories ignored the activities of the *masses*, whereas historical materialism first made it possible to study with scientific accuracy the social conditions of the

life of the masses and the changes in these conditions. At best, pre-Marxist "sociology" and historiography gave an accumulation of raw facts collected at random, and a description of separate sides of the historic process. Examining the *totality* of all the opposing tendencies, reducing them to precisely definable conditions in the mode of life and the method of production of the various *classes* of society, discarding subjectivism and free will in the choice of various "leading" ideas or in their interpretation, showing how all the ideas and all the various tendencies, without exception, have their roots in the condition of the material forces of production, Marxism pointed the way to a comprehensive, an all-embracing study of the rise, development, and decay of socio-economic structures. People make their own history ; but what determines their motives, that is, the motives of people in the mass ; what gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and endeavours ; what is the sum total of all these clashes among the whole mass of human societies ; what are the objective conditions for the production of the material means of life that form the basis of all the historical activity of man ; what is the law of the development of these conditions?—to all these matters Marx directed attention, pointing out the way to a scientific study of history as a unified and true-to-law process despite its being extremely variegated and contradictory.

#### CLASS STRUGGLE

That in any given society the strivings of some of the members conflict with the strivings of others ; that social life is full of contradictions ; that history discloses to us a struggle among peoples and societies, and also within each nation and each society, manifesting in addition an alternation between periods of revolution and reaction, peace and war, stagnation and rapid progress or decline—these facts are generally known. Marxism provides a clue which enables us to discover the reign of law in this seeming

labyrinth and chaos : the theory of the class struggle. Nothing but the study of the totality of the strivings of all the members of a given society, or group of societies, can lead to the scientific definition of the result of these strivings. Now, the conflict of strivings arises from differences in the situation and modes of life of the *classes* into which society is divided.

The history of all human society, past and present [wrote Marx in 1848, in *The Communist Manifesto* ; except the history of the primitive community, Engels added], has been the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild-burgess and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed—stood in sharp opposition each to the other. They carried on perpetual warfare, sometimes masked, sometimes open and acknowledged ; a warfare that invariably ended either in a revolutionary change in the whole structure of society or else in the common ruin of the contending classes. . . . Modern bourgeois society, rising out of the ruins of feudal society, did not make an end of class antagonisms. It merely set up new classes in place of the old ; new conditions of oppression ; new embodiments of struggle. Our own age, the bourgeois age, is distinguished by this—that it has simplified class antagonisms. More and more, society is splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly contraposed classes : bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Since the time of the great French Revolution, the class struggle as the actual motive force of events has been most clearly manifest in all European history. During the Restoration period in France, there were already a number of historians (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers) who, generalising events, could not but recognise in the class struggle the key to the understanding of all the history of France. In the modern age—the epoch of the complete victory of the bourgeoisie, of representative institutions, of extended (if not universal) suffrage, of cheap daily newspapers widely circulated among the masses, etc., of powerful and ever-expanding organisations of workers and employers, etc.—the class struggle (though sometimes in a highly one-sided, “peaceful,” “constitutional” form), has shown itself still

more obviously to be the mainspring of events. The following passage from Marx's *Communist Manifesto* will show us, what Marx demanded of social sciences as regards an objective analysis of the situation of every class in modern society as well as an analysis of the conditions of development of every class.

Among all the classes that confront the bourgeoisie to-day, the proletariat alone is really revolutionary. Other classes decay and perish with the rise of large-scale industry, but the proletariat is the most characteristic product of that industry. The lower middle class—small manufacturers, small traders, handicraftsmen, peasant proprietors—one and all fight the bourgeoisie in the hope of safeguarding their existence as sections of the middle class. They are, therefore, not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay, more, they are reactionary, for they are trying to make the wheels of history turn backwards. If they ever become revolutionary, it is only because they are afraid of slipping down into the ranks of the proletariat; they are not defending their present interests, but their future interests; they are forsaking their own standpoint, in order to adopt that of the proletariat.

In a number of historical works Marx gave brilliant and profound examples of materialist historiography, an analysis of the position of *each* separate class, and sometimes of that of various groups or strata within a class, showing plainly why and how "every class struggle is a political struggle." The above quoted passage is an illustration of what a complex network of social relations and *transitional stages* between one class and another, between the past and the future, Marx analyses in order to arrive at the resultant of the whole historical development.

Marx's economic doctrine is the most profound, the most many-sided, and the most detailed confirmation and application of his teaching.

#### MARX'S ECONOMIC DOCTRINE

"It is the ultimate aim of this work to reveal the economic law of motion of modern society" (that is to say, capitalist,

bourgeois society), writes Marx in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*. The study of the production relationships in a given, historically determinate society, in their genesis, their development, and their decay—such is the content of Marx's economic teaching. In capitalist society the dominant feature is the production of *commodities*, and Marx's analysis therefore begins with an analysis of commodity.

### *Value*

A commodity is, firstly, something that satisfies a human need ; and, secondly, it is something that is exchanged for something else. The utility of a thing gives it *use-value*. Exchange-value (or simply, value) presents itself first of all as the proportion, the ratio, in which a certain number of use-values of one kind are exchanged for a certain number of use-values of another kind. Daily experience shows us that by millions upon millions of such exchanges, all and sundry use-values, in themselves very different and not comparable one with another, are equated to one another. Now, what is common in these various things which are constantly weighed one against another in a definite system of social relationships ? That which is common to them is that they are *products of labour*. In exchanging products, people equate to one another most diverse kinds of labour. The production of commodities is a system of social relationships in which different producers produce various products (the social division of labour), and in which all these products are equated to one another in exchange. Consequently, the element common to all commodities is not concrete labour in a definite branch of production, not labour of one particular kind, but *abstract* human labour—human labour in general. All the labour power of a given society, represented in the sum total of values of all commodities, is one and the same human labour power. Millions upon millions of acts of exchange prove this. Consequently, each particular commodity represents only

a certain part of *socially necessary* labour time. The magnitude of the value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour, or by the labour time that is socially requisite for the production of the given commodity, of the given use-value. ". . . Exchanging labour products of different kinds one for another, they equate the values of the exchanged products ; and in doing so they equate the different kinds of labour expended in production, treating them as homogeneous human labour. They do not know that they are doing this, but they do it." As one of the earlier economists said, value is a relationship between two persons, only he should have added that it is a relationship hidden beneath a material wrapping. We can only understand what value is when we consider it from the point of view of a system of social production relationships in one particular historical type of society ; and, moreover, of relationships which present themselves in a mass form, the phenomenon of exchange repeating itself millions upon millions of times. "As values, all commodities are only definite quantities of congealed labour time." Having made a detailed analysis of the twofold character of the labour incorporated in commodities, Marx goes on to analyse the *form of value and of money*. His main task, then, is to study the *origin* of the money form of value, to study the *historical process* of the development of exchange, beginning with isolated and casual acts of exchange ("simple, isolated, or casual value form," in which a given quantity of one commodity is exchanged for a given quantity of another), passing on to the universal form of value, in which a number of different commodities are exchanged for one and the same particular commodity, and ending with the money form of value, when gold becomes this particular commodity, the universal equivalent. Being the highest product of the development of exchange and of commodity production, money masks the social character of individual labour, and hides the social tie between the various producers who come together in the market. Marx analyses in great detail the various

functions of money ; and it is essential to note that here (as generally in the opening chapters of *Capital*) what appears to be an abstract and at times purely deductive mode of exposition in reality reproduces a gigantic collection of facts concerning the history of the development of exchange and commodity production.

Money . . . presupposes a definite level of commodity exchange. The various forms of money (simple commodity equivalent or means of circulation, or means of payment, treasure, or international money) indicate, according to the different extent to which this or that function is put into application, and according to the comparative predominance of one or other of them, very different grades of the social process of production. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]

### *Surplus Value*

At a particular stage in the development of commodity production, money becomes transformed into capital. The formula of commodity circulation was C-M-C (commodity—money—commodity) ; the sale of one commodity for the purpose of buying another. But the general formula of capital, on the contrary, is M-C-M (money—commodity—money) ; purchase for the purpose of selling—at a profit. The designation “surplus value” is given by Marx to the increase over the original value of money that is put into circulation. The fact of this “growth” of money in capitalist society is well known. Indeed, it is this “growth” which transforms money into *capital*, as a special, historically defined, social relationship of production. Surplus value cannot arise out of the circulation of commodities, for this represents nothing more than the exchange of equivalents ; it cannot arise out of an advance in prices, for the mutual losses and gains of buyers and sellers would equalise one another ; and we are concerned here, not with what happens to individuals, but with a mass or average or social phenomenon. In order that he may be able to receive surplus value, “Moneybags must . . . find in the market a commodity whose use-value has the peculiar quality of



being a source of value"—a commodity, the actual process of whose use is at the same time the process of the creation of value. Such a commodity exists. It is human labour power. Its use is labour, and labour creates value. The owner of money buys labour power at its value, which is determined, like the value of every other commodity, by the socially necessary labour time requisite for its production (that is to say, the cost of maintaining the worker and his family). Having bought labour power, the owner of money is entitled to use it, that is, to set it to work for the whole day—twelve hours, let us suppose. Meanwhile, in the course of six hours ("necessary" labour time) the labourer produces sufficient to pay back the cost of his own maintenance, and in the course of the next six hours ("surplus" labour time), he produces a "surplus" product for which the capitalist does not pay him—surplus product or surplus value. In capital, therefore, from the viewpoint of the process of production, we have to distinguish between two parts: first, constant capital, expended for the means of production (machinery, tools, raw materials, etc.), the value of this being (all at once or part by part) transferred, unchanged, to the finished product; and, secondly, variable capital, expended for labour power. The value of this latter capital is not constant, but grows in the labour process, creating surplus value. To express the degree of exploitation of labour power by capital, we must therefore compare the surplus value, not with the whole capital, but only with the variable capital. Thus, in the example just given, the rate of surplus value, as Marx calls this relationship, will be 6:6, i.e., 100 per cent.

There are two historical prerequisites to the genesis of capital: first, accumulation of a considerable sum of money in the hands of individuals living under conditions in which there is a comparatively high development of commodity production. Second, the existence of workers who are "free" in a double sense of the term: free from any constraint or restriction as regards the sale of their

labour power ; free from any bondage to the soil or to the means of production in general—i.e., of propertyless workers, of “proletarians” who cannot maintain their existence except by the sale of their labour power.

There are two fundamental ways in which surplus value can be increased : by an increase in the working day (“absolute surplus value”) ; and by a reduction in the necessary working day (“relative surplus value”). Analysing the former method, Marx gives an impressive picture of the struggle of the working class for shorter hours and of governmental interference, first (from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth) in order to lengthen the working day, and subsequently (factory legislation of the nineteenth century) to shorten it. Since the appearance of *Capital*, the history of the working-class movement in all lands provides a wealth of new facts to amplify this picture.

Analysing the production of relative surplus value, Marx investigates the three fundamental historical stages of the process whereby capitalism has increased the productivity of labour ; (1) simple co-operation ; (2) division of labour, and manufacture ; (3) machinery and large-scale industry. How profoundly Marx has here revealed the basic and typical features of capitalist development is shown by the fact that investigations of the so-called “kustar” industry of Russia furnish abundant material for the illustration of the first two of these stages. The revolutionising effect of large-scale machine industry, described by Marx in 1867, has become evident in a number of “new” countries, such as Russia, Japan, etc., in the course of the last fifty years.

But to continue. Of extreme importance and originality is Marx’s analysis of the *accumulation of capital*, that is to say, the transformation of a portion of surplus value into capital and the applying of this portion to additional production, instead of using it to supply the personal needs or to gratify the whims of the capitalist. Marx pointed out the mistake made by earlier classical political economy (from Adam Smith on), which assumed that all the surplus value

which was transformed into capital became variable capital. In actual fact, it is divided into *means of production* plus variable capital. The more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital in the sum total of capital is of immense importance in the process of development of capitalism and in that of the transformation of capitalism into Socialism.

The accumulation of capital, accelerating the replacement of workers by machinery, creating wealth at the one pole and poverty at the other, gives birth to the so-called "reserve army of labour," to a "relative overabundance" of workers or to "capitalist over-population." This assumes the most diversified forms, and gives capital the possibility of expanding production at an exceptionally rapid rate. This possibility, in conjunction with enhanced facilities for credit and with the accumulation of capital in the means of production, furnishes, among other things, the key to the understanding of the *crises* of over production that occur periodically in capitalist countries—first about every ten years, on an average, but subsequently in a more continuous form and with a less definite periodicity. From accumulation of capital upon a capitalist foundation we must distinguish the so-called "primitive accumulation": the forcible severance of the worker from the means of production, the driving of the peasants off the land, the stealing of the communal lands, the system of colonies and national debts, of protective tariffs, and the like. "Primitive accumulation" creates, at one pole, the "free" proletariat: at the other, the owner of money, the capitalist.

The "*historical tendency of capitalist accumulation*" is described by Marx in the following well-known terms:

The expropriation of the immediate producers is effected with ruthless vandalism, and under the stimulus of the most infamous, the basest, the meanest, and the most odious of passions. Self-earned private property [of the peasant and the handicraftsman], the private property that may be looked upon as grounded on a coalescence of the isolated, individual, and

independent worker with his working conditions, is supplemented by capitalist private property, which is maintained by the exploitation of others' labour, but of labour which in a formal sense is free. . . . What has now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working on his own account, but the capitalist who exploits many labourers. This expropriation is brought about by the operation of the immanent laws of capitalist production, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist lays a number of his fellow capitalists low. Hand in hand with this centralisation, concomitantly with the expropriation of many capitalists by a few, the co-operative form of the labour process develops to an ever-increasing degree; therewith we find a growing tendency towards the purposive application of science to the improvement of technique; the land is more methodically cultivated; the instruments of labour tend to assume forms which are only utilisable by combined effort; the means of production are economised through being turned to account only by joint, by social labour; all the peoples of the world are enmeshed in the net of the world market, and therefore the capitalist régime tends more and more to assume an international character. While there is thus a progressive diminution in the number of the capitalist magnates (who usurp and monopolise all the advantages of this transformative process), there occurs a corresponding increase in the mass of poverty, oppression, enslavement, degeneration, and exploitation; but at the same time there is a steady intensification of the wrath of the working class—a class which grows ever more numerous, and is disciplined, unified, and organised by the very mechanism of the capitalist method of production. Capitalist monopoly becomes a fetter upon the method of production which has flourished with it and under it. The centralisation of the means of production and the socialisation of labour reach a point where they prove incompatible with their capitalist hulk. This bursts asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]

Of great importance and quite new is Marx's analysis, in the second volume of *Capital*, of the reproduction of social capital, taken as a whole. Here, too, Marx is dealing, not with an individual phenomenon, but with a mass phenomenon; not with a fractional part of the economy of society, but with economy as a whole. Having corrected the above-mentioned mistake of the classical economists, Marx divides

the whole of social production into two great sections : production of the means of production, and production of articles for consumption. Using figures for an example, he makes a detailed examination of the circulation of all social capital taken as a whole—both when it is reproduced in its previous proportions and when accumulation takes place. The third volume of *Capital* solves the problem of how the average rate of profit is formed on the basis of the law of value. An immense advance in economic science is this, that Marx conducts his analysis from the point of view of mass economic phenomena, of the aggregate of social economy, and not from the point of view of individual cases or upon the purely superficial aspects of competition—a limitation of view so often met with in vulgar political economy and in the contemporary “theory of marginal utility.” First, Marx analyses the origin of surplus value, and then he goes on to consider its division into profit, interest, and ground-rent. Profit is the ratio between the surplus value and all the capital invested in an undertaking. Capital with a “high organic composition” (i.e., with a preponderance of constant capital over variable capital to an extent above the social average) yields a below-average rate of profit ; capital with a “low organic composition” yields an above-average rate of profit. Competition among the capitalists, who are free to transfer their capital from one branch of production to another, reduces the rate of profit in both cases to the average. The sum total of the values of all the commodities in a given society coincides with the sum total of the prices of all the commodities ; but in separate undertakings, and in separate branches of production, as a result of competition, commodities are sold, not in accordance with their values, but in accordance with the *prices of production*, which are equal to the expended capital plus the average profit.

In this way the well-known and indisputable fact of the divergence between prices and values and of the equalisation of profits is fully explained by Marx in conformity with

the law of value ; for the sum total of the values of all the commodities coincides with the sum total of all the prices. But the adjustment of value (a social matter) to price (an individual matter) does not proceed by a simple and direct way. It is an exceedingly complex affair. Naturally, therefore, in a society made up of separate producers of commodities, linked solely through the market, conformity to law can only be an average, a general manifestation, a mass phenomenon, with individual and mutually compensating deviations to one side and the other.

An increase in the productivity of labour means a more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital. Inasmuch as surplus value is a function of variable capital alone, it is obvious that the rate of profit (the ratio of surplus value to the whole capital, and not to its variable part alone) has a tendency to fall. Marx makes a detailed analysis of this tendency and of the circumstances that incline to favour it or to counteract it. Without pausing to give an account of the extraordinarily interesting parts of the third volume of *Capital* that are devoted to the consideration of usurer's capital, commercial capital, and money capital, I shall turn to the most important subject of that volume, the theory of *ground-rent*. Due to the fact that the land area is limited, and that in capitalist countries it is all occupied by private owners, the production price of agricultural products is determined by the cost of production, not on soil of average quality, but on the worst soil, and by the cost of bringing goods to the market, not under average conditions, but under the worst conditions. The difference between this price and the price of production on better soil (or under better conditions) constitutes *differential* rent. Analysing this in detail, and showing how it arises out of variations in the fertility of the individual plots of land and in the extent to which capital is applied to the land, Marx fully exposes (see also the *Theorien über den Mehrwert* [*Theories of Surplus Value*], in which the criticism of Rodbertus's theory deserves particular attention) the

error of Ricardo, who considered that differential rent is only obtained when there is a continual transition from better to worse lands. Advances in agricultural technique, the growth of towns, and so on, may, on the contrary, act inversely, may transfer land from one category into the other ; and the famous "law of diminishing returns," charging nature with the insufficiencies, limitations, and contradictions of capitalism, is a great mistake. Moreover, the equalisation of profit in all branches of industry and national economy in general, presupposes complete freedom of competition, the free mobility of capital from one branch to another. But the private ownership of land, creating monopoly, hinders this free mobility. Thanks to this monopoly, the products of agriculture, where a low organic composition of capital prevails, and, consequently, individually, a higher rate of profit can be secured, are not exposed to a perfectly free process of equalisation of the rate of profit. The landowner, being a monopolist, can keep the price of his produce above the average, and this monopoly price is the source of *absolute rent*. Differential rent cannot be done away with so long as capitalism exists ; but absolute rent *can* be abolished even under capitalism—for instance, by nationalisation of the land, by making all the land state property. Nationalisation of the land would put an end to the monopoly of private landowners, with the result that free competition would be more consistently and fully applied in the domain of agriculture. That is why, as Marx states, in the course of history the radical bourgeois have again and again come out with this progressive bourgeois demand of land nationalisation, which, however, frightens away the majority of the bourgeoisie, for it touches upon another monopoly that is highly important and "touchy" in our days—the monopoly of the means of production in general. (In a letter to Engels, dated August 2, 1862, Marx gives a remarkably popular, concise, and clear exposition of his theory of average rate of profit and of absolute ground-rent. See *Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, pp. 77-81 ;

also the letter of August 9, 1862, Vol. III, pp. 86-87). For the history of ground-rent it is also important to note Marx's analysis which shows how rent paid in labour service (when the peasant creates a surplus product by labouring on the lord's land) is transformed into rent paid in produce or rent in kind (the peasant creating a surplus product on his own land and handing this over to the lord of the soil under stress of "non-economic constraint"); then into monetary rent (which is the monetary equivalent of rent in kind, the *obrok* of old Russia, money having replaced produce thanks to the development of commodity production), and finally into capitalist rent, when the place of the peasant has been taken by the agricultural *entrepreneur* cultivating the soil with the help of wage labour. In connection with this analysis of the "genesis of capitalist ground-rent" must be noted Marx's profound ideas concerning the *evolution of capitalism in agriculture* (this is of especial importance in its bearing on backward countries, such as Russia).

The transformation of rent in kind into money rent is not only necessarily accompanied, but even anticipated by the formation of a class of propertyless day labourers, who hire themselves out for wages. During the period of their rise, when this new class appears but sporadically, the custom necessarily develops among the better situated tributary farmers of exploiting agricultural labourers for their own account, just as the wealthier serfs in feudal times used to employ serfs for their own benefit. In this way they gradually acquire the ability to accumulate a certain amount of wealth and to transform themselves even into future capitalists. The old self-employed possessors of the land thus gave rise among themselves to a nursery for capitalist tenants, whose development is conditioned upon the general development of capitalist production outside of the rural districts. [*Capital*, Vol. III.]

The expropriation of part of the country folk, and the hunting of them off the land, does not merely "set free" the workers for the uses of industrial capital, together with their means of subsistence and the materials of their labour; in addition it creates the home market. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]



The impoverishment and the ruin of the agricultural population lead, in their turn, to the formation of a reserve army of labour for capital. In every capitalist country, "part of the rural population is continually on the move, in course of transference to join the urban proletariat, the manufacturing proletariat. . . . (In this connection, the term "manufacture" is used to include all non-agricultural industry.) This source of a relative surplus population is, therefore, continually flowing. . . . The agricultural labourer, therefore, has his wages kept down to the minimum, and always has one foot in the swamp of pauperism" (*Capital*, Vol. I). The peasant's private ownership of the land he tills constitutes the basis of small-scale production and causes the latter to flourish and attain its classical form. But such petty production is only compatible with a narrow and primitive type of production, with a narrow and primitive framework of society. Under capitalism, the exploitation of the peasants "differs from the exploitation of the industrial proletariat only in point of form. The exploiter is the same: capital. The individual capitalists exploit the individual peasants through mortgages and usury, and the capitalist class exploits the peasant class through state taxation" (*Class Struggles in France*). "Peasant agriculture, the smallholding system, is merely an expedient whereby the capitalist is enabled to extract profit, interest, and rent from the land, while leaving the peasant proprietor to pay himself his own wages as best he may." As a rule, the peasant hands over to the capitalist society, i.e., to the capitalist class, part of the wages of his own labour, sinking "down to the level of the Irish tenant—all this on the pretext of being the owner of private property." Why is it that "the price of cereals is lower in countries with a predominance of small farmers than in countries with a capitalist method of production"? (*Capital*, Vol. III.) The answer is that the peasant presents part of his surplus product as a free gift to society (i.e., to the capitalist class). "This lower price [of bread and other agricultural

products] is also a result of the poverty of the producers and by no means of the productivity of their labour" (*Capital*, Vol. III). Peasant proprietorship, the smallholding system, which is the normal form of petty production, degenerates, withers, perishes under capitalism.

Small peasants' property excludes by its very nature the development of the social powers of production, of labour, the social forms of labour, the social concentration of capital, cattle raising on a large scale, and a progressive application of science. Usury and a system of taxation must impoverish it everywhere. The expenditure of capital in the price of the land withdraws this capital from cultivation. An infinite dissipation of means of production and an isolation of the producers themselves go with it. [Co-operatives, i.e., associations of small peasants, while playing an unusually progressive bourgeois rôle, only weaken this tendency without eliminating it; one must not forget besides, that these co-operatives do much for the well-to-do peasants and very little, almost nothing, for the mass of the poor peasants, also that the associations themselves become exploiters of wage labour.] Also an enormous waste of human energy. A progressive deterioration of the conditions of production and a raising of the price of means of production is a necessary law of small peasants' property. [*Capital*, Vol. III.]

In agriculture as in industry, capitalism improves the production process only at the price of the "martyrdom of the producers."

The dispersion of the rural workers over large areas breaks down their powers of resistance at the very time when concentration is increasing the powers of the urban operatives in this respect. In modern agriculture, as in urban industry, the increased productivity and the greater mobility of labour are purchased at the cost of devastating labour power and making it a prey to disease. Moreover, every advance in capitalist agriculture is an advance in the art, not only of robbing the worker, but also of robbing the soil. . . . Capitalist production, therefore, is only able to develop the technique and the combination of the social process of production by simultaneously undermining the foundations of all wealth—the land and the workers. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]

## SOCIALISM

From the foregoing it is manifest that Marx deduces the inevitability of the transformation of capitalist society into Socialist society wholly and exclusively from the economic law of the movement of contemporary society. The chief material foundation of the inevitability of the coming of Socialism is the socialisation of labour in its myriad forms, advancing ever more rapidly, and conspicuously so, throughout the half century that has elapsed since the death of Marx—being especially plain in the growth of large-scale production, of capitalist cartels, syndicates, and trusts ; but also in the gigantic increase in the dimensions and the power of finance capital. The intellectual and moral driving force of this transformation is the proletariat, the physical carrier trained by capitalism itself. The contest of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, assuming various forms which grow continually richer in content, inevitably becomes a political struggle aiming at the conquest of political power by the proletariat (" the dictatorship of the proletariat "). The socialisation of production cannot fail to lead to the transfer of the means of production into the possession of society, to the " expropriation of the expropriators." An immense increase in the productivity of labour ; a reduction in working hours ; replacement of the remnants, the ruins of petty, primitive, individual production by collective and perfected labour—such will be the direct consequences of this transformation. Capitalism breaks all ties between agriculture and industry ; but at the same time, in the course of its highest development, it prepares new elements for the establishment of a connection between the two, uniting industry and agriculture upon the basis of the conscious use of science and the combination of collective labour, the redistribution of population (putting an end at one and the same time to rural seclusion and unsociability and savagery, and to the unnatural concentration of enormous masses of population in huge cities). A new kind

of family life, changes in the position of women and in the upbringing of the younger generation, are being prepared by the highest forms of modern capitalism ; the labour of women and children, the break-up of the patriarchal family by capitalism, necessarily assume in contemporary society the most terrible, disastrous, and repulsive forms. Nevertheless,

... large-scale industry, by assigning to women and to young persons and children of both sexes a decisive rôle in the socially organised process of production, and a rôle which has to be fulfilled outside the home, is building the new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes. I need hardly say that it is just as stupid to regard the Christo-Teutonic form of the family as absolute, as it is to take the same view of the classical Roman form or of the classical Greek form, or of the Oriental form—which, by the by, constitute an historically interconnected developmental series. It is plain, moreover, that the composition of the combined labour personnel out of individuals of both sexes and various ages—although in its spontaneously developed and brutal capitalist form (wherein the worker exists for the process of production instead of the process of production existing for the worker) it is a pestilential source of corruption and slavery—under suitable conditions cannot fail to be transformed into a source of human progress. [*Capital*, Vol. I.]

In the factory system are to be found “ the germs of the education of the future. . . . This will be an education which, in the case of every child over a certain age, will combine productive labour with instruction and physical culture, not only as a means for increasing social production, but as the only way of producing fully developed human beings ” (*ibid.*, p. 522). Upon the same historical foundation, not with the sole idea of throwing light on the past, but with the idea of boldly foreseeing the future and boldly working to bring about its realisation, the Socialism of Marx propounds the problems of nationality and the State. The nation is a necessary product, an inevitable form, in the bourgeois epoch of social development. The

working class cannot grow strong, cannot mature, cannot consolidate its forces, except by "establishing itself as the nation," except by being "national" ("though by no means in the bourgeois sense of the term"). But the development of capitalism tends more and more to break down the partitions that separate the nations one from another, does away with national isolation, substitutes class antagonisms for national antagonisms. In the more developed capitalist countries, therefore, it is perfectly true that "the workers have no fatherland," and that "united action" of the workers, in the civilised countries at least, "is one of the first conditions requisite for the emancipation of the workers" (*Communist Manifesto*). The State, which is organised oppression, came into being inevitably at a certain stage in the development of society, when this society had split into irreconcilable classes, and when it could not exist without an "authority" supposed to be standing above society and to some extent separated from it. Arising out of class contradictions, the State becomes

. . . the State of the most powerful economic class that by force of its economic supremacy becomes also the ruling political class, and thus acquires new means of subduing and exploiting the oppressed masses. The ancient State was therefore the State of the slave-owners for the purpose of holding the slaves in check. The feudal state was the organ of the nobility for the oppression of the serfs and dependent farmers. The modern representative State is the tool of the capitalist exploiters of wage labour. [Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, a work in which the writer expounds his own views and Marx's.]

This condition of affairs persists even in the democratic republic, the freest and most progressive kind of bourgeois State; there is merely a change of form (the government becoming linked up with the stock exchange, and the officialdom and the press being corrupted by direct or indirect means). Socialism, putting an end to classes, will thereby put an end to the State.

The first act, writes Engels in *Anti-Dühring*, where by the State really becomes the representative of society as a whole, namely, the expropriation of the means of production for the benefit of society as a whole, will likewise be its last independent act as a State. The interference of the State authority in social relationships will become superfluous, and will be discontinued in one domain after another. The government over persons will be transformed into the administration of things and the management of the process of production. The State will not be "abolished"; it will "die out."

The society that is to reorganise production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will transfer the machinery of State where it will then belong: into the museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning-wheel and the bronze axe. [Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.]

If, finally, we wish to understand the attitude of Marxian Socialism towards the small peasantry, which will continue to exist in the period of the expropriation of the expropriators, we must turn to a declaration by Engels expressing Marx's views. In an article on "The Peasant Problem in France and Germany," which appeared in the *Neue Zeit*, he says:

When we are in possession of the powers of the State, we shall not even dream of forcibly expropriating the poorer peasants, the smallholders (with or without compensation), as we shall have to do in relation to the large landowners. Our task as regards the smallholders will first of all consist in transforming their individual production and individual ownership into co-operative production and co-operative ownership, not forcibly, but by way of example, and by offering social aid for this purpose. We shall then have the means of showing the peasant all the advantages of this change—advantages which even now should be obvious to him.

#### TACTICS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Having discovered as early as 1844–1845 that one of the chief defects of the earlier materialism was its failure to

understand the conditions or recognise the importance of practical revolutionary activity, Marx, during all his life, alongside of theoretical work, gave unremitting attention to the tactical problems of the class struggle of the proletariat. An immense amount of material bearing upon this is contained in all the works of Marx and in the four volumes of his correspondence with Engels (*Briefwechsel*), published in 1913. This material is still far from having been collected, organised, studied, and elaborated. This is why we shall have to confine ourselves to the most general and brief remarks, emphasising the point that Marx justly considered materialism without *this* side to be incomplete, one-sided, and devoid of vitality. The fundamental task of proletarian tactics was defined by Marx in strict conformity with the general principles of his materialist-dialectical outlook. Nothing but an objective account of the sum total of all the mutual relationships of all the classes of a given society without exception, and consequently an account of the objective stage of development of this society as well as an account of the mutual relationship between it and other societies, can serve as the basis for the correct tactics of the class that forms the vanguard. All classes and all countries are at the same time looked upon not statically, but dynamically; i.e., not as motionless, but as in motion (the laws of their motion being determined by the economic conditions of existence of each class). The motion, in its turn, is looked upon not only from the point of view of the past, but also from the point of view of the future; and, moreover, not only in accordance with the vulgar conception of the "evolutionists," who see only slow changes—but dialectically: "In such great developments, twenty years are but as one day—and then may come days which are the concentrated essence of twenty years," wrote Marx to Engels (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 127). At each stage of development, at each moment, proletarian tactics must take account of these objectively unavoidable dialectics

of human history, utilising on the one hand, the phases of political stagnation, when things are moving at a snail's pace along the road of the so-called "peaceful" development, to increase the class consciousness, strength, and fighting capacity of the most advanced class; on the other hand, conducting this work in the direction of the "final aims" of the movement of this class, cultivating in it the faculty for the practical performance of great tasks in great days that are the "concentrated essence of twenty years." Two of Marx's arguments are of special importance in this connection: one of these is in the *Poverty of Philosophy* and relates to the industrial struggle and to the industrial organisations of the proletariat; the other is in *The Communist Manifesto*, and relates to the proletariat's political tasks. The former runs as follows:

The great industry masses together in a single place a crowd of people unknown to each other. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of their wages, this common interest which they have against their employer, unites them in the same idea of resistance—combination. . . . The combinations, at first isolated, . . . [form into] groups, and, in face of constantly united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more important and necessary for them than the maintenance of wages. . . . In this struggle—a veritable civil war—are united and developed all the elements necessary for a future battle. Once arrived at that point, association takes a political character.

Here we have the programme and the tactics of the economic struggle and the trade union movement for several decades to come, for the whole long period in which the workers are preparing for "a future battle." We must place side by side with this a number of Marx's references, in his correspondence with Engels, to the example of the British labour movement; here Marx shows how, industry being in a flourishing condition, attempts are made "to buy the workers" (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. I, p. 136), to distract them from the struggle; how, generally speaking, prolonged prosperity "demoralises



the workers" (Vol. II, p. 218); how the British proletariat is becoming "bourgeoisified"; how "the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all nations seems to be to establish a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat side by side with the bourgeoisie" (Vol. II, p. 290); how the "revolutionary energy" of the British proletariat oozes away (Vol. III, p. 124); how it will be necessary to wait for a considerable time "before the British workers can rid themselves of seeming bourgeois contamination" (Vol. III, p. 127); how the British movement "lacks the mettle of the old Chartists" (1866: Vol. III, p. 305); how the English workers are developing leaders of "a type that is half way between the radical bourgeoisie and the worker" (Vol. IV, p. 209, on Holyoake); how, due to British monopoly, and as long as that monopoly lasts, "the British worker will not budge" (Vol. IV, p. 433). The tactics of the economic struggle in connection with the general course (and *the outcome*) of the labour movement, are here considered from a remarkably broad many-sided, dialectical, and genuinely revolutionary outlook.

On the tactics of the political struggle, *The Communist Manifesto* advanced this fundamental Marxian thesis: "Communists fight on behalf of the immediate aims and interests of the working class, but in their present movement they are also defending the future of that movement." That was why in 1848 Marx supported the Polish party of the "agrarian revolution"—"the party which initiated the Cracow insurrection in the year 1846." In Germany during 1848 and 1849 he supported the radical revolutionary democracy, nor subsequently did he retract what he had then said about tactics. He looked upon the German bourgeoisie as "inclined from the very beginning to betray the people" (only an alliance with the peasantry would have enabled the bourgeoisie completely to fulfil its tasks) "and to compromise with the crowned representatives of the old order of society." Here is Marx's summary account of the class position of the German

bourgeoisie in the epoch of the bourgeois-democratic revolution—an analysis which, among other things, is an example of materialism, contemplating society in motion, and not looking only at that part of the motion which is directed *backwards*.

Lacking faith in themselves, lacking faith in the people; grumbling at those above, and trembling in face of those below . . . dreading a world-wide storm . . . nowhere with energy, everywhere with plagiarism . . . ; without initiative . . . —a miserable old man, doomed to guide in his own senile interests the first youthful impulses of a young and vigorous people. . . . [*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, 1848; see *Literarischer Nachlass*, Vol. III, p. 213.]

About twenty years afterwards, writing to Engels under the date of February 11, 1865 (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 224), Marx said that the cause of the failure of the Revolution of 1848 was that the bourgeoisie had preferred peace with slavery to the mere prospect of having to fight for freedom. When the revolutionary epoch of 1848–9 was over, Marx was strongly opposed to any playing at Revolution (Schapper and Willich, and the contest with them), insisting on the need for knowing how to work under the new conditions, when new revolutions were in the making—quasi—“peacefully.” The spirit in which Marx wanted the work to be carried on is plainly shown by his estimate of the situation in Germany during the period of blackest reaction. In 1856 he wrote (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. II, p. 108): “The whole thing in Germany depends on whether it is possible to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the peasants’ war.” As long as the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany was in progress, Marx directed his whole attention, in the matter of tactics of the Socialist proletariat, to developing the democratic energy of the peasantry. He held that Lassalle’s action was “objectively a betrayal of the whole working-class movement to the Prussians” (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 210), among other things, because he “was

rendering assistance to the junkers and to Prussian nationalism." On February 5, 1865, exchanging views with Marx regarding a forthcoming joint declaration of theirs in the press, Engels wrote (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 217): "In a predominantly agricultural country it is base to confine oneself to attacks on the bourgeoisie exclusively in the name of the industrial proletariat, while forgetting to say even a word about the patriarchal 'whipping rod exploitation' of the rural proletariat by the big feudal nobility." During the period from 1864 to 1870, in which the epoch of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany was being completed, in which the exploiting classes of Prussia and Austria were fighting for this or that method of completing the revolution *from above*, Marx not only condemned Lassalle for coquetting with Bismarck, but also corrected Wilhelm Liebknecht who had lapsed into "Austrophilism" and defended particularism. Marx insisted upon revolutionary tactics that would fight against both Bismarck and "Austrophilism" with equal ruthlessness, tactics which would not only suit the "conqueror," the Prussian junker, but would forthwith renew the struggle with him *upon the very basis* created by the Prussian military successes (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. II, pp. 134, 136, 147, 179, 204, 210, 215, 418, 437, 440-1). In the famous address issued by the International Workingmen's Association, dated September 9, 1870, Marx warned the French proletariat against an untimely uprising; but when, in 1871, the uprising actually took place, Marx hailed the revolutionary initiative of the masses with the utmost enthusiasm, saying that they were "storming the heavens" (Letter of Marx to Kugelmann). In this situation, as in so many others, the defeat of a revolutionary onslaught was, from the Marxian standpoint of dialectical materialism, from the point of view of the general course and the *outcome* of the proletarian struggle, a lesser evil than would have been a retreat from a position hitherto occupied, a surrender without striking a blow, as such a surrender would have demoralised the proletariat

and undermined its readiness for struggle. Fully recognising the importance of using legal means of struggle during periods of political stagnation, and when bourgeois legality prevails, Marx, in 1877 and 1878 when the Exception Law against the Socialists had been passed in Germany, strongly condemned the "revolutionary phrase-making" of Most ; but he attacked no less and perhaps even more sharply, the opportunism that, for a time, prevailed in the official Social-Democratic Party, which failed to manifest a spontaneous readiness to resist, to be firm, a revolutionary spirit, a readiness to resort to illegal struggle in reply to the Exception Law (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. IV, pp. 397, 404, 418, 422, and 424 ; also letters to Sorge).

*V. I. Lenin*

## OUR PROGRAMME

*Written 1899 ; first published 1925. English translation in "The Communist," July 1928.*


[This article was written in 1899, for the third number of the *Rabochaia Gazeta*, which however never appeared, owing to police interference. The article is one of the earliest in which Lenin clearly stated the policy of an independent party with a clear revolutionary policy and free of opportunists. This was to be the continuous theme of his writings (in the journal *Iskra*, and in *What is to be Done ?*) during the following years, and was to lead to the splitting of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, at its Congress in London in 1903, into the "Bolshevik" (majority—following Lenin) and "Menshevik" (minority) sections.]

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## OUR PROGRAMME

INTERNATIONAL social democracy is at present going through a period of theoretical vacillations. Up to the present the doctrines of Marx and Engels were regarded as a firm foundation of revolutionary theory—nowadays voices are raised everywhere declaring these doctrines to be inadequate and antiquated. Anyone calling himself a social-democrat and having the intention to publish a social-democratic organ, must take up a definite attitude as regards this question, which by no means concerns German social-democrats alone.

We base our faith entirely on Marx's theory ; it was the first to transform socialism from a Utopia into a science, to give this science a firm foundation and to indicate the path which must be trodden in order further to develop this science and to elaborate it in all its details. It discovered the nature of present-day capitalist economy and explained the way in which the employment of workers—the purchase of labour power—the enslavement of millions of those possessing no property by a handful of capitalists, by the owners of the land, the factories, the mines, etc., is concealed. It has shown how the whole development of modern capitalism is advancing towards the large producer ousting the small one, and is creating the prerequisites which make a socialist order of society possible and necessary. It has taught us to see, under the disguise of ossified habits, political intrigues, intricate laws, cunning theories, the class struggle, the struggle between, on the one hand, the various species of the possessing classes, and, on the other hand, the mass possessing no property, the proletariat, which leads all those who possess nothing. It has made clear what is the real task of a revolutionary socialist party—not to set up projects for the transformation of society, not to preach sermons to the capitalists and their admirers about improving the position of the workers, not the instigation of



conspiracies, but the organisation of the class struggle of the proletariat and the carrying on of this struggle, the final aim of which is the seizure of political power by the proletariat and the organisation of a socialist society.

We now ask : What new elements have the touting "renovators" introduced into this theory, they who have attracted so much notice in our day and have grouped themselves round the German socialist Bernstein ? Nothing, nothing at all ; they have not advanced by a single step the science which Marx and Engels adjured us to develop ; they have not taught the proletariat any new methods of fighting ; they are only marching backwards in that they adopt the fragments of antiquated theories and are preaching to the proletariat not the theory of struggle but the theory of submissiveness—submissiveness to the bitterest enemies of the proletariat, to the governments and bourgeois parties who never tire of finding new methods of persecuting socialists. Plekhanov, one of the founders and leaders of Russian social-democracy, was perfectly right when he subjected to merciless criticism the latest " Criticism " of Bernstein, whose views have now been rejected even by the representatives of the German workers at the Party Congress in Hanover (October, 1899.—Ed.).

We know that on account of these words we shall be drenched with a flood of accusations ; they will cry out that we want to turn the Socialist Party into a holy order of the " orthodox," who persecute the " heretics " for their aberrations from the " true dogma," for any independent opinion, etc. We know all these nonsensical phrases which have become the fashion nowadays. Yes there is no shadow of truth in them, no iota of sense. There can be no strong socialist party without a revolutionary theory which unites all socialists, from which the socialists draw their whole conviction, which they apply in their methods of fighting and working. To defend a theory of this kind, of the truth of which one is completely convinced, against unfounded attacks and against attempts to debase it, does

not mean being an enemy of criticism in general. We by no means regard the theory of Marx as perfect and inviolable ; on the contrary, we are convinced that this theory has only laid the foundation stones of that science on which the socialists must continue to build in every direction, unless they wish to be left behind by life. We believe that it is particularly necessary for Russian socialists to work out the Marxist theory independently, for this theory only gives general precepts, the details of which must be applied in England otherwise than in France, in France otherwise than in Germany, and in Germany otherwise than in Russia. For this reason we will willingly devote space in our paper to articles about theoretical questions, and we call upon all comrades openly to discuss the matters in dispute.

What are the main questions which arise in applying the common programme of all social-democrats to Russia ?

We have already said that the essence of this programme consists in the organisation of the class struggle of the proletariat and in carrying on this struggle, the final aim of which is the seizure of political power by the proletariat and the construction of a socialist society. The class struggle of the proletariat is divided into : The economic fight (the fight against individual capitalists, or against the individual groups of capitalists by the improvement of the position of the workers) and the political fight (the fight against the Government for the extension of the rights of the people, i.e., for democracy, and for the expansion of the political power of the proletariat). Some Russian social-democrats (among them apparently those who conduct the paper *Rabochaia Mysl*) regard the economic fight as incomparably more important and almost go so far as to postpone the political fight to a more or less distant future. This standpoint is quite wrong. All social-democrats are unanimous in believing that it is necessary to carry on an agitation among the workers on this basis, i.e., to help the workers in their daily fight against the employers, to direct

their attention to all kinds and all cases of chicanery, and in this way to make clear to them the necessity of unity. To forget the political for the economic fight would, however, mean a digression from the most important principle of international social-democracy ; it would mean forgetting what the whole history of the Labour movement has taught us. Fanatical adherents of the bourgeoisie and of the Government which serves it, have indeed repeatedly tried to organise purely economic unions of workers and thus to deflect them from the " politics " of socialism. It is quite possible that the Russian Government will also be clever enough to do something of the kind, as it has always endeavoured to throw some largesse or other sham presents to the people in order to prevent them becoming conscious that they are oppressed and are without rights.

No economic fight can give the workers a permanent improvement of their situation, it cannot, indeed, be carried on on a large scale unless the workers have the free right to call meetings, to join in unions, to have their own newspapers and to send their representatives to the National Assembly as do the workers in Germany and all European countries (with the exception of Turkey and Russia). In order, however, to obtain these rights, a political fight must be carried on. In Russia, not only the workers but all the citizens are deprived of political rights. Russia is an absolute monarchy. The Tsar alone promulgates laws, nominates officials and controls them. For this reason it seems as though in Russia the Tsar and the Tsarist Government were dependent on no class and cared for all equally. In reality, however, all the officials are chosen exclusively from the possessing class, and all are subject to the influence of the large capitalists who obtain whatever they want—the Ministers dance to the tune the large capitalists play. The Russian worker is bowed under a double yoke ; he is robbed and plundered by the capitalists and the landowners, and, lest he should fight against them, he is bound hand and foot by the police, his mouth is gagged and any attempt to



defend the rights of the people is followed by persecution. Any strike against a capitalist results in the military and police being let loose on the workers. Every economic fight of necessity turns into a political fight, and social-democracy must indissolubly combine the economic with the political fight into a united class struggle of the proletariat.

The first and chief aim of such a fight must be the conquest of political rights, the conquest of political freedom. Since the workers of St. Petersburg alone have succeeded, in spite of the inadequate support given them by the socialists in obtaining concessions from the Government within a short time—the passing of a law for shortening the hours of work—the whole working class, led by a united “Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party,” will be able, through obstinate fighting, to obtain incomparably more important concessions.

The Russian working class will see its way to carrying on an economic and political fight alone, even if no other class comes to its help. The workers are not alone, however, in the political fight. The fact that the people is absolutely without rights and the unbridled arbitrary rule of the officials rouses the indignation of all who have any pretensions to honesty and education, who cannot reconcile themselves with the persecution of all free speech and all free thought; it rouses the indignation of the persecuted Poles, Finns, Jews, Russian sects, it rouses the indignation of small traders, of the industrialists, the peasants, of all who can nowhere find protection against the chicanery of the officials and the police. All these groups of the population are incapable of carrying on an obstinate political fight alone; if, however, the working class raises the banner of a fight of this kind it will be supported on all sides. Russian social-democracy will place itself at the head of all fights for the rights of the people, of all fights for democracy, and then it will be invincible.

These are our fundamental ideas which we shall develop systematically and from every point of view in our paper.

We are convinced that in this way we shall tread the path which has been indicated by the "Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" in its "Manifesto."

*V. I. Lenin*

## WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

*Published 1902. English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1931.*

[This work, the sub-title of which is "Burning Questions of Our Movement," was of great historical importance in the development of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. In his earlier articles and pamphlets, Lenin had already sharply criticised the perversions of Marxist theory which were at that time beginning to dominate the socialist movement in Western Europe and were gathering influence in Russia. In *What is to be Done?* he showed the need for a triple struggle—theoretical, political, economic—and secondly, for a centralised revolutionary party to lead it. The sections reprinted here cover the main theoretical issue of the character and content of revolutionary agitation.]

## WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

### DOGMATISM AND "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"

*What is "Freedom of Criticism"?*

"FREEDOM OF CRITICISM," this undoubtedly is the most fashionable slogan at the present time, and the one most frequently employed in the controversies between the Socialists and democrats of all countries. At first sight,

nothing would appear to be more strange than the solemn appeals by one of the parties to the dispute for freedom of criticism. Can it be that some of the progressive parties have raised their voices against the constitutional law of the majority of European countries which guarantees freedom to science and scientific investigation? "Something must be wrong here," an onlooker who has not yet fully appreciated the nature of the disagreement among the controversialists will say when he hears this fashionable slogan repeated at every cross-road. "Evidently this slogan is one of the conventional phrases which, like a nickname, becomes legitimatised by custom," he will conclude.

In fact, it is no secret that two separate tendencies have been formed in international Social-Democracy.<sup>1</sup> The fight between these tendencies now flares up in a bright flame, and now dies down and smoulders under the ashes of imposing "resolutions for an armistice." What this "new" tendency, which adopts a "critical" attitude towards "obsolete doctrinaire" Marxism represents, has been *stated* with sufficient precision by Bernstein, and *demonstrated* by Millerand.

Social-Democracy must change from a party of the social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms. Bernstein has surrounded this political demand by a whole battery of symmetrically arranged "new" arguments and

<sup>1</sup> This, perhaps, is the first occasion in the history of modern Socialism that controversies between various tendencies within the Socialist movement have grown from national into international controversies; and this is extremely encouraging. Formerly, the disputes between the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers, between the Guesdists and the Possibilists, between the Fabians and the Social-Democrats, and between the Narodniki and the Social-Democrats in Russia, remained purely national disputes, reflected purely national features and proceeded, as it were, on different planes. At the present time (this is quite evident now) the English Fabians, the French Ministerialists, the German Bernsteinists, and the Russian "Critics"—all belong to the same family, all extol each other, learn from each other, and are rallying their forces against "doctrinaire" Marxism. Perhaps, in this first real battle with Socialist opportunism, international revolutionary Social-Democracy will become sufficiently hardened to be able, at last, to put an end to the political reaction, long reigning in Europe.

reasonings. The possibility of putting Socialism on a scientific basis and of proving that it is necessary and inevitable from the point of view of the materialist conception of history was denied ; the fact of increasing poverty, proletarianisation, the growing acuteness of capitalist contradictions, were also denied. The very conception of " *ultimate aim* " was declared to be unsound, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat was absolutely rejected. It was denied that there is any difference in principle between liberalism and Socialism. *The theory of the class struggle* was rejected on the grounds that it could not be applied to strictly democratic society, governed according to the will of the majority, etc.

Thus, the demand for a decided change from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois reformism, was accompanied by a no less decided turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism. As this criticism of Marxism has been going on for a long time now, from the political platform, from university chairs, in numerous pamphlets, and in a number of scientific works, as the younger generation of the educational classes have been systematically trained for decades on this criticism, it is not surprising that the " new, critical " tendency in Social-Democracy should spring up, all complete, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. This new tendency did not have to grow and develop, it was transferred bodily from bourgeois literature to Socialist literature.

If Bernstein's theoretical criticism and political yearnings are still obscure to anyone, the trouble the French have taken to demonstrate the " new method " should remove all ambiguities. In this instance, also, France has justified its old reputation as the country in which " more than anywhere else the historical class struggles were always fought to a finish " [Engels, in his introduction to Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*]. The French Socialists have commenced, not to theorise, but to act. The more developed democratic political conditions in France have permitted them to put

Bernsteinism into practice immediately, with its inevitable consequences. Millerand has provided an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism. It is not surprising that he so zealously defends and praises Bernstein and Volmar ! Indeed, if Social-Democracy, in essentials, is merely a reformist party, and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then, not only has a Socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, but he ought always to strive to obtain places in it. If democracy, in essence, means the abolition of class domination, then why should not a Socialist minister charm the whole bourgeois world by orations on class co-operation ? Why should he not remain in the cabinet even after the shooting down of workers by gendarmes has exposed, for the hundredth and thousandth time, the real nature of the democratic co-operation of classes ? Why should he not personally take part in welcoming the Tsar, for whom the French Socialists now have no other sobriquet than " Hero of the Gallows, Knout and Banishment " (*knouteur, pendeur et deportateur*) ? And the reward for this humiliation and self-degradation of Socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the Socialist consciousness of the working class—the only thing that can guarantee victory—the reward for this is, imposing *plans* for niggardly reforms, so niggardly in fact, that much more has been obtained even from bourgeois governments.

He who does not deliberately close his eyes cannot fail to see that the new " critical " tendency in Socialism is nothing more nor less than a new species of *opportunism*. And if we judge people not by the brilliant uniforms they deck themselves in, not by the imposing appellations they give themselves, but by their actions, and by what they actually advocate, it will be clear that " freedom of criticism " means freedom for an opportunistic tendency in Social-Democracy, the freedom to convert Social-Democracy into a democratic reformist party, the freedom to introduce bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into Socialism.

"Freedom" is a grand word, but under the banner of Free Trade the most predatory wars were conducted : under the banner of "free labour," the toilers were robbed. The term "freedom of criticism" contains the same inherent falsehood. Those who are really convinced that they have advanced science, would demand, not freedom for the new views to continue side by side with the old, but the substitution of the old views by the new views. The cry "Long live freedom of criticism," that is heard to-day, too strongly calls to mind the fable of the empty barrel.

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and are under their almost constant fire. We have combined voluntarily, especially for the purpose of fighting the enemy and not to retreat into the adjacent marsh, the inhabitants of which, right from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group, and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now several in our crowd begin to cry out : Let us go into this marsh ! And when we begin to shame them, they retort : How conservative you are ! Are you not ashamed to deny us the right to invite you to take a better road !

Oh yes, gentlemen ! You are free, not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render *you* every assistance to get there. Only, let go of our hands, don't clutch at us, and don't besmirch the grand word "freedom" ; for we too are "free" to go where we please, free, not only to fight against the marsh, but also those who are turning towards the marsh. . . .

### *Criticism in Russia*

The peculiar position of Russia in regard to the point we are examining is that *right from the very beginning* of the

spontaneous labour movement on the one hand, and the change of progressive public opinion towards Marxism on the other, a combination was observed of obviously heterogeneous elements under a common flag for the purpose of fighting the common enemy (obsolete social and political views). We refer to the heyday of "legal Marxism." Speaking generally, this was an extremely curious phenomenon, that no one in the 'eighties, or the beginning of the 'nineties, would have believed possible. Suddenly, in a country ruled by an autocracy, in which the press is completely shackled, and in a period of intense political reaction in which even the tiniest outgrowth of political discontent and protest was suppressed, a *censored* literature springs up, advocating the theory of revolutionary Marxism, in a language extremely obscure, but understood by the "interest." The government had accustomed itself to regard only the theory of (revolutionary) Populism as dangerous without observing its internal evolution as is usually the case, and rejoicing at the criticism, levelled against it *no matter from what side it came*. Quite a considerable time elapsed (according to our Russian calculations) before the government realised what had happened and the unwieldy army of censors and gendarmes discovered the new enemy and flung itself upon him. Meanwhile, Marxian books were published one after another, Marxian journals and newspapers were published, nearly every one became a Marxist, Marxism was flattered, the Marxists were courted and the book publishers rejoiced at the extraordinary ready sale of Marxian literature. It is quite reasonable to suppose that among the Marxian novices who were carried away by this stream, there was more than one "author who got a swelled head. . ."

We can now speak calmly of this period as of an event of the past. It is no secret that the brief appearance of Marxism on the surface of our literature was called forth by the alliance between people of extreme and of extremely moderate views. In point of fact, the latter were bourgeois

democrats ; and this was the conclusion (so strikingly confirmed by their subsequent "critical" development), that intruded itself on the minds of certain persons even when the "alliance" was still intact.

That being the case, does not the responsibility for the subsequent "confusion" rest mainly upon the revolutionary Social-Democrats who entered into alliance with these future "critics"? This question, together with a reply in the affirmative, is sometimes heard from people with excessively rigid views. But these people are absolutely wrong. Only those who have no reliance in themselves can fear to enter into temporary alliances with unreliable people. Besides, not a single political party could exist without entering into such alliances. The combination with the legal Marxists was in its way the first really political alliance contracted by Russian Social-Democrats. Thanks to this alliance an astonishingly rapid victory was obtained over Populism, and Marxian ideas (even though in a vulgarised form) became very widespread. Moreover, the alliance was not concluded altogether without "conditions." The proof: The burning by the censor, in 1895, of the Marxian symposium, *Materials on the Problem of the Economic Development of Russia*. If the literary agreement with the legal Marxists can be compared with a political alliance, then that book can be compared with a political treaty.

The rupture, of course, did not occur because the "allies" proved to be bourgeois democrats. On the contrary, the representatives of the latter tendency were the natural and desirable allies of the Social-Democrats in so far as their democratic tasks that were brought to the front by the prevailing situation in Russia were concerned. But an essential condition for such an alliance must be complete liberty for Socialists to reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the bourgeoisie. However, the Bernsteinist and "critical" tendency to which the majority of the legal Marxists turned,



deprived the Socialists of this liberty and corrupted Socialist consciousness by vulgarising Marxism, by preaching the toning down of social antagonisms, by declaring the idea of the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat to be absurd, by restricting the labour movement and the class struggle to narrow trade unionism and to a "practical" struggle for petty, gradual reforms. This was tantamount to the bourgeois democrat's denial of Socialism's right to independence, and, consequently, of its right to existence ; in practice it meant a striving to convert the nascent labour movement into a tail of the liberals.

Naturally, under such circumstances a rupture was necessary. But the "peculiar" feature of Russia manifested itself in that this rupture simply meant the closing to the Social-Democrats of access to the most popular and widespread "legal" literature. The "ex-Marxists" who took up the flag of "criticism," and who obtained almost a monopoly in the "sale" of Marxism, entrenched themselves in this literature. Catchwords like : "Against orthodoxy" and "Long live freedom of criticism" (now repeated by *Rabocheye Dyelo*) immediately became the fashion, and the fact that neither the censor nor the gendarmes could resist this fashion is apparent from the publication of *three* Russian editions of Bernstein's celebrated book (celebrated in the Herostratus sense) and from the fact that the books by Bernstein, Prokopovich and others were recommended by Zubatov [*Iskra*, No. 10]. And this tendency did not confine itself to the sphere of literature. The turn towards criticism was accompanied by the turn towards Economism that was taken by Social-Democratic practical workers.

The manner in which the contacts and mutual dependence between legal criticism and illegal Economism arose and grew is an interesting subject in itself, and may very well be treated in a special article. It is sufficient to note here that these contacts undoubtedly existed. The notoriety deservedly acquired by the *Credo* was due precisely to the

frankness with which it formulated these contacts and laid down the fundamental political tendencies of Economism, viz. : Let the workers carry on the economic struggle (it would be more correct to say the trade union struggle, because the latter embraces also specifically labour politics), and let the Marxist intelligentsia merge with the liberals for the political "struggle." Thus, it turned out that trade union work "among the people" meant fulfilling the first part of this task, and legal criticism meant fulfilling the second part. . . .

The question now arises : Seeing what the peculiar features of Russian "criticism" and Russian Bernsteinism were, what should those who desired, in deeds and not merely in words, to oppose opportunism have done ? First of all, they should have made efforts to resume the theoretical work that was only just commenced in the period of legal Marxism, and that has now again fallen on the shoulders of the illegal workers. Unless such work is undertaken the successful growth of the movement is impossible. Secondly, they should have actively combated legal "criticism" that was corrupting people's minds. Thirdly, they should have actively counteracted the confusion and vacillation prevailing in practical work, and should have exposed and repudiated every conscious or unconscious attempt to degrade our programme and tactics. . . .

### *The Importance of the Theoretical Struggle*

. . . The case of the Russian Social-Democrats strikingly illustrates the fact observed in the whole of Europe (and long ago observed in German Marxism) that the notorious freedom of criticism implies, not the substitution of one theory by another, but freedom from every complete and thought-out theory ; it implies eclecticism and absence of principle. Those who are in the least acquainted with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain deterioration of

theoretical standards. Quite a number of people, with very little, and even totally lacking in, theoretical training, joined the movement for the sake of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can judge, therefore, how tactless *Robocheye Dyelo* is when, with an air of invincibility, it quotes the statement of Marx that : " A single step of the real movement is worth a dozen programmes." To repeat these words in the epoch of theoretical chaos is sheer mockery. Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme, in which he *sharply condemns* eclecticism in the formulation of principles : " If you must combine," Marx wrote to the party leaders, " then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not haggle over principles, do not make ' concessions ' in theory." This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who strive—in his name !—to belittle the significance of theory.

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity. The importance of theory for Russian Social-Democrats is still greater for three reasons, which are often forgotten :

The first is that our party is only in the process of formation, its features are only just becoming outlined, and it has not yet completely settled its reckoning with other tendencies in revolutionary thought which threaten to divert the movement from the proper path. Indeed, in very recent times we have observed (as Axelrod long ago warned the Economists would happen) a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary tendencies. Under such circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an " unimportant," mistake, may give rise to most deplorable consequences, and only the short-sighted would consider factional disputes and strict distinction of shades to be inopportune and superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for many,

many years to come may be determined by the strengthening of one or the other "shade."

The second reason is that the Social-Democratic movement is essentially an international movement. This does not mean merely that we must combat national chauvinism. It means also that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only on the condition that it assimilates the experience of other countries. In order to assimilate this experience, it is not sufficient merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest revolutions. A critical attitude is required towards this experience, and ability to subject it to independent tests. Only those who realise how much the modern labour movement has grown in strength will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to fulfil this task.

The third reason is that the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other Socialist party in the world. Farther on we shall deal with the political and organisational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we wish merely to state that the *rôle of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by an advanced theory. . . .*

#### TRADE UNION POLITICS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

##### *Political Agitation and its Restriction by the Economists*

Everyone knows that the spread and consolidation of the economic<sup>1</sup> struggle of the Russian workers proceeded

<sup>1</sup> In order to avoid misunderstanding we would state, that here, and throughout this pamphlet, by economic struggle, we mean (in accordance with the meaning of the term as it has become accepted amongst us) the "practical economic struggle" which Engels described as "resistance to capitalism," and which in free countries is known as the trade union struggle.

simultaneously with the creation of a "literature" exposing economic conditions, i.e., factory and industrial conditions. These "leaflets" were devoted mainly to the exposure of factory conditions, and very soon a passion for exposures was roused among the workers. As soon as the workers realised that the Social-Democratic circles desired to and could supply them with a new kind of leaflet that told the whole truth about their poverty-stricken lives, about their excessive toil and their lack of rights, correspondence began to pour in from the factories and workshops. This "exposure literature" created a sensation not only in the particular factory dealt with and the conditions of which were exposed in a given leaflet, but in all the factories to which news had spread about the facts exposed. And as the poverty and want among the workers in the various enterprises and in the various trades are pretty much the same, the "Truth about the life of the workers" roused the admiration *of all*. Even among the most backward workers, a veritable passion was roused to "go into print"—a noble passion to adopt this rudimentary form of war against the whole of the modern social system which is based upon robbery and oppression. And in the overwhelming majority of cases these "leaflets" were in truth a declaration of war, because the exposures had a terrifically rousing effect upon the workers; it stimulated them to put forward demands for the removal of the most glaring evils, and roused in them a readiness to support these demands with strikes. Finally, the employers themselves were compelled to recognise the significance of these leaflets as a declaration of war, so much so that in a large number of cases they did not even wait for the outbreak of hostilities. As is always the case, the mere publication of these exposures made them effective, and they acquired the significance of a strong moral force. On more than one occasion the mere appearance of a leaflet proved sufficient to compel an employer to concede all or part of the demands put forward. In a word, economic (factory) exposures have

been an important lever in the economic struggle and they will continue to be so as long as capitalism, which creates the need for the workers to defend themselves, exists. Even in the more progressive countries of Europe to-day, the exposure of the evils in some backward trade, or in some forgotten branch of domestic industry, serves as a starting point for the awakening of class-consciousness, for the beginning of a trade-union struggle, and for the spread of Socialism.

Recently, the overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats were almost wholly engaged in this work of exposing factory conditions. It is sufficient to refer to the columns of *Rabochaya Mysl* to judge to what an extent they were engaged in it. So much so, indeed, that they lost sight of the fact that this, *taken by itself*, was not substantially Social-Democratic work, but merely trade-union work. As a matter of fact, these exposures merely dealt with the relations between the workers *in a given trade*, with their immediate employers, and all that it achieved was that the vendors of labour power learned to sell their "commodity" on better terms, and to fight the purchasers of labour power over a purely commercial deal. These exposures might have served (if properly utilised by revolutionaries) as a beginning and a constituent part of Social-Democratic activity, but they might also (and with subsequence to spontaneity inevitably had to) have led to a "pure and simple" trade-union struggle and to a non-Social-Democratic labour movement. Social-Democrats lead the struggle of the working class not only for better terms for the sale of labour power, but also for the abolition of the social system which compels the propertyless class to sell itself to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class, not in its relation to a given group of employers, but in its relation to all classes in modern society, to the state as an organised political force. Hence, it not only follows that Social-Democrats must not confine themselves entirely to the economic struggle; they must not even allow the

organisation of economic exposures to become the predominant part of their activities. We must actively take up the political education of the working class, and the development of its political consciousness. *Now*, after *Zarya* and *Iskra* have made the first attack upon Economism "all are agreed" with this (although some agreed only nominally, as we shall soon prove).

The question now arises : What does political education mean ? Is it sufficient to confine oneself to the propaganda of working-class hostility to autocracy ? Of course not. It is not enough to *explain* to the workers that they are politically oppressed (any more than it was to *explain* to them that their interests were antagonistic to the interests of the employers). Advantage must be taken of every concrete example of this oppression for the purpose of agitation (in the same way as we began to use concrete examples of economic oppression for the purpose of agitation). And inasmuch as *political* oppression affects all sorts of classes in society, inasmuch as it manifests itself in various spheres of life and activity, in industrial life, civic life, in personal and family life, in religious life, scientific life, etc., etc., is it not evident that *we shall not be fulfilling our task* of developing the political consciousness of the workers if *we do not undertake* the organisation of the *political exposure of autocracy in all its aspects* ? In order to agitate over concrete examples of oppression, these examples must be exposed (in the same way as it was necessary to expose factory evils in order to carry on economic agitation).

One would think that this was clear enough. It turns out, however, that "all" are agreed that it is necessary to develop political consciousness *in all its aspects*, only in words. It turns out that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, for example, has not only failed to take up the task of organising (or to make a start in organising) in all-sided political exposure, but is even trying to *drag Iskra*, which has undertaken this task, *away from it*. Listen to this : "The political struggle of the working class is merely (it is precisely not "merely") a

more developed, a wider and more effective form of economic struggle." [Programme of *Rabocheye Dyelo* published in No. 1, p. 3.] "The Social Democrats are now confronted with the task of, as far as possible, giving the economic struggle itself a political character." [Martynov, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 42.] "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable method of drawing the masses into active political struggle" (resolution passed by the congress of the League and "amendments" thereto). [Two Congresses, pp. 11 and 17.] As the reader will observe, all these postulates permeate *Rabocheye Dyelo*, from its very first number to the recently issued Instructions by the Editorial Committee, and all of them evidently express a single view regarding political agitation and the political struggle. Examine this view from the standpoint of the opinion prevailing among all Economists, that political agitation must *follow* economic agitation. Is it true that in general the economic struggle "is the most widely applicable method" of drawing the masses into the political struggle? It is absolutely untrue. All and sundry manifestations of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, in addition to the evils connected with the economic struggle, are equally "widely applicable" as a means of "drawing in" the masses. The tyranny of the Zemstvo chiefs, the flogging of the peasantry, the corruption of the officials, the conduct of the police towards the "common people" in the cities, the fight against the famine-stricken and the suppression of the popular striving towards enlightenment and knowledge, the extortion of taxes, the persecution of the religious sects, the severe discipline in the army, the militarist conduct towards the students and the liberal intelligentsia—all these and a thousand other similar manifestations of tyranny, though not directly connected with the "economic" struggle, do they, in general, represent a *less* "widely applicable" method and subject for political agitation and for drawing the masses into the political struggle? The very opposite is the case. Of all the innumerable cases in which



the workers suffer (either personally or those closely associated with them) from tyranny, violence, and lack of rights, undoubtedly only a relatively few represent cases of police tyranny in the economic struggle as such. Why then should we beforehand *restrict* the scope of political agitation by declaring *only one* of the methods to be "the most widely applicable," when Social-Democrats have other, generally speaking, not less "widely applicable" means?

Long, long ago (a year ago ! . . .) *Rabocheye Dyelo* wrote :

The masses begin to understand immediate political demands after one, or at all events, after several strikes ; immediately the government sets the police and gendarmerie against them [No. 7, p. 15, August 1900].

This opportunist theory of stages has now been rejected by the League, which makes a concession to us by declaring : " There is no need whatever to conduct political agitation right from the beginning, exclusively on an economic basis." [*Two Congresses*, p. 11.] This very repudiation of part of its former errors by the League will enable the future historian of Russian Social-Democracy to discern the depths to which our Economists have degraded Socialism better than any number of lengthy arguments ! But the League must be very naïve indeed to imagine that the abandonment of one form of restricting politics will induce us to agree to another form of restriction ! Would it not be more logical to say that the economic struggle should be conducted on the widest possible basis, that it should be utilised for political agitation, but that " there is no need whatever " to regard the economic struggle as the *most* widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle ? The League attaches significance to the fact that it substituted the phrase " most widely applicable method " by the phrase " a better method," contained in one of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Jewish Labour League (Bund). We confess that we find it difficult

to say which of these resolutions is the better one. In our opinion *both are bad*. Both the League and the Bund fall into error (partly perhaps unconsciously, owing to the influence of tradition) concerning the economic, trade-unionist interpretation of politics. The fact that this error is expressed either by the word "better" or by the words "most widely applicable" makes no material difference whatever. If the League had said that "political agitation on an economic basis" is the most widely applied (and not "applicable") method it would have been right in regard to a certain period in the development of our Social-Democratic movement. It would have been right in regard to the *Economists and to many* (if not the majority) of the practical Economists of 1898-1901 who have *applied* the method of political agitation (to the extent that they applied it at all) *almost exclusively on an economic basis*. Political agitation on *such* lines was recognised, and as we have seen, even recommended by *Rabochaya Mysl*, and by the Self-Emancipation group! *Rabocheye Dyelo* should have *strongly condemned* the fact that useful economic agitation was accompanied by the harmful restriction of the political struggle, but, instead of that, it declares the method most widely *applied* (*by the Economists*) to be the most widely *applicable*! It is not surprising, therefore, that when we describe these people as Economists, they can do nothing else but pour abuse upon us, and call us "mystifiers," "disrupters," "Papal Nuncios," and "slanderers," go complaining to the world that we have mortally offended them and declare almost on oath that "not a single Social-Democratic organisation is now tinged with Economism. Oh, these evil, slanderous politicians! They must have deliberately invented this Economism, out of sheer hatred of mankind, in order mortally to offend other people!"

What do the words "to give the economic struggle itself a political character," which Martynov uses in presenting the tasks of Social-Democracy, mean concretely? The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers

against their employers for better terms *in the sale of their labour power*, for better conditions of life and labour. This struggle is necessarily a struggle according to trade, because conditions of labour differ very much in different trades, and, consequently, the fight to *improve* these conditions can only be conducted in respect of each trade (trade unions in the Western countries, temporary trade associations and leaflets in Russia, etc.). To give "the economic struggle itself a political character" means, therefore, to strive to secure satisfaction for these trade demands, the improvement of conditions of labour in each separate trade by means of "legislative and administrative measures" (as Martynov expresses it on the next page of his article, p. 43). This is exactly what the trade unions do and always have done. Read the works of the thoroughly scientific (and "thoroughly" opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will find that the British trade unions long ago recognised, and have long carried out the task of "giving the economic struggle itself a political character"; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all juridical hindrances to the co-operative and trade-union movement, for laws protecting women and children, for the improvement of conditions of labour by means of sanitary and factory legislation, etc.

Thus, the pompous phrase: "To give the economic struggle *itself* a political character," which sounds so "terrifically" profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade-union politics! On the pretext of rectifying *Iskra's* onesidedness, which, it is alleged, places "the revolutionising of dogma higher than the revolutionising of life," we are presented with the *struggle for economic reform* as if it were something entirely new. As a matter of fact, the phrase "to give the economic struggle itself a political character" means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. And Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion

had he only pondered over the significance of his own words. "Our party," he says, turning his heaviest guns against *Iskra*, "could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, for the relief of unemployment, for the relief of the famine-stricken, etc." [*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42, 43.] Concrete demands for measures—does not this mean demands for social reforms? And again we ask the impartial reader, do we slander the *Rabocheye Dyeloists* (may I be forgiven for this clumsy expression!) when we declare them to be concealed Bernsteinists, for advancing their thesis about the necessity for fighting for economic reforms as a reason for their *disagreement* with *Iskra*?

Revolutionary Social-Democracy always included, and now includes, the fight for reforms in its activities. But it utilises "economic" agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it cease to be an autocratic government. Moreover, it considers it to be its duty to present this demand to the government, not on the basis of the economic struggle *alone*, but on the basis of all manifestations of public and political life. In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms to the revolutionary struggle for liberty and for Socialism, in the same way as the part is subordinate to the whole. Martynov, however, resuscitates the theory of stages in a new form, and strives to prescribe an exclusively economic so to speak, path of development for the political struggle. By coming out at this moment, when the revolutionary movement is on the up-grade, with an alleged special "task" of fighting for reforms, he is dragging the party backwards, and is playing into the hands of both "economic" and liberal opportunism.

Shamefacedly hiding the struggle for reforms behind the pompous thesis "to give the economic struggle itself a political character," Martynov advanced, as if it were a

special point, *exclusively economic* (in fact, exclusively factory) reforms. Why he did that, we do not know. Perhaps it was due to carelessness? But if he indeed had only "factory" reforms in mind, then the whole of his thesis, which we have just quoted, loses all sense. Perhaps he did it because he thought it possible and probable that the government would agree to make "concessions" only in the economic sphere? If that is what he thought, then it is a strange error. Concessions are also possible, and are made in the sphere of legislation concerning flogging, passports, land-compensation payments, religious sects, the censorship, etc., etc. "Economic" concessions (or pseudo-concessions) are, of course, the cheapest and most advantageous concessions) to make from the government's point of view, because by these means it hopes to win the confidence of the masses of the workers. Precisely for this very reason, Social-Democrats *must under no circumstances* create grounds for the belief (or the misunderstanding) that we attach greater value to economic reforms than to political reforms, or that we regard them as being particularly important, etc. . . .

*Political Exposures and "Training in  
Revolutionary Activity"*

In advancing against *Iskra* his "theory" of "raising the activity of the masses of the workers," Martynov, as a matter of fact, displayed a striving to *diminish* this activity, because he declared the very economic struggle before which all Economists grovel to be the preferable, the most important and "the most widely applicable means of rousing this activity, and the widest field for it." This error is such a characteristic one, precisely because it is not peculiar to Martynov alone. As a matter of fact, it is possible to "raise the activity of the masses of the workers" *only* provided this activity *is not restricted entirely* to "political agitation on an economic basis." And one of the fundamental

conditions for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organisation of *all-sided* political exposure. In *no other way* can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity except by means of such exposure. Hence, to conduct such activity is one of the most important functions of international Social-Democracy as a whole, for even in countries where political liberty exists, there is still a field for work of exposure, although in such countries the work is conducted in a different sphere. For example, the German party is strengthening its position and spreading its influence, thanks particularly to the untiring energy with which it is conducting a campaign of political exposure. Working-class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected. Moreover, that response must be a Social-Democratic response, and not one from any other point of view. The consciousness of the masses of the workers cannot be genuine class consciousness, unless the workers learn to observe from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events, *every* other social class and *all* the manifestations of the intellectual, ethical and political life of these classes ; unless they learn to apply practically the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of *all* aspects of the life and activity of *all* classes, strata and groups of the population. Those who concentrate the attention, observation and the consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone, are not Social-Democrats ; because, for its self-realisation the working class must not only have a theoretical . . . rather it would be more true to say : Not so much theoretical as a practical understanding acquired through experience of political life of the relationships between *all* classes of modern society. That is why the idea preached by our Economists, that the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into the political movement is so extremely harmful and

extremely reactionary in practice. In order to become a Social-Democrat, a working man must have a clear picture in his mind of the economic nature and the social and political features of the landlord, of the priest, of the high state official and of the peasant, of the student and of the tramp ; he must know their strong and weak sides ; he must understand all the catchwords and sophisms by which each class and each stratum camouflages its egotistical strivings and its real " nature " ; he must understand what interests certain institutions and certain laws reflect and how they are reflected. The working man cannot obtain this " clear picture " from books. He can obtain it only from living examples and from exposures, following hot after their occurrence, of what goes on around us at a given moment, of what is being discussed, in whispers perhaps, by each one in his own way, of the meaning of such and such events, of such and such statistics, in such and such court sentences, etc., etc., etc. These universal political exposures are an essential and *fundamental* condition for training the masses in revolutionary activity.

Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display so little revolutionary activity in connection with the brutal way in which the police maltreat the people, in connection with the persecution of the religious sects, with the flogging of the peasantry, with the outrageous censorship, with the torture of soldiers, with the persecution of the most innocent cultural enterprises, etc. ? Is it because the " economic struggle " does not " stimulate " them to this, because such political activity does not " promise palpable results," because it produces little that is " positive " ? To advance this argument, we repeat, is merely to shift the blame to the shoulders of others, to blame the masses of the workers for our own philistinism (also Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our remoteness from the mass movement ; we must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organise a sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposure of these

despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel*, that the students and religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life, and, feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to respond to these things and then he will organise cat-calls against the censors one day, another day he will demonstrate outside the house of the provincial governor who has brutally suppressed peasant uprising, another day he will teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc. As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, to *hurl* universal and fresh exposures among the masses of the workers. Many of us as yet do not appreciate the *bounden duty* that rests upon us, but spontaneously follow in the wake of the "drab every-day struggle," in the narrow confines of factory life. Under such circumstances to say that *Iskra* displays a tendency to belittle the significance of the forward march of the drab every-day struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas [Martynov, p. 61]—means to drag the party backwards, to defend and glorify our unpreparedness and backwardness.

As for calling the masses to action, that will come of itself immediately that energetic political agitation, live and striking exposures are set going. To catch some criminal red-handed and immediately to brand him publicly will have far more effect than any number of "appeals to action"; the effect very often will be such that it will be impossible to tell who exactly it was that "appealed" to the crowd, and who exactly suggested this or that plan of demonstration, etc. Calls for action, not in the general, but in the concrete, sense of the term, can be made only at the place of action; only those who themselves go into action now can make appeals for action. And our business as Social-Democratic publicists is to deepen, expand and intensify political



exposures and political agitation. A word in passing about "calls to action." *The only paper that prior to the spring events, called upon the workers actively to intervene in a matter that certainly did not promise any palpable results for the workers, i.e., the drafting of the students into the army was Iskra.* Immediately after the publication of the order of January 11 "Drafting the 183 Students into the Army," *Iskra* published an article about it (in its February issue, No. 2), and *before* any demonstration was started openly called upon "the workers to go to the aid of the students," called upon the "people" boldly to take up the government's open challenge. We ask : How is the remarkable fact to be explained that although he talks so much about "calling for action," and even suggests "calling for action" as a special form of activity, Martynov said not a word about *this* call ? After this, is not Martynov's allegation, that *Iskra* was *one-sided* because it did not sufficiently "call for" the struggle for demands "promising palpable results," sheer philistinism ?

Our Economists, including *Rabocheye Dyelo*, were successful because they disguised themselves as uneducated workers. But the working-class Social-Democrat, the working-class revolutionist (and their number is growing) will indignantly reject all this talk about fighting for demands "promising palpable results," etc., because he will understand that this is only a variation of the old song about adding a kopeck to the rouble. These working-class revolutionaries will say to their counsellors of the *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo* : You are wasting your time, gentlemen ; you are interfering with excessive zeal in a job that we can manage ourselves, and you are neglecting your own duties. It is silly of you to say that the Social-Democrats' task is to give the economic struggle itself a political character, for that is only the beginning, it is not the main task that Social-Democrats must fulfil. All over the world, including Russia, *the police themselves often give* the economic struggle a political character, and the

workers are beginning to understand whom the government supports.<sup>1</sup>

The "economic struggle between the workers and the employers and the government," about which you make as much fuss as if you had made a new discovery, is being carried on in all parts of Russia, even the most remote, by the workers themselves who have heard about strikes, but who have heard almost nothing about Socialism. The "activity" you want to stimulate among us workers by advancing concrete demands promising palpable results, we are already displaying and in our every-day, petty trade-union work, we put forward concrete demands, very often without any assistance from the intellectuals whatever. But *such* activity is not enough for us ; we are not children to be fed on the sops of "economic" politics alone ; we want to know everything that everybody else knows, we want to learn the details of *all* aspects of political life and to take part *actively* in every political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less on what we already know, and tell us more about what we do not know and what we can never learn from our factory

<sup>1</sup> The demand "to give the economic struggle itself a political character" most strikingly expresses *subservience to spontaneity* in the sphere of political activity. Very often the economic struggle *spontaneously* assumed a political character, that is to say without the injection of the "revolutionary bacilli of the intelligentsia," without the intervention of the class-conscious Social-Democrats. For example, the economic struggle of the British workers assumed a political character without the intervention of the Socialists. The tasks of the Social-Democrats, however, are not exhausted by political agitation on the economic field; their task is to *convert* trade-union politics into the Social-Democratic political struggle, to *utilise* the flashes of political consciousness which gleam in the minds of the workers during their economic struggles for the purpose of *raising* them to the level of *Social-Democratic* political consciousness. The Martynovs, however, instead of raising and stimulating the spontaneously awakening political consciousness of the workers, *bow down before spontaneity* and repeat over and over again, until one is sick and tired of hearing it, that the economic struggle "stimulates" in the workers' minds thoughts about their own lack of political rights. It is unfortunate, gentlemen, that the spontaneously awakening trade-union political consciousness does not "*stimulate*" in your minds thoughts about your Social-Democratic tasks !

and "economic" experience, that is, you must give us political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your *duty* to bring us that knowledge in a hundred and a thousand times greater measure than you have done up till now ; and you must bring us this knowledge, not only in the form of arguments, pamphlets and articles which sometimes—excuse my frankness !—are very dull, but in the form of live *exposures* of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Fulfil this duty with greater zeal, and *talk less about "increasing the activity of the masses of the workers !"* We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to support by open street fighting demands that do not even promise any "palpable results" whatever ! You cannot "increase" our activity, because *you yourselves are not sufficiently active*. Be less subservient to spontaneity, and think more about increasing *your own* activity, gentlemen ! . . .

### *The Working Class as Champion of Democracy*

We have seen that the organisation of wide political agitation, and, consequently, of all-sided political exposures, is an absolutely necessary and *paramount* task of activity, that is, if that activity is to be truly Social-Democratic. We arrived at this conclusion *solely* on the grounds of the pressing needs of the working class for political knowledge and political training. But this ground by itself is too narrow for the presentation of the question, for it ignores the general democratic tasks of Social-Democracy as a whole, and of modern Russian Social-Democracy in particular. In order to explain the situation more concretely we shall approach the subject from an aspect that is "nearer" to the Economist, namely, from the practical aspect. "Every one agrees" that it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the working class. But the question arises, How is that to be done ? What must be

done to bring this about? The economic struggle merely brings the workers "up against" questions concerning the attitude of the government towards the working class. Consequently, *however much we may try* to "give to the economic struggle itself a political character" *we shall never be able* to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the degree of Social-Democratic consciousness) by confining ourselves to the economic struggle, for *the limits of this task are too narrow*. The Martynov formula has some value for us, not because it illustrates Martynov's abilities to confuse things, but because it strikingly expresses the fundamental error that all the Economists commit, namely, their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers *from within*, that is to say, exclusively, or at least mainly, by means of the economic struggle. Such a view is radically wrong. Piqued by our opposition to them, the Economists refuse to ponder deeply over the origins of these disagreements, with the result that we absolutely fail to understand each other. It is as if we spoke in different tongues.

The workers can acquire class political consciousness *only from without*, that is, only outside of the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between *all* classes and the state and the government—the sphere of the inter-relations between *all* classes. For that reason, the reply to the question: What must be done in order that the workers may acquire political knowledge? cannot be merely the one which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those who are inclined towards Economism, usually content themselves with, i.e., "go among the workers." To bring political knowledge to the workers the Social-Democrats must *go among all classes of the population*, must despatch units of their army *in all directions*.

We deliberately select this awkward formula, we deliberately express ourselves in a simple, forcible way, not

because we desire to indulge in paradoxes, but in order to "stimulate" the Economists to take up their tasks which they unpardonably ignore, to make them understand the difference between trade-union and Social-Democratic politics, which they refuse to understand. Therefore, we beg the reader not to get excited, but to hear us patiently to the end.

Take the type of Social-Democratic circle that has been most widespread during the past few years, and examine its work. It has "contact with the workers," it issues leaflets—in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists, and the tyranny of the police are strongly condemned—and rests content with this. At meetings of workers, there are either no discussions or they do not extend beyond such subjects. Lectures and discussions on the history of the revolutionary movement, on questions of the home and foreign policy of our government, on questions of the economic evolution of Russia and of Europe, and the position of the various classes in modern society, etc., are extremely rare. Of systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society, no one even dreams. The ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is something more in the nature of a trade-union secretary than a Socialist political leader. Any trade-union secretary, an English one, for instance, helps the workers to conduct the economic struggle, helps to expose factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and of measures which hamper the freedom of strikes and the freedom to picket, to warn all and sundry that a strike is proceeding at a certain factory, explains the partiality of arbitration courts which are in the hands of the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade-union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." It cannot be too strongly insisted that *this is not* enough to constitute Social-Democracy. The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be a trade-union secretary, but a *tribune of the*

*people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects ; he must be able to group all these manifestations into a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation ; he must be able to take advantage of every petty event in order to explain his Socialistic convictions and his Social-Democratic demands *to all*, in order to explain to *all* and everyone the world historical significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. . . .

We said that a Social-Democrat, if he really believes it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the proletariat, must "go among all classes of the people." This gives rise to the questions : How is this to be done ? Have we enough forces to do this ? Is there a base for such work among all the other classes ? Will this not mean a retreat, or lead to a retreat from the class point of view ? We shall deal with these questions.

We must "go among all classes of the people" as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators, and as organisers. No one doubts that the theoretical work of Social-Democrats should be directed towards studying all the features of the social and political position of the various classes. But extremely little is done in this direction compared with the work that is done in studying the features of factory life. In the committees and circles, you will meet men who are immersed say in the study of some special branch of the metal industry, but you will hardly ever find members of organisations (obliged, as often happens, for some reason or other to give up practical work) especially engaged in the collection of material concerning some pressing question of social and political life which could serve as a means for conducting Social-Democratic work among other strata of the population. In speaking of the lack of training of the majority of present-day leaders of the labour movement, we cannot refrain from mentioning the point about training in this connection also, for it is also bound

up with the "economic" conception of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." The principal thing, of course, is *propaganda and agitation* among all strata of the people. The Western-European Social-Democrats find their work in this field facilitated by the calling of public meetings, to which *all* are free to go, and by the parliament, in which they speak to the representatives of *all* classes. We have neither a parliament, nor the freedom to call meetings, nevertheless we are able to arrange meetings of workers who desire to listen to a *Social-Democrat*. We must also find ways and means of calling meetings of representatives of all and every other class of the population that desire to listen to a *Democrat*; for he who forgets that "the Communists support every revolutionary movement," that we are obliged for that reason to emphasise *general democratic tasks before the whole people*, without for a moment concealing our Socialistic convictions, is not a Social-Democrat. He who forgets his obligation to *be in advance of everybody* in bringing up, sharpening and solving *every* general democratic question is not a Social-Democrat. . . .

To proceed. Have we sufficient forces to be able to direct our propaganda and agitation among *all* classes of the population? Of course we have. Our Economists are frequently inclined to deny this. They lose sight of the gigantic progress our movement has made from (approximately) 1894 to 1901. Like real Khvostists, they frequently live in the distant past, in the period of the beginning of the movement. At that time, indeed, we had astonishingly few forces, and it was perfectly natural and legitimate then to resolve to go exclusively among the workers, and severely condemn any deviation from this. The whole task then was to consolidate our position in the working class. At the present time, however, gigantic forces have been attracted to the movement; the best representatives of the young generation of the educated classes are coming over to us; everywhere, and in all provinces, there are people who have taken part in the movement in the past, who desire to do

so now, who are striving towards Social-Democracy, but who are obliged to sit idle because we cannot employ them (in 1894 you could count the Social-Democrats on your fingers). One of the principal political and organisational shortcomings of our movement is that we are *unable* to utilise all these forces, and give them appropriate work (we shall deal with this in detail in the next chapter). The overwhelming majority of these forces entirely lack the opportunity for "going to the workers," so there are no grounds for fearing that we shall deflect forces from our main cause. And in order to be able to provide the workers with real, universal, and live political knowledge, we must have "our own men," Social-Democrats, everywhere, among all social strata, and in all positions from which we can learn the inner springs of our state mechanism. Such men are required for propaganda and agitation, but in a still larger measure for organisation.

Is there scope for activity among all classes of the population? Those who fail to see this also lag intellectually behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses. The labour movement has aroused and is continuing to arouse discontent in some, hopes for support for the opposition in others, and the consciousness of the intolerableness and inevitable downfall of autocracy in still others. We would be "politicians" and Social-Democrats only in name (as very often happens), if we failed to realise that our task is to utilise every manifestation of discontent, and to collect and utilise every grain of even rudimentary protest. This is quite apart from the fact that many millions of the peasantry, handicraftsmen, petty artisans, etc., always listen eagerly to the preachings of any Social-Democrat who is at all intelligent. Is there a single class of the population in which no individuals, groups or circles are to be found who are discontented with the state of tyranny, and therefore accessible to the propaganda of Social-Democrats as the spokesmen of the most pressing general democratic needs? To those who desire to have a clear idea of what the



political agitation of a Social-Democrat *among all* classes and strata of the population should be like, we would point to *political exposures* in the broad sense of the word as the principal (but of course not the sole) form of this agitation.

We must "arouse in every section of the population that is at all enlightened a passion for *political exposure*," I wrote in my article "Where to Begin" (*Iskra*, No. 4, May 1901), with which I shall deal in greater detail later.

"We must not allow ourselves to be discouraged by the fact that the voice of political exposure is still feeble, rare and timid. This is not because of a general submission to political despotism, but because those who are able and ready to expose have no tribune from which to speak, because there is no audience to listen eagerly to and approve of what the orators say, and because the latter can nowhere perceive among the people forces to whom it would be worth while directing their complaint against the 'omnipotent' Russian government. . . . We are now in a position to set up a tribune for the national exposure of the tsarist government, and it is our duty to do so. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic paper. . . ."

The ideal audience for these political exposures is the working class, which is first and foremost in need of universal and live political knowledge, which is most capable of converting this knowledge into active struggle, even if it did not promise "palpable results." The only platform from which *public* exposures can be made is an All-Russian newspaper. "Unless we have a political organ, a movement deserving the name of political is inconceivable in modern Europe." In this connection Russia must undoubtedly be included in modern Europe. The press has long ago become a power in our country, otherwise the government would not spend tens of thousands of roubles to bribe it, and to subsidise the Katkovs, and Meshcherskys. And it is no novelty in autocratic Russia for the underground press to break through the wall of censorship and *compel* the legal and conservative press to speak openly of it. This was the case in the 'seventies and even in the 'fifties. How much

broadener and deeper are now the strata of the people willing to read the illegal underground press, and to learn from it "how to live and how to die," to use the expression of the worker who sent a letter to *Iskra* [No. 7]. Political exposures are as much a declaration of war against the *government* as economic exposures are a declaration of war against the employers. And the wider and more powerful this campaign of exposure will be, the more numerous and determined the social *class* which has *declared war in order to commence the war* will be, the greater will be the moral significance of this declaration of war. Hence, political exposures in themselves serve as a powerful instrument for *disintegrating* the system we oppose, the means for diverting from the enemy his casual or temporary allies, the means for spreading enmity and distrust among those who permanently share power with the autocracy.

Only a party that will *organise* real all-national exposures can become the vanguard of the revolutionary forces in our time. The word all-national has a very profound meaning. The overwhelming majority of the non-working class expositors (and in order to become the vanguard, we must attract other classes) are sober politicians and cool business men. They know perfectly well how dangerous it is to "complain" even against a minor official, let alone against the "omnipotent" Russian government. And they will come *to us* with their complaints only when they see that these complaints really have effect, and when they see that we represent a *political* force. In order to become this political force in the eyes of outsiders, much persistent and stubborn work is required to *increase* our own consciousness, initiative and energy. For this, it is not sufficient to stick the label "vanguard" on "rearguard" theory and practice.

But if we have to undertake the organisation of the real all-national exposure of the government, then in what way will the class character of our movement be expressed? —the over-zealous advocates of "close organic contact

with the proletarian struggle " will ask us. The reply is : In that we *Social-Democrats* will *organise* these public exposures ; in that all the questions that are brought up by the agitation will be explained in the spirit of Social-Democracy, without any deliberate or unconscious distortions of Marxism ; in the fact that *the party* will carry on this universal political agitation, uniting into one inseparable whole the pressure upon the government in the name of the whole people, the revolutionary training of the proletariat—while preserving its political independence—the guidance of the economic struggle of the working class, the utilisation of all its spontaneous conflicts with its exploiters, which rouse and bring into our camp increasing numbers of the proletariat ! . . .

V. I. Lenin

## THE REVOLUTION OF 1905

*Articles published in Bolshevik journals during 1905 and 1906, also a lecture delivered in Zurich in January 1917. English edition, Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 1931.*

[During the Russian revolution of 1905 Lenin was in Geneva, where he was editing the Bolshevik journals *Vperiod* and later *Proletary*, the *Iskra* (which Lenin directed from 1901-3) having come under Menshevik control since 1903. The first article, reprinted here, was written on Jan. 25, 1905, immediately after the massacre of the workers in St. Petersburg on "Bloody Sunday," and was published in *Vperiod*, Jan. 31, 1905. This was followed by other articles on the various stages of the revolution. The lecture on the 1905 revolution delivered by Lenin in Zurich on January

22, 1917, covers the ground of these articles, and is therefore the second document reprinted below. It is a complete analysis of the 1905 revolution, which Lenin later described as the "dress rehearsal" of the 1917 revolution.]

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## THE REVOLUTION OF 1905

### THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

Geneva.

*Wednesday, January 25.*

**M**OST important historic events are taking place in Russia. The proletariat has risen against Tsarism. The proletariat has been driven to the uprising by the Government. Now there is hardly room for doubt that the Government deliberately allowed the strike movement to develop and a wide demonstration to be started in order to bring matters to a head, and to have a pretext for calling out the military forces. Its manœuvre was successful! Thousands of killed and wounded—this is the toll of Bloody Sunday, January 22, in Petersburg. The army vanquished unarmed workers, women and children. The army overpowered the enemy by shooting prostrate workers. "We have taught them a good lesson!" cynically say the Tsar's henchmen and their European flunkies, the conservative bourgeoisie.

Yes, it was a great lesson! The Russian proletariat will not forget this lesson. The most uneducated, the most backward strata of the working class, who had naïvely trusted the Tsar and had sincerely wished to put peacefully before "the Tsar himself" the requests of a tormented nation, were all taught a lesson by the military force led by the Tsar and the Tsar's uncle, the Grand Duke Vladimir.

The working class had received a great lesson in civil

war ; the revolutionary education of the proletariat advanced in one day further than it could have advanced in months and years of drab, everyday, stupefied existence. The slogan of the heroic Petersburg proletariat, "liberty or death !" rings like an echo throughout the whole of Russia. Events are developing with marvellous speed. The general strike in Petersburg is spreading. All industrial social and political life is paralysed. On Monday, January 23, the encounters between the workers and the military become more stubborn. Contrary to the false Government *communiqués*, blood is spilt in many parts of the capital. The Kolpino workers are rising. The proletariat is arming itself and the people. There are rumours that the workers have seized the Sestroretsk Arsenal. The workers are supplying themselves with revolvers, they are forging their tools into weapons, they are procuring bombs for a desperate fight for freedom. The general strike is spreading to the provinces. In Moscow 10,000 people have already ceased work. A general strike is to be called in Moscow to-morrow (Thursday, January 26). A revolt has broken out in Riga. The workers in Lodz are demonstrating, an uprising is being prepared in Warsaw, demonstrations of the proletariat are taking place in Helsingfors. In Baku, Odessa, Kiev, Kharkov, Kovno and Vilno, there is growing ferment among the workers and the strike is spreading. In Sebastopol the stores and arsenals of the navy department are ablaze, and the troops refuse to shoot on the rebellious sailors. There are strikes in Reval and in Saratov. In Radom, an armed encounter occurred between the workers and a detachment of reserves which had been called out.

The revolution is spreading. The government is already beginning to waver. From a policy of bloody repression it is trying to pass to economic concessions and to save itself by throwing a sop, by promising the nine-hour day. But the lesson of Bloody Sunday must not be forgotten. The demand of the rebellious Petersburg workers—the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly on the

basis of universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage—must become the demand of all the striking workers. The immediate overthrow of the Government—such was the slogan raised in answer to the massacre of January 9, even by those Petersburg workers who believed in the Tsar ; they raised this slogan through their leader, George Gapon, who said after that bloody day : “ We no longer have a Tsar. A river of blood separates the Tsar from the nation. Long live the fight for freedom ! ”

Long live the revolutionary proletariat ! say we. The general strike is rousing and mobilising larger and larger masses of the working class and of the city poor. The arming of the people is becoming one of the immediate problems of the revolutionary moment.

Only an armed people can be a real stronghold of national freedom. And the sooner the proletariat succeeds in arming itself, and the longer it maintains its martial position of striker and revolutionary, the sooner will the army begin to waver, the soldiers will at last begin to understand what they are doing, they will go over to the side of the people against the monsters, against the tyrants, against the murderers of defenceless workers and of their wives and children. No matter what the outcome of the present uprising in Petersburg will be, it will, in any case, be the first step to a wider, more conscious, better prepared uprising. The government may perhaps succeed in putting off the day of reckoning, but the postponement will only make the next step of the revolutionary attack more powerful. Social-Democracy will take advantage of this postponement in order to close the ranks of the organised fighters, and to spread the news about the start made by the Petersburg workers. The proletariat will join in the fight, will desert mill and factory, and prepare arms for itself. Into the midst of the city poor, to the millions of peasants, the slogans of the struggle for freedom will be carried more and more effectively. Revolutionary committees will be formed in every factory, in every

section of the city, in every village. The people in revolt will overthrow all the government institutions of the Tsarist autocracy and proclaim the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

The immediate arming of the workers and of all citizens in general, the preparation and organisation of the revolutionary forces for annihilating the Government authorities and institutions—this is the practical basis on which all revolutionaries can, and must unite, to strike a common blow. The proletariat must always go its independent way in close contact with the Social-Democrat party, always bearing in mind its great final goal, the goal of ridding mankind of all exploitation. But this independence of the Social-Democratic proletarian party will never cause us to forget the importance of a common revolutionary attack at the moment of actual revolution. We Social-Democrats can and must proceed independently of the revolutionaries of the bourgeois democracy, and guard the class independence of the proletariat. But we must go hand in hand with them in an uprising when direct blows are being struck at Tsarism, when resisting the troops, when attacking the Bastille of the accursed enemy of the entire Russian people.

The eyes of the proletariat of the whole world are anxiously turned towards the proletariat of all Russia. The overthrow of Tsarism in Russia, started so valiantly by our working class, will be the turning-point in the history of all countries, will make easier the task of the workers of all nations, in all states, in all parts of the globe. Therefore, let every Social-Democrat, let every class-conscious worker remember the great tasks of the all-national struggle that now rest on his shoulders. Let him not forget that he represents the needs and the interests of the entire peasantry too, of the entire mass of the toiling and exploited, of the entire people against the all-national enemy. The whole world is watching the example of the heroic proletarians of St. Petersburg.

Long live the Revolution !  
Long live the proletariat in revolt !

#### LECTURE ON THE 1905 REVOLUTION

MY YOUNG FRIENDS AND COMRADES,

To-day is the twelfth anniversary of "Bloody Sunday," which is rightly regarded as the beginning of the Russian Revolution.

Thousands of workers—not Social-Democrats, but faithful, loyal people—led by the priest Gapon, stream from all parts of the city to the centre of the capital, to the square in front of the Winter Palace, in order to submit a petition to the Tsar. The workers carry ikons, and their leader, in a letter to the Tsar, has guaranteed his personal safety and asked him to appear before the people.

Troops are called out. Uhlans and Cossacks hurl themselves against the crowd with drawn swords. They fire on the unarmed workers, who on their bended knees implore the Cossacks to let them go to the Tsar. On that day, according to police reports, more than 1,000 were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded. The indignation of the workers was indescribable.

Such is the bare outline of what took place on January 22, 1905, "Bloody Sunday."

In order that you may understand more clearly the significance of this event, I will quote to you a few passages from the workers' petition. The petition begins with the following words :

We workers, inhabitants of St. Petersburg, have come to Thee. We are unfortunate, reviled slaves. We are crushed by despotism and tyranny. At last, when our patience was exhausted, we ceased work and begged our masters to give us only that without which life is a torture. But this was refused. Everything seemed unlawful to the employers. We here, many thousands of us, like the whole of the Russian people, have no human rights whatever. Owing to the deeds of Thine officials we have become slaves."



The petition enumerates the following demands : amnesty, civic liberty, normal wages, the land to be gradually transferred to the people, convocation of a Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal and equal suffrage ; and it ends with the following words : " Sire, do not refuse aid to Thy people ! Throw down the wall that separates Thee from Thy people. Order and swear that our requests will be granted, and Thou wilt make Russia happy ; if not, we are ready to die on this very spot. We have only two roads : freedom and happiness, or the grave."

Reading it *now*, this petition of uneducated, illiterate workers, led by a patriarchal priest, creates a strange impression. Involuntarily one compares this naive petition with the peaceful resolutions passed to-day by the social-pacifists, i.e., who claim to be Socialists, but who, in reality, are bourgeois phrase-mongers. The unenlightened workers of pre-revolutionary Russia did not know that the Tsar was the head of the *ruling class*, namely, the class of large landowners, who by a thousand ties, were already bound up with a big bourgeoisie who were ready to defend their monopoly, privileges and profits by every violent means. The social-pacifists of to-day, who—without jesting—pretend to be " highly educated " people, do not realise that it is just as foolish to expect a " democratic " peace from the bourgeois governments, which are waging an imperialist predatory war, as it was foolish to think that the bloody Tsar could be induced to grant reforms by peaceful petitions.

Nevertheless, the great difference between the two is that the present-day social-pacifists are to a large extent hypocrites, who, by mild suggestions, strive to divert the people from the revolutionary struggle, whereas the unenlightened workers in pre-revolutionary Russia proved by their deeds that they were straightforward people who, for the first time, had awakened to political consciousness.

It is this awakening of tremendous masses of the people to political consciousness and revolutionary struggle that marks the historic significance of January 22, 1905.

"There is not yet a revolutionary people in Russia," said Mr. Peter Struve, then leader of the Russian liberals and publisher abroad of an illegal, free organ—*two days before* "*Bloody Sunday*." To this "highly educated," supercilious and extremely stupid leader of the bourgeois reformists the idea that an illiterate peasant country could give birth to a revolutionary people seemed utterly absurd. The reformists of those days—like the reformists of to-day—were profoundly convinced that a real revolution was impossible!

Prior to January 22 (January 9, old style), 1905, the revolutionary party of Russia consisted of a small handful of people, and the reformists of those days (like the reformists of to-day) derisively called them a "sect." Several hundred revolutionary organisers, several thousand members of local organisations, half a dozen revolutionary papers appearing not more frequently than once a month, published mainly abroad, and smuggled into Russia under extraordinary difficulties and at the price of many sacrifices—such were the revolutionary parties in Russia, and revolutionary Social-Democracy in particular, prior to January 22, 1905. This circumstance gave the narrow-minded and overbearing reformists a formal justification for asserting that there was not yet a revolutionary people in Russia.

Within a few months, however, the picture completely changed. The hundreds of revolutionary Social-Democrats "suddenly" grew into thousands; the thousands became leaders of between two and three millions of proletarians. The proletarian struggle gave rise to a strong ferment, often to revolutionary movements, among the peasant masses, fifty to a hundred million strong; the peasant movement had its repercussion in the army and led to soldiers' uprisings, to armed clashes between one section

of the army and another. In this manner, a colossal country, with a population of 130,000,000, entered into the revolution; in this way slumbering Russia became transformed into a Russia of a Revolutionary proletariat and a revolutionary people.

It is necessary to study this transformation to understand its possibilities, its ways and methods, so to speak.

The principal means by which this transformation was brought about was the mass strike. The peculiar feature of the Russian Revolution is that in its social content it was a *bourgeois-democratic* revolution, but in its methods of struggle it was a *proletarian* revolution. It was a bourgeois-democratic revolution, since the aim toward which it strove directly and which it could reach directly, with the aid of its own forces, was a democratic republic, an eight-hour day and the confiscation of the immense estates of the nobility—all measures achieved almost completely in the French bourgeois revolution in 1792 and 1793.

At the same time the Russian Revolution was also a proletarian revolution, not only in the sense that the proletariat was the leading force, the vanguard of the movement, but also in the sense that the specifically proletarian means of struggle—namely, the strike—was the principal instrument employed for rousing the masses and the most characteristic phenomenon in the wave-like rise of decisive events.

The Russian Revolution is the *first*, though certainly not the last, great revolution in history, in which the mass political strike played an extraordinarily great rôle. It can even be asserted that it is impossible to understand the events in the Russian Revolution and the changes that took place in its political forms, unless a study is made of the *statistics of strikes*, which alone provide the clue to these events and change in form.

I know perfectly well that statistics are very dry in a lecture and are calculated to drive an audience away.

Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from quoting a few figures, in order that you may be able to appreciate the objective foundation of the whole movement. The average number of persons involved in strikes in Russia during the last ten years preceding the revolution was 43,000 per annum. Consequently, the total number of persons involved in strikes during the whole decade preceding the revolution was 430,000. In January, 1905, which was the first month of the revolution, the number of persons involved in strikes was 440,000. There were more persons involved in strikes in one month than in the whole of the preceding decade !

In no capitalist country in the world—not even in advanced countries like England, the United States of America, or Germany, has such a tremendous strike movement been witnessed as that which occurred in Russia in 1905. The total number of persons involved in strikes rose to 2,800,000, twice the total number of factory workers in the country ! This, of course, does not prove that the urban factory workers of Russia were more educated, or stronger, or more adapted to the struggle than their brothers in Western Europe. The very opposite is true.

But it does prove how great the dormant energy of the proletariat can be. It shows that in a revolutionary epoch—I say this without exaggeration on the basis of the most accurate data of Russian history—the proletariat *can* develop fighting energy *a hundred times greater* than in normal, peaceful, times. It shows that up to 1905, humanity did not yet know what a great, what a tremendous exertion of effort the proletariat is capable of in a fight for really great aims, and when it fights in a really revolutionary manner !

The history of the Russian Revolution shows that it is the vanguard, the chosen elements of the wage-workers who fought with the greatest tenacity and the greatest self-sacrifice. The larger the enterprises involved, the more stubborn the strikes were and the more often they repeated

themselves during that year. The bigger the city the more significant was the rôle the proletariat played in the struggle. In the three large cities, St. Petersburg, Riga and Warsaw, where the workers were numerous and more class-conscious, the proportion of workers involved in strikes to the total number of workers was immeasurably larger than in other cities, and, of course, much larger than in the rural districts.

The metal workers in Russia—probably the same is true also in regard to the other capitalist countries—represent the vanguard of the proletariat. In this connection we note the following instructive fact : Taking all industries combined, the number of persons involved in strikes in 1905 was 160 per hundred workers employed, but in the *metal industry* the number was 320 per hundred ! It is calculated that in 1905 every Russian factory worker lost in wages in consequence of strikes, on the average ten roubles—approximately 26 francs at the pre-war rate of exchange—sacrificing this money, as it were, for the sake of the struggle. If we take the metal workers alone, we find that the loss in wages is *three times as great* ! The best elements of the working class marched in the forefront of the battle, leading after them the hesitating ones, rousing the dormant and encouraging the weak.

An outstanding feature was the manner in which economic strikes were interlaced with political strikes during the revolution.

It is quite evident that only when these two forms of strikes are closely linked up with each other can the movement acquire its greatest power. The broad masses of the exploited could not have been drawn into the revolutionary movement had they not seen examples of how the wage workers in the various branches of industry compelled the capitalists to improve their conditions. This struggle imbued the masses of the Russian people with a new spirit. Only then did the old serf-ridden, backward, patriarchal pious and obedient Russia cast off the old Adam ; only

then did the Russian people obtain a really democratic and really revolutionary education.

When the bourgeois gentry and their uncritical chorus of satellites, the social-reformists, talk priggishly about the "education" of the masses, they usually mean something schoolmasterly, pedantic, something which demoralises the masses and imbues them with bourgeois prejudices.

The real education of the masses can never be separated from the independent, political, and particularly from the revolutionary struggle of the masses themselves. Only the struggle educates the exploited class. Only the struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will ; and therefore, even reactionaries have to admit that the year 1905, the year of struggle, "the mad year," definitely buried patriarchal Russia.

We will examine more closely the relation between the metal workers and the textile workers in Russia during the strike struggle of 1905. The metal workers were the best paid, the most class-conscious and the best educated proletarians. The textile workers, who in 1905 were two and a half times more numerous than the metal workers, were the most backward and the worst-paid mass of workers in Russia, who in very many cases had not yet definitely severed their connections with their present kinsmen in the village. In this connection a very important fact comes to light.

The metal workers' strikes in 1905 show a preponderance of political over economic strikes, although at the beginning of the year this preponderance was not so great as it was toward the end of the year. On the other hand, among the textile workers were observed a great preponderance of economic strikes at the beginning of 1905, and only at the end of the year do we get a preponderance of political strikes. From this it follows quite obviously that the economic struggle, the struggle for immediate and direct improvement of conditions, is alone capable of rousing the

backward strata of the exploited masses, gives them a real education and transforms them—during a revolutionary epoch—into an army of political fighters within the space of a few months.

Of course, for this to happen, the vanguard of the workers had to understand that the class struggle was not a struggle in the interests of a small upper stratum, as the reformists too often tried to persuade the workers to believe; the proletariat had to come forward as the real vanguard of the majority of the exploited, drawing that majority into the struggle, as was the case in Russia in 1905 and as must certainly be the case in the coming proletarian revolution in Europe.

The beginning of 1905 brought with it the first great wave of strikes throughout the entire country. Already in the spring of that year we observe the awakening of the first big, not only economic, but also political *peasant movement* in Russia. The importance of this turning-point of history will be appreciated if it is borne in mind that it was only in 1861 that the peasantry in Russia was liberated from the severest bondage of serfdom, that the majority of the peasants are illiterate, that they live in indescribable poverty, oppressed by the landlords, deluded by the priests and isolated from each other by great distances and an almost complete absence of roads.

A revolutionary movement against Tsarism arose for the first time in Russia in 1825 and that revolution was represented almost entirely by noblemen. From that moment up to 1881, when Alexander the Second was assassinated by the terrorists, the movement was led by middle class intellectuals. They displayed the greatest spirit of self-sacrifice, and they aroused the astonishment of the whole world by their heroic, terroristic methods of struggle. Those sacrifices were certainly not made in vain. They certainly contributed—directly and indirectly—to the subsequent revolutionary education of the Russian people. But they did not and could not achieve their

immediate aim—to call forth a popular revolution.

This was achieved only by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Only the waves of mass strikes that swept over the whole country, coupled with the severe lessons of the imperialist Russo-Japanese war, roused the broad masses of peasants from their lethargic slumber. The word "striker" acquired an entirely new meaning among the peasants: it signified a rebel, a revolutionary, a term previously expressed by the word "student." As, however, the "student" belonged to the middle class, to the "learned," to the "gentry," he was alien to the people. On the other hand a "striker" was of the people; he belonged to the exploited class; when deported from St. Petersburg, he often returned to the village, where he told his fellow-villagers of the conflagration that had broken out in the cities that was to destroy the capitalists and nobility. A new type appeared in the Russian village—the class-conscious young peasant. He associated with "strikers," he read newspapers, he told the peasants about events in the cities, explained to his fellow villagers the meaning of political demands and called upon them to fight against the big landowners, the priests and the government officials.

The peasants would gather in groups to discuss their conditions and gradually they were drawn into the struggle. Gathering in large crowds they attacked the big landowners, set fire to their mansions and estates and looted their stores, seized grain and other foodstuffs, killed policemen and demanded that the huge estates belonging to the nobility be transferred to the people.

In the spring of 1905, the peasant movement was only in its inception; it spread to only a minority of the counties, approximately one-seventh of the total were affected.

But the combination of the proletarian mass strikes in the cities with the peasant movement in the villages was sufficient to shake the "firmest" and last prop of Tsarism. I refer to the *Army*.



A series of *mutinies* in the navy and in the army broke out. Every fresh wave of strikes and of peasant movements during the revolution was accompanied by mutinies among the armed forces in all parts of Russia. The most well-known of these is the mutiny on the Black Sea cruiser, *Prince Potemkin*, which, after it was seized by the revolutionaries, took part in the revolution in Odessa. After the revolution was defeated, and the attempts to seize other ports (for instance, Feodosia in the Crimea) had failed, it surrendered to the Rumanian authorities in Constanza.

Permit me to relate to you in detail one little episode in the mutiny of the Black Sea Fleet, in order to give you a concrete picture of events at the apex of their development.

Gatherings of revolutionary workers and sailors were being organised more and more frequently. Since men in the armed forces were not permitted to attend workers' meetings, the workers began in masses to visit the military meetings. They gathered in thousands. The idea of joint action found a lively response. The most class-conscious companies elected deputies.

Then the military authorities decided to take action. The attempts of some of the officers to deliver "patriotic" speeches at the meetings had failed miserably: the seamen, who were accustomed to debating, put their officers to shameful flight. After these efforts had failed, it was decided to prohibit meetings altogether. In the morning of November 24, 1905, a company of soldiers, in full war kit, was posted at the gate of the naval barracks. Rear-Admiral Pisarevsky, in a loud voice, gave the order: "Permit no one to leave the barracks! In case of disobedience, shoot!" A sailor, named Petrov, stepped forth from the ranks of the company that received that order, loaded his rifle in everybody's view, and with one shot killed Lieutenant-Colonel Stein of the Brest-Litovsk Regiment, and with another wounded Rear-Admiral Pisarevsky. The command was given: "Arrest him!" Nobody budged. Petrov threw

his rifle to the ground and exclaimed : " Why don't you move ? Take me ! " He was arrested. The seamen, who rushed from every side, angrily demanded his release, and declared that they vouched for him. Excitement ran high.

" Petrov, the shot was an accident, wasn't it ? " asked one of the officers, trying to find a way out of the situation.

" What do you mean, an accident ? I stepped forward, loaded and took aim. Is that an accident ? "

" They demand your release. . . . "

And Petrov was released. The seamen, however, were not content with that ; all officers on duty were arrested, disarmed, and taken to company headquarters. . . . Seamen delegates, forty in number, conferred throughout the whole night. The decision was to release the officers, but never to permit them to enter the barracks again.

This little incident shows you clearly how events developed in the majority of the mutinies. The revolutionary ferment among the people could not but spread to the armed forces. It is characteristic that the leaders of the movement came from those elements in the navy and the army which had been recruited mainly from among the industrial workers and possessed most technical training, for instance, the sappers. The broad masses, however, were still too naïve, their mood was too passive, too good-natured, too Christian. They flared up very quickly ; any case of injustice, excessively harsh conduct on the part of the officers, bad food, etc., was enough to call forth revolt. But there was no persistence in their protest ; they lacked a clear perception of aim ; they lacked a clear understanding of the fact that only the most vigorous continuation of the armed struggle, only a victory over all the military and civil authorities, only the overthrow of the government and the seizure of power throughout the whole state could guarantee the success of the revolution.

The broad masses of the seamen and soldiers light-heartedly rose in revolt. But with equal light-heartedness

they foolishly released the arrested officers. They allowed themselves to be pacified by promises and persuasion on the part of their officers ; in this way the officers gained precious time, obtained reinforcements, broke the power of the rebels, and then the most brutal suppression of the movement and the execution of the leaders followed.

It is instructive to compare the mutinies in Russia in 1905 with the mutinies of the Decembrists in 1825. At that time, the leaders of the political movement belonged almost exclusively to the officer class, particularly to the officers of the nobility ; they had become infected through contact with the democratic ideas of Europe during the Napoleonic Wars. The mass of the soldiers, who at that time were still serfs, remained passive.

The history of 1905 presents a totally different picture. The mood of the officers, with few exceptions, was either bourgeois-liberal reformist, or openly counter-revolutionary. The workers and peasants in military uniform were the soul of the mutinies ; the mutinies became a movement of the people. For the first time in the history of Russia the movement spread to the majority of the exploited. But on the one hand, the masses lacked persistence and determination, they were too much afflicted with the malady of trustfulness ; on the other hand, the movement lacked an organisation of revolutionary Social-Democratic workers in military uniform. The soldiers lacked the ability to take the leadership into their own hands, to place themselves at the head of the revolutionary army, and to assume the offensive against the government authorities.

These two shortcomings—we will say in passing—will slowly, perhaps, but surely, be removed, not only by the general development of capitalism, but also by the present war.

At all events, the history of the Russian Revolution, like the history of the Paris Commune of 1871, unfailingly teaches that militarism can never, under any circumstances, be vanquished and destroyed, except by a victorious

struggle of one section of the national army against the other section. It is not sufficient simply to denounce, revile and to "repudiate" militarism, to criticise and to argue that it is harmful ; it is foolish peacefully to refuse to perform military service : the task is to keep the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat in a state of high tension and to train its best elements, not only in a general way but concretely, so that when popular ferment reaches the higher pitch, they will put themselves at the head of the revolutionary army.

This lesson is taught us by daily experience in any capitalist state. Every "minor" crisis that such a state experiences shows us in miniature the elements and embryos of the battles which must inevitably take place on a large scale during a big crisis. What else, for instance, is a strike, if not a small crisis in capitalist society ? Was not the Prussian Minister for Internal Affairs, Herr von Puttkamer, right when he uttered his famous declaration : "Every strike discloses the hydra head of revolution" ? Does not the calling out of troops during strikes in all, even the most peaceful, the most "democratic"—save the mark—capitalist countries show *how* things will work in a *really great* crisis ?

But to return to the history of the Russian Revolution.

I have endeavoured to picture to you how the workers stirred the whole country and the broadest, most backward strata of the exploited, how the peasant movement began, and how it was accompanied by military uprisings.

In the autumn of 1905, the movement reached its zenith. On August 19 the Tsar issued a manifesto on the introduction of popular representation. The so-called Bulygin Duma was to be created on the basis of a suffrage embracing a remarkably small number of electors, and this peculiar "parliament" was supposed to have, not legislative, but only *advisory* powers !

The bourgeoisie, the liberals, the opportunists, were ready to embrace wholeheartedly this "grant" of a

frightened Tsar. Like all reformists, our reformists of 1905 could not understand that historic situations arise when reforms and particularly mere promises of reforms pursue *only* one aim : to allay the unrest of the people, to force the revolutionary class to cease, or at least to slacken, its struggle.

Russian revolutionary Social-Democracy perfectly understood the true nature of the grant of an illusory constitution in August, 1905. This is why, without a moment's hesitation, it issued the slogans : " Down with the advisory Duma ! Boycott the Duma ! Down with the Tsarist government ! Continue the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of this government ! Not the Tsar, but a provisional revolutionary government must convoke the first real popular representative assembly in Russia ! "

History proved that the revolutionary Social-Democrats were right by the fact that the Bulygin Duma was never convoked. It was swept away by the revolutionary storm before it assembled ; this storm forced the Tsar to promulgate a new electoral law, which provided for an increase in the number of electors, and to recognise the legislative character of the Duma.

In October and December, 1905, the rising tide of the Russian Revolution reached its highest level. The flood-gates of the revolutionary power of the people opened wider than ever before. The number of persons involved in strikes—which in January, 1905, as I have already told you, was 440,000—reached over half a million in November, 1905 (in one single month, notice !). To this number, which applies *only* to factory workers, must be added several hundreds of thousands of railway workers, postal and telegraph employees, etc.

The Russian general railroad strike stopped railway traffic and most effectively paralysed the power of the government. The doors of the universities and lecture halls which in peace-time were used only to befuddle youthful heads with pedantic professorial wisdom and to turn them

into docile servants of the bourgeoisie and Tsarism, were flung wide open and served as meeting-places for thousands of workers, artisans and office workers, who openly and freely discussed political questions.

Freedom of the press was won. The censorship was simply ignored. No publisher dared send the copy to the authorities, and the authorities did not dare take any measures against this. For the first time in Russian history revolutionary papers appeared freely in St. Petersburg and other cities; in St. Petersburg alone, three daily Social-Democratic papers, with circulations ranging from 50,000 to 100,000, were published.

The proletariat marched at the head of the movement. It set out to win the eight-hour day in a revolutionary manner. The fighting slogan of the St. Petersburg proletariat was then: "*An eight-hour day and arms!*" It became obvious to the growing mass of the workers that the fate of the revolution could, and would, be decided only by an armed struggle.

In the fire of battle a peculiar mass organisation was formed, the famous *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*, meetings of delegates from all factories. In several cities in Russia these *Soviets of Workers' Deputies* began to play more and more the rôle of a provisional revolutionary government, the rôle of organs and leaders of rebellion. Attempts were made to organise Soviets of Soldiers' and Sailors' Deputies, and to combine them with the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

For a period, several cities of Russia at that time represented something in the nature of small, local "republics," the state authorities were deposed, and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies actually functioned as the new state authority. Unfortunately, these periods were all too brief, the "victories" were too weak, too isolated.

The peasant movement in the autumn of 1905 reached still greater dimensions. *Over one-third* of the counties throughout the country were affected by "peasant riots" and real peasant uprisings. The peasants burned no less

than 2,000 estates and distributed among themselves the provisions that the predatory nobility had robbed from the people.

Unfortunately, this work was not done with sufficient thoroughness : unfortunately, the peasants destroyed only one-fifteenth of the total number of noblemen's estates, only one-fifteenth part of what *they should have* destroyed, in order to wipe from the face of the land of Russia the shame of large feudal land ownership. Unfortunately, the peasants were too scattered, too isolated from each other in their actions ; they were too unorganised, not aggressive enough, and therein lies one of the fundamental reasons for the defeat of the revolution.

Among the oppressed peoples of Russia there flared up a national movement for liberation. *Over one-half, almost three-fifths (to be exact, 57 per cent.)* of the population of Russia is subject to national oppression : they have not the right to employ their native language, and are forcibly Russified. For instance, the Mohammedans, who number tens of millions among the population of Russia, with astonishing rapidity, organised a Mohammedan League. Generally speaking, all kinds of organisations sprang up and grew at a colossal rate at that time.

To give the audience, particularly the youth, an example of how at that time the national movement for liberation rose in connection with the labour movement, I quote the following case :

In December, 1905, the children in hundreds of Polish schools burned all Russian books, pictures and portraits of the Tsar, and attacked and drove out of the Russian schools the Russian teachers and Russian schoolmasters, shouting : " Get out of here ! Go back to Russia ! " The Polish pupils in the secondary schools put forward the following demands : (1) all secondary schools to be under the control of a Soviet of Workers' Deputies ; (2) joint pupils' and workers' meetings to be called within the school buildings ; (3) the wearing of red blouses in the secondary

schools to be permitted as a token of membership in the future proletarian republic ; etc.

The higher the tide of the movement rose, the more vigorously and decisively did the reaction arm to fight against the revolution. The Russian Revolution of 1905 confirmed the truth of what Karl Kautsky had written in 1902 in his book *Social Revolution* (at that time he was still a revolutionary Marxist and not a defender of social-patriots and opportunists as at present). He wrote the following :

The coming revolution . . . will be less like a spontaneous uprising against the government and more like a protracted civil war.

This is exactly what happened ! This will, undoubtedly, also happen in the coming European revolution !

The hatred of Tsarism was directed particularly against the Jews. On the one hand, the Jews provided a particularly high percentage (compared with the total of the Jewish population) of leaders of the revolutionary movement. In passing, it should be said to their merit that to-day the Jews provide a relatively high percentage of representatives of internationalism compared with other nations. On the other hand, Tsarism knew perfectly well how to play up the most despicable prejudices of the most ignorant strata of the population against the Jews, in order to organise—if not to lead directly—pogroms, those atrocious massacres of peaceful Jews, their wives and children, which have roused such disgust throughout the whole civilised world. Of course, I have in mind the disgust of the truly democratic elements of the civilised world, and those are *exclusively* the Socialist workers, the proletarians.

It is calculated that in 100 cities at that time 4,000 were killed and 10,000 were mutilated. The bourgeoisie, even in the freest republican countries of Western Europe, know only too well how to combine their hypocritical phrases about "Russian atrocities" with the most



shameless financial transactions, particularly with financial support of Tsarism and with imperialist exploitation of Russia through the export of capital, etc.

The climax of the Revolution of 1905 was reached in the December uprising in Moscow. A small handful of rebels, namely, of organised and armed workers—they numbered not more than *eight thousand*—for nine days resisted the Tsarist government. The government dared not trust the Moscow garrison ; on the contrary, it had to keep it behind locked doors, and only on the arrival of the Semenovskiy Regiment from St. Petersburg was it able to quell the rebellion.

The bourgeoisie are pleased to describe the Moscow uprising as something artificial and throw scorn upon it. In the German so-called "scientific" literature, for instance, Herr Professor Max Weber, in his great work on the political development of Russia, described the Moscow uprising as a "putsch." "The Lenin group," says this "highly learned" Herr Professor, "and a section of the Social-Revolutionaries had long prepared for this *senseless* uprising."

In order properly to appraise this professorial wisdom of the cowardly bourgeoisie, it is sufficient to recall the dry strike statistics. In January, 1905, there were only 13,000 persons involved in purely political strikes in Russia, whereas in October there were 330,000 and *in December the maximum was reached of 370,000 involved in purely political strikes*—in one month alone ! Let us recall the progress of the counter-revolution, the uprisings of the peasants and the soldiers, and we will soon come to the conclusion that the dictum of bourgeois science concerning the December uprising is not only absurd, but is a subterfuge on the part of the representatives of the cowardly bourgeoisie, which sees in the proletariat its most dangerous class enemy.

In reality, the whole development of the Russian Revolution inevitably led to an armed, decisive battle between

the Tsarist government and the vanguard of the class-conscious proletariat.

In my previous remarks I have already pointed out wherein lay the weakness of the Russian Revolution which led to its temporary defeat.

With the quelling of the December uprising the revolution began to subside. Even in this period, extremely interesting moments are to be observed ; suffice it to recall the twofold attempt of the most militant elements of the working class to stop the retreat of the revolution and to prepare for a new offensive.

But my time has nearly expired, and I do not want to abuse the patience of my audience. I think, however, that I have outlined the most important aspects of the revolution—its class character, its driving forces and its method of struggle—as fully as it is possible to deal with a large subject in a brief lecture.

A few brief remarks concerning the world significance of the Russian Revolution.

Geographically, economically, and historically, Russia belongs, not only to Europe, but also to Asia. This is why the Russian Revolution succeeded in finally rousing the biggest and the most backward country in Europe and in creating a revolutionary people led by a revolutionary proletariat. It achieved more than that.

The Russian Revolution gave rise to a movement throughout the whole of Asia. The revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China prove that the mighty uprising of 1905 left deep traces, and that its influence expressed in the forward movement of *hundreds and hundreds* of millions of people is ineradicable.

In an indirect way the Russian Revolution exercised influence also on the countries situated to the west. One must not forget that news of the Tsar's constitutional manifesto, reaching Vienna on October 30, 1905, played a decisive rôle in the final victory of universal suffrage in Austria.

A telegram bearing the news was delivered to the Congress of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party, which was then assembled, just as Comrade Ellenbogen—who at that time was not yet a social-patriot but a comrade—was making his report on the political strike. This telegram was placed before him on the table. The discussion was immediately stopped. Our place is in the streets!—this was the cry that resounded in the meeting hall of the delegates of Austrian Social-Democracy. The following days witnessed monster street demonstrations in Vienna and barricades in Prague. The victory of universal suffrage in Austria was decided.

Very often we meet Western Europeans who argue about the Russian Revolution as if events, relationships, and methods of struggle in that backward country have very little resemblance to Western European relationships and, therefore, can hardly have any practical significance.

There is nothing more erroneous than such an opinion.

No doubt the forms and occasions for the impending battles in the coming European revolution will, in many respects, differ from the forms of the Russian Revolution.

Nevertheless, the Russian Revolution—precisely because of its proletarian character in that particular sense to which I referred—was the *prologue* to the coming European revolution. Undoubtedly this coming revolution can only be a proletarian revolution in the profounder sense of the word : a proletarian Socialist revolution even in its content. This coming revolution will show to an even greater degree on the one hand, that only stern battles, only civil wars, can free humanity from the yoke of capital ; on the other hand, that only class-conscious proletarians can and will come forth in the rôle of leaders of the vast majority of the exploited.

The present grave-like stillness in Europe must not deceive us. Europe is charged with revolution. The monstrous horrors of the imperialist war, the suffering caused by the high cost of living, engender everywhere a revolutionary

spirit ; and the ruling classes, the bourgeoisie with its servitors, the governments, are more and more moving into a blind alley from which they can never extricate themselves without tremendous upheavals.

Just as in 1905 a popular uprising against the Tsarist government commenced under the leadership of the proletariat with the aim of achieving a democratic republic, so the coming years, precisely because of this predatory war, will lead in Europe to popular uprisings under the leadership of the proletariat against the power of finance capital, against the big banks, against the capitalists ; and these upheavals cannot end otherwise than with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, with the victory of Socialism.

We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution. But I can certainly express the hope that the youth who are working so splendidly in the Socialist movement of Switzerland, and of the whole world, will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win, in the coming proletarian revolution.

*V. I. Lenin*

## MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO- CRITICISM

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[When in exile in Siberia in 1898-9 Lenin took up the study of philosophy, intending to support Plekhanov in his defence of dialectical materialism against the neo-Kantians. In 1903-4 a new revisionist movement began among the Russian Social Democrats ; the leading figures were A. Bogdanov and A. Lunacharsky. The 1905 revolution

interrupted the philosophical controversy, which was not resumed until 1907-8, when a number of anti-materialist tendencies again became prominent. Matters came to a head with the publication in St. Petersburg in 1908 of a volume called *Outlines of Marxian Philosophy*, by a number of contributors including Bogdanov and Lunacharsky. Lenin wrote to Maxim Gorki: "With the reading of each article my indignation has grown more intense. No, this is not Marxism . . ." He at once began to work on his reply, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which is a fundamental contribution to Marxist philosophy, clearly developing the principles of dialectical materialism against every form of idealism. Here it is only possible to give a few sections dealing particularly with the theory of knowledge.]

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## MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM

### THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE OF EMPIRIO-CRITICISM AND OF DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

#### *Sensations and Complexes of Sensations*

THE FUNDAMENTAL tenets of the theory of knowledge of Mach and Avenarius are expounded with frankness, simplicity and clearness only in their early philosophic works. To these works we shall now turn. As to the corrections and emendations which were afterwards effected by these writers, we shall take them up later on.

"The problem of science," Mach wrote in 1872, "can be split into three parts:

"1. The determination of the connection of presentations. This is psychology.

"2. The discovery of the laws of the connection of sensations (perceptions). This is physics.

"3. The clear establishment of the laws of the connection of sensations and presentations. This is psycho-physics."

This is clear enough.

The object of physics is the relation between sensations and not between things or bodies, the images of which are our sensations. And in 1883, in his *Die Mechanik in ihrer Entwicklung*, Mach repeats the very same notion: "Sensations are not 'symbols of things.' The 'thing' is rather the mental symbol of the complex of sensations which is in a state of relative equilibrium. Not the things (bodies) but colours, sounds, pressures, spaces, times (what we usually call sensations), are the actual elements of the world."

About this word "elements," the fruit of twelve years of "reflection," we shall speak further. At present let us note that Mach is explicit in his statement that things or bodies are complexes of sensations, and that his position is the opposite of that which holds that sensations are "symbols" of things (it would be more correct to say images or reflections of things). The latter theory is philosophic materialism. For instance, Friedrich Engels—the well-known collaborator of Marx and the co-founder of Marxism—constantly and exclusively speaks in his works of things and their mental images or reflections (*Gedanken, Abbilder*). It is obvious that these mental images arise only from sensations. It would seem that the position of "philosophic Marxism" ought to be known to everyone who speaks of it, especially to one who in the name of this philosophy writes about it. But because of the great confusion which our Machians have brought with them, it is very urgent to repeat things which are generally known. We turn to the first paragraph of *Anti-Dühring* and we read: "the things and their mental reflection . . ."; or to the first paragraph of the philosophic part which reads thus: "But how are these subjective principles derived? [The question here is about the fundamental principles of all knowledge.] From thought itself? No. These forms can never be created by thought nor derived from it but only from the external world. . . . Principles are not the starting points of investigation [as it is with Dühring who wishes

to be a materialist, but who cannot consistently carry out materialism] but the conclusion of it ; they are not to be applied to nature and history but are derived from them. Nature and Humanity are not steered by principles, but principles are, on the other hand, only correct in so far as they correspond to nature and history. That is just the materialistic conception of matter, and the opposite, that of Dühring is the idealistic conception. It turns things upside down and constructs a real world out of the world of thought " (p. 55). Engels, to repeat, applies this "sole materialistic view" everywhere and without exception, relentlessly attacking Dühring for the least deviation from materialism to idealism. Those who will pay the slightest attention in reading *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Anti-Dühring* will find scores of examples in which Engels speaks of things and their reflection in the human brain, in our consciousness, reason, etc. Engels does not say that sensations or ideas are "symbols" of things, for a consistent materialist ought to use the term image, picture, or reflection instead of "symbol," as we shall prove when we come to consider the question. The argument here, however, is not at all about this or that formulation of materialism, but about the opposition of materialism to idealism, about the difference of two trends of thought in philosophy, that is, whether we are to proceed from things to sensations and thought, or from sensations and thought to things ? Engels sides with the first—materialism ; Mach, with the second—idealism. No tricks, no sophistry (with which we shall often meet in his later works), will obscure the clear and undisputed fact that Ernst Mach's doctrine of things as complexes of sensations is subjective idealism and a tedious repetition of Berkeleianism. If with Mach, bodies are to be reduced to "complexes of sensations," or with Berkeley, to "combinations of sensations," then from this it inevitably follows that the "world is my idea." Starting with such a supposition it is impossible to arrive at the existence of other selves except myself—and this is the

purest solipsism. Much as Mach, Avenarius, Petzoldt and the others renounced solipsism, they were unable to get rid of it without falling prey to logical contradiction. To make this fundamental element of the philosophy of Machism still clearer, we shall adduce a few more citations from Mach's works. Here is a sample from the *Analysis of Sensations* :

We see an object having a point S. If we touch S, that is bring it into connection with our body, we receive a prick. We can see S, without feeling the prick. But as soon as we feel the prick we find S on the skin. The visible point, therefore, is a permanent nucleus, to which the prick is annexed, according to circumstances, as something accidental. From the frequency of analogous occurrences we ultimately accustom ourselves to regard all properties of bodies as "effects" proceeding from permanent nuclei and conveyed to the ego through the medium of the body ; which effects we call sensations. . . .

In other words : people "accustom" themselves to materialism, to consider sensations as the result of the effect of bodies, things, or nature on our sense-organs. This harmful—for the philosophic idealist—"habit," acquired by mankind and natural science, is not at all to the liking of Mach, and he tries to break it. "By this operation, however, these nuclei are deprived of their entire sensory content and converted into a bare abstract symbol." An old song, most honourable Professor ! This is a literal repetition of Berkeley who said that matter is a bare abstract symbol. It is obviously Ernst Mach who is laid bare, for since he does not recognise the "sensory content" to be an objective reality, existing independently of us, then the sensory content remains a "bare abstract" self, an italicised and capitalised *Self* similar to "the insane pianoforte, which imagined that it was the sole existing thing in this world." If the "sensory content" of our sensation is not the outer world, then nothing exists save the bare self that indulges in empty philosophic trifling. A stupid and fruitless occupation ! "The assertion, then,



is correct that the world consists only of our sensations. In which case we have knowledge *only* of sensations, and the assumption of the nuclei referred to, or of a reciprocal action between them, from which sensations proceed, turns out to be quite idle and superfluous. Such a view can only fit in with a half-hearted realism or a half-hearted philosophical criticism." (*Ibid.*)

We cited the sixth paragraph of the "anti-metaphysical utterance" of Mach in full. It is an absolute plagiarism from Berkeley. There is not a trace here of genuine thought, unless we are to regard the expression, "we perceive our perception" as original. From this it may be inferred that the "world consists of my sensations." The word "our," used by Mach, instead of "my" is illegitimately employed by him. By this word alone Mach betrays that "half-heartedness" of which he accuses others. For if the "assertion" of the existence of the outer world is an "idle" speculation, if the statement about the independent existence of the needle and of the interaction between my body and its point is "idle and superfluous," then the "assertion" of the existence of other selves is still more idle and superfluous. That means that only *I* exist, and our fellow men as well as the outer world come under the category of idle "nuclei." Holding such a doctrine one ought not to speak about "our" sensations; but as Mach does speak about them, it only betrays his own half-hearted method. It proves that his philosophy is a jumble of idle and shallow words in which he himself does not believe.

The following is a good example of Mach's confusion. In § 6 of Chapter II of the *Analysis of Sensations* we read: "If I can imagine that, while I am having sensations, I myself or someone else could observe my brain with all the necessary physical and chemical appliances, it would then be possible to ascertain with what process of the organism sensations of a particular kind are connected" (p. 242).

Well, then, does it mean that our sensations are connected

with a particular kind of processes which take place in the organism in general, and in our brain in particular? Mach very definitely admits this to be the case (it would be quite a task not to admit it from the standpoint of natural science !). But is this not the very same "assertion" about the very same "nuclei and their interaction" which our philosopher declared to be idle and superfluous? We are told that bodies are complexes of sensations; to go further than that, to regard sensations as a product of the effect of bodies upon our sense-organs is, in Mach's opinion, metaphysics, an idle and superfluous assertion, etc.—an opinion similar to Berkeley's. But the brain is a body, you will say. Yes, that means that the brain also is no more than a complex of sensations. And that means that with the help of the complexes of sensations I (and I am also nothing else than a complex of sensations) perceive the complex of sensations. What a wonderful philosophy! At first to recognise sensations "as the real world elements" and on this to build an "original" Berkeleianism, and then secretly to import opposite views that sensations are connected in the organism with particular kinds of processes. Are not these "processes" connected with the exchange of matter between the "organism" and the external world? Could this exchange occur, if the sensations of the organism did not present an objectively correct picture of this external world?

Mach does not ask himself such embarrassing questions. He jumbles together fragments of Berkeleianism with views of natural science that instinctively adhere to the materialist theory of knowledge. . . . In the same paragraph Mach writes: "It is sometimes even asked whether inorganic 'matter' has sensation . . ." Does this mean that there is no question about organic matter having sensation? Does it mean that sensation is not something primary but that it is one of the properties of matter? Oh! yes, Mach leaves out all the absurdities of Berkeleianism! "The question is natural enough, if we start from the

generally current physical conception which represents matter as the immediately and undoubtedly experienced reality out of which everything, inorganic and organic, is constructed." Let us keep in mind Mach's valuable admission that the habitual and widely spread physical notions regard matter as an immediate reality, of which reality only one variety (organic matter) possesses the well defined property of sensation. "For sensation must either arise suddenly somewhere or other in this structure, or else have been present in the foundation-stones from the beginning. From our point of view the question is merely a perversion. Matter is for us not what is primarily given. What is primarily given is, rather, the elements which, when standing to one another in a certain known relation are called sensations."

What is primarily given, then, is sensation, though in organic matter it is "connected" only with a particular kind of process! By making such an absurd statement, it seems as if Mach condemns materialism ("the generally current physical conception") because the question as to why and how sensation "arises" has not been decided! This is a sample of the "refutation" of materialism by the fideists and their sycophants. Can any philosophy "solve" questions if there has not been collected a sufficient amount of data for its solution? Does not Mach himself say in the very same paragraph, "As long as this problem [i.e., what is the lower limit of sensation in the organic world?] has not been solved in even a single special case, no decision of the question is possible"?

The difference between materialism and Machism in this particular question is thus reduced to the following. Materialism in full agreement with natural science takes matter as the *prius*, regarding consciousness, reason and sensation as derivative, because in a well expressed form it is connected only with the higher forms of matter (organic matter). It becomes possible, therefore, to assume the existence of a property similar to sensation "in the

foundation-stones of the structure of matter itself." Such, for example, is the supposition of the well-known German naturalist Ernst Haeckel, the English biologist Lloyd Morgan and others, not to speak of Diderot's conjecture, mentioned above. Machism clings to the opposite, idealistic viewpoint, which at once leads to an incongruity since, in the first place, sensation is taken as the primary entity in spite of the fact that it is connected with particular kinds of processes (in matter organised in a particular way) ; and, in the second place, the hypothesis that bodies are complexes of sensations is here destroyed by the assumption of the existence of other living beings and, in general, of other " complexes " besides the given great Self.

The word " element," which many a naïve person accepts (as we shall later see) as a new discovery, in reality only obscures the question by a meaningless and misleading term which has not the least bearing upon the solution of the problem. This term is misleading because there still remains so much to investigate, so much to find out about how matter, devoid of sensation, is related to matter which, though composed of the same atoms (or electrons), is yet endowed with a definite faculty of sensation. Materialism, by putting clearly the problem, gives impetus to continual experimentation thus making possible its solution. Machism, one variety of muddled idealism, by means of the trifling word " element," entangles this problem and sidetracks it.

In the last philosophic work of Mach there is one place that clearly betrays this idealistic trick. In his *Erkenntnis und Irrtum* we read : " While there is no difficulty in constructing any physical element out of sensation, which is a psychical element, it is impossible to imagine how we could compose a psychical experience out of elements that are current in modern physics, out of mass and motion, rigid elements that are only convenient for this special science."

Engels speaks very definitely about the rigidity of the views of many modern naturalists and about their

metaphysical (in the Marxian sense, anti-dialectical) conceptions. We shall see how Mach failed in this particular point either because he was not able to grasp it, or because he was ignorant of the relationship of relativism to dialectics. But for the present we shall not concern ourselves with it. It is important for us to note here the definiteness with which Mach's idealism comes to the fore in spite of the confused, supposedly new terminology. Now we have the assurance that there will be no difficulty in building up physical elements out of sensations, that is from psychical elements! Such constructions are, indeed, not difficult, for they are purely verbal constructions, empty scholasticisms which leave a loophole for fideism. No wonder, then, that after this discovery Mach dedicates his works to the immanentist school, no wonder that the followers of that school, the adherents of the most reactionary philosophic idealism, embrace Mach's theory. The "recent positivism" of Ernst Mach arrived only two hundred years too late. Berkeley gave numerous proofs that out of sensations, out of "psychical elements," one can "build" nothing but *solipsism*! We have already learned something about the materialism, with which Mach contrasts his own views without naming the enemy frankly and explicitly, from the examples of Diderot. The doctrine consists not in the derivation of sensation from the movement of matter or in the identification of sensation with the movement of matter, but in the recognition that sensation is one of the properties of matter in motion. On this particular question Engels held Diderot's views. Engels opposed the "vulgar" materialists, Vogt, Büchner and Moleschott because they assumed that thought is secreted by the brain as bile is secreted by the liver, holding that in this matter, they were confused. But Mach who contrasts his views with those of the materialists, ignores, of course, all the great materialists—Diderot, Feuerbach, Marx and Engels—just as all other official professors of the official philosophy do.

To characterise the prime and fundamental conception of Avenarius let us take his first independent philosophic work. Bogdanov in his *Empirio-Monism* (Book 1, 2nd ed., 1905, p. 12, *note*) says that "in the development of Mach's views, the starting point was philosophical idealism, while the realistic tinge is characteristic of Avenarius from the very start." Bogdanov said this, for he took Mach at his word; but in vain, for his assertion is diametrically opposed to the truth. On the contrary, the idealistic view of Avenarius is so prominent in his work of 1876, that he was himself compelled to admit it in 1891. In the Introduction to *Der Menschliche Weltbegriff* Avenarius says: "He who read my first systematic work, *Philosophie*, etc., must surely have presumed that I would attempt to treat the questions of the *Kritik der reinen Erfahrung* from the idealist standpoint," but "the sterility of idealism" compelled me to "doubt the correctness of my previous attitude" (*ibid.*, p. x.). This starting point of Avenarius is universally acknowledged in philosophic literature. Of the French writers I shall refer to Couwelaert who says that in the *Prolegomena* the philosophical standpoint of Avenarius is that of "monistic idealism." Of the German writers I shall name Rudolph Willy, Avenarius's disciple, who says that "Avenarius—in his youth, especially in his work of 1876—was totally under the influence of the so-called epistemological idealism."

It would be ridiculous to deny idealism in Avenarius' *Prolegomena*, when it openly states that "only sensation can be thought of as existing" (pp. 10 and 65 of the second German edition). That is how Avenarius himself presents the content of § 116 of his work. "We admitted," he says, "that the existing (*das Seiende*) is a substance endowed with sensation; the substance falls off . . . ["it is more economical," as you see, "there is less effort" in thinking that there is no "substance" and that there exists no external world!] there remains sensation: we must then regard what exists as sensation through and through."

Sensation, then, exists without "substance," thought without brain ! Are there really such philosophers who are capable of defending this brainless philosophy ? Yes, there are ! And Professor Richard Avenarius is one of them. We must pause for a while on the argument advanced in defence of this philosophy, difficult as it is for a normal person to take it seriously. Here in §§ 89 and 90 of the same work is Avenarius' argument : ". . . The position that motion causes sensation is based on illusory experience alone. This experience, the separate act of which is perception, consists in the supposed fact that sensation arises in a certain kind of substance (brain) as a result of the transferred motion (excitation) and with the help of other material conditions (e.g., blood). However, regardless of the fact that this generation was never in itself observed, an empirical proof is at least necessary to show that sensation which is assumed to be caused in a certain substance by the transferred motion, did not already exist in the substance in one way or another ; so that the appearance of sensation should not be interpreted in any other way but as a creating act on the part of the transferred action. Thus only by the proof that where we have now a sensation there was none before, not even a minimal one, is it possible to ascertain the fact which, denoting as it does some act of creation, contradicts the rest of experience and radically changes our conception of nature. But it is impossible to obtain such proof through any experience ; on the contrary, the notion of a state of substance which, previously deprived of sensation, now begins to perceive, is no more than a hypothesis. And such hypothesis only complicates and obscures our knowledge instead of simplifying and clarifying it.

Should the experience, which assumes that a transmitted motion is capable of causing sensation in a substance that begins to perceive from this moment on, prove itself illusory upon more intimate acquaintance, then there would still remain sufficient material in the content of the experience to ascertain at least

the relative origin of sensation from conditions of motion. It might appear that the amount of sensation, which was latent or minimal, or which did not appear to our consciousness before, now, due to the transmitted motion, frees itself, becomes more intense, or becomes known. However, even this bit of remaining content of experience is no more than illusory. Were we even in the position of ideal observers who could trace the outgoing motion from the moving substance A which, transmitted through a series of intermediate centres, reaches the substance B which is endowed with sensation, we would at best find that sensation in substance B developed simultaneously with the reception of the incoming motion, but we would not find that this occurred as a consequence of the motion.

We have purposely quoted this refutation of materialism by Avenarius in full, in order that the reader might see with what sophistry "recent" empirio-critical philosophy operates. We shall compare the argument of the idealist Berkeley with the *materialist* argument of Bogdanov, as a kind of punishment for the latter's betrayal of materialism !

In bygone days, nine years ago, when Bogdanov was still partly "a naturo-historical materialist" (that is, an adherent of the materialist theory of knowledge, which the preponderant majority of contemporary naturalists instinctively hold), when he was only partly confused by the befuddled Ostwald, he wrote : "From ancient times to the present, the classification of the facts of consciousness into three categories has still held true for descriptive psychology, namely, the domain of sensations and ideas, the domain of emotion and the domain of excitations . . . To the first category belong the images of phenomena of the outer or inner world that are taken by themselves in consciousness. . . . Such an image is called a "sensation" if it is directly caused by the intermediation of the sense-organ with its corresponding external phenomenon." And a little farther : "Sensation . . . arises in consciousness as a result of a certain external impulse transmitted by the external sense-organs" (p. 222). Or "sensation is the foundation of mental life; it is the immediate connection with the outer world"



(p. 240). "In the process of sensation the transformation of energy of external excitation into a fact of consciousness takes place at each step" (p. 133). And even in 1905 when, due to the benevolent assistance of Ostwald and Mach, Bogdanov abandoned the materialist viewpoint for the idealist, he still wrote (because of impaired memory!) in his *Empirio-Monism*: "As is well-known, the energy of external excitation is transformed at the nerve endings into a 'telegraphic' form of the nervous current, as yet insufficiently elaborated yet devoid of mysticism. This energy reaches the neurones that are located in the so-called 'lower' centres—ganglial, spinal, subcortical, etc." (Book 1, 2nd ed., 1905, p. 118.)

For every scientist, who is not led astray by professorial philosophy, as well as for every materialist, sensation is nothing but a direct connection of the mind with the external world; it is the transformation of energy of external excitation into a mental state. This transformation has been observed by each of us a million times. The sophistry of idealist philosophy consists in that it takes sensation not as a connection of the mind with the outer world but as a screen, as a wall which separates the mind from the outer world; in that it is taken not as an image corresponding to the perception of the external phenomenon but as the "only entity." Avenarius accepted the slightly changed form of this old sophistry which had already been worn thin by Bishop Berkeley. As we do not know all the conditions of the constantly observed connection of sensation with matter organised in a certain way, we recognise sensation alone as existing. The argument of Avenarius may be reduced to this. . . .

### *Did Nature Exist Prior to Man?*

We have already seen that this question appears to be a crucial one for the philosophy of Mach and Avenarius. Natural science positively asserts that the earth once

existed in a state in which no man or any other living creature existed or could have existed. Inasmuch as organic matter is a later appearance, a result of a long evolution, it follows that there could have been no perceiving matter, no "complexes of sensations," no self which is "inseparably" connected with the environment, as Avenarius would like to have it. Hence, matter is primary, and mind, consciousness, sensation are products of a very high development. Such is the materialist theory of knowledge, which natural science instinctively holds.

The question arises whether the outstanding representatives of empirio-criticism take note of this contradiction between their theory and natural science. They do take note and ask themselves by what arguments they can remove this contradiction. Three attitudes to this question are of particular interest to materialism, that of Avenarius himself and those of his disciples, Petzoldt and Willy.

Avenarius tries to eliminate the contradiction with natural science by means of the theory of the "potential" central term in the co-ordination. As we already know, co-ordination is the "inseparable" connection of the self and the environment. To remove the obvious absurdity of this theory the concept of the "potential" central term is introduced. For instance, what should be done with the hypothesis of man's development from the embryo? Does the environment (the "counterpart of the term") exist, if the "central term" is the embryo? The embryonic system C—Avenarius contends—is the "potential central term in relation to the future individual environment" (*Bemerkungen*, p. 140). The potential central term is never equal to zero, not only when there are no parents but also when there are only the "integral parts of the environment" capable of becoming parents (p. 141).

The co-ordination then is continual. It is essential for the empirio-criticist to assert this in order to save the fundamentals of his philosophy—sensations and their complexes. Even when there is no human being, the central

term is not equal to zero ; it only becomes the potential central term ! It is surprising that there still are people who can take a philosopher seriously who produces such arguments. Even Wundt, who asserted that he is no enemy of metaphysics (that is, fideism), was compelled to admit " the obscure mystification of the term experience " by the application of the word " potential " which destroys whatever co-ordination there is (*loc. cit.*, p. 379).

Indeed, can one take co-ordination seriously when its continuity consists in one of its members being potential ?

Is this not mysticism ? Does this not lead to fideism ?

If it is possible to think of the potential central term in relation to a future environment, why not think of it in relation to the past environment, that is, after man's death ? You will contend that Avenarius did not make this inference from his theory. Well, even this is not to the credit of his fallacious and reactionary theory, for it becomes thereby more cowardly. In 1894 Avenarius did not tell the whole tale, or perhaps feared to speak or even think about it consistently. Schubert-Soldern, however, referred to this theory in 1896 for theological purposes ; in 1906 he won the approval of Mach, who said that Schubert-Soldern followed a direction which was " in close proximity to Machism " (p. 4). Engels had a perfect right to attack Dühring, the open atheist, for leaving loopholes for fideism in his philosophy. He had several times justly accused the materialist Dühring for his drawing of theological inferences at least in the 'seventies. And still there now are people who wish to be considered Marxists and yet carry to the masses a philosophy which is very near fideism ! " It would seem," Avenarius wrote in *Bemerkungen*, " that from the empirio-critical standpoint natural science has no right to make queries about such periods of our present environment which precede the existence of man in time " (p. 144). Avenarius goes on to say that " he who asks questions about it cannot avoid imaginatively projecting himself there in space and time [*sich "hinzudenken"*] ;

what the natural scientist wants to know (though he is not clearly aware of it) is essentially this: How is the earth and the universe to be determined prior to the appearance of living beings or men? Only by imagining oneself in the rôle of a spectator, just as one follows the history of another planet or solar system from the basis of our earth, with the help of perfected instruments."

An object cannot exist independently of our mind. "We shall always imaginatively project ourselves as reason endeavouring to apprehend the object."

This theory of the necessity of "projecting" the human mind into any object and into nature prior to the emergence of man, is laid down by me in the first paragraph, in the words of the "recent positivist" Avenarius, and in the second, in the words of the subjective idealist Fichte. The sophistry of this theory is so manifest that one feels uneasy in analysing it. Now then, if we "project" ourselves, our presence will be imaginary—but yet the existence of the earth prior to the emergence of man is real. To be sure, a man could not be an actual observer of the earth which was in a molten state, and to "imagine" his being present there is obscurantism. It is the same as if I were to prove the existence of hell by the argument that I could "project" myself there as an observer. The "reconciliation" of empirio-criticism with natural science may be reduced to this: Avenarius agrees to "project" something, the possibility of which is excluded by natural science. No man who has the least education, and is healthy, can doubt that the earth existed when there could be no life, no sensation or "central term." Hence, the whole theory of Mach and Avenarius, from which it follows that the earth is a complex of sensations ("bodies are complexes of sensations") or "complexes of elements in which the mental and physical are similar," or "the counter part of the system in which the central term cannot be equal to zero," is philosophic obscurantism, a reduction of subjective idealism to absurdity.

Petzoldt, having seen the absurdity of the position into which Avenarius fell, felt ashamed. In his *Einführung in die Philosophie der reinen Erfahrung* (Vol. II) he devotes a whole paragraph (§ 65) to the problem of the reality of periods of the earth ante-dating the existence of man.

"In the teaching of Avenarius," says Petzoldt, "the self plays a rôle different from that in Schuppe [note that Petzoldt had openly and repeatedly declared: 'Our philosophy is founded on three persons—Avenarius, Mach, and Schuppe'] yet it is a rôle of determining importance for his theory." Petzoldt was evidently influenced by the fact that Schuppe had unmasked Avenarius by saying that everything was grounded on the self; and Petzoldt wishes to correct himself. "Avenarius once said," Petzoldt continues, "that we can think of a place where no human foot as yet has trodden, but in order to *think* about it, it is necessary that that be present which we designate by the term 'self' *whose* thought it becomes."

Petzoldt replies: "The epistemologically important question consists in, not whether we could think of such a place, but whether we have a right to think of it as existing, or having existed, independently of any individual reflection."

That is right! People can think and "project" all kinds of hells and devils—Lunacharsky even "projected" (to use a mild expression) a religious conception—but the purpose of the theory of knowledge is to show the unreal, fantastic and reactionary character of such figments of the imagination.

"... That the system C [brain] is necessary for reflection, is obvious for both the philosophy of Avenarius and that which is defended by me. . . ."

It is not true; Avenarius's theory of 1876 is a theory of mind without brain. And in the theory of 1892-4, as we shall see immediately, there is an element of idealist absurdity.

"... But is this system C made the *condition of existence* of, say, the Secondary period of the earth?" And

Petzoldt, presenting the argument of Avenarius already cited, on the aim of science and on the possibility of "projecting" the spectator replies: "No, we wish to know whether we have a right to imagine the existence of the earth at that remote epoch in the same way as I would imagine it having existed yesterday or a while ago. Or must the existence of the earth be really conditioned (as Willy claimed) by our right to assume that at a certain time together with the earth there existed at least some system C, be it even on the lowest stage of its development?" (About this idea of Willy we shall speak presently.)

"Avenarius evades Willy's queer inference by means of the argument that the person who put the question could not divorce himself from his thought (that is, imagine himself absent), otherwise he could not avoid projecting himself imaginatively into the situation. But then Avenarius makes the individual self of the person, who makes queries about such a self, the condition, not of a mere act of thought about the inhabitable earth, but of our right to think about the existence of the earth at that time.

"It would be easy to avoid these misleading paths, if we would not ascribe such importance to the self. The only thing the theory of knowledge demands, taking into consideration the various conceptions of the remote in both space and time, is that it be plausible and uniquely determined; the rest is the affair of special sciences" (Vol. II, p. 325).

Petzoldt converted the principle of causality into that of unique determination and introduced into his theory, as we shall see below, the *a priori* of such principle. This means that Petzoldt saves himself from Avenarius's subjective idealism and solipsism (in the professorial jargon, he attributes an exaggerated importance to the self) with the help of the *Kantian* ideas. The absence of the objective element in the doctrine of Avenarius, the impossibility of reconciling it with the demands of natural science which

declares the earth (object) to have existed long before the appearance of living beings (subject), compelled Petzoldt to resort to causality (unique determination). The earth existed, says Petzoldt, for its existence prior to the appearance of man is causally bound up with the present existence of the earth. But in the first place, where does the notion of causality come from? *A priori*, says Petzoldt. In the second place are not those conceptions of hell, devils and Lunacharsky's "projections" also bound by causality? In the third place, the theory "of the complexes of sensation" at any rate proves itself to be destroyed by Petzoldt. Petzoldt could not do away with the contradiction which he found in Avenarius, and entangled himself even more, for there could be only one solution—the recognition of the theory that the outer world reflected by us exists independently of our mind. Only such a materialist solution is really compatible with natural science, and only such a conception eliminates the idealist solution of the principle of causality of Petzoldt and Mach, about which we shall speak separately. . . .

*Does Man Think With the Help of the Brain?*

Bazarov emphatically answers this question in the affirmative. He writes: "If to Plekhanov's thesis 'that mind is an inner [Bazarov?] state of matter,' a more satisfactory qualification be added, namely, 'that each mental process is a function of the cerebral process,' then neither Mach nor Avenarius would object to it" (*Outlines*, p. 29).

For a mouse there is no stronger beast than a cat. For the Russian Machians there is no stronger materialist than Plekhanov. Was Plekhanov really the only one, or the first one, to defend the materialist thesis that mind is the inner function of matter? And if Bazarov did not like Plekhanov's formulation of materialism, why did he take cognizance of Plekhanov and not of Engels or Feuerbach? Simply

because the Machians are afraid to admit the truth. They are fighting materialism, yet they pretend that they are only fighting Plekhanov. This is an unprincipled and cowardly stratagem.

Let us proceed, however, with empirio-criticism. Avenarius "would not dispute" the statement that "thought is a function of the brain," says Bazarov. These words are absolutely untrue. Avenarius not only objects to the materialist thesis, but he even invents a whole "theory" in order to refute this thesis. "Our brain," says Avenarius in *Der menschliche Weltbegriff*, "is not the locus or residue, or creator of thought; it is not its instrument, or organ, or carrier or substratum" (p. 76—sympathetically quoted by Mach in the *Analysis of Sensations*, p. 28). "Thought is not an indweller, or master, or half, or an aspect of anything; neither is it the product or even the physiological function or state of the brain in general" (*ibid*). And no less emphatically does Avenarius express himself in his *Bemerkungen*: "Presentations are not functions (physiological, or mental, or psycho-physical) of the brain" (*op. cit.*, p. 419). Sensations are not "psychical functions of the brain" (§ 116).

According to Avenarius, then, the brain is not the organ of thought, and thought is not the function of the brain. Take Engels and you will immediately meet with views exactly contrary to those—views that are frankly materialistic. "Consciousness and thought," says Engels in *Anti-Dühring*, "are products of the brain of man" (p. 56, English edition). This idea is often repeated in that work. In *Ludwig Feuerbach* we have the following exposition of Feuerbach's and Engels's views: "... The material, perceptual universe, to which we ourselves belong, is the only reality, and ... our consciousness and thought, however supernatural they may seem, are only evidences of a material bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is only the highest product of matter. This is, of course, pure materialism"



(p. 64). (Cf. p. 53) on the reflection of nature processes in the "thinking brain."

Avenarius rejects this materialist viewpoint saying that "the thinking brain" is a "fetish of natural science" (*Der menschliche Weltbegriff*, p. 70). Hence, Avenarius has no illusions concerning his absolute disagreement with natural science. He admits, as Mach and all the adherents of the immanentist school do, that natural science unconsciously upholds the materialist view. He admits and openly declares that he absolutely disagrees with the "prevailing psychology" (*Bemerkungen*, p. 150). The prevailing psychology is guilty of an inadmissible "introjection"—a new term invented by our philosopher, which means the inherence of thought in the brain, or of sensations in us. These two words (*in uns*), says Avenarius, express the fundamental proposition which empirio-criticism disputes. "This locating of the visible, etc., in man is what we call introjection" (p. 153, § 45).

This introjection rejects "on principle" the "natural conception of reality," substituting the expression "in me" instead of the expression "before me" (*vor mir*, p. 154), making "of one component part of the (real) environment an integral part of the (ideal) mind" (*ibid.*). "Out of the *amechanical* [a new word in place of 'mental'] which manifests itself freely and clearly in experience, introjection makes something which hides itself mysteriously in the central nervous system" (*ibid.*).

Here we have the same mystification which we encountered in the famous defence of "naïve realism" by the empirio-criticists and the adherents of the immanentist school. Avenarius is acting here on the advice of Turgenev's rascal, to denounce mainly those vices which one recognises in himself. Avenarius pretends that he is combating idealism: See how ordinary philosophic idealism is inferred from introjection, how, he says, the outer world is converted into sensation, into representation and so forth, while I defend "naïve realism," and

recognise everything experienced as equally real, both "self" and environment, without locating the outer world in the brain of man.

The sophistry here is the same as that which we observed in the case of his celebrated co-ordination. Distracting the reader's attention by his attacks on realism, Avenarius defends this same idealism, albeit with a somewhat changed phraseology: thought is not a function of the brain; the brain is not the organ of thought; sensations are not functions of the nervous system! oh, no, sensations are "elements," psychical in one connection and physical in another—(though the elements are "identical"). Through the use of an ambiguous and pretentious terminology, ostensibly expressing a new "theory," Avenarius circled about for a while but ultimately gravitated to his fundamental idealist position.

And if our Russian Machians (Bogdanov and the others) have not noticed the "mystification" and have seen a refutation of idealism in what is really a "new" defence of it, then let us recall at least that in the analysis of empirio-criticism given by those who are experts in philosophy, we meet a sober estimation of Avenarius's trend of ideas, in which its real character is exposed once its pretentious terminology is eliminated.

Bogdanov wrote as follows in 1903:

Richard Avenarius gave us a well drawn and most complete philosophic picture of the development of the dualistic conceptions of mind and body. The gist of his "doctrine of introjection" is that we observe directly only physical bodies, and are acquainted only by hypothetical inference with the experiences of others, that is to say, we know the mind of another person only through indirect reasoning. . . . The hypothesis is complicated by the assumption that the experiences of the other person occurring in his body, are lodged (are introjected) in his organism. Such an hypothesis is not only superfluous but gives rise in addition to numerous contradictions. Avenarius gave an account of these contradictions in a systematic fashion, thus revealing a series of successive historical stages in the development of dualism and of philosophical idealism;

but here, we need not follow him. "Introjection serves as an explanation of the dualism of mind and body."

Bogdanov, believing that the doctrine of "introjection" was aimed at idealism, was caught on the hook of the "professorial" philosophy. He accepted on faith the estimation of introjection given by Avenarius himself, and failed to notice the sting it contained for materialism. Introjection denies that thought is a function of the brain, that sensations are functions of the central nervous system of man; it denies therefore the simplest truths of physiology in order to defeat materialism. "Dualism" is here refuted idealistically (in spite of Avenarius's apparent ire against idealism), for sensation and thought prove to be not secondary phenomena, not derivative from matter, but primary entities. Dualism is refuted by Avenarius much in the same manner as the existence of the object without the subject is refuted. It is the same idealist "refutation" of the possibility of the existence of matter without thought, of the existence of an external world independent of our sensations; the absurd denial of the fact—that the visual image of the tree is a function of the retina, the nerves and the brain—was necessary for Avenarius in order to confirm his theory of the "inseparable" connection of both self and tree, subject and environment in an "all-inclusive" experience.

The doctrine of introjection is a confusion which necessarily gives rise to idealistic absurdities and contradicts the viewpoint of natural science which holds that thought is the function of the brain, that perceptions, that is, the images of the external world, are effects of external objects on our sense-organs. The materialist elimination of "the dualism of mind and body" (materialistic monism) consists in this, that the existence of the mind is shown to be dependent upon that of the body, in that mind is declared to be secondary, a function of the brain, or a reflection of the outer world. The idealist elimination of the "dualism of body and mind" (idealistic monism) consists in an

"attempt to show that mind is not a function of the body, that mind is primary, that the "environment" and "self" exist in an inseparable connection in the same "complex of elements." Apart from these two diametrically opposed methods of elimination of "the dualism of body and mind," there can be no third method unless it be eclecticism—an illogical confusion of materialism and idealism. And this confusion in Avenarius appears to Bogdanov and the rest "to be a truth which transcends both materialism and idealism."

Professional philosophers, however, are not as naïve and credulous as are the Russian Machians. True, each one of these expert gentlemen, generally full fledged professors, defends "his" own pet system of refutation against materialism or, at least, of "reconciliation" of materialism and idealism. But in discussing an opponent they reveal without any ceremony the incompatible elements of materialism and idealism in what is heralded as the "latest" and most "original" system. And although a few young intellectuals were enmeshed in Avenarius's net, the old bird, Wundt, however, was not enticed by such bait. Wundt, the idealist, very impolitely unmasked the buffoon Avenarius, giving him credit *en passant* for the antimaterialistic tendency of the doctrine of introjection.

"If empirio-criticism," Wundt wrote, "reproaches vulgar materialism because by means of such expressions as the brain 'has' a thought, or 'produces' reason, it expresses a relation which cannot be stated on grounds of actual observation [evidently Wundt accepts as a matter of course the assumption that a person thinks without the help of the brain !] . . . this reproach, of course, has good ground" (*loc. cit.*, pp. 47-48).

Indeed, the idealists will always proceed against materialism hand in hand with the half-hearted compromisers, Avenarius and Mach ! It is only to be regretted, Wundt goes on to say, that this theory of introjection "does not stand in any relation to the doctrine of the

independent vital series, is only artificially tacked on to it" (p. 365).

"Introjection," says Ewald, "is no more than a fiction of empirio-criticism, which serves to shield its fallacies" (*loc. cit.* p. 44). "We here observe a peculiar contradiction. On the one hand the elimination of the doctrine of introjection and the restoration of the natural conception of reality would restore it to life. On the other hand, by means of the notion of essential co-ordination, empirio-criticism leads to a purely idealistic theory concerning the absolute correlation of the counter term and the central term. Thus Avenarius's thought runs in a vicious circle. He started out to do battle against idealism, but capitulated before it on the very eve of the first skirmish. He set out to liberate the realm of objects from the yoke of the subject, but ended in tying it again to the subject. What he actually destroys in his criticism, is only a caricature of idealism, and not the genuine expression of its theory of knowledge" (*loc. cit.*, pp. 64-5).

"In the frequently-quoted statement by Avenarius," Norman Smith says, "that the brain is not the seat, organ or supporter, of thought, he rejects the only terms which we possess for defining their connection" (*loc. cit.*, p. 30).

No wonder then that the theory of introjection, approved by Wundt, gained the sympathy of James Ward, the outspoken spiritualist, who waged a systematic war against "naturalism and agnosticism," and especially against Huxley (not because he was not outspoken and explicit in his materialism, which was Engels's reproach against him, but because under his agnosticism, materialism was concealed).

Let us note that Karl Pearson, the English Machian, without dodging the philosophic issues involved, and recognising neither introjection, co-ordination, nor "the discovery of the world-elements," arrives at the inevitable conclusion of Machism, namely, purely subjective idealism. Pearson knows of no "elements"; "sense-impressions"

is his first and last word. He has no doubt that man thinks with the help of the brain. And the contradiction between this thesis (which alone is in conformity with science) and the starting point of his philosophy remained open and clear to all. Pearson tries hard to combat the view that matter exists independently of our sense-perceptions.

Repeating all of Berkeley's arguments, Pearson declares that matter is a nonentity. But when he comes to speak of the relation of the mind to the brain, he is straightforward, as, for instance, in the following: "From will and consciousness associated with material machinery we can infer nothing whatever as to will and consciousness without that machinery" (*ibid.*, p. 58). He lays down the following thesis as a summary of the corresponding part of his investigation: "Consciousness has no meaning beyond nervous systems akin to our own; it is illogical to assert that all matter is conscious [but it is logical to assert that matter contains a property of reflection which is in its essence akin to sensation], still more that consciousness or will can exist outside matter" (*ibid.*, p. 75).

Pearson commits here a terrible blunder! Matter is nothing but groups of sense-perceptions. This is his thesis, his philosophy. This means that sensation or thought is primary; matter, secondary. But consciousness without matter cannot exist, surely, at least not without a nervous system. So that, mind and sensation now prove to be secondary. Water on the earth, the earth on the whale, and the whale on the water. Mach's "elements," Avenarius's "co-ordination" and "introjection" do not in the least mitigate the difficulty; they only obscure matters with erudite chatter. . . .

*Absolute and Relative Truth, or on the Eclecticism  
of Engels Discovered by Bogdanov*

Bogdanov made this discovery in 1906, announcing it in the preface of Book III of his *Empirio-Monism*. "Engels in

*Anti-Dühring*," writes Bogdanov, "expresses himself almost in the same sense which I characterised as 'the relativity of truth' (p. v), that is, in the sense of the denial of eternal truth the denial of the absolute objectivity of whatever truth there is. . . . Engels mistakenly wavers in his views when he ironically recognises certain wretched eternal truths (p. viii). . . . Only inconsistency can account for Engels's eclectic reservations in this connection . . ." (p. ix). Let us cite one instance of Bogdanov's refutation of Engels's eclecticism. "Napoleon died on May 5, 1821," says Engels, in *Anti-Dühring*, in the chapter, "Eternal Truths," where he treats of the platitudes which one must encounter in pretending to find eternal truths in historical sciences. Bogdanov thus answers Engels: "What 'truth' is it? And what is there 'eternal' about it? The constancy of the one-to-one correspondence between a point-instant of time and the death of Napoleon has no longer any real significance for our generation, it cannot serve as the starting point for any activity, and it leads nowhere" (p. ix). And on p. viii: "Can you call *Plattheiten Wahrheiten*? Are platitudes truths? The truth is a vital organising form of experience; it leads us somewhere in our activity and gives us a prop in the struggle of life."

It is sufficiently clear from these two quotations that, instead of refuting Engels, Bogdanov is really beating air. If you are not in a position to maintain that the proposition, "Napoleon died on May 5, 1821," is false, then you are practically acknowledging that it is true. If you do not assert that it can be refuted in the future, then you are acknowledging this truth to be eternal. But to present such phrases as that the truth is a "vital organising form of experience" as an answer is to offer a jumble of words as philosophy. Was the earth evolved in the manner taught by the science of geology, or was the earth created in seven days? Is it really possible to dodge the question by phrases of "vital" (what does it mean?) truth which "leads" somewhere? Is it true that the knowledge of the earth's

history and the history of humanity "have no real significance"? But this is only a trifle by the means of which Bogdanov covers his retreat. Having taken it upon himself to prove that the admission of eternal truths by Engels is eclecticism, it is no more than a transparent dodge to settle the question verbally and leave unrefuted the fact that Napoleon really died on May 5, 1821. To think that this truth can possibly be refuted in the future is absurd.

The example taken by Engels is elementary, and anybody can present scores of such truths (as e.g., the other instance of Engels, that Paris is in France), which are eternal and absolute, and which only insane people can doubt. Why does Engels speak of "platitudes"? Because he ridicules and refutes the dogmatic, metaphysical materialist, Dühring, who could not apply dialectics to the question of the relation between absolute and relative truth. To be a materialist is to acknowledge objective truth revealed by our sense-organs. To acknowledge as objective truth, a truth independent of man and mankind, is to recognise in one way or another, absolute truth. Now, this "one way or another" separates the metaphysical materialist Dühring from the dialectical materialist Engels. Dühring juggled with the words "last, final, eternal truth" in discussing the most complicated questions of science, and especially in discussing history. Of course, there are eternal truths, says Engels, but it is unwise to use "high-sounding" words (*gewaltige Worte*) for small matters. To further materialism, we must drop the vulgar play upon the expression "eternal truth"; we must know how to put, and solve dialectically, the question of the correlation between absolute and relative truths. This was the source of the struggle between Dühring and Engels which took place thirty years ago. And Bogdanov, who manages "not to have noticed" Engels's explanation of the problem of absolute and relative truth given in the same chapter, and who accuses Engels of "eclecticism" for his admission of a proposition which is a



truism for every sort of materialism, once more reveals his complete ignorance of materialism and dialectics.

"We now come to the question," Engels writes in *Anti-Dühring*, in the chapter mentioned, "as to what product, if any, of human knowledge can especially have 'sovereign validity' and 'unrestricted claims to truth'" (*loc. cit.*, p. 118). Engels thus solves the problem :

"The sovereignty of thought is realised in a number of highly unsovereign men capable of thinking ; the knowledge which has unlimited pretensions to truth is realised in a number of relative blunders ; neither the one nor the other can be fully realised except through an endless eternity of human existence.

"We have here again the same contradiction as above between the necessary, as an absolute, conceived characteristic of human thought, and its reality in the very limited thinking single individual, a contradiction which can only be solved in the endless progression of the human race, that is, endless as far as we are concerned. In this sense human thought is just as sovereign as not . . . and its possibility of knowledge just as unlimited as limited. It is sovereign and unlimited as regards its nature, its significance, its possibilities, its historical end ; it is not sovereign and limited with respect to individual expression and its actuality at any particular time. It is just the same with eternal truths" (p. 119).

This discussion is very important for the question of relativism, or the principle of the relativity of our knowledge which is emphasised by all Machians. The Machians insist that they are relativists, but the Russian Machians, repeating those words after the Germans, are afraid to, or cannot, put clearly and directly the question concerning the relation of relativism to dialectics. For Bogdanov (as for all the Machians) the recognition of the relativity of our knowledge excludes the least admission of absolute truth. For Engels absolute truth is made up of relative truths. Bogdanov is a relativist ; Engels is a dialectician.

Here is another no less important discussion of Engels from the same chapter of *Anti-Dühring* :

"Truth and error, like all mutually antagonistic concepts, have only an absolute reality under very limited conditions, as we have seen, and as even Herr Dühring should know by a slight acquaintance with the first elements of dialectics, which show the insufficiency of all polar antagonisms. As soon as we bring the antagonisms of truth and error out of this limited field it becomes relative and is not serviceable for new scientific statements. If we should seek to establish its reality beyond those limits we are at once confronted by a dilemma, both poles of the antagonism come into conflict with their opposite ; truth becomes error and error becomes truth " (*ibid.*, p. 125). There follows the example of Boyle's law (that the volume of gas is inversely proportional to its pressure). . . . The "particle of truth" contained in that law is only absolute truth within certain limits. The law is proven to be a truth "only approximately."

Human reason then in its nature is capable of yielding and does yield the absolute truth which is composed of the sum-total of relative truths. Each step in the development of science adds new fragments of truth, and from this the absolute truth is constituted, but the limits of the truth of each scientific statement are relative, now expanding, now shrinking with the growth of science. "Absolute truth," says Dietzgen in his *Excursions*, "can be seen, heard, smelt, touched and, of course, also known ; but it cannot be resolved into pure knowledge, it is not pure mind . . . (p. 281). How can a picture 'conform' with its model? Approximately it can. What picture worth the name does not agree approximately with its object? Every portrait is more or less of a likeness. But to be altogether alike, quite the same as the original—what a monstrous idea !

"We can only know nature and her parts relatively, since even a part, though only a relation of nature,

possesses again the characteristics of the Absolute, the nature of the All-Existence which cannot be exhausted by knowledge.

"How, then, do we know that behind the phenomena of Nature, behind the relative truths, there is a universal, unlimited, absolute nature which does not reveal itself completely to man? . . . Whence that knowledge? It is innate; it is given us with consciousness" (p. 283).

This last phrase is one of Joseph Dietzgen's inexact expressions, which led Marx, in one of his letters to Kugelman, to make note of the confusion in Dietzgen's views. Only by seizing upon these incorrect and unessential phrases can one speak of a special philosophy of Dietzgen which is supposedly different from dialectical materialism. But Dietzgen corrects himself on the same page: "When I say that the consciousness of the endless, absolute truth is innate in us, is the one and only knowledge *a priori*, I am confirmed in my statement also by the experience of this innate consciousness."

From all these statements of Engels and Dietzgen it is obvious that as far as dialectical materialism is concerned there does not exist a fixed immutable boundary between relative and absolute truth. Bogdanov did not grasp this at all, as is evident from the fact that he could bring himself to write the following: "Old-fashioned materialism sets itself up as the absolute *objective knowledge of the essence of things* [Bogdanov's italics] but this is incompatible with the historical conditioning features of any particular ideology.

From the standpoint of modern materialism, or Marxism, the relative limits of our approximation to the cognition of the objective, absolute truth are historically conditioned; but the existence of this truth is unconditioned, as well as the fact that we are continually approaching it. The general outlines of a picture are historically conditioned, but it is unconditionally true that this picture reflects an objectively existing model. Historically conditioned are the

circumstances under which we made progress in our knowledge of the essence of things. For example, the *discovery* of alizarine in coal tar was historically conditioned, or the *discovery* of the electronic structure of the atom was historically conditioned ; but it is unconditionally true that every such discovery is a step forward to "absolute objective knowledge." In a word, every ideology is historically conditioned, but it is unconditionally true that to every scientific theory (as distinct from religion), there corresponds an objective truth, something absolutely so in nature. You will say that this distinction between relative and absolute truth is indefinite. And I will reply that it is sufficiently indefinite to prevent science from becoming dogmatic, in the bad sense of the word, from becoming dead, frozen, ossified ; but it is at the same time sufficiently "definite" to preclude us from espousing any brand of fideism or agnosticism, from embracing the sophistry and philosophical idealism of the followers of Hume and Kant. Here is a boundary which you have not noticed, and not having noticed it, you have fallen into the mire of reactionary philosophy. It is the boundary between dialectical materialism and relativism.

We are relativists, declare Mach, Avenarius and Petzoldt. We are relativists, Mr. Chernov, and a few Russian Machians who wish to be Marxians, echo after them. In this, Mr. Chernov and my Machian comrades, lies your error. To make relativism the basis of the theory of knowledge is inevitably to condemn oneself to absolute scepticism, agnosticism and sophistry, or subjectivism. Relativism as the basis of the theory of knowledge is not only a recognition of the relativity of our cognition, but is tantamount to the denial of the existence of an objective limit or goal independent of humanity to which our cognition approaches. From the point of view of mere relativism one can justify any sophistry, one can even regard the statement "Napoleon died on May 5, 1821," as conditioned ; one can declare things to be true for the "convenience" of

an individual or humanity, as well as recognise scientific ideology to be "convenient" in one respect and religious ideology to be very "convenient" in another, etc.

Dialectics, as Hegel explained it, includes an "element" of relativism, of negation and scepticism, but it is not thereby reduced to relativism. The materialist dialectics of Marx and Engels certainly does contain relativism, but it is not reduced to it, that is, it recognises the relativity of all our knowledge, not in the sense of the denial of objective truth, but in the sense of the historical conditions which determine the degrees of our knowledge as it approaches this truth.

Bogdanov writes in italics: "*Consistent Marxism does not admit such dogmatism and such static expressions*" as eternal truths. This is a blunder. If the world is an eternally moving and developing material mass (as the Marxians assume) which reflects a progressive human consciousness, what has all this to do with the notion of the "static"? The question at issue here is not one concerning the intrinsic essence of things, nor of the intrinsic nature of consciousness, but of the correspondence between the consciousness which reflects nature, and the nature which is reflected by consciousness. In this question, and in this question alone, the term "dogmatism" has a special, characteristic philosophic flavour; it is the favourite word which the idealists and the agnostics hurl against the materialists, as we have already seen from the example of the very "old" materialist, Feuerbach. The objections that are raised from the standpoint of the prominent "recent positivists" against materialism are as old as they are trashy!

### *The Criterion of Practice in the Theory of Knowledge*

We have seen that Marx, in 1845, and Engels, in 1888 and 1891, introduced the criterion of practice into the theory of knowledge of materialism. To ask outside the

realm of practice whether "the objective truth corresponds to human reason" is scholasticism, says Marx in his second thesis on Feuerbach. The best refutation of Kantian and Humean agnosticism as well as of other philosophic whims (*Schrullen*) is practice, repeats Engels. "The success of our actions proves the correspondence (*Uebereinstimmung*) of our perception with the objective nature of the objects perceived," he answers the agnostics.

Compare with this the argument of Mach regarding the criterion of practice :

A common and popular way of thinking and speaking is to contrast "appearance" with "reality." A pencil held in front of us in the air is seen by us as straight ; dip it into the water, and we see it crooked. In the latter case we say that the pencil *appears* crooked, but is in reality straight. But what justifies us in declaring one fact rather than another to be the reality, and degrading the other to the level of appearance ? In both cases we have to do with facts which present us with different combinations of the elements, combinations which in the two cases are differently conditioned. Precisely because of its environment the pencil dipped in water is optically crooked ; but it is tactually and metrically straight. An image in a concave or flat mirror is *only* visible whereas under other and ordinary circumstances a tangible body as well corresponds to the visible image. A bright surface is brighter beside a dark surface than beside one brighter than itself. To be sure, our expectation is deceived when, not paying sufficient attention to the conditions, and substituting for one another different cases of the combination, we fall into the natural error of expecting what we are accustomed to, although the case may be an unusual one. The facts are not to blame for that. In these cases, to speak of "appearance" may have a practical meaning, but cannot have a scientific meaning. Similarly, the question which is often asked, whether the world is real or whether we merely dream it, is devoid of all scientific meaning. Even the wildest dream is a fact as much as any other.

It is true that not only is the wildest dream a fact, but the wildest philosophy as well. There can be no doubt about it after our acquaintance with the philosophy of Ernst Mach, as the last sophist, he confounds scientific-historical, psychological investigations of human errors,

all kinds of "wild dreams" of humanity, such as faith in spooks, with the epistemological differentiation of truthful and "wild." It is as if an economist would say that the theory of Senior, that the whole surplus value of the capitalist is given to him at the "last hour" of the worker's labour-time, and the theory of Marx are both a fact; and from the point of view of science there is no sense in the question as to which theory expresses objective truth and which the prejudice of the bourgeoisie and the corruption of its professors.

The tanner, Joseph Dietzgen, saw in the scientific, that is, materialist theory of knowledge a "universal weapon against religious belief," and yet for Professor Ernst Mach the difference between the materialist and the subjective-idealist theories of knowledge "is devoid of all scientific meaning." That science is impartial in the clash of materialism, idealism and religion, is a favourite idea not only of Mach, but of all modern bourgeois professors, who are, to quote Dietzgen, "graduated flunkies using their sham idealism to keep the people in ignorance" (*loc. cit.*, p. 130).

It is sham professorial idealism when the criterion of practice, which makes a distinction between illusion and actuality, is taken by Mach out of the realm of science, out of the theory of knowledge.

Human practice proves the correctness of the materialist theory of knowledge, said Marx and Engels, declaring as "scholastic" and "philosophic legerdemain," all attempts to solve fundamental epistemological questions which ignore practice. For Mach practice is one thing, and the theory of knowledge another. "Cognition," says Mach, in his last work, *Erkenntnis und Irrtum*, "is a biologically useful mental experience. Only success can separate knowledge from error (p. 116). . . . Understanding is a physical working hypothesis" (p. 183). Our Russian Machians, who wish to be Marxians, accept with a peculiar naïveté such phrases of Mach as proof that he borders very closely on Marxism. But Mach borders on Marxism as

closely as Bismarck bordered on the labour movement or Bishop Yevlogy on democracy. With Mach, such assumptions stand side by side with his idealist theory of knowledge, but do not preponderantly determine the choice of a fundamental tendency or theory in epistemology. Knowledge may be biologically useful, useful in human practice, in the preservation of the species, but it is useful only when it reflects an objective truth, independent of man. For a materialist, the "success" of human practice proves the correspondence of our representations to the objective nature of the things we perceive. For a solipsist, "success" is restricted to what is needed only in practice, and can be dis severed from the theory of knowledge. To include the criterion of practice as the basis of the theory of knowledge is inevitably to come to materialism, says the Marxian. Practice has a materialistic reference, says Mach, but the theory of practice is a different article.

"Now in practice," Mach writes in the *Analysis of Sensations*, "we can as little do without the Ego-presentation when we act, as we can do without the presentation of a body when we grasp at a thing. Physiologically we remain egoists and materialists, just as we always see the sun rise again. But theoretically this way of looking at the matter cannot be maintained" (p. 357).

Egoism is beside the point here, for egoism is not an epistemological category. The question of the rising of the sun is also beside the point, for in practice, which serves us as a criterion in the theory of knowledge, we must include also the practice of astronomical observations, discoveries, etc. There remains only Mach's valuable admission that men in their practice are totally and exclusively guided by a materialist theory of knowledge; the attempt to overlook it "theoretically" is characteristic of the scholastic erudition and sham idealist endeavours of Mach.

That these attempts to eliminate practice, in order to make room for agnosticism and idealism, on the grounds that practice is irrelevant to epistemology, are by no



means new, can be seen in the following example from the history of German classical philosophy. Midway between Kant and Fichte stands Schulze (in the history of philosophy, the so-called Schulze-Aenesidemus). He openly defends the sceptical alignment in philosophy, considering himself a follower of Hume (and of the ancients, Pyrrho and Sextus). He decidedly rejects the thing-in-itself and the possibility of objective knowledge, and insists that we should not go beyond "experience," beyond sensations, while he foresees the following objection from the other camp. He says: "Since a sceptic, by participating in affairs of life, recognises as indubitable the reality of objective things, behaves accordingly and admits the criterion of truth, his own behaviour is the best and most obvious refutation of his scepticism. "Such proofs," Schulze objects angrily, "are only valid for the mob; my scepticism does not touch upon practical life, but remains within the domain of philosophy" (p. 255). But the subjective idealist Fichte, too, hopes to find room within the domain of idealism for that "realism which is inevitable for all of us and even for the most determined idealist when it comes to practice—that realism which assumes that objects exist absolutely independent of us and outside of us."

The recent positivism of Mach has not gone very far from Schulze and Fichte! Let us note as a curiosity that for Bazarov also in this question, no one exists save Plekhanov—for him, too, there is no stronger beast than a cat. Bazarov ridicules the "salto-vitale" philosophy of Plekhanov (*Outlines*, p. 69), who really made the absurd remark, that "belief" in the existence of the outer world is an inevitable "salto-vitale" (vital leap) in philosophy. The word "belief," though put in quotation marks (after Hume), discloses a confusion of terms in Plekhanov. There can be no question about it. But what has the problem particularly to do with Plekhanov? Why has not Bazarov taken another materialist, let us say, Feuerbach? Is it because he does not know him? But ignorance is no

argument. Feuerbach also, like Marx and Engels, makes an inadmissible "leap" (from the viewpoint of Schulze, Fichte and Mach) to practice, in the fundamental problems of epistemology. Criticising idealism, Feuerbach presents its essence in the following significant quotation from Fichte which demolishes Machism. "You assume," writes Fichte, "that things are real, that they exist outside of you only because you see them, hear them and touch them. But vision, touch and hearing are only sensations. . . . You perceive, not the objects, but your perceptions." And Feuerbach replies: "A human being is not an abstract ego; he is either a man or a woman. The question, whether the world is perception, can be compared to the question, whether a human being is my perception, or our relations in practical life prove the contrary? The fundamental error of idealism is that it asks and answers the question about objectivity and subjectivity, about the reality or unreality of the world only from the theoretical view-point" (*ibid.*, p. 189). Feuerbach absorbs the sum-total of human practice into the theory of knowledge. He says: "Of course, idealists also recognise the reality of the I and Thou in practical life. For the idealists this viewpoint is good only for life and not for speculation. But a speculation which contradicts life, which sets in place of the standpoint of truth the standpoint of death, which separates the soul from the body, is a false and dead speculation (p. 192). Before perceiving we breathe; we cannot exist without air, food and drink."

"Does this mean that we must deal with questions of food and drink in examining the problem of the ideality or reality of the world?' exclaims the indignant idealist. How base! What an offence to good manners to scold a refined, scientific materialism from the chair of philosophy and theology, only to *practise* the crudest sort of it at the table" (p. 196). And Feuerbach exclaims, to make subjective perception equivalent to the objective world "is to identify pollution with childbirth" (p. 198).

The remark is not a polite one, but it hits the mark of those philosophers who teach that sense-perception is the reality existing outside of us.

From the standpoint of life, practice ought to be the first and fundamental criterion of the theory of knowledge. It inevitably leads to materialism, brushing aside the infinite inventions of professorial scholasticism. Of course, we must not forget that the criterion of practice, in the nature of things, neither confirms nor refutes completely any human presentation. This criterion is sufficiently indefinite not to allow human knowledge to become "absolute," and at the same time sufficiently definite to wage a bitter struggle with all varieties of idealism and agnosticism. If that which our practice confirms, is the sole, ultimate and objective truth, then it follows that the sole path to this truth is the road of science which stands by the materialist creed. For instance, Bogdanov agrees to recognise Marx's theory of the circulation of capital as an objective truth only for "our time," regarding as "dogmatism" the designation of this theory as an "historically objective" truth. This again is a blunder. No future circumstances can change the correspondence of this theory with the fact, for the simple reason that such a truth is as eternal as that Napoleon died on May 5, 1821. But inasmuch as practice, i.e., the development of capitalist countries in the last few decades, actually proves the objective truth of the whole social and economic theory of Marx in general, and not only some of its specific formulations, it is obvious that to speak here of the "dogmatism" of the Marxists, is to make an inexcusable concession to bourgeois economy. The sole inference from the proposition upheld by Marxists, that the theory of Marx is the objective truth, is this: Following in the direction of the Marxian theory, we shall draw nearer and nearer to the objective truth (without exhausting it); following another path, we shall arrive at confusion and falsehood.

V. I. Lenin

## THE HISTORICAL FATE OF THE TEACHING OF KARL MARX

*Published March 14, 1913. English translation, "Communist Review," April 1933.*

[This was an article written for the thirtieth anniversary of Marx's death. It traces the influence of Marxism since 1848, showing that in spite of "decaying liberalism" reviving itself in the form of socialist opportunism, the "social peace" of Europe "most nearly resembles a powder-barrel." Lenin's prophecy of "an even greater triumph to Marxism" in the coming historical epoch was fulfilled in 1917.]

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## THE HISTORICAL FATE OF THE TEACHING OF KARL MARX

THE CHIEF THING in the teaching of Marx is the explanation of the world-historical rôle of the proletariat as the creator of Socialist society. Has the march of events throughout the world confirmed this teaching after it had been outlined by Marx?

Marx put it forward for the first time in 1844. *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, which appeared in 1848, already gives a complete, systematic explanation of this teaching, an explanation which is still the best existing. Since that time world history is obviously divided into three chief periods: (1) From the revolutions of 1848 to the Paris Commune (1871); (2) from the Paris

Commune to the Russian revolution of 1905 ; (3) from the Russian revolution.

Let us cast a glance at the fate of Marx's teaching in each of these periods.

# I

Marx's teaching at the beginning of the first period is far from prevailing. It is only one of an extraordinary number of fractions or currents in socialism. Those forms of socialism prevail which are in general akin to our own populism : lack of understanding of the materialist foundation of the historical movement, failure to remark the rôle and importance of each class in capitalist society, the concealing of the bourgeois nature of democratic changes by various pseudo-socialist phrases about "the people," "justice," "law," etc.

The revolution of 1848 deals a mortal blow at all these noisy, motley, ranting forms of *pre-Marxist* socialism. In all countries the revolution shows the different classes of society *in action*. The shooting of the workers by the republican bourgeoisie in the June days of 1848 in Paris finally defines the socialist nature of the proletariat *alone*. The liberal bourgeoisie is a hundred times more afraid of the independence of this class than of any kind of reaction : cowardly liberalism cringes before it. The peasantry is satisfied with the abolition of the remnants of feudalism and goes over to the side of order, only in a few cases hesitating between *workers' democracy* and *bourgeois liberalism*. All teachings of a *non-class* socialism and of *non-class* politics appear empty nonsense.

The Paris Commune (1871) completes this development of bourgeois changes ; only to the heroism of the proletariat does the republic owe its stability, that is to say, the form of state construction in which class relations act in their most concealed form.

In all other European countries a more confused and less complete development leads to the forming of the

same kind of bourgeois society. At the end of the first period (1848-1871), the period of storms and revolutions, pre-Marxian socialism is *dying out*. Independent *proletarian* parties are being born : the First International (1864-1872) and German social-democracy.

## II

The second period (1872-1904) differs from the first in its "peaceful" character, in the absence of revolutions. The West has finished with bourgeois revolutions. The East has not yet grown up to them.

The West enters the field of "peaceful" preparation for the period of future changes. Everywhere proletarian parties, socialist in essence, are formed which learn how to use bourgeois parliamentarism, to create their daily press, their educational institutions, their co-operatives. The teaching of Marx wins a complete victory and *spreads out*. Slowly and undeviatingly the process of selection and gathering of the proletarian forces goes forward, the preparations for coming battles.

The dialectic of history is of such a kind that the theoretical victory of Marxism compels its enemies to reclothe themselves as Marxists. Internally decaying liberalism tries to revive itself in the form of socialist *opportunism*. The period of preparation of forces for great battles is interpreted by them as turning away from these battles. The improvement of the condition of the slaves in the struggle against wage slavery they explain as the sale by the slaves for a penny of their rights to freedom. In cowardly fashion they preach "social peace" (that is, peace with the slave-owners), turning away from the class struggle, etc. They have many supporters among socialist parliamentarians, various officials of the labour movement and the "sympathetic" intelligentsia.

## III

Hardly had the opportunists succeeded in boasting of "social peace" and the fact that storms were no longer inevitable under "democracy," than a new source of great world storms was discovered in Asia. The Turkish, Persian and Chinese revolutions followed on the Russian revolution. We are now living right in the midst of the epoch of these storms and their "reflex action" on Europe. Whatever may be the fate of the great Chinese revolution, against which various "civilised" hyenas are now sharpening their teeth, no forces in the world will restore the old serfdom in Asia, nor erase from the face of the earth the heroic democracy of the popular masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

The long postponement of the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe has driven a few people, inattentive to the conditions for preparing and developing the mass struggle, to despair and anarchy. We now see how shortsighted and poor-spirited was this anarchist despair.

We should not take despair, but courage from the fact of the drawing of the eight hundred millions of Asia into the fight for the same ideals as Europe.

The Asiatic revolutions have shown us the lack of character and cowardice of liberalism, as well as the exceptional importance of the independence of the democratic masses, as well as the clear differentiation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie of all kinds. Anybody who, after the experience of Europe and Asia, talks about a *non-class* politics or *non-class* socialism, should simply be put in a cage and exhibited along with some Australian kangaroo.

After Asia, though not in an Asiatic manner, Europe also has begun to stir. The "peaceful" period 1872-1904 has for ever and beyond return gone to eternity. The high cost of living and the yoke of the trusts are causing an unheard-of sharpening of the economic struggle which is even moving the liberalism of the most corrupted sections of the

English workers. A political crisis is ripening before our eyes even in the most "die-hard" bourgeois-junker country, in Germany. Furious piling up of armaments and the policy of imperialism are creating in contemporary Europe a kind of "social peace" which most nearly resembles a powder-barrel. While the decay of *all* the bourgeois parties and the maturing of the proletariat goes unswervingly forward.

After the appearance of Marxism each of the three great epochs of world history has brought it fresh confirmation and new triumphs. But the coming historical epoch will bring an even greater triumph to Marxism as the teaching of the proletariat.

14 (1) March, 1913.

## SOCIALISM AND WAR

*Published August 1915. English edition, Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 1931.*

[Lenin wrote this pamphlet in Switzerland in August 1915, just before the Zimmerwald Conference of those sections of the Socialist Parties which opposed the war. The passages reprinted below are typical of the series of articles and letters written by Lenin in connection with the war, showing the "betrayal of Socialism" by the leaders of the Second International who supported "their own" imperialists, and bringing out the essential Marxist attitude to imperialist war: "Turn the imperialist war into civil war."]

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## SOCIALISM AND WAR

PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM AND THE WAR OF  
1914-1915

## (Ch. I)

... The Socialists of the whole world solemnly declared in 1912, in Basle, that they considered the coming European war a "criminal" and reactionary undertaking of all the governments, an undertaking which must hasten the breakdown of capitalism by inevitably generating a revolution against it. The war came, the crisis was there. Instead of revolutionary tactics, the majority of the Social-Democratic parties followed reactionary tactics, siding with their government and their respective bourgeoisies. This betrayal of Socialism means the collapse of the Second (1889-1914) International. We must make clear to ourselves the causes of that collapse, the reasons for the birth and growth of social-chauvinism.

*Social-Chauvinism is Opportunism brought to  
Completion*

During the entire period of the Second International, a struggle was going on everywhere inside the Social-Democratic parties between the revolutionary and the opportunist wings. In a series of countries there was a split along this line (England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria). There was no doubt in the mind of any Marxist that opportunism expressed a bourgeois policy inside of the labour movement, that it expressed the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and of the alliance of an insignificant section of bourgeois-like workers with "their own" bourgeoisie against the interests of the mass of proletarians, the mass of the oppressed.

The objective conditions at the end of the nineteenth century were such that they strengthened opportunism, turning the use of legal bourgeois opportunities into servile

worship of legalism, creating a thin layer of bureaucracy and aristocracy in the working class, attracting to the ranks of the Social-Democratic parties many petty-bourgeois "fellow travellers."

The war hastened this development ; it turned opportunism into social-chauvinism ; it changed the alliance of the opportunists with the bourgeoisie from a secret to an open one. At the same time, the military authorities everywhere introduced martial law and muzzled the working mass, whose old leaders, almost in a body, went over to the bourgeoisie.

The economic basis of opportunism and social-chauvinism is the same : the interests of an insignificant layer of privileged workers and petty bourgeoisie who are defending their privileged positions, their "right" to the crumbs of profits which "their" national bourgeoisie receives from robbing other nations, from the advantages of its position as a great nation.

The ideological and political content of opportunism and social-chauvinism is the same : class collaboration instead of class struggle ; renunciation of revolutionary means of struggle ; aiding "one's" own government in its difficulties instead of taking advantage of its difficulties to work for a revolution. If we take all European countries as a whole, if we look not at individual persons (however authoritative), it appears that the opportunists ideology has become the mainstay of social-chauvinism, whereas from the camp of the revolutionists we hear almost everywhere more or less consistent protests against it. If we take, for instance, the division of opinion manifested at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907, we find that international Marxism was against imperialism while international opportunism was even then already for it.

*Unity with the Opportunists is an Alliance of the Workers with "Their" National Bourgeoisie and a split in the International Revolutionary Working Class*

During the period that preceded the war, opportunism was often considered a legitimate component part of a Social-Democratic party, though "deviating" and "extreme." The war has proven the inadmissibility of this combination in the future. Opportunism has ripened, it has brought to completion its rôle of an emissary of the bourgeoisie within the labour movement. Unity with the opportunists has become nothing but hypocrisy, as evidenced by the example of the German Social-Democratic Party. On all important occasions (as at the voting of August 4) the opportunists confront the party with their ultimatum, the acceptance of which is secured through their numerous connections with the bourgeoisie, through their majorities on the executive committees of the labour unions, etc. To keep *united* with opportunism at the present time means *practically* to subjugate the working class to "its" bourgeoisie, to make an alliance with it for the oppression of other nations and for the struggle for the privileges of a great nation ; at the same time it means splitting the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

However difficult it may be in individual cases to fight the opportunists who occupy a leading position in many organisations ; whatever peculiar forms the process of purging the labour parties of the opportunists may assume in various countries, this process is inevitable and fruitful. Reformist Socialism is dying ; regenerating Socialism "will be revolutionary, non-compromising, rebellious," according to the just expression of the French Socialist, Paul Golay.

*Kautskyism*

Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents the most typical and striking example

of how lip service to Marxism has in reality led to its transformation into "Struveism" or "Brentanoism." Plekhanov represents a similar example. Those people castrate Marxism; they purge it, by means of obvious sophisms, of its revolutionary living soul; they recognise in Marxism *everything except* revolutionary means of struggle, except the advocacy of, and the preparation for, such struggle, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky quite meaninglessly "reconciles" the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, the defence of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the left, such as abstaining from voting appropriations, verbal expression of opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book predicting the approach of a revolutionary period and discussing the relation between war and revolution, Kautsky who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on revolutionary utilisation of the coming war, now justifies and embellishes social-chauvinism in every way. Like Plekhanov, he joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing the very idea of revolution, in repudiating every step towards immediate revolutionary struggle.

The working class cannot realise its revolutionary rôle, which is of world significance, otherwise than by waging a merciless war against this desertion of principles, this supineness, this servility to opportunism and this unexampled theoretical vulgarisation of Marxism. Kautskyism is not an accident but a social product of the contradictions within the Second International which combined faithfulness to Marxism in words with submission to opportunism in deeds.

In every country this fundamental falsehood of Kautskyism assumes different forms. In Holland, Roland-Holst, though rejecting the idea of defence of the fatherland, is supporting unity with the party of the opportunists. In Russia, Trotsky, apparently repudiating this idea, also fights for unity with the opportunists and chauvinist group *Nasha Zarya*. In Rumania, Rakovsky, declaring war against

opportunism which he blames for the collapse of the International, is at the same time ready to recognise the legitimacy of the idea of the defence of the fatherland. These are manifestations of the evil which the Dutch Marxists Gorter and Pannekoek have named "passive radicalism," and which reduces itself to substituting eclecticism for revolutionary Marxism in theory and to slavishness or impotence in the face of opportunism in practice.

*The Slogan of Marxists is the Slogan of  
Revolutionary Social-Democracy*

The war has undoubtedly created the acutest crisis and has incredibly intensified the sufferings of the masses. The reactionary character of this war, the shameless lie of the bourgeoisie of *all* countries which covers its predatory aims with "national" ideology, all this inevitably creates on the basis of an objective revolutionary situation, revolutionary sentiments in the masses. Our duty is to help make these sentiments conscious, to deepen them and give them form. The only correct expression of this task is the slogan, "Turn the imperialist war into civil war." *All* consistent class struggle in time of war, all "mass actions" earnestly conducted must inevitably lead to this. We cannot know whether in the first or in the second imperialist war between the great nations, whether during or after it, a strong revolutionary movement will flare up. Whatever the case may be, it is our absolute duty systematically and unflinchingly to work in that particular direction.

The Basle Manifesto directly refers to the example of the Paris Commune, i.e. to turning a war between governments into civil war. Half a century ago, the proletariat was too weak; objective conditions for Socialism had not ripened yet; a co-ordination and co-operation of the revolutionary movements in all the belligerent countries could not take place; the fact that a section of the Paris workers was captivated by "national ideology" (traditions

of 1792) was its petty-bourgeois weakness noted at the time by Marx, and one of the reasons for the collapse of the Commune. Now, half a century later, all the conditions that weakened the revolution are no more. At the present time it is unforgivable for a Socialist to countenance repudiation of activities in the spirit of the Paris Communards.

### *Example of Fraternisation in the Trenches*

The bourgeois papers of all the belligerent countries have quoted examples of fraternisation between the soldiers of the belligerent nations, even in the trenches. The fact that the military authorities of Germany and England have issued severe orders against such fraternisation proves that the government and the bourgeoisie consider it of serious importance. If at a time when opportunism among the leaders of the Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe is supreme and social-chauvinism is supported by the entire Social-Democratic press as well as by all influential figures of the Second International, such cases of fraternisation are possible, how much nearer could we bring the end of this criminal, reactionary and slave-driving war and the organisation of a revolutionary international movement if systematic work were conducted in this direction, at least by the Left Socialists of all the belligerent countries !

### *Importance of Illegal Organisations*

Like the opportunists, the most eminent Anarchists of the world have covered themselves in this war with the shame of social-chauvinism in the spirit of Plekhanov and Kautsky. One of its useful results, however, will undoubtedly be the death of both opportunism and Anarchism in this war. The Social-Democratic parties, in no case and under no conditions refusing to take advantage of the slightest legal possibility for the organisation of the masses

and the preaching of Socialism, must do away with a servile attitude towards legalism. "Be the first to shoot, Messrs. Bourgeois!" Engels wrote in reference to civil war, pointing out the necessity for us to violate legality *after* it has been violated by the bourgeoisie. The crisis has shown that the bourgeoisie is violating legality in every country, including the freest, and that it is impossible to lead the masses towards revolution without creating an illegal organisation for preaching, discussing, analysing, preparing revolutionary means of struggle. In Germany, for instance, all *honest* activities of the Socialists are being conducted against abject opportunism and hypocritical "Kautskyism," and conducted illegally. In England, men are being sentenced to hard labour for appeals to abstain from joining the army.

To think that membership in a Social-Democratic party is compatible with repudiation of illegal methods of propaganda and the ridicule of them in the legal press is to betray Socialism.

### *Defeat of "One's Own" Government in Imperialist War*

The advocates of victory of "one's own" government in the present war, as well as the advocates of the slogan "Neither victory nor defeat," proceed equally from the standpoint of social-chauvinism. A revolutionary class in a reactionary war cannot help wishing the defeat of its government, it cannot fail to see the connection between the government's military reverses and the increased opportunity for overthrowing it. Only a bourgeois who believes that the war started by the governments will necessarily end as a war between governments, and who wishes it to be so, finds "ridiculous" or "absurd" the idea that the Socialists of *all* the belligerent countries should express their wish that *all* "their" governments be defeated. On the contrary, such expression would coincide with the

hidden thoughts of every class-conscious worker, and would lie along the line of our activity which tends to turn the imperialist war into civil war.

An earnest anti-war propaganda by a section of the English, German and Russian Socialists would undoubtedly "weaken the military strength" of the respective governments, but such propaganda would be to the credit of the Socialists. The Socialists must explain to the masses that there is no salvation for them outside of a revolutionary overthrow of "their" governments and that the difficulties of those governments in the present war must be taken advantage of for just this purpose.

### *Pacifism and the Peace Slogan*

A mass sentiment for peace often expresses the beginning of a protest, an indignation and a consciousness of the reactionary nature of the war. It is the duty of all Social-Democrats to take advantage of this sentiment. They will take the most ardent part in every movement and in every demonstration made on this basis, but they will not deceive the people by assuming that in the absence of a revolutionary movement it is possible to have peace without annexations, without the oppression of nations, without robbery, without planting the seed of new wars among the present governments and the ruling classes. Such deception would only play into the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries and their counter-revolutionary plans. Whoever wishes a durable and democratic peace must be for civil war against the governments and the bourgeoisie.

### *Right of Nations to Self-Determination*

The most widespread deception of the people by the bourgeoisie in the present war consists in hiding its predatory aims under an ideology of "national liberation." The English promise freedom to Belgium, the Germans



to Poland, etc. As we have seen, this is in reality a war of the oppressors of the majority of the nations of the world for the deepening and widening of such oppression.

The Socialists cannot reach their great aim without fighting against every form of national oppression. They must therefore unequivocally demand that the Social-Democrats of the *oppressing* countries (of the so-called "great" nations in particular) should recognise and defend the right of the *oppressed* nations to self-determination in the political sense of the word, i.e. the right to political separation. A Socialist of a great nation or a nation possessing colonies who does not defend this right is a chauvinist.

To defend this right does in no way mean to encourage the formation of small states, but on the contrary it leads to a freer, more fearless and therefore wider and more universal formation of larger governments and unions of governments—a phenomenon more advantageous for the masses and more in accord with economic development.

On the other hand, the Socialists of the *oppressed* nations must unequivocally fight for complete unity of the *workers* of both the oppressed and the oppressor nationalities (which also means organisational unity). The idea of a lawful separation between one nationality and the other (the so-called "national cultural autonomy" of Bauer and Renner) is a reactionary idea.

Imperialism is the period of an increasing oppression of the nations of the whole world by a handful of "great" nations; the struggle for a Socialist international revolution against imperialism is, therefore, impossible without the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. "No people oppressing other peoples can be free" (Marx and Engels). No proletariat reconciling itself to the least violation by "its" nation of the rights of other nations can be Socialist.

*V. I. Lenin*

## IMPERIALISM : THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM

*Published in Petrograd, 1917. English edition, Martin Lawrence  
Ltd., 1933.*

[This was written by Lenin in 1916, in Zurich. Its immediate aim was to show that "the war of 1914-18 was on both sides imperialist"; that imperialism is a "direct continuation of the fundamental properties of capitalism in general." The book traces the growth of trusts and monopolies in the chief capitalist countries, and shows how this development inevitably leads to war. It is also of great importance for its examination of the sources of opportunism in the international labour movement. Parts of the later chapters are given below; in these conclusions are drawn and the theory of imperialism stated.]

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## IMPERIALISM : THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM

### IMPERIALISM AS A SPECIAL STAGE OF CAPITALISM

(Ch. VII)

WE MUST now try to draw certain conclusions, to sum up what has been said about imperialism. Imperialism emerged as a development and direct continuation of the fundamental properties of capitalism in general. But capitalism became capitalist imperialism, only at a definite, very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental properties had begun to change into their opposites, when the features of a period of transition from capitalism

to a higher socio-economic system had begun to take shape and reveal themselves all along the line. Economically fundamental in this process is the replacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopolies. Free competition is the fundamental property of capitalism and of commodity production generally. Monopoly is the direct opposite of free competition ; but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our very eyes, creating large-scale production and squeezing out small-scale production, replacing large-scale by larger-scale production, finally leading to such a concentration of production and capital that monopoly has been and is the result : cartels, syndicates and trusts, and, merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks manipulating thousands of millions. And at the same time the monopolies, which have sprung from free competition, do not eliminate it, but exist alongside of it and over it, thereby giving rise to a number of very acute and bitter antagonisms, points of friction, and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher order.

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism, we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include the essential point, for, on the one hand, finance capital is bank capital of the few biggest monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist combines of industrialists ; on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unoccupied by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolistic possession of the territories of the world, which has been completely divided up.

But too brief definitions, although convenient, since they sum up the main points, are nevertheless inadequate, because very fundamental features of the phenomenon to be defined must still be deduced. And so, without forgetting the conditional and relative value of all definitions, which can never include all the connections of a fully developed

phenomenon, we must give a definition of imperialism that will include the following five essential features :

1. The concentration of production and capital, developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive rôle in economic life.
2. The merging of bank capital with industrial capital and the creation, on the basis of this "finance capital," of a financial oligarchy.
3. The export of capital, as distinguished from the export of commodities, becomes of particularly great importance.
4. International monopoly combines of capitalists are formed which divide up the world.
5. The territorial division of the world by the greatest capitalist powers is completed.

Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the domination of monopolies and finance capital has taken shape ; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance ; in which the division of the world by the international trusts has begun, and in which the partition of all the territory of the earth by the greatest capitalist countries has been completed.

We shall see later how imperialism may and must be defined differently when consideration is given not only to the fundamental, purely economic factors—to which the above definition is limited—but also to the historical place of this stage of capitalism in relation to capitalism in general, or to the relations between imperialism and the two basic tendencies in the labour movement. The point to be noted just now is that imperialism, as understood in this sense, undoubtedly represents a special stage in the development of capitalism. In order to enable the reader to obtain as well-grounded an impression of imperialism as possible we have expressly tried to quote as much as possible from *bourgeois* economists, who are obliged to admit the particularly indisputable and established facts regarding the newest capitalist economy. With the same object we have produced detailed statistics which reveal to what extent bank capital,

etc., has grown, showing just how the transition from quantity to quality, from developed capitalism to imperialism, has expressed itself. Needless to say, all the boundaries in nature and in society are conditional and changing, and it would be absurd to dispute, for instance, over the year or decade in which imperialism became "definitely" established.

In defining imperialism, however, we have to enter into controversy, primarily, with Karl Kautsky, the principal Marxist theoretician of the epoch of the so-called Second International—that is, of the twenty-five years between 1889 and 1914.

Kautsky, in 1915 and even in November 1914, decisively attacked the fundamental ideas expressed in our definition of imperialism. He declared that imperialism must not be regarded as a "phase" or as an economic stage, but as a policy; a definite policy "preferred" by finance capital; that imperialism cannot be "identified" with "contemporary capitalism"; that if by imperialism is meant "all the phenomena of contemporary capitalism"—cartels, protectionism, the rule of the financiers, and colonial policy—then the question whether imperialism is necessary to capitalism becomes reduced to the "rankest tautology," for in that case, imperialism is "naturally a vital necessity for capitalism," and so on. The most accurate way to present Kautsky's ideas is to quote his own definition of imperialism, which is directly opposed to the substance of the ideas which we set forth (for the objections of the German Marxists, who for many years have been propounding such ideas, have been known to Kautsky as the objections of a definite tendency in Marxism for a long time).

Kautsky's definition is as follows:

Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control and to annex larger and larger *agrarian* [Kautsky's italics] regions, irrespective of what nations inhabit them.

This definition is utterly worthless because it is one-sided, i.e., it arbitrarily brings out the national question alone (admittedly, it is extremely important in itself as well as in its relation to imperialism); arbitrarily and *incorrectly* it connects this question *only* with the industrial capital in the countries which annex other nations; in an equally arbitrary and incorrect manner it emphasises the annexation of agrarian regions.

Imperialism is a striving for annexations—this is what the *political* part of Kautsky's definition amounts to. It is correct, but very incomplete, for politically, imperialism is generally a striving towards violence and reaction. We are interested here, however, in the *economic* aspect of the question, which Kautsky *himself* introduced into *his own* definition. The errors in the definition of Kautsky are clearly evident. The characteristic feature of imperialism is *not* industrial capital, *but* finance capital. It is not an accident that in France, it was precisely the extraordinarily rapid development of *finance* capital and the weakening of industrial capital, that, from 1880 onwards, gave rise to a sharpening of annexationist (colonial) policy. The characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely the fact that it strives to annex *not only* agrarian but even the most industrialised regions (the German appetite for Belgium; the French appetite for Lorraine), first, because the fact that the world is already partitioned makes it necessary, in the event of a *re-partition*, to stretch out one's hand to *any* kind of territory, and second, because an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between a number of great powers in striving for hegemony, i.e., for the seizure of territory, not so much for their own direct advantage as to weaken the adversary and undermine *his* hegemony (for Germany, Belgium is chiefly necessary as a base against England; for England, Bagdad as a base against Germany, etc.).

Kautsky refers especially—and repeatedly—to the Englishmen who, he alleges, have established the purely political meaning of the word "imperialism" in his, Kautsky's,

sense. We take up the work by the Englishman, Hobson, *Imperialism*, which appeared in 1902, and therein we read (p. 324) :

The new imperialism differs from the older, first, in substituting for the ambition of a single growing empire the theory and the practice of competing empires, each motivated by similar lusts of political aggrandisement and commercial gain ; secondly in the dominance of financial or investing over mercantile interests.

We see that Kautsky is absolutely wrong in factually referring to Englishmen in general (unless he meant the vulgar British imperialists, or the avowed apologists for imperialism). We see that Kautsky, while pretending that he is continuing to defend Marxism, is really taking a step backward in comparison with the *social-liberal* Hobson, who rightly takes account of two "historically concrete" (Kautsky virtually ridicules historical concreteness by his definition) features of modern imperialism : (1) the competition between *several* imperialisms and (2) the predominance of the financier over the merchant. Yet if it were chiefly a question of the annexation of an agrarian country by an industrial one, the rôle played by the merchant would be predominant.

But Kautsky's definition is not only wrong and un-Marxian. It serves as a basis for a whole system of views which all along the line run counter to Marxian theory and practice ; we shall refer to this again. The argument about words which Kautsky raises as to whether the newest stage of capitalism should be called imperialism or the stage of finance capital is really not serious. Call it what you will, it makes no difference. The important thing is that Kautsky detaches the policy of imperialism from its economics, speaks of annexations as being a policy "preferred" by finance capital, and opposes to it another bourgeois policy which he alleges to be possible on the same basis of finance capital. It would follow that monopolies in economics are compatible with methods which are neither monopolistic,

nor violent, nor annexationist, in politics. It would follow that the territorial division of the world, which was completed precisely during the period of finance capital and which represents the main feature of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the greatest capitalist states, is compatible with a non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the newest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth. The result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism.

Kautsky enters into controversy with the German apologist of imperialism and annexations, Cunow, who clumsily and cynically argues that : imperialism is modern capitalism ; the development of capitalism is inevitable and progressive ; therefore imperialism is progressive ; therefore we should bow down before imperialism and chant its praises. This is something like the caricature of the Russian Marxists which the Narodniks drew in 1894-1895. They used to argue that if the Marxists considered capitalism inevitable and progressive in Russia, they ought to open up a public-house and start breeding capitalism ! Kautsky retorts to Cunow : No, imperialism is not modern capitalism, but only one of the forms of the policy of modern capitalism. This policy we can and must fight ; we can and must fight against imperialism, annexations, etc.

The retort sounds quite plausible. But in effect it is a more subtle and disguised (and, therefore, more dangerous) preaching of conciliation with imperialism, for unless the "struggle" against the policy of the trusts and banks strikes at the economic bases of the trusts and banks, it reduces itself to bourgeois reformism and pacifism, to an innocent and benevolent expression of pious hopes. Kautsky's theory, which has nothing in common with Marxism, avoids mentioning existing conditions, and ignores the most important of them instead of revealing them in their full depth. Naturally, such a "theory" can only serve the purpose of defending unity with the Cunows !



From a purely economic point of view, says Kautsky, it is not impossible that capitalism will pass through yet another new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultra-imperialism, i.e., of a super-imperialism, a union of world imperialisms and not struggles among them ; a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of " the joint exploitation of the world by an internationally combined finance capital."

We shall have to deal with this " theory of ultra-imperialism " later to show in detail how decisively and utterly it departs from Marxism. Meanwhile, in keeping with the general plan of the present work, we must examine the exact economic data on this question. Is " ultra-imperialism " possible " from the purely economic point of view," or is this ultra-nonsense ?

If by the purely economic point of view is meant a " pure " abstraction, then all that can be said resolves itself into the following proposition : evolution is proceeding towards monopoly ; therefore the trend is towards a single world monopoly, single world trust. This is indisputable, but it is also as completely devoid of meaning as is the statement that " evolution is proceeding " towards the manufacture of foodstuffs in laboratories. In this sense the " theory " of ultra-imperialism is no less absurd than a " theory of ultra-agriculture " would be.

If, on the other hand, we are discussing the " purely economic " conditions of the epoch of finance capital as an historically concrete epoch of the beginning of the twentieth century, then the best reply to the lifeless abstractions of " ultra-imperialism " (which serve an exclusively reactionary aim : that of diverting attention from the depth of *existing* contradictions) is to contrast them with the concrete economic realities of present-day world economy. Kautsky's meaningless talk about ultra-imperialism encourages, amongst other things, the profoundly mistaken idea, which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, that the domination of finance capital *weakens* the

unevenness and contradictions within world economy, whereas in reality it *strengthens* them.

Richard Calver, in his little book, *An Introduction to World Economy*, attempted to compile the chief, purely economic data necessary to understand, in a concrete way, the inter-relations within world economy at the turn of the nineteenth century. He divides the world into five "main economic regions": (1) Central Europe (the whole of Europe with the exception of Russia and Great Britain); (2) Great Britain; (3) Russia; (4) Eastern Asia; (5) America. He includes the colonies in the "regions" of the states to which they belong and "puts aside" a few countries not distributed according to regions, such as Persia, Afghanistan and Arabia in Asia, Morocco and Abyssinia in Africa, etc.

We observe three regions with highly developed capitalism (with a high development of means of communication, trade and industry): the Central European, the British, and the American. Among them are three states which dominate the world: Germany, Britain, the United States. Imperialist rivalry and the struggle between these countries have become very keen because Germany has only an insignificant area and a few colonies; the creation of "Central Europe" is still a matter for the future, and it is being born in the midst of desperate struggles. For the moment the distinctive feature of all Europe is political disintegration. In the British and American regions, on the contrary, political concentration is very highly developed, but there is a tremendous disparity between the immense colonies of the former and the insignificant colonies of the latter. In the colonies, capitalism is only beginning to develop. The struggle for South America becomes more and more bitter.

Here is a summary of the economic data he gives on these regions:

Principal Econ. Regions of the World	Area (in mill. sq. km.)	Pop. (in mill.)	Transport		Trade Imp. and Exp. (in bill. Mks.)	Industry		
			Rlways. (in thous. km.)	Merch. fleet (in mill. tons)		Yearly Output of Coal (in mill. tons)	Output of Pig Iron (in mill. tons)	No. of Cotton Spin- dles (in mill.)
1. Cent. Euro- pean .	27·6 (23·6) <sup>1</sup>	388 (146)	204	8	41	251	15	26
2. British .	28·9 (28·6)	398 (355)	140	11	25	249	9	51
3. Russian .	22·	131	63	1	3	16	3	7
4. East. Asian .	12·	389	8	1	2	8	0·02	2
5. American .	30·	148	379	6	14	245	14	19

There are two regions where capitalism is poorly developed : Russia and Eastern Asia. In the former the density of population is low, in the latter it is very high ; in the former, political concentration is high, in the latter it does not exist. The partition of China has only just begun, and the struggle for it between Japan, the U.S.A., etc., is continually gaining in intensity.

Compare this reality, the vast diversity of economic and political conditions, the extreme disparity in the rate of growth of the various countries, the frenzied struggles among the imperialist states, with Kautsky's stupid little fable about " peaceful " ultra-imperialism. Is this not the reactionary attempt of a frightened petty-bourgeois to hide from stern reality ? Do not the international cartels, which seem to Kautsky to be the embryos of " ultra-imperialism " (as the manufacture of tablets in a laboratory " might " seem to be ultra-agriculture in embryo) present an example of the division and the *re-division* of the world, the transition from peaceful division to non-peaceful and vice versa ? Is not American and other finance capital, which peacefully divided up the whole world, with Germany's participation (for instance in the international rail syndicate, or in the international mercantile shipping trust) now *re-dividing* the world on the basis of a new alignment of forces

<sup>1</sup> The figures in parentheses show the area and population of the colonies.

which are being changed by methods altogether *non-peaceful*?

Finance capital and the trusts are aggravating instead of diminishing the differences between the rates of development of the various parts of world economy. When the alignment of forces is changed, how else, *under capitalism*, can a solution of the contradictions be found, except through *force*?

Railway statistics provide remarkably exact data on the different rates of growth of capitalism and finance capital in world economy. In the last decades of imperialist development, the total length of railways has changed as follows:

RAILROADS			
(in thousands of kilometres)			
	1890	1913	Increase
Europe . . . . .	224	346	122
United States . . . . .	268	411	143
Colonies (total) . . . . .	82	210	128
Independent or semi-de- pendent states of Asia and America . . . . .	43	137	94
	} 125		} 347
	} 43		
Total . . . . .	617	1,104	487

The development of railways has been most rapid in the colonies and in the independent (and semi-independent) states of Asia and America. It is known that here the finance capital of the four or five biggest capitalist states reigns fully. Two hundred thousand kilometres of new railway lines in the colonies and in the other countries of Asia and America represent more than 40 billion marks in capital, newly invested on particularly advantageous terms, with special guarantees of a good return, with profitable orders for steel mills, etc., etc.

Capitalism is growing most rapidly in the colonies and in trans-oceanic countries. Amongst the latter *new* imperialist powers are emerging (Japan). The struggle of world imperialisms is becoming acute. The tribute levied by

finance capital on the most profitable colonial and trans-oceanic enterprises is increasing. In dividing up this "booty," an exceptionally large share goes to countries which, as far as rate of development of productive forces is concerned, do not always stand at the top of the list. In the case of the greatest powers, considered with their colonies, the total length of railways (in thousands of kilometres) was as follows :

	1890	1913	Increase
United States . . .	268	413	145
British Empire . . .	107	208	101
Russia . . .	32	78	46
Germany . . .	43	68	25
France . . .	41	63	22
Total . . .	491	830	339

Thus, about eighty per cent of the total railways are concentrated in the hands of the five greatest powers. But the concentration of the *ownership* of these railways, the concentration of finance capital, is immeasurably more important ; French and English millionaires, for example, own an enormous amount of stocks and bonds in American, Russian and other railways.

Thanks to its colonies, Great Britain has increased " its " network of railways by 100,000 kilometres, four times as much as Germany. At the same time, it is known that the development of productive forces in Germany during this period, and especially the development of the coal and iron industries, has been incomparably more rapid than in England—not to mention France or Russia. In 1892, Germany produced 4.9 million tons of pig iron, and Great Britain 6.8 million tons ; but in 1912, Germany produced 17.6 million tons against Great Britain's 9 million, an overwhelming superiority over England ! The question arises, is there, *under capitalism*, any means of eliminating the disparity between the development of productive forces and

the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the partition of colonies and "spheres of influence" by finance capital on the other side—other than war?

#### PARASITISM AND THE DECAY OF CAPITALISM

##### (Ch. VIII)

We have now to examine another very important aspect of imperialism, to which, usually, too little attention is paid in the majority of discussions on this subject. One of the shortcomings of the Marxist, Hilferding, is that he took a step backward in comparison with the non-Marxist, Hobson. We refer to parasitism, inherent in imperialism.

As we have seen, the most deep-rooted economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, i.e., monopoly which has grown out of capitalism, and exists in the general capitalist environment of commodity production and competition, in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. Nevertheless, like any monopoly, it inevitably gives rise to a tendency towards stagnation and decay. In proportion as monopoly prices become fixed, even temporarily, so the stimulus to technical, and consequently to all other progress, to advance, tends to disappear; and to that extent also the *economic* possibility arises of artificially retarding technical progress. For instance, in America a certain Owens invented a machine which revolutionised the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle-manufacturing cartel purchased Owens's patents, but pigeon-holed them and held up their practical application. Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for any length of time, eliminate competition on the world market (and this is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is absurd). Of course, the possibility of reducing cost of production and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements is an influence in the direction of change.

Nevertheless, the *tendency* towards stagnation and decay, inherent in monopoly, continues in turn to operate in individual branches of industry ; in individual countries, for certain periods of time, it gains the upper hand.

The monopoly of ownership of very extensive, rich or well-situated colonies, works in the same direction.

Moreover, imperialism is an immense accumulation of money capital in a few countries, which, as we have seen, amounts to 100 or 150 billions francs in securities. Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather of a stratum, of *rentiers*, i.e., persons who live by "clipping coupons," who take absolutely no part in any enterprise, and whose profession is idleness. The exportation of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still further isolates this rentier stratum from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country living on the exploitation of the labour of several overseas countries and colonies.

In 1893—writes Hobson—the British capital invested abroad represented about 15 per cent of the total wealth of the United Kingdom.

Let us remember that by 1915 this capital had increased about two and a half times.

Aggressive imperialism—says Hobson further on—which costs the tax-payer so dear, which is of so little value to the manufacturer and trader . . . is a source of great gain to the investor. . . . The annual income Great Britain derives from commissions on her whole foreign and colonial trade, import and export, is estimated by Sir R. Giffen [the statistician] at £18,000,000 for 1899, taken at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, upon a turnover of £800,000,000.

Considerable as this sum is, it cannot entirely explain the aggressive imperialism of Great Britain. This is explained by the 90 to 100 million pounds revenue from "invested" capital, the income of the rentier class.

The income of the rentiers is *five times* as great as the venue obtained from the foreign trade of the greatest

"trading" country in the world! This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism.

For this reason the term "rentier state" (*Rentnerstaat*) or usurer state is coming into general use in the economic literature on imperialism. The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states and a vast majority of debtor states.

The premier place among foreign investments—says Schulze-Gaevernitz—is taken by those invested in politically dependent, or closely allied countries. England makes loans to Egypt, Japan, China, South America. Her war fleet plays the part of sheriff in case of necessity. England's political power protects her from the anger of her debtors. . . .

Sartorius von Waltershausen in his work, *The National Economic System of Foreign Capital Investments*, cites Holland as the model rentier state, and points out that England and France are now becoming such. Schilder believes that five industrial nations are "definitely avowed creditor nations": England, France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. Holland does not appear on this list simply because it is "less industrialised." The United States is the creditor only of other American countries.

England—writes Schulze-Gaevernitz—is gradually being transformed from an industrial state into a creditor state. Notwithstanding the absolute increase in industrial production and exports, the relative importance of revenue from interest and dividends, profits from issues, commissions and speculation is on the increase, when the whole national economy is taken into account. In my opinion it is this fact which is at the economic base of imperialist expansion. The creditor is more firmly tied to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer.

In regard to Germany, A. Lansburgh, the editor of *Die Bank*, in 1911, in an article entitled, "Germany As A Rentier State," wrote the following :

People in Germany like to sneer at the inclination observed in France for people to become rentiers. But they forget meanwhile



that, as far as the middle class is concerned, the situation in Germany is becoming more and more like that in France.

The rentier state is a state of parasitic decaying capitalism, and this circumstance cannot fail to be reflected in all the social-political conditions of the affected countries in general, and particularly in the two fundamental tendencies in the working-class movement. To demonstrate this as clearly as possible, we shall let Hobson speak—a most “reliable” witness, since he cannot be suspected of partiality for “orthodox Marxism”; moreover, he is an Englishman who is very well acquainted with the situation in the country which is richest in colonies, in finance capital, and in imperialist experience.

With the Boer War fresh in his mind, Hobson describes the connection between imperialism and the interests of the financiers, their growing profits from armaments, supplies, etc., and writes as follows :

While the directors of this definitely parasitic policy are capitalists, the same motives appeal to special classes of the workers. In many towns most important trades are dependent upon government employment or contracts ; the imperialism of the metal and shipbuilding centres is attributable in no small degree to this fact.

In this writer's opinion there are two circumstances which weakened the power of the ancient empires : (1) “economic parasitism” and (2) the formation of armies composed of subject peoples.

There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence.

And we would add that the economic possibility of such corruption, whatever its form may be, requires monopolistically high profits.

As for the second circumstance, Hobson writes :

One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives ; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders ; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives.

The prospect of a dismemberment of China evokes the following economic evaluation by Hobson :

The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the south of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a large body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods : all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa. . . .

We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western states, a European federation of great powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world-civilisation, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they support great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England to-day which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors, and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world-forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation

of the future very probable ; but the influences which govern the imperialism of Western Europe to-day are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards some such consummation.

Hobson is quite right. If the forces of imperialism were not counteracted they would lead to just that. He correctly appraises the significance of a " United States of Europe," in the present, imperialist stage. But it must be added that *even within* the labour movement, the opportunists, who for the moment have been victorious in most countries, are " working " systematically and undeviatingly in this very direction. Imperialism, which means the partition of the world and the exploitation not of China alone ; which means monopolistically high profits for a handful of very rich countries, creates the economic possibility of corrupting the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters, gives form to and strengthens opportunism. However, we must not lose sight of the forces which counteract imperialism generally and opportunism in particular, which, naturally, the social-liberal Hobson does not see.

The German opportunist, Gerhard Hilderbrand, who at one time was expelled from the party for defending imperialism, but would to-day make a good leader of the so-called " Social-Democratic " Party of Germany, serves as a good supplement to Hobson by his advocacy of a " United States of Western Europe " (without Russia) for the purpose of " joint " action against . . . the African Negroes, the " great Islamic movement " ; for the " maintenance of a powerful army and navy " against a " Sino-Japanese coalition," etc.

The description of " British imperialism " in Schulze-Gaevernitz's book reveals the same parasitical traits. The national income of Great Britain approximately doubled between 1865 and 1898, while the income " from abroad " increased *ninefold* in the same period. While the " merit " of imperialism is that it " trains the Negro to work " (not without coercion, of course . . .), the " danger " of imperialism is that Europe

will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then heavy industrial labour—on to the coloured peoples, and itself be content with the rôle of rentier, and in this way, perhaps, pave the way for the economics and later, the political emancipation of the coloured races.

An increasing proportion of land in Great Britain is being taken out of cultivation and used for sport, for the diversion of the rich. It is said of Scotland—the most aristocratic place for hunting and other sport—that it “lives on its past and Mr. Carnegie” (an American billionaire). Britain annually spends £14,000,000 on horse-racing and fox-hunting alone. The number of rentiers in Great Britain is about a million. The percentage of producers among the population is becoming smaller.

Year	Population of England and Wales (in millions)	No. of workers employed in basic industries (in millions)	Per cent of the population
1851 . .	17.9	4.1	23
1901 . .	32.5	5.0	15

And, in speaking of the British working class, the bourgeois student of “British imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century” is obliged to distinguish systematically between the “*upper stratum*” and the “*lower proletarian stratum proper*.” The upper stratum furnishes the main body of co-operators, of trade unionists, of members of sporting clubs and of numerous religious sects. The right to vote, which in Great Britain, is still “*sufficiently restricted to exclude the lower proletarian stratum proper*,” is adapted to their level! In order to present the condition of the British working class in the best light, only this upper stratum—which constitutes only a *minority* of the proletariat—is generally spoken of. For instance: “The problem of unemployment is mainly a London problem and that of the lower proletarian stratum, with whom politicians are little concerned. . . .” It would

be better to say : with whom the bourgeois politicians and the " Socialist " opportunists are little concerned.

Another one of the peculiarities of imperialism connected with the facts that we are describing, is the decline in emigration from imperialist countries, and the increase in immigration (influx of workers and transmigration) to these countries from the more backward countries, where wages are lower. As Hobson observes, emigration from Great Britain has been declining since 1884. In that year the number of emigrants was 242,000, while in 1900 the number was 169,000. German emigration reached its highest point in the decade 1881-1890 with a total of 1,453,000 emigrants. In the following two decades it fell to 554,000 and 341,000. On the other hand there was an increase in the number of workers entering Germany, from Austria, Italy, Russia and other countries. According to the 1907 census, there were 1,342,294 foreigners in Germany, of whom 440,800 were industrial workers and 257,329 were agricultural workers. In France, the workers employed in the mining industry are " in great part " foreigners : Polish, Italian and Spanish. In the United States, immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are engaged in the most poorly paid occupations, while American workers provide the highest percentage of foremen and of the better-paid workers. Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections even among the workers, and to separate them from the main proletarian masses.

It must be observed that in Great Britain the tendency of imperialism to split the workers, to strengthen opportunism among them, and cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, revealed itself much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries ; for two important distinguishing features of imperialism were observed in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century, viz., vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in world markets. For several decades Marx and Engels systematically traced this

connection between opportunism in the labour movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism. For example, on October 7, 1858, Engels wrote to Marx :

... the British working class is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, and it seems that this most bourgeois of all nations wants to bring matters to such a pass as to have a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *side by side* with the bourgeoisie. Of course this is to some extent justifiable for a nation which is exploiting the whole world.

Almost a quarter of a century later, in a letter dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks of the "very worst English ... [trade unions.—*Ed.*] which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by the middle class." In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote :

You ask me what the English workers think of the colonial policy ? The same as they think about politics in general. There is no labour party here, there are only conservatives and liberal radicals, and the workers enjoy with them the fruits of the British world market and colonial monopoly. [Engels sets forth the same ideas in his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, published in 1892.]

Here causes and effects are clearly shown. Causes : (1) exploitation of the whole world by this country ; (2) its monopolistic position in the world market ; (3) its colonial monopoly. Effects : (1) bourgeoisification of a part of the British proletariat ; (2) a part of the proletariat permits itself to be led by people who are bought by the bourgeoisie, or who at least are paid by it. The imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the partition of the world by a very few states, each of which to-day exploits (in the sense of drawing super-profits from) a part of the world only a little smaller than that which England exploited in 1858. Each of them, by means of trusts, cartels, finance capital, and the relations between debtor and creditor, occupies a monopoly position on the world market.

Each of them enjoys to some degree a colonial monopoly. (We have seen that out of 75 million square kilometres of *total* colonial area in the world, 65 million, or 86 per cent, is concentrated in the hands of six powers ; 61 million, or 81 per cent, belongs to three powers.)

The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of economic and political conditions which could not but intensify the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and basic interests of the labour movement. Imperialism has grown from an embryo into a dominant system ; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in national economics and politics ; the partition of the world has been completed. On the other hand, instead of an undivided monopoly by Britain, we see a few imperialist powers fighting among themselves for the right to share in this monopoly, and this struggle is characteristic of the whole period of the beginning of the twentieth century.

Opportunism cannot now triumph completely in the labour movement of any country for many decades as it did in England in the second half of the nineteenth century, but in several countries it has finally grown ripe, over-ripe and rotten, and has become completely emerged with bourgeois policy as "social-chauvinism."

## CRITIQUE OF IMPERIALISM

### (Ch. IX)

By the critique of imperialism, in the broad sense of the term, we mean the attitude of the different classes of society towards imperialist policy in connection with their general ideology.

The enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated in a few hands and creating an extremely extensive and close network of ties and relationships, which subordinates to itself not only the bulk of the medium and small, but even very smallest capitalists and petty owners, on the one hand,

and an intense struggle waged against other national-state groups of financiers for the partition of the world and domination over other countries, on the other hand—cause the possessing classes to go over as one to the side of imperialism. The signs of the times are a “general” enthusiasm regarding its prospects, a passionate defence of imperialism, and every possible camouflage of its real nature. The imperialist ideology is also permeating the working class. There is no Chinese Wall between it and the other classes. The leaders of the present so-called “Social-Democratic” Party of Germany are justly called social-imperialists; that is, Socialists in words and imperialists in deeds; and as early as 1902, Hobson noted the existence of “Fabian imperialists” in England who belonged to the opportunist “Fabian Society.”

The bourgeois scholars and publicists usually present their defence of imperialism in a somewhat veiled form, obscure the fact that it is in complete domination, and conceal its deep roots; they strive to concentrate attention on special aspects and characteristics of secondary importance, and do their utmost to distract attention from the main issue by advancing absolutely ridiculous schemes for “reform,” such as police supervision of the trusts or banks, etc. Less frequently, cynical and frank imperialists speak out and are bold enough to admit the absurdity of the idea of “reforming” the fundamental features of imperialism.

We will give an example. The German imperialists attempt, in the *Archives of World Economy*, to trace the movements for national emancipation in the colonies, particularly, of course, in colonies other than German. They note the ferment and protest movements in India; the movement in Natal (South Africa), in the Dutch East Indies, etc. One of them, commenting on an English report of the speeches delivered at a conference of subject peoples and races, held on June 28–30, 1910, consisting of representatives of various peoples under foreign domination in Africa, Asia and Europe, writes as follows:



We are told that we must fight against imperialism ; that the dominant states must recognise the right of subjugated peoples to self-government ; that an international tribunal should supervise the fulfilment of treaties concluded between the great powers and the weaker peoples. Beyond the expression of these pious hopes the conference does not go. We see no trace of a realisation of the fact that imperialism is indissolubly bound up with capitalism in its present form and that therefore (! ! ) it is hopeless to fight directly against imperialism, except perhaps if the fight is confined to protests against certain of its most hateful excesses.

Since reforming the bases of imperialism is an illusion, a "pious hope," since the bourgeois representatives of oppressed nations do not go "further," the bourgeois representatives of the oppressing nations do go "further," but backward, to servility to imperialism, concealed by a pretence to "science." "Logic," indeed !

The question as to whether it is possible to change the bases of imperialism by reforms, whether to go forward to a further aggravation and accentuation of the contradictions it engenders, or backwards towards allaying them, is a fundamental question in the critique of imperialism. The fact that the political characteristics of imperialism are reaction all along the line and increased national oppression, in connection with oppression by the financial oligarchy and the elimination of free competition, has given rise to a petty-bourgeois-democratic opposition to imperialism in almost all imperialist countries since the beginning of the twentieth century. And the break with Marxism made by Kautsky and the broad international Kautskyist tendency consists in the very fact that Kautsky not only did not trouble to, and did not know how to, take a stand against this petty-bourgeois reformist opposition, which is reactionary in its economic basis, but, on the contrary, in practice became identified with it.

In the United States, the imperialist war waged against Spain in 1898 gave rise to an "anti-imperialist" opposition by the last of the Mohicans of bourgeois democracy. They

declared this war "criminal"; they denounced the annexation of foreign territories as a violation of the Constitution, and decried the "jingo treachery" by means of which Aguinaldo, leader of the native Filipinos, was deceived (he was promised liberty for his country, but later American troops were landed there and the Philippines were annexed). They quoted the words of Lincoln :

When the white man governs himself, that is self-government ; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism.

But as long as all this criticism shrank from recognising the indissoluble bond between imperialism and the trusts, and, therefore, between imperialism and the foundations of capitalism ; as long as it shrank from aligning itself with the forces being engendered by large-scale capitalism and its development, it remained a " pious hope."

This also, in the main, is the position of Hobson in his criticism of imperialism. Hobson anticipated Kautsky in protesting against the " inevitability of imperialism," and in making an appeal showing the need to " raise the consuming capacity " of the people (under capitalism !). The petty-bourgeois point of view in the critique of imperialism, the omnipotence of the banks, the financial oligarchy, etc., is that adopted by authors whom we have repeatedly quoted, such as Agahd, Lansburgh, L. Eschwege, and, among French writers, Victor Bérard, author of a superficial book entitled *England and Imperialism*, which appeared in 1900. All of these, who make no claim whatever to being Marxists, contrast imperialism with free competition and democracy ; they condemn the Bagdad railway adventure as leading to disputes and war, utter " pious hopes " for peace, etc., including the compiler of international stock issue statistics, A. Neymarck, who, after calculating the hundreds of billions of francs of " international " securities, exclaimed in 1912 :

Is it possible to believe that peace can be disturbed? . . . that, in the face of these enormous figures . . . any one would risk starting a war?

Such simplicity of mind on the part of bourgeois economists is not surprising. Besides, *it is in their interest* to pretend to be so naïve and to talk "seriously" about peace under imperialism. But what remains of Kautsky's Marxism when, in 1914-1915-1916, he takes the same bourgeois-reformist point of view and affirms that "we are all agreed" (imperialists, pseudo-Socialists, and social-pacifists) with regard to peace? Instead of an analysis of imperialism and an exposure of the depths of its contradictions, we have nothing but a reformist "pious hope" of side-stepping and evading them.

Here is an example of Kautsky's economic critique of imperialism. He takes the statistics of British export and import trade with Egypt for 1872 and 1912. These statistics show that this import and export trade has grown more slowly than British exports and imports as a whole. From this, Kautsky concludes :

We have no reason to suppose that British trade with Egypt would have developed less, as a result of the operation of economic factors alone, without the military occupation of Egypt. . . . The efforts of present-day states to expand can best be satisfied not by the violent methods of imperialism, but by peaceful democracy.

This argument of Kautsky's which is repeated in every key by his Russian armour-bearer (and Russian sponsor of social-chauvinists) Mr. Spectator, constitutes the basis of Kautsky's critique of imperialism, and that is why we must deal with it in greater detail. We shall begin with a quotation from Hilferding, whose conclusions Kautsky, on many occasions, including April 1915, declared, "have been unanimously accepted by all Socialist theoreticians."

... It is not the business of the proletariat—wrote Hilferding—to contrast the more progressive capitalist policy with the policy, now overcome, of the era of free trade and of hostility towards the state. The reply of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital, to imperialism, cannot be free trade, but Socialism alone. The aim of proletarian policy cannot now be the idea of restoring free competition—now become a reactionary ideal—but only the complete abolition of competition by the abolition of capitalism.

Kautsky broke with Marxism by advocating what is, in the period of finance capital, a “reactionary ideal,” “peaceful democracy,” “the simple weight of economic factors”; for, *objectively*, this ideal drags us back from monopoly to non-monopoly capitalism, and is a reformist swindle.

Trade with Egypt (or with any other colony or semi-colony) “would have developed better” *without* military occupation, without imperialism, without finance capital. What does this mean? That capitalism would develop more rapidly if free competition were not restricted by monopolies in general, nor by the “ties” nor the yoke (i.e., again the monopoly), of finance capital, nor by the monopolist possession of colonies by individual countries?

Kautsky’s arguments can have no other sense; and *this* “sense” is nonsense. But suppose that it is so, that free competition, without any sort of monopoly, *would* develop capitalism and trade more rapidly, is it not a fact that the more rapidly capitalism and trade develop, the greater is the concentration of production and capital which *gives rise* to monopoly? And monopolies have *already* come into being—precisely *out* of free competition! Even if monopolies have now begun to retard progress, this is not an argument in favour of free competition, which became impossible after it gave birth to monopolies.

However one may twist Kautsky’s argument, there is nothing in it but reaction and bourgeois reformism. Even if we correct this argument and say, as Spectator says, that

the trade of the British colonies with Britain is now developing more slowly than their trade with other countries, that likewise does not save Kautsky ; for Britain *also* is being beaten by monopoly, by imperialism, only by that of other countries (America, Germany). It is well known that the cartels have given rise to a new and original form of protective tariffs—goods suitable for export are protected (Engels noted this in Volume III of *Capital*). It is well known, too, that the cartels and finance capital have a system peculiar to themselves of exporting goods at “dumping prices,” or “dumping,” as the English call it : within the country the cartel sells its products at a monopolistically high price ; abroad it disposes of them at a fraction of this price to undermine a competitor, to increase its own production to the maximum, etc. If German trade with the British colonies is developing more rapidly than that of Britain, it only proves that German imperialism is younger, stronger, better organised, and more highly developed than the British, but this by no means proves the “superiority” of free trade, for it is not free trade fighting against protection and colonial dependence, but one imperialism fighting another, one monopoly against another, one finance capital against another. The superiority of German imperialism over British imperialism is stronger than the wall of colonial frontiers or of protective tariffs. To derive from this any “argument” *in favour* of free trade and “peaceful democracy” is insipidity, it is to vulgarise the essential features and qualities of imperialism, to substitute petty-bourgeois reformism for Marxism. . . .

Kautsky’s theoretical critique of imperialism has therefore nothing in common with Marxism and serves no purpose other than as a preamble to propaganda for peace and unity with the opportunists and the social-chauvinists, for the very reason that this critique evades and obscures precisely the most profound and basic contradictions of imperialism : the contradictions of monopolies existing side by side with free competition ; the contradictions between

the immense "operations" (and immense profits) of finance capital and "fair" trade on the open market; between combines and trusts on the one hand and non-trustified industry on the other, etc.

The notorious theory of "ultra-imperialism," invented by Kautsky, is equally reactionary. Compare his arguments on this subject in 1915 with Hobson's arguments of 1902.

Kautsky writes :

... whether it is possible that the present imperialist policy might be supplanted by a new ultra-imperialist policy, which would introduce the joint exploitation of the world by an internationally combined finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals? Such a new phase of capitalism is at any rate conceivable. Is it realisable? Sufficient evidence is not yet available to enable us to answer this question.

Hobson writes :

Christendom thus laid out in a few great federal empires, each with a retinue of uncivilised dependencies, seems to many the most legitimate development of present tendencies, and one which would offer the best hope of permanent peace on an assured basis of inter-imperialism.

Kautsky called ultra-imperialism or super-imperialism what Hobson thirteen years before had called inter-imperialism. Except for coining a new and clever word by replacing one Latin prefix by another, Kautsky's progress in "scientific" thought consists only in his temerity at labelling as Marxism what Hobson in effect described as the cant of English parsons. After the Boer War it was quite natural that this most worthy caste should exert its main effort to *console* the British petty-bourgeoisie and the workers, who had lost many of their relatives on the battlefields of South Africa and who were paying higher taxes in order to guarantee still higher profits for the British financiers. And what better consolation could there be than the theory that imperialism is not so bad, that it stands close to inter- (or ultra-) imperialism, which can assure

permanent peace? No matter what the good intentions of the British clergy or of the sugary Kautsky may have been, the objective, that is, the real social significance of his "theory," is this and this alone: a most reactionary consolation of the masses by holding out hopes for a possible permanent peace under capitalism, by distracting their attention from the sharp antagonisms and acute problems of the present and directing their attention to illusory perspectives of some sort of new "ultra-imperialism" of the future. Other than delusion of the masses, there is nothing in Kautsky's "Marxian" theory.

Indeed, it is enough to keep clearly in mind well-known and indisputable facts to become convinced of the complete falsity of the perspectives which Kautsky is trying to hold out to the German workers (and the workers of all countries). Let us take India, Indo-China and China. It is well known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, inhabited by six or seven hundred million human beings, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great Britain, France, Japan, the United States, etc. Let us assume that these imperialist countries form alliances against one another in order to protect and extend their possessions, interests, and "spheres of influence" in these Asiatic states; these will be "inter-imperialist," or "ultra-imperialist" alliances. Let us assume that *all* the imperialist powers conclude an alliance for the "peaceful" partition of these Asiatic countries; this alliance would be "internationally united finance capital." Actual examples of such an alliance may be seen in the history of the twentieth century, for instance, in the relations of the powers with China. We ask, is it "conceivable," assuming that the capitalist system remains intact (and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make), that such alliances would not be short-lived, that they would preclude friction, conflicts and struggles in any and every possible form?

It suffices to state this question clearly to make any other

reply than a negative one impossible ; for there can be *no other* conceivable basis, under capitalism, for partition of spheres of influence, of interests, of colonies, etc., than a calculation of the *strength* of the participants, their general economic, financial, military and other strength. Now, the relative strength of these participants is not changing uniformly, for under capitalism there cannot be an *equal* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry or countries. Half a century ago, Germany was a pitiable nonentity as compared with Britain so far as capitalist strength was concerned. The same with Japan as compared with Russia. Is it "conceivable" that in ten or twenty years' time the relative strength of the imperialist powers will have remained *unchanged* ? Absolutely inconceivable.

Therefore, "inter-imperialist" or "ultra-imperialist" alliances, in the realities of capitalism and not in the petty-bourgeois phantasies of English clergymen or the German "Marxist" Kautsky, no matter in what form these alliances be concluded, whether of one imperialist coalition against another or of a general alliance of *all* the imperialist powers, *inevitably* can be only "breathing spells" between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars and in their turn grow out of wars. One is the condition of the other, giving rise to alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle *on one and the same* basis, that of imperialist connections and inter-relations of world economics and world politics. But the sage Kautsky, in order to pacify the workers and to reconcile them with the social-chauvinists who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie, *breaks* one link of a whole chain from the others, separates to-day's peaceful (and ultra-imperialist, nay ultra-ultra-imperialist) alliance of *all* the powers for the "pacification" of China (remember the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion) from the non-peaceful conflict of to-morrow, which will prepare the ground for another "peaceful" general alliance for the partition, say, of Turkey, on the day after to-morrow, etc.,



etc. Instead of showing the vital connection between periods of imperialist peace and periods of imperialist wars, Kautsky puts before the workers a lifeless abstraction solely in order to reconcile them to their lifeless leaders.

An American writer, Hill, in his *History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe*, points out in his preface the following periods of modern diplomatic history : (1) the revolutionary period ; (2) the constitutional movement ; (3) the present period of " commercial imperialism."

Another writer divides the history of Great Britain's " foreign policy " since 1870 into four periods : (1) the Asiatic period : struggle against Russia's advance in Central Asia towards India ; (2) the African period (approximately 1885-1902) : struggles against France over the partition of Africa (the Fashoda affair, 1898, a hair's-breadth from a war with France) ; (3) the second Asiatic period (treaty with Japan against Russia) ; and (4) the " European " period, chiefly directed against Germany.

" The political skirmishes of outposts are fought on the financial field," wrote Riesser, the banker, in 1905, showing how French finance capital operating in Italy was preparing the way for a political alliance between the two countries, how a struggle was developing between Germany and Britain over Persia, a struggle among all the European capitalists over Chinese loans, etc. Behold, the living reality of peaceful " ultra-imperialist " alliances in their indissoluble connection with ordinary imperialist conflicts !

The glossing over of the deepest contradictions of imperialism by Kautsky, which inevitably becomes a decking-out of imperialism, leaves its traces also in this writer's critique of the political features of imperialism. Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. The result of these tendencies is reaction all along the line, whatever the political system, and extreme intensification of antagonisms in this domain also. Particularly acute also becomes national oppression and the striving

for annexation, i.e., the violation of national independence (for annexation is nothing else than a violation of the right of nations to self-determination). Hilferding justly draws attention to the relation between imperialism and the intensification of national oppression.

But in the newly opened-up countries—he writes—the imported capital intensifies antagonisms and excites the constantly growing resistance of the people, who are awakened to national consciousness against the intruders. This resistance can easily become transformed into dangerous measures directed against foreign capital. Former social relations become completely revolutionised. The agrarian fetters that for a thousand years have bound the “nations beyond the pale of history” are broken, and they themselves are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself gradually provides the vanquished with the ways and means for their emancipation. And they set out to achieve that goal which once was the highest for the European nations: the construction of a national united state as a means to economic and cultural freedom. This movement for independence threatens European capital precisely in its most valuable and most promising fields of exploitation, and European capital can maintain its domination only by constantly increasing its military forces.

To this must be added that it is not only in newly opened-up countries, but also in the old ones, that imperialism is leading to annexation, to increased national oppression, and, consequently, also to more stubborn resistance. While objecting to the growth of political reaction caused by imperialism, Kautsky leaves in the dark a question which has become very urgent, that of the impossibility of unity with the opportunists in the epoch of imperialism. While objecting to annexations, he presents his objections in such a form as will be most acceptable and least offensive to the opportunists. He addresses himself directly to a German audience, yet he obscures the most timely and important points, for instance, that Alsace-Lorraine is an annexation by Germany. In order to appraise this “mental aberration” of Kautsky’s, we shall take the

following example. Let us suppose that a Japanese is condemning the annexation of the Philippine Islands by the Americans. Are there many who will believe that he is protesting because he abhors annexations in general, and not because he himself has a desire to annex the Philippines? And shall we not be constrained to admit that the "fight" the Japanese is waging against annexations can be regarded as sincere and politically honest only if he fights against the annexation of Korea by Japan, and demands for Korea freedom of separation from Japan?

Kautsky's theoretical analysis of imperialism and his economic and political critique of imperialism are permeated *through and through* with a spirit absolutely irreconcilable with Marxism, a spirit that obscures and glosses over the most basic contradictions of imperialism, and strives to preserve at all costs the crumbling unity with opportunism in the European labour movement.

V. I. Lenin

## THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

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[In the preface which he wrote in August 1917, Lenin observed that "the question of the State is acquiring at present a particular importance, both as theory, and from the point of view of practical politics." This was when Lenin was in Finland, after the July rising in Petrograd, and less than three months before the November revolution. *The State and Revolution* is the most comprehensive study of revolutionary theory in relation to the State, both capitalist and proletarian. It is one of the most essential

works of Marxism ; it explains the whole development of the revolution in Russia, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the building up of the productive forces and the stages towards classless society—all in advance of events, on the basis of the analysis made by Marx and Engels of the theory of the State and the experience of previous revolutions. It has only been possible to reprint chapters I and V. The titles of the other chapters are : II. The Experiences of 1848-51 ; III. Experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 ; IV. Supplementary Explanations by Engels ; and VI. Vulgarisation of Marx by the Opportunists. Lenin originally intended to write a seventh chapter : Experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 (i.e., March 1917). But, as he says in a post-script, dated December 13, 1917, to the first edition : " Outside of the title, I did not succeed in writing a single line of the chapter ; what 'interfered' was the political crisis—the eve of the October revolution of 1917. . . . It is more pleasant and useful to go through the 'experience of the revolution' than to write about it." This final chapter was never written. ]

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## THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

### CLASS SOCIETY AND THE STATE

(Ch. I)

#### *1. The State as the Product of the Irreconcilability of Class Antagonisms*

WHAT IS NOW HAPPENING to Marx's doctrine has, in the course of history, often happened to the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes have visited

relentless persecution on them and received their teaching with the most savage hostility, the most furious hatred, the most ruthless campaign of lies and slanders. After their death, attempts are made to turn them into harmless icons, canonise them, and surround their *names* with a certain halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating and vulgarising the *real essence* of their revolutionary theories and blunting their revolutionary edge. At the present time, the bourgeoisie and the opportunists within the labour movement are co-operating in this work of adulterating Marxism. They omit, obliterate, and distort the revolutionary side of its teaching, its revolutionary soul. They push to the foreground and extol what is, or seems, acceptable to the bourgeoisie. All the social-chauvinists are now "Marxists"—joking aside! And more and more do German bourgeois professors, erstwhile specialists in the demolition of Marx, speak now of the "national-German" Marx, who, they aver, has educated the labour unions which are so splendidly organised for conducting the present predatory war!

In such circumstances, the distortion of Marxism being so widespread, it is our first task to *resuscitate* the real teachings of Marx on the State. For this purpose it will be necessary to quote at length from the works of Marx and Engels themselves. Of course, long quotations will make the text cumbersome and in no way help to make it popular reading, but we cannot possibly avoid them. All, or at any rate, all the most essential passages in the works of Marx and Engels on the subject of the State must necessarily be given as fully as possible, in order that the reader may form an independent opinion of all the views of the founders of scientific Socialism and of the development of those views and in order that their distortions by the present predominant "Kautskyism" may be proved in black and white and rendered plain to all.

Let us begin with the most popular of Engels' works,

*Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats*, the sixth edition of which was published in Stuttgart as far back as 1894. We must translate the quotations from the German originals, as the Russian translations, although very numerous, are for the most part either incomplete or very unsatisfactory.

Summarising his historical analysis Engels says :

The State is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from the outside ; just as little is it " the reality of the moral idea," " the image and reality of reason," as Hegel asserted. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development ; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, may not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society becomes necessary, whose purpose is to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of " order " ; and this power arising out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly separating itself from it, is the State.

Here we have, expressed in all its clearness, the basic idea of Marxism on the question of the historical rôle and meaning of the State. The State is the product and the manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms. The State arises when, where, and to the extent that the class antagonisms *cannot* be objectively reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the State proves that the class antagonisms *are* irreconcilable.

It is precisely on this most important and fundamental point that distortions of Marxism arise along two main lines.

On the one hand, the bourgeois, and particularly the petty-bourgeois, ideologists, compelled under the pressure of indisputable historical facts to admit that the State only exists where there are class antagonisms and the class struggle, " correct " Marx in such a way as to make it appear that the State is an organ for *reconciling* the classes.

According to Marx, the State could neither arise nor maintain itself if a reconciliation of classes were possible. But with the petty-bourgeois and philistine professors and publicists, the State—and this frequently on the strength of benevolent references to Marx !—becomes a conciliator of the classes. According to Marx, the State is an organ of class *domination*, an organ of *oppression* of one class by another ; its aim is the creation of “ order ” which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes. But in the opinion of the petty-bourgeois politicians, order means reconciliation of the classes, and not oppression of one class by another ; to moderate collisions does not mean, they say, to deprive the oppressed classes of certain definite means and methods of struggle for overthrowing the oppressors, but to practise reconciliation.

For instance, when, in the Revolution of 1917, the question of the real meaning and rôle of the State arose in all its vastness as a practical question demanding immediate action on a wide mass scale, all the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks suddenly and completely sank to the petty-bourgeois theory of “ reconciliation ” of the classes by the “ State.” Innumerable resolutions and articles by politicians of both these parties are saturated through and through with this purely petty-bourgeois and philistine theory of “ reconciliation.” That the State is an organ of domination of a definite class which *cannot* be reconciled with its antipode (the class opposed to it)—this petty-bourgeois democracy is never able to understand. Its attitude towards the State is one of the most telling proofs that our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are not Socialists at all (which we Bolsheviks have always maintained), but petty-bourgeois democrats with a near-Socialist phraseology.

On the other hand, the “ Kautskyist ” distortion of Marx is far more subtle. “ Theoretically,” there is no denying that the State is the organ of class domination, or that

class antagonisms are irreconcilable. But what is forgotten or glossed over is this : if the State is the product of the irreconcilable character of class antagonisms, if it is a force standing *above* society and "increasingly separating itself from it," then it is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, *but also without the destruction* of the apparatus of State power, which was created by the ruling class and in which this "separation" is embodied. As we shall see later Marx drew his theoretically self-evident conclusion from a concrete historical analysis of the problems of revolution. And it is exactly this conclusion which Kautsky—as we shall show fully in our subsequent remarks—has "forgotten" and distorted.

## 2. *Special Bodies of Armed Men, Prisons, Etc.*

Engels continues :

In contrast with the ancient organisation of the *gens*, the first distinguishing characteristic of the State is the grouping of the subjects of the State *on a territorial basis*. . . .

Such a grouping seems "natural" to us, but it came after a prolonged and costly struggle against the old form of tribal or gentile society.

. . . The second is the establishment of a *public force*, which is no longer absolutely identical with the population organising itself as an armed power. This special public force is necessary, because a self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible since the cleavage of society into classes. . . . This public force exists in every State ; it consists not merely of armed men, but of material appendages, prisons and repressive institutions of all kinds, of which gentile society knew nothing. . . .

Engels develops the conception of that "power" which is termed the State—a power arising from Society, but placing itself above it and becoming more and more separated



from it. What does this power mainly consist of? It consists of special bodies of armed men who have at their disposal prisons, etc.

We are justified in speaking of special bodies of armed men, because the public power peculiar to every State is not "absolutely identical" with the armed population, with its "self-acting armed organisation."

Like all the great revolutionary thinkers, Engels tries to draw the attention of the class-conscious workers to that very fact which to prevailing philistinism appears least of all worthy of attention, most common and sanctified by solid, indeed, one might say, petrified prejudices. A standing army and police are the chief instruments of State power. But can this be otherwise?

From the point of view of the vast majority of Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century whom Engels was addressing, and who had neither lived through nor closely observed a single great revolution, this cannot be otherwise. They cannot understand at all what this "self-acting armed organisation of the population" means. To the question, whence arose the need for special bodies of armed men, standing above society and becoming separated from it (police and standing army), the Western European and Russian philistines are inclined to answer with a few phrases borrowed from Spencer or Mikhailovsky, by reference to the complexity of social life, the differentiation of functions, and so forth.

Such a reference seems "scientific" and effectively dulls the senses of the average man, obscuring the most important and basic fact, namely, the break-up of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes.

Without such a break-up, the "self-acting armed organisation of the population" might have differed from the primitive organisation of a herd of monkeys grasping sticks, or of primitive men, or men united in a tribal form of society, by its complexity, its high technique, and so forth, but would still have been possible.

It is impossible now, because society, in the period of civilisation, is broken up into antagonistic, and, indeed, irreconcilably antagonistic classes, which, if armed in a "self-acting" manner, would come into armed struggle with each other. A State is formed, a special power is created in the form of special bodies of armed men, and every revolution, by shattering the State apparatus, demonstrates to us how the ruling class aims at the restoration of the special bodies of armed men at *its* service, and how the oppressed class tries to create a new organisation of this kind, capable of serving not the exploiters, but the exploited.

In the above observation, Engels raises theoretically the very same question which every great revolution raises practically, palpably, and on a mass scale of action, namely, the question of the relation between special bodies of armed men and the "self-acting armed organisation of the population." We shall see how this is concretely illustrated by the experience of the European and Russian revolutions.

But let us return to Engels' discourse.

He points out that sometimes, for instance, here and there in North America, this public power is weak (he has in mind an exception that is rare in capitalist society, and he speaks about parts of North America in its pre-imperialist days, where the free colonist predominated), but that in general it tends to become stronger :

It [the public power] grows stronger, however, in proportion as the class antagonisms within the State grow sharper, and with the growth in size and population of the adjacent States. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have screwed up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the State itself.

This was written as early as the beginning of the 'nineties of last century, Engels' last preface being dated June 16, 1891. The turn towards imperialism, understood to mean complete domination of the trusts, full sway of the large

banks, and a colonial policy on a grand scale, and so forth, was only just beginning in France, and was even weaker in North America and in Germany. Since then the "rivalry in conquest" has made gigantic progress—especially as, by the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the whole world had been finally divided up between these "rivals in conquest," i.e., between the great predatory powers. Military and naval armaments since then have grown to monstrous proportions, and the predatory war of 1914-1917 for the domination of the world by England or Germany, for the division of the spoils, has brought the "swallowing up" of all the forces of society by the rapacious State power nearer to a complete catastrophe.

As early as 1891 Engels was able to point to "rivalry in conquest" as one of the most important features of the foreign policy of the great powers, but in 1914-1917, when this rivalry, many times intensified, has given birth to an imperialist war, the rascally social-chauvinists cover up their defence of the predatory policy of "their" capitalist classes by phrases about the "defence of the fatherland," or the "defence of the republic and the revolution," etc. !

### 3. *The State as an Instrument for the Exploitation of the Oppressed Class*

For the maintenance of a special public force standing above society, taxes and State loans are needed.

Having at their disposal the public force and the right to exact taxes, the officials now stand as organs of society *above* society. The free, voluntary respect which was accorded to the organs of the gentile form of government does not satisfy them, even if they could have it. . . .

Special laws are enacted regarding the sanctity and the inviolability of the officials. "The shabbiest police servant . . . has more authority" than the representative of the

clan, but even the head of the military power of a civilised State "may well envy the least among the chiefs of the clan the unconstrained and uncontested respect which is paid to him."

Here the question regarding the privileged position of the officials as organs of State power is clearly stated. The main point is indicated as follows: what is it that places them *above* society? We shall see how this theoretical problem was solved in practice by the Paris Commune in 1871 and how it was slurred over in a reactionary manner by Kautsky in 1912:

As the State arose out of the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it, at the same time, arose in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the State of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which by virtue thereof becomes also the dominant class politically, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. . . .

Not only the ancient and feudal States were organs of exploitation of the slaves and serfs, but

the modern representative State is the instrument of the exploitation of wage-labour by capital. By way of exception, however, there are periods when the warring classes so nearly attain equilibrium that the State power, ostensibly appearing as a mediator, assumes for the moment a certain independence in relation to both. . . .

Such were, for instance, the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empires in France, and the Bismarck régime in Germany.

Such, we may add, is now the Kerensky government in republican Russia after its shift to persecuting the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when the Soviets, thanks to the leadership of the petty-bourgeois democrats, have *already* become impotent, while the bourgeoisie is *not yet* strong enough to disperse them outright.

In a democratic republic, Engels continues, "wealth wields its power indirectly, but all the more effectively," first, by means of "direct corruption of the officials" (America); second, by means of "the alliance of the government with the stock exchange" (France and America).

At the present time, imperialism and the domination of the banks have "developed" to an unusually fine art both these methods of defending and asserting the omnipotence of wealth in democratic republics of all descriptions. If, for instance, in the very first months of the Russian democratic republic, one might say during the honeymoon of the union of the "Socialists"—Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—with the bourgeoisie, Mr. Palchinsky obstructed every measure in the coalition cabinet, restraining the capitalists and their war profiteering, their plundering of the public treasury by means of army contracts; and if, after his resignation, Mr. Palchinsky (replaced, of course, by an exactly similar Palchinsky) was "rewarded" by the capitalists with a "soft" job carrying a salary of 120,000 roubles per annum, what was this? Direct or indirect bribery? A league of the government with the capitalist syndicates, or "only" friendly relations? What is the rôle played by the Chernovs, Tseretelis, Avksentyevs and Skobelevs? Are they the "direct" or only the indirect allies of the millionaire treasury looters?

The omnipotence of "wealth" is thus more *secure* in a democratic republic, since it does not depend on the poor political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and therefore, once capital has gained control (through the Palchinskys, Chernovs, Tseretelis and Co.) of this very best shell, it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that *no* change, either of persons, or institutions, or parties in the bourgeois republic can shake it.

We must also note that Engels quite definitely regards universal suffrage as a means of bourgeois domination.

Universal suffrage, he says, obviously summing up the long experience of German Social-Democracy, is "an index of the maturity of the working class ; it cannot, and never will, be anything else but that in the modern State."

The petty-bourgeois democrats, such as our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and also their twin brothers, the social-chauvinists and opportunists of Western Europe, all expect "more" from universal suffrage. They themselves share, and instil into the minds of the people, the wrong idea that universal suffrage "in the *modern* State" is really capable of expressing the will of the majority of the toilers and of assuring its realisation.

We can here only note this wrong idea, only point out that this perfectly clear, exact and concrete statement by Engels is distorted at every step in the propaganda and agitation of the "official" (i.e., opportunist) Socialist parties. A detailed analysis of all the falseness of this idea, which Engels brushes aside, is given in our further account of the views of Marx and Engels on the "modern" State.

A general summary of his views is given by Engels in the most popular of his works in the following words :

The State, therefore, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies which managed without it, which had no conception of the State and State power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the State became a necessity owing to this cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but is becoming a positive hindrance to production. They will disappear as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the State will inevitably disappear. The society that organises production anew on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will put the whole State machine where it will then belong : in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning-wheel and the bronze axe.

It is not often that we find this passage quoted in the propaganda and agitation literature of contemporary Social-Democracy. But even when we do come across it, it is

generally quoted in the same manner as one bows before an icon, i.e., it is done merely to show official respect for Engels, without any attempt to gauge the breadth and depth of revolutionary action presupposed by this relegating of "the whole State machine . . . to the museum of antiquities." In most cases we do not even find an understanding of what Engels calls the State machine.

#### 4. *The "Withering Away" of the State and Violent Revolution*

Engels' words regarding the "withering away" of the State enjoy such popularity, they are so often quoted, and they show so clearly the essence of the usual adulteration by means of which Marxism is made to look like opportunism, that we must dwell on them in detail. Let us quote the whole passage from which they are taken :

The proletariat seizes State power, and then transforms the means of production into State property. But in doing this, it puts an end to itself as the proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms, it puts an end also to the State as the State. Former society, moving in class antagonisms, had need of the State, that is, an organisation of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production ; therefore, in particular, for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, bondage or serfdom, wage-labour) determined by the existing mode of production. The State was the official representative of society as a whole, its embodiment in a visible corporate body ; but it was this only in so far as it was the State of that class which itself, in its epoch, represented society as a whole : in ancient times, the State of the slave-owning citizens ; in the Middle Ages, of the feudal nobility ; in our epoch, of the bourgeoisie. When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it makes itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection ; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed, and a special repressive force,

a State, is no longer necessary. The first act in which the State really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—the seizure of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a State. The interference of a State power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then becomes dormant of itself. Government over persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The State is not “abolished,” *it withers away*. It is from this standpoint that we must appraise the phrase “people’s free State”—both its justification at times for agitational purposes, and its ultimate scientific inadequacy—and also the demand of the so-called Anarchists that the State should be abolished overnight.

Without fear of committing an error, it may be said that of this argument by Engels so singularly rich in ideas, only one point has become an integral part of Socialist thought among modern Socialist parties, namely, that, unlike the Anarchist doctrine of the “abolition” of the State, according to Marx the State “withers away.” To emasculate Marxism in such a manner is to reduce it to opportunism, for such an “interpretation” only leaves the hazy conception of a slow, even, gradual change, free from leaps and storms, free from revolution. The current popular conception, if one may say so, of the “withering away” of the State undoubtedly means a slurring over, if not a negation, of revolution.

Yet, such an “interpretation” is the crudest distortion of Marxism, which is advantageous only to the bourgeoisie; in point of theory, it is based on a disregard for the most important circumstances and considerations pointed out in the very passage summarising Engels’ idea, which we have just quoted in full.

In the first place, Engels at the very outset of his argument says that, in assuming State power, the proletariat by that very act “puts an end to the State as the State.” One is “not accustomed” to reflect on what this really means. Generally, it is either ignored altogether, or it is considered as a piece of “Hegelian weakness” on Engels’



part. As a matter of fact, however, these words express succinctly the experience of one of the greatest proletarian revolutions—the Paris Commune of 1871, of which we shall speak in greater detail in its proper place. As a matter of fact, Engels speaks here of the destruction of the bourgeois State by the proletarian revolution, while the words about its withering away refer to the remains of *proletarian* statehood *after* the Socialist revolution. The bourgeois State does not “wither away,” according to Engels, but is “put an end to” by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. What withers away after the revolution is the proletarian State or semi-state.

Secondly, the State is a “special repressive force.” This splendid and extremely profound definition of Engels’ is given by him here with complete lucidity. It follows from this that the “special repressive force” of the bourgeoisie for the suppression of the proletariat, of the millions of workers by a handful of the rich, must be replaced by a “special repressive force” of the proletariat for the suppression of the bourgeoisie (the dictatorship of the proletariat). It is just this that constitutes the destruction of “the State as the State.” It is just this that constitutes the “act” of “the seizure of the means of production in the name of society.” And it is obvious that such a substitution of one (proletarian) “special repressive force” for another (bourgeois) “special repressive force” can in no way take place in the form of a “withering away.”

Thirdly, as to the “withering away” or, more expressively and colourfully, as to the State “becoming dormant,” Engels refers quite clearly and definitely to the period *after* “the seizure of the means of production (by the State) in the name of society,” that is, after the Socialist revolution. We all know that the political form of the “State” at that time is complete democracy. But it never enters the head of any of the opportunists who shamelessly distort Marx that when Engels speaks here of the State “withering away,” or “becoming dormant,” he speaks of *democracy*.

At first sight this seems very strange. But it is "unintelligible" only to one who has not reflected on the fact that democracy is *also* a State and that, consequently, democracy will *also* disappear when the State disappears. The bourgeois State can only be "put an end to" by a revolution. The State in general, i.e., most complete democracy, can only "wither away."

Fourthly, having formulated his famous proposition that "the State withers away," Engels at once explains concretely that this proposition is directed equally against the opportunists and the Anarchists. In doing this, however, Engels puts in the first place that conclusion from his proposition about the "withering away" of the State which is directed against the opportunists.

One can wager that out of every 10,000 persons who have read or heard about the "withering away" of the State, 9,990 do not know at all, or do not remember, that Engels did not direct his conclusions from this proposition against the Anarchists *alone*. And out of the remaining ten, probably nine do not know the meaning of a "people's free State" nor the reason why an attack on this watchword contains an attack on the opportunists. This is how history is written! This is how a great revolutionary doctrine is imperceptibly adulterated and adapted to current philistinism! The conclusion drawn against the Anarchists has been repeated thousands of times, vulgarised, harangued about in the crudest fashion possible until it has acquired the strength of a prejudice, whereas the conclusion drawn against the opportunists has been hushed up and "forgotten"!

The "people's free State" was a demand in the programme of the German Social-Democrats and their current slogan in the 'seventies. There is no political substance in this slogan other than a pompous middle-class circumlocution of the idea of democracy. In so far as it referred in a lawful manner to a democratic republic, Engels was prepared to "justify" its use "at times" from a propaganda

point of view. But this slogan was opportunist, for it not only expressed an exaggerated view of the attractiveness of bourgeois democracy, but also a lack of understanding of the Socialist criticism of every State in general. We are in favour of a democratic republic as the best form of the State for the proletariat under capitalism, but we have no right to forget that wage slavery is the lot of the people even in the most democratic bourgeois republic. Furthermore, every State is a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the oppressed class. Consequently, *no* State is either "free" or "people's State." Marx and Engels explained this repeatedly to their party comrades in the 'seventies.

Fifthly, in the same work of Engels, from which every one remembers his argument on the "withering away" of the State, there is also a disquisition on the significance of a violent revolution. The historical analysis of its rôle becomes, with Engels, a veritable panegyric on violent revolution. This, of course, "no one remembers"; to talk or even to think of the importance of this idea is not considered good form by contemporary Socialist parties, and in the daily propaganda and agitation among the masses it plays no part whatever. Yet it is indissolubly bound up with the "withering away" of the State in one harmonious whole.

Here is Engels' argument :

. . . That force, however, plays another rôle (other than that of a diabolical power) in history, a revolutionary rôle ; that, in the words of Marx, it is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new ; that it is the instrument with whose aid social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilised political forms—of this there is not a word in Herr Dühring. It is only with sighs and groans that he admits the possibility that force will perhaps be necessary for the overthrow of the economic system of exploitation—unfortunately ! because all use of force, forsooth, demoralises the person who uses it. And this in spite of the immense moral and spiritual impetus which has resulted from every victorious

revolution ! And this in Germany, where a violent collision—which indeed may be forced on the people—would at least have the advantage of wiping out the servility which has permeated the national consciousness as a result of the humiliation of the Thirty Years' War. And this parson's mode of thought—lifeless, insipid and impotent—claims to impose itself on the most revolutionary Party which history has known ?

How can this panegyric on violent revolution, which Engels insistently brought to the attention of the German Social-Democrats between 1878 and 1894, i.e., right to the time of his death, be combined with the theory of the "withering away" of the State to form one doctrine ?

Usually the two views are combined by means of eclecticism, by an unprincipled, sophistic, arbitrary selection (to oblige the powers that be) of either one or the other argument, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred (if not more often), it is the idea of the "withering away" that is specially emphasised. Eclecticism is substituted for dialectics—this is the most usual, the most widespread phenomenon to be met with in the official Social-Democratic literature of our day in relation to Marxism. Such a substitution is, of course, nothing new ; it may be observed even in the history of classic Greek philosophy. When Marxism is adulterated to become opportunism, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the best method of deceiving the masses ; it gives an illusory satisfaction ; it seems to take into account all sides of the process, all the tendencies of development, all the contradictory factors and so forth, whereas in reality it offers no consistent and revolutionary view of the process of social development at all.

We have already said above, and shall show more fully later, that the teaching of Marx and Engels regarding the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois State. It *cannot* be replaced by the proletarian State (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through "withering away,"

but, as a general rule, only through a violent revolution. The panegyric sung in its honour by Engels and fully corresponding to the repeated declarations of Marx (remember the concluding passages of the *Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Communist Manifesto*, with its proud and open declaration of the inevitability of a violent revolution ; remember Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* of 1875 in which, almost thirty years later, he mercilessly castigates the opportunist character of that programme)—this praise is by no means a mere "impulse," a mere declamation, or a polemical sally. The necessity of systematically fostering among the masses *this* and just this point of view about violent revolution lies at the root of the *whole* of Marx's and Engels' teaching. The neglect of such propaganda and agitation by both the present predominant social-chauvinist and the Kautskyist current brings their betrayal of Marx's and Engels' teaching into prominent relief.

The replacement of the bourgeois by the proletarian State is impossible without a violent revolution. The abolition of the proletarian State, i.e., of all States, is only possible through "withering away."

Marx and Engels gave a full and concrete exposition of these views in studying each revolutionary situation separately, in analysing the lessons of the experience of each individual revolution.

#### THE ECONOMIC BASE OF THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

##### (Ch. V)

A most detailed elucidation of this question is given by Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (letter to Bracke, May 15, 1875, printed only in 1891 in the *Neue Zeit*, IX-1, and in a special Russian edition). The polemical part of this remarkable work, consisting of a criticism of Lassalleism, has, so to speak, over-shadowed its positive part,

namely, the analysis of the connection between the development of Communism and the withering away of the State.

*1. Formulation of the Question by Marx*

From a superficial comparison of the letter of Marx to Bracke (May 15, 1875) with Engels' letter to Bebel (March 28, 1875), analysed above, it might appear that Marx was much more "pro-state" than Engels, and that the difference of opinion between the two writers on the question of the State is very considerable.

Engels suggests to Bebel that all the chatter about the State should be thrown overboard ; that the word "State" should be eliminated from the programme and replaced by "community" ; Engels even declares that the Commune was really no longer a State in the proper sense of the word. And Marx even speaks of the "future State in Communist society," i.e., he is apparently recognising the necessity of a State even under Communism.

But such a view would be fundamentally incorrect. A closer examination shows that Marx's and Engels' views on the State and its withering away were completely identical, and that Marx's expression quoted above refers merely to this withering away of the State.

It is clear that there can be no question of defining the exact moment of the *future* withering away—the more so as it must obviously be a rather lengthy process. The apparent difference between Marx and Engels is due to the different subjects they dealt with, the different aims they were pursuing. Engels set out to show to Bebel, in a plain, bold and broad outline, all the absurdity of the current superstitions concerning the State, shared to no small degree by Lassalle himself. Marx, on the other hand, only touches upon *this* question in passing, being interested mainly in another subject—the *evolution* of Communist society.

The whole theory of Marx is an application of the theory of development—in its most consistent, complete, well considered and fruitful form—to modern capitalism. It was

natural for Marx to raise the question of applying this theory both of the *coming* collapse of capitalism and to the *future* development of *future* Communism.

On the basis of what *data* can the future development of future Communism be considered?

On the basis of the fact that *it has its origin* in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism *has given birth*. There is no shadow of an attempt on Marx's part to conjure up a Utopia, to make idle guesses about that which cannot be known. Marx treats the question of Communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological species, if he knew that such and such was its origin, and such and such the direction in which it changed.

Marx, first of all, brushes aside the confusion the Gotha Programme brings into the question of the interrelation between State and society.

"Contemporary society" is the capitalist society—he writes—which exists in all civilised countries, more or less free of mediæval admixture, more or less modified by each country's particular historical development, more or less developed. In contrast with this, the "contemporary State" varies with every State boundary. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in Switzerland, and different in England from what it is in the United States. The "contemporary State" is therefore a fiction.

Nevertheless, in spite of the motley variety of their forms, the different States of the various civilised countries all have this in common: they are all based on modern bourgeois society, only a little more or less capitalistically developed. Consequently, they also have certain essential characteristics in common. In this sense, it is possible to speak of the "contemporary State" in contrast to the future, when its present root, bourgeois society, will have perished.

Then the question arises: what transformation will the State undergo in a Communist society? In other words, what social functions analogous to the present functions of the State will then still survive? This question can only be answered scientifically, and however many thousand times the word people

is combined with the word State, we get not a flea-jump closer to the problem. . . .

Having thus ridiculed all talk about a "people's State," Marx formulates the question and warns us, as it were, that to arrive at a scientific answer one must rely only on firmly established scientific data.

The first fact that has been established with complete exactness by the whole theory of development, by science as a whole—a fact which the Utopians forgot, and which is forgotten by the present-day opportunists who are afraid of the Socialist revolution—is that, historically, there must undoubtedly be a special stage or epoch of *transition* from capitalism to Communism.

## 2. *Transition from Capitalism to Communism*

Between capitalist and Communist society—Marx continues—lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the former into the latter. To this also corresponds a political transition period, in which the State can be no other than *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.

This conclusion Marx bases on an analysis of the rôle played by the proletariat in modern capitalist society, on the data concerning the development of this society, and on the irreconcilability of the opposing interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Earlier the question was put thus : to attain its emancipation, the proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, conquer political power and establish its own revolutionary dictatorship.

Now the question is put somewhat differently : the transition from capitalist society, developing towards Communism, towards a Communist society, is impossible without a "political transition period," and the State in this period can only be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.



What, then, is the relation of this dictatorship to democracy?

We have seen that *The Communist Manifesto* simply places side by side the two ideas: the "transformation of the proletariat into the ruling class" and the "establishment of democracy." On the basis of all that has been said above, one can define more exactly how democracy changes in the transition from capitalism to Communism.

In capitalist society, under the conditions most favourable to its development, we have more or less complete democracy in the democratic republic. But this democracy is always bound by the narrow framework of capitalist exploitation, and consequently, always remains, in reality, a democracy for the minority, only for the possessing classes, only for the rich. Freedom in capitalist society always remains just about the same as it was in the ancient Greek republics: freedom for the slave-owners. The modern wage-slaves, owing to the conditions of capitalist exploitation, are so much crushed by want and poverty that "democracy is nothing to them," "politics is nothing to them"; that, in the ordinary peaceful course of events, the majority of the population is debarred from participating in social and political life.

The correctness of this statement is perhaps most clearly proved by Germany, just because in this State constitutional legality lasted and remained stable for a remarkably long time—for nearly half a century (1871-1914)—and because Social-Democracy in Germany during that time was able to achieve far more than in other countries in "utilising legality," and was able to organise into a political party a larger proportion of the working class than anywhere else in the world.

What, then, is this largest proportion of politically conscious and active wage-slaves that has so far been observed in capitalist society? One million members of the Social-Democratic Party—out of fifteen million wage-workers! Three million organised in trade unions—out of fifteen million!

Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich—that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the mechanism of capitalist democracy, everywhere, both in the “petty”—so-called petty—details of the suffrage (residential qualification, exclusion of women, etc.), and in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for “beggars”!), in the purely capitalist organisation of the daily Press, etc., etc.—on all sides we see restriction after restriction upon democracy. These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor, seem slight, especially in the eyes of one who has himself never known want and has never been in close contact with the oppressed classes in their mass life (and nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the bourgeois publicists and politicians are of this class), but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics and from an active share in democracy.

Marx splendidly grasped this *essence* of capitalist democracy, when, in analysing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed were allowed, once every few years, to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class should be in parliament to represent and repress them!

But from this capitalist democracy—inevitably narrow, subtly rejected the poor, and therefore hypocritical and false to the core—progress does not march onward, simply smoothly, and directly, to “greater and greater democracy,” as the liberal professors and petty-bourgeois opportunists would have us believe. No, progress marches onward, i.e., toward Communism, through the dictatorship of the proletariat; it cannot do otherwise, for there is no one else and no other way to *break the resistance* of the capitalist exploiters.

But the dictatorship of the proletariat—i.e., the organisation of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing the oppressors—cannot produce

merely an expansion of democracy. *Together* with an immense expansion of democracy which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich folk, the dictatorship of the proletariat produces a series of restrictions of liberty in the case of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage-slavery ; their resistance must be broken by force ; it is clear that where there is suppression there is also violence, there is no liberty, no democracy.

Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that "as long as the proletariat still *needs* the State, it needs it not in the interests of freedom, but for the purpose of crushing its antagonists ; and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom, then the State, as such, ceases to exist."

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, i.e., exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the modification of democracy during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism.

Only in Communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (i.e., there is no difference between the members of society in their relation to the social means of production), *only then* "the State ceases to exist," and "*it becomes possible to speak of freedom.*" Only then a really full democracy, a democracy without any exceptions, will be possible and will be realised. And only then will democracy itself begin to *wither away* due to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually *become accustomed* to the observation of the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all school books ; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without

compulsion, without subordination, without the *special apparatus* for compulsion which is called the State.

The expression "the State *withers away*," is very well chosen, for it indicates both the gradual and the elemental nature of the process. Only habit can, and undoubtedly will, have such an effect ; for we see around us millions of times how readily people get accustomed to observe the necessary rules of life in common, if there is no exploitation, if there is nothing that causes indignation, that calls forth protest and revolt and has to be *suppressed*.

Thus, in capitalist society, we have a democracy that is curtailed, poor, false ; a democracy only for the rich, for the minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of transition to Communism, will, for the first time, produce democracy for the people, for the majority, side by side with the necessary suppression of the minority—the exploiters. Communism alone is capable of giving a really complete democracy, and the more complete it is the more quickly will it become unnecessary and wither away of itself.

In other words : under capitalism we have a State in the proper sense of the word, that is, special machinery for the suppression of one class by another, and of the majority by the minority at that. Naturally, for the successful discharge of such a task as the systematic suppression by the exploiting minority of the exploited majority, the greatest ferocity and savagery of suppression are required, seas of blood are required, through which mankind is marching in slavery, serfdom, and wage-labour.

Again, during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism, suppression is *still* necessary ; but it is the suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of exploited. A special apparatus, special machinery for suppression, the "State," is *still* necessary, but this is now a transitional State, no longer a State in the usual sense, for the suppression of the minority of exploiters, by the majority of the wage slaves of *yesterday*, is a matter comparatively

so easy, simple and natural that it will cost far less bloodshed than the suppression of the risings of slaves, serfs or wage labourers, and will cost mankind far less. This is compatible with the population, that the need for *special machinery* of suppression will begin to disappear. The exploiters are, naturally, unable to suppress the people without a most complex machinery for performing this task ; but *the people* can suppress the exploiters even with very simple "machinery," almost without any "machinery," without any special apparatus, by the simple *organisation of the armed masses* (such as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, we may remark, anticipating a little).

Finally, only Communism renders the State absolutely unnecessary, for there is *no one* to be suppressed—"no one" in the sense of a *class*, in the sense of a systematic struggle with a definite section of the population. We are not Utopians, and we do not in the least deny the possibility and inevitability of excesses on the part of *individual persons*, nor the need to suppress *such* excesses. But, in the first place, no special machinery, no special apparatus of repression is needed for this ; this will be done by the armed people itself, as simply and as readily as any crowd of civilised people, even in modern society, parts a pair of combatants or does not allow a woman to be outraged. And, secondly, we know that the fundamental social cause of excesses which consists in violating the rules of social life is the exploitation of the masses, their want and their poverty. With the removal of this chief cause, excesses will inevitably begin to "*wither away*." We do not know how quickly and in what succession, but we know that they will wither away. With their withering away, the State will also *wither away*.

Without going into Utopias, Marx defined more fully what can *now* be defined regarding this future, namely, the difference between the lower and higher phases (degrees, stages) of Communist society.

### 3. First Phase of Communist Society

In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx goes into some detail to disprove the Lassallean idea of the workers' receiving under Socialism the "undiminished" or "full product of their labour." Marx shows that out of the whole of the social labour of society, it is necessary to deduct a reserve fund, a fund for the expansion of production, for the replacement of worn-out machinery and so on; then also, out of the means of consumption must be deducted a fund for the expenses of management, for schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, and so on.

Instead of the hazy, obscure, general phrase of Lassalle's—"the full product of his labour for the worker"—Marx gives a sober estimate of exactly how a Socialist society will have to manage its affairs, Marx undertakes a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there is no capitalism, and says:

What we are dealing with here [analysing the programme of the party] is not a Communist society which has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, one which is just *emerging* from capitalist society, and which therefore in all respects—economic, moral and intellectual—still bears the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it sprang.

And it is this Communist society—a society which has just come into the world out of the womb of capitalism, and which, in all respects, bears the stamp of the old society—that Marx terms the "first," or lower, phase of Communist society.

The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals. The means of production belong to the whole of society. Every member of society, performing a certain part of socially-necessary work, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such a quantity of work. According to this certificate, he receives from the public warehouses, where articles of

consumption are stored, a corresponding quantity of products. Deducting that proportion of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it.

"Equality" seems to reign supreme.

But when Lassalle, having in view such a social order (generally called Socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of Communism), speaks of this as "just distribution" and says that this is "the equal right of each to an equal product of labour," Lassalle is mistaken, and Marx exposes his error.

"Equal right," says Marx, "we indeed have here"; but it is *still* a "bourgeois right," which, like every right, *presupposes inequality*. Every right is an application of the *same* measure to *different* people who, in fact, are not the same and are not equal to one another; this is why "equal right" is really a violation of equality, and an injustice. In effect, every man having done as much social labour as every other, receives an equal share of the social products (with the above-mentioned deductions).

But different people are not alike: one is strong, another is weak; one is married, the other is not; one has more children, another has less, and so on.

. . . With equal labour—Marx concludes—and therefore an equal share in the social consumption fund, one man in fact receives more than the other, one is richer than the other, and so forth. In order to avoid all these defects, rights, instead of being equal, must be unequal.

The first phase of Communism, therefore, still cannot produce justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize as private property the *means of production*, the factories, machines, land, and so on. In tearing down Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, confused phrase about "equality" and "justice" *in general*, Marx shows the

*course of development* of Communist society, which is forced at first to destroy *only* the "injustice" that consists in the means of production having been seized by private individuals, and which *is not capable* of destroying at once the further injustice consisting in the distribution of the articles of consumption "according to work performed" (and not according to need).

The vulgar economists, including the bourgeois professors and also "our" Tugan-Baranovsky, constantly reproach the Socialists with forgetting the inequality of people and with "dreaming" of destroying this inequality. Such a reproach, as we see, only proves the extreme ignorance of the gentlemen propounding bourgeois ideology.

Marx not only takes into account with the greatest accuracy the inevitable inequality of men; he also takes into account the fact that the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society ("Socialism" in the generally accepted sense of the word) *does not remove* the defects of distribution and the inequality of "bourgeois right" which *continue to rule* as long as the products are divided "according to work performed."

But these defects—Marx continues—are unavoidable in the first phase of Communist society, when, after long travail, it first emerges from capitalist society. Justice can never rise superior to the economic conditions of society and the cultural development conditioned by them.

And so, in the first phase of Communist society (generally called Socialism) "bourgeois right" is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained, i.e., only in respect of the means of production. "Bourgeois right" recognises them as the private property of separate individuals. Socialism converts them into common property. *To that extent*, and to that extent alone, does "bourgeois rights" disappear.



However, it continues to exist as far as its other part is concerned ; it remains in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) distributing the products and allotting labour among the members of society. "He who does not work, shall not eat"—this Socialist principle is *already* realised ; "for an equal quantity of labour, an equal quantity of products"—this Socialist principle is also *already* realised. However, this is not yet Communism, and this does not abolish "bourgeois right," which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an equal (in reality unequal) amount of work, an equal quantity of products.

This is a "defect," says Marx, but it is unavoidable during the first phase of Communism ; for, if we are not to fall into Utopianism, we cannot imagine that, having overthrown capitalism, people will at once learn to work for society *without any standards of right* ; indeed, the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately lay* the economic foundations for *such* a change.

And there is no other standard yet than that of "bourgeois right." To this extent, therefore, a form of State is still necessary, which, while maintaining public ownership of the means of production, would preserve the equality of labour and equality in the distribution of products.

The State is withering away in so far as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no *class* can be suppressed.

But the State has not yet altogether withered away, since there still remains the protection of "bourgeois right" which sanctifies actual inequality. For the complete extinction of the State, complete Communism is necessary.

#### 4. Higher Phase of Communist Society

Marx continues :

In a higher phase of Communist society, when the enslaving subordination of individuals in the division of labour has disappeared, and with it also the antagonism, between mental and physical labour ; when labour has become not only a

means of living, but itself the first necessity of life ; when, along with the all-round development of individuals, the productive forces too have grown, and all the springs of social wealth are flowing more freely—it is only at that stage that it will be possible to pass completely beyond the narrow horizon of bourgeois rights, and for society to inscribe on its banners : from each according to his ability : to each according to his needs !

Only now can we appreciate the full correctness of Engels' remarks in which he mercilessly ridiculed all the absurdity of combining the words " freedom " and " state." While the State exists there is no freedom. When there is freedom, there will be no State.

The economic basis for the complete withering away of the State is that high stage of development of Communism when the antagonism between mental and physical labour disappears, that is to say, when one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality disappears—a source, moreover, which it is impossible to remove immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists.

This expropriation will make a gigantic development of the productive forces *possible*. And seeing how incredibly, even now, capitalism *retards* this development, how much progress could be made even on the basis of modern technique at the level it has reached, we have a right to say, with the fullest confidence, that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in a gigantic development of the productive forces of human society. But how rapidly this development will go forward, how soon it will reach the point of breaking away from the division of labour, of removing the antagonism between mental and physical labour, of transforming work into the " first necessity of life "—this we do not and *cannot* know.

Consequently, we have a right to speak solely of the inevitable withering away of the State, emphasising the protracted nature of this process and its dependence upon the rapidity of development of the *higher phase* of Communism ;

leaving quite open the question of lengths of time, or the concrete forms of withering away, since material for the solution of such questions is *not available*.

The State will be able to wither away completely when society has realised the rule : " From each according to his ability ; to each according to his needs," i.e., when people have become accustomed to observe the fundamental rules of social life, and their labour is so productive, that they voluntarily work *according to their ability*. " The narrow horizon of bourgeois rights," which compels one to calculate, with the hard-heartedness of a Shylock, whether he has not worked half an hour more than another, whether he is not getting less pay than another—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for any exact calculation by society of the quantity of products to be distributed to each of its members ; each will take freely " according to his needs."

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare such a social order " a pure Utopia," and to sneer at the Socialists for promising each the right to receive from society, without any control of the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, automobiles, pianos, etc. Even now, most bourgeois " savants " deliver themselves of such sneers, thereby displaying at once their ignorance and their self-seeking defence of capitalism.

Ignorance—for it has never entered the head of any Socialist to " promise " that the highest phase of Communism will arrive ; while the great Socialists, in *foreseeing* its arrival, presupposed both a productivity of labour unlike the present and a person not like the present man in the street, capable of spoiling, without reflection, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's book, the stores of social wealth, and of demanding the impossible.

Until the " higher " phase of Communism arrives, the Socialists demand the *strictest* control, *by society and by the State*, of the quantity of labour and the quantity of consumption ; only this control must *start* with the

expropriation of the capitalists, with the control of the workers over the capitalists, and must be carried out, not by a State of bureaucrats, but by a State of *armed workers*.

Self-seeking defence of capitalism by the bourgeois ideologists (and their hangers-on like Tsereteli, Chernov and Co.) consists in that they *substitute* disputes and discussions about the distant future for the essential imperative questions of present-day policy : the expropriation of the capitalists, the conversion of *all* citizens into workers and employees of *one* huge "syndicate"—the whole State—and the complete subordination of the whole of the work of this syndicate to the really democratic State of the *Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies*.

In reality, when a learned professor, and following him some philistine, and following the latter Messrs. Tsereteli and Chernov, talk of the unreasonable Utopias, of the demagogic promises of the Bolsheviks, of the impossibility of "introducing" Socialism, it is the higher stage or phase of Communism which they have in mind, and which no one has ever promised, or even thought of "introducing," for the reason that, generally speaking, it cannot be "introduced."

And here we come to that question of the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism, upon which Engels touched in his above-quoted discussion on the incorrectness of the name "Social-Democrat." The political difference between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of Communism will in time, no doubt, be tremendous ; but it would be ridiculous to emphasise it now, under capitalism, and only, perhaps, some isolated Anarchist could invest it with primary importance (if there are still some people among the Anarchists who have learned nothing from the Plekhanov-like conversion of the Kropotkins, the Graveses, the Cornelissens, and other "leading lights" of Anarchism to social-chauvinism or Anarcho-*Jusquaubout*-ism, as G  , one of the few Anarchists still preserving honour and conscience, has expressed it).

But the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism is clear. What is generally called Socialism was termed by Marx the "first" or lower phase of Communist society. In so far as the means of production become *public* property, the word "Communism" is also applicable here, providing we do not forget that it is *not* full Communism. The great significance of Marx's elucidations consists in this: that here, too, he consistently applies materialist dialectics, the doctrine of development, looking upon Communism as something which evolves *out of* capitalism. Instead of artificial, "elaborate" scholastic definitions and profitless disquisitions on the meaning of words (what Socialism is, what Communism is), Marx gives an analysis of what may be called stages in the economic ripeness of Communism.

In its first phase or first stage Communism *cannot* as yet be economically ripe and entirely free of all tradition and of all taint of capitalism. Hence the interesting phenomenon of Communism retaining, in its first phase, "the narrow horizon of bourgeois rights." Bourgeois rights, with respect to distribution of articles of *consumption*, inevitably presupposes, of course, the existence of the *bourgeois State*, for rights are nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the rights.

Consequently, for a certain time not only bourgeois rights, but even the bourgeois State remains under Communism, without the bourgeoisie!

This may look like a paradox, or simply a dialectical puzzle for which Marxism is often blamed by people who would not make the least effort to study its extraordinarily profound content.

But, as a matter of fact, the old surviving in the new confronts us in life at every step, in nature as well as in society. Marx did not smuggle a scrap of "bourgeois" rights into Communism of his own accord; he indicated what is economically and politically inevitable in a society issuing *from the womb* of capitalism.

Democracy is of great importance for the working class in its struggle for freedom against the capitalists. But democracy is by no means a limit one may not overstep ; it is only one of the stages in the course of development from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to Communism.

Democracy means equality. The great significance of the struggle of the proletariat for equality, and the significance of equality as a slogan, are apparent, if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of *classes*. But democracy means only *formal* equality. Immediately after the attainment of equality for all members of society *in respect of* the ownership of the means of production, that is, of equality of labour and equality of wages, there will inevitably arise before humanity the question of going further from formal equality to real equality, i.e., to realising the rule, "From each according to his ability ; to each according to his needs." By what stages, by means of what practical measures humanity will proceed to this higher aim—this we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realise how infinitely mendacious is the usual bourgeois presentation of Socialism as something lifeless, petrified, fixed once for all, whereas in reality, it is *only* with Socialism that there will commence a rapid, genuine, real mass advance, in which first the *majority* and then the whole of the population will take part—an advance in all domains of social and individual life.

Democracy is a form of the State—one of its varieties. Consequently, like every State, it consists in organised, systematic application of force against human beings. This on the one hand. On the other hand, however, it signifies the formal recognition of the equality of all citizens, the equal right of all to determine the structure and administration of the State. This, in turn, is connected with the fact that, at a certain stage in the development of democracy, it first rallies the proletariat as a revolutionary class against capitalism, and gives it an opportunity to crush,

to smash to bits, to wipe off the face of the earth the bourgeois State machinery—even its republican variety: the standing army, the police, and bureaucracy; then it substitutes for all this a *more* democratic, but still a State machinery in the shape of armed masses of workers, which becomes transformed into universal participation of the people in the militia.

Here “quantity turns into quality”: *such* a degree of democracy is bound up with the abandonment of the framework of bourgeois society, and the beginning of its Socialist reconstruction. If *everyone* really takes part in the administration of the State, capitalism cannot retain its hold. In its turn, capitalism, as it develops, itself creates *pre-requisites* for “everyone” *to be able* really to take part in the administration of the State. Among such pre-requisites are universal literacy, already realised in most of the advanced capitalist countries, then the “training and disciplining” of millions of workers by the huge, complex, and socialised apparatus of the post office, the railways, the big factories, large-scale commerce, banking, etc., etc.

With such *economic* pre-requisites it is perfectly possible, immediately, within twenty-four hours after the overthrow of the capitalists and bureaucrats, to replace them, in the control of production and distribution, in the business of *control* of labour and products, by the armed workers, by the whole people in arms. (The question of control and accounting must not be confused with the question of the scientifically educated staffs of engineers, agronomists and so on. These gentlemen work to-day, obeying the capitalists; they will work even better to-morrow, obeying the armed workers.)

Accounting and control—these are the *chief* things necessary for the organising and correct functioning of the *first phase* of Communist society. *All* citizens are here transformed into hired employees of the State, which is made up of the armed workers. *All* citizens become employees and workers of *one* national State “syndicate.” All that is required is

that they should work equally, should regularly do their share of work, and should receive equal pay. The accounting and control necessary for this have been *simplified* by capitalism to the utmost, till they have become the extraordinarily simple operations of watching, recording and issuing receipts, within the reach of anybody who can read and write and knows the first four rules of arithmetic.

When the *majority* of the people begin everywhere to keep such accounts and maintain such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry, who still retain capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, national ; and there will be no way of getting away from it, there will be " nowhere to go."

The whole of society will have become one office and one factory, with equal work and equal pay.

But this " factory " discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society after the defeat of the capitalists and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, or our final aim. It is but a *foothold* necessary for the radical cleansing of society of all the hideousness and foulness of capitalist exploitation, *in order to advance further.*

From the moment when all members of society, or even only the overwhelming majority, have learned how to govern the State *themselves*, have taken this business into their own hands, have " established " control over the insignificant minority of capitalists, over the gentry with capitalist leanings, and the workers thoroughly demoralised by capitalism—from this moment the need for any government begins to disappear. The more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it begins to be unnecessary. The more democratic the " State " consisting of armed workers, which is " no longer a State in the proper sense of the word," the more rapidly does *every* State begin to wither away.

For when *all* have learned to manage, and independently



are actually managing by themselves social production, keeping accounts, controlling the idlers, the gentlefolk, the swindlers and similar "guardians of capitalist traditions," then the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are men of practical life, not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of every-day social life in common will have become a *habit*.

The door will then be wide open for the transition from the first phase of Communist society to its higher phase, and along with it to the complete withering away of the State.

*V. I. Lenin*

## LETTERS FROM AFAR

*Written in Switzerland in March and April 1917; only one was published in Petrograd, in the "Pravda" of April 3, 1917.*

*Complete English edition, Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 1931.*

[Between March 20 and April 8, 1917, Lenin wrote five letters from Switzerland, analysing the situation in Russia and laying down the main lines of policy for the Bolsheviks. The first letter was written soon after Lenin knew of the overthrow of the Tsar's Government on March 14, 1917, and the establishment of the Provisional Government. Lenin at once put forward the standpoint that this was only the first stage of a revolution which would only be completed by the overthrow of the Provisional Government and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship. The second letter reprinted here was written on March 24,

1917 ; it develops the idea of the Soviets as the organs of revolutionary power which would smash the old machinery of the State.]

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## LETTERS FROM AFAR

### *The First Stage of the First Revolution*

THE FIRST revolution arising out of the imperialist World War has broken out. This first revolution will, certainly, not be the last.

The first stage of this first revolution, namely, the Russian revolution of March 14, 1917, is over, according to the scanty information at the writer's disposal in Switzerland. Surely this first stage of our revolution will not be the last one.

How could such a "miracle" happen, that in eight days—the period indicated by M. Miliukov in his boastful telegram to all the representatives of Russia abroad—a monarchy that had maintained itself for centuries, and continued to maintain itself during three years of tremendous national class conflicts of 1905–1907, could utterly collapse?

There are no miracles in nature or in history, yet every sudden turn in history, including every revolution, presents such a wealth of material, it unfolds such unexpectedly peculiar co-ordinations of forms of conflict and alignment of fighting forces, that there is much that must appear miraculous to the burgher's mind.

A combination of a whole series of conditions of world-wide historic importance was required for the tsarist monarchy to collapse in a few days. Let us point out the principal ones.

Without the three years, 1905–1907, of tremendous class conflicts and of revolutionary energy of the Russian proletariat, this second revolution could not possibly have had the rapid progress indicated in the fact that its *first phase*

was accomplished in a few days. The first revolution (1905) ploughed the ground deeply and uprooted the prejudices of centuries ; it awakened to political life and struggle millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants. The first revolution revealed to the workers and peasants, as well as to the world, all the classes (and all the principal parties) of Russian society in their true character ; the actual alignment of their interests, their powers and modes of action, their immediate and ultimate objectives. This first revolution, and the succeeding counter-revolutionary period (1907-1914), fully revealed the nature of the tsarist monarchy as having reached the "utmost limit" ; it exposed all the infamy and vileness, all the cynicism and corruption of the tsarist clique dominated by that monster, Rasputin ; it exposed all the bestiality of the Romanov family—that band of assassins which bathed Russia in the blood of the Jews, the workers, the revolutionaries—those landowners, "first among peers," who owned millions of acres of land and would stoop to any brutality, to any crime—ready to ruin or crush any section of the population, however numerous, in order to preserve the "sacred property rights" for themselves and for their class.

Without the revolution of 1905-1907, without the counter-revolution of 1907-1914, it would have been impossible to secure so clear a "self-determination" of all classes of the Russian people and of all the peoples inhabiting Russia, a clarification of the relation of these classes to each other and to the tsarist monarchy, as transpired during the eight days of the March revolution. This eight-day revolution, if we may express ourselves in terms of metaphors, was "performed" after a dozen informal as well as dress rehearsals ; the "actors" knew each other and their rôles, their places, and the entire setting ; they knew every detail through and through, down to the last more or less significant shade of political tendency and mode of action.

But, in order that the first great revolution of 1905, which Messrs. Guchkov and Miliukov and their satellites condemned as a "great rebellion" should, after the lapse of a dozen years, lead to the "glorious revolution" of 1917—so termed by the Guchkovs and Miliukovs because (for the *present*) it has put them into power—there was still needed a great, mighty, all-powerful "régisseur," who was, on the one hand, in a position to accelerate the course of history on a grand scale, and, on the other, to produce world-wide crisis of unheard-of intensity: economic, political, national and international. In addition to an unusual acceleration of world history, there were also needed particularly sharp historic turns so that during one of them the blood-stained chariot of tsarism might be overturned in a trice.

This all-powerful "régisseur," this mighty accelerator of events, was the imperialist World War.

Now it can no longer be doubted that this war is world-wide, for the United States and China have been half dragged in already, and to-morrow will be completely involved in it.

Nor can it any longer be doubted that the war is imperialistic on both sides. Only the capitalists and their satellites, the social-patriots and social-chauvinists, can deny or suppress this fact. Both the German and the Anglo-French bourgeoisie are waging war for the grabbing of foreign territory, for the strangulation of small nations, for financial supremacy over the world, for the division and redistribution of colonies, for saving the tottering capitalist régime by means of deceiving and disuniting the workers in the various countries.

It was objectively inevitable that the imperialist war should immensely quicken and unusually sharpen the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and transform itself into a civil war between hostile classes.

This transformation has been started by the March

revolution, whose first stage has shown us, first, a joint attack on tsarism delivered by two forces : on the one hand, the whole bourgeois and landowning class of Russia, with all their unenlightened followers and very enlightened managers, in the persons of the Anglo-French ambassadors and capitalists ; and, on the other, the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

These three political camps, three fundamental political forces : (1) The tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landowning class, the head of the old bureaucracy and of the higher military commanders ; (2) the Russia of the bourgeoisie and landowners represented by the Octobrists and Cadets, with the petty bourgeoisie in their wake ; (3) the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, seeking for allies among the entire proletariat and the whole mass of the poorest population—these three fundamental political forces have revealed themselves with utmost clarity even in the first eight days of the "first stage." This is evident even to such an observer as the present writer who is far away from the scene of events and is compelled to confine himself to the meagre dispatches of foreign papers.

But before going into further detail in this matter, I must come back to that portion of my letter which is devoted to a factor of first importance, namely, the imperialist World War.

The belligerent powers, the belligerent groups of capitalists, the "masters" of the capitalist system, and the slave-drivers of capitalist slavery, have been shackled to each other by the war with chains of iron. *One bloody lump*, that is the socio-political life of the historic period through which we are now passing.

The Socialists who deserted to the bourgeoisie at the beginning of the war, all the Davids and Scheidemanns in Germany, the Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Gvozdevs and Co. in Russia, have long been shouting lustily against the "illusions" of the revolutionists, against the "illusions"

of the Basle Manifesto, against the "dream farce" of turning the imperialist war into civil war. They have sung hymns of praise to the alleged strength, tenacity and adaptability of capitalism, while they were aiding the capitalists in "adapting," taming, deceiving and disuniting the working classes of the various countries !

But "he who laughs last laughs best." The bourgeoisie was not able to delay for very long the coming of the revolutionary crisis produced by the war. This crisis is growing with irresistible force in all countries, beginning with Germany where, according to a recent observer who visited that country, there is "hunger organised with the ability of genius," and down to England and France where hunger is also looming, though it is not so "wonderfully" organised.

It is natural that the tsarist Russia, where disorganisation was monstrous, where the proletariat is the most revolutionary in the world (not due to any specific characteristics, but because of the vivid traditions of "1905"), the revolutionary crisis should have burst forth earlier than anywhere else. The crisis was hastened by a number of most serious defeats inflicted on Russia and her allies. These defeats disorganised the entire old mechanism of government and the entire old system ; they aroused the indignation of *all* classes of the population ; they incensed the army and largely wiped out the old body of commanders hailing from the backward nobility and particularly from the rotten officialdom, replacing it with a young and buoyant one of a predominantly bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and declassed origin.

But, if military defeats played the rôle of a negative factor that hastened the outbreak, the alliance of Anglo-French finance-capital, of Anglo-French imperialism, with the Octobrist and Constitutional-Democratic capital of Russia appeared as a factor that speeded this crisis.

This highly important phase of the situation is, for obvious reasons, not mentioned by the Anglo-French Press

while maliciously emphasised by the German. We Marxists must face the truth soberly, being confused neither by the official lies, the sugary diplomatic and ministerial lies of one group of imperialist belligerents, nor by the sniggering and smirking of its financial and military rivals of the other belligerent group. The whole course of events in the March revolution shows clearly that the English and French embassies with their agents and "associates," who had long made the most desperate efforts to prevent a "separate" agreement and a separate peace between Nicholas II (let us hope and strive that he be the last) and Wilhelm II, strove directly to dethrone Nicholas Romanov.

Let us not harbour any illusions.

The fact that the revolution succeeded so quickly and, apparently, at the first superficial glance, so "radically," is due to an unusual historical conjuncture where there combined, in a strikingly "favourable" manner, absolutely dissimilar movements, absolutely different class interests, absolutely opposed political and social tendencies. There was the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists who encouraged Miliukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power, with the object of prolonging the imperialist war, with the object of conducting the war more savagely and obstinately, with the object of slaughtering new millions of Russian workers and peasants, in order that the Guchkovs might obtain Constantinople; the French, Syria; the English capitalists, Mesopotamia, etc. This, on the one side. On the other, there was a profound proletarian and popular mass movement (of the entire poorest population of the cities and villages) of a revolutionary character, for bread, for peace, for real freedom.

The revolutionary workers and soldiers have destroyed the infamous tsarist monarchy to its very foundations, being neither elated nor constrained by the fact that, at certain brief historic moments of an exceptional combination of circumstances, they are aided by the struggle of

Buchanan, Guchkov, Miliukov and Co., who simply desire to replace one monarch by another.

Thus, and only thus, did it occur. Thus, and only thus, must be the view of the politician who is not afraid of the truth, who soberly weighs the interrelation of social forces in a revolution, who evaluates every given moment not only from the viewpoint of its present peculiarities, but also from the standpoint of the more fundamental motives, the deeper interrelation of the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in Russia as well as throughout the world.

The workers and soldiers of Petrograd, as well as the workers and soldiers of all Russia, self-sacrificingly fought against the tsarist monarchy—for freedom, for land for the peasants, for peace as against the imperialist slaughter. Anglo-French imperialist capital, in order to continue and develop the slaughter, engaged in court intrigues, it framed conspiracies, incited and encouraged the Guchkovs and Miliukovs, and contrived a new government, which, ready-made, seized power after the proletarian struggle had delivered the first blows against tsarism.

This government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons.

They are the representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of the capitalist landowners and bourgeoisie that for a long time has been ruling our country economically, and that, in the revolution of 1905-1907, in the counter-revolutionary period of 1907-1914, and then, with extraordinary rapidity, in the period of the war of 1914-1917, organised itself politically, taking into its hands local self-government, popular education, conventions of every type, the Duma, the war industries committees, etc. This new class was almost in power in 1917; therefore the first blows against tsarism were sufficient to destroy the latter, and to clear the ground for the bourgeoisie. The imperialist war, requiring an incredible exertion of strength, so accelerated the course



of development of backward Russia that at a single stroke (at least it seems like a single stroke) we have caught up with Italy, England, even France ; we have attained a "coalition," a "national," "parliamentary" government (i.e. a government adapted to carrying on the imperialist slaughter and deceiving the people).

Alongside of this government, which, as regards the present war, is but the clerk of the billion-dollar "firms," England and France, there has arisen a new, unofficial, as yet undeveloped and comparatively weak, workers' government, expressing the interests of the workers and of all the poorer elements of the city and country population. This is the *Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies*.

Such is the actual political situation which we must first of all try to establish with the greatest possible objective precision, in order that we may base Marxist tactics on the only solid foundation upon which they should be based—the foundation of facts.

The tsarist monarchy has been beaten, but not destroyed.

The Octobrist-Cadet bourgeois government, wishing to carry on the imperialist war "to a finish," is in reality the agent of the financial firm "England and France" ; it is forced to promise to the people a maximum of liberties and pittances compatible with the maintenance by this government of its power over the people and the possibility of continuing the imperialist war.

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is a workers' government in embryo, a representative of the interests of all the poorest masses of the population, i.e., of nine-tenths of the population which is striving for peace, bread, and liberty.

The conflict among these three forces determines the situation as it is at present, a transition stage from the first phase of the revolution to the second.

In order that there may be a real struggle against the tsarist monarchy, in order that freedom may really be

secured, not merely in words, not in the promises of rhetorical liberalism, it is necessary not that the workers should support the new government, but that this government should support the workers ! For the only guarantee of liberty and of a complete destruction of tsarism is the arming of the proletariat, the strengthening, broadening, and developing of the rôle, and significance and power of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

All the rest is mere phrases and lies, the self-deception of the politicians of the liberal and radical stamp.

Help the arming of the workers, or, at least, do not interfere with it, and the liberty of Russia is invincible, the monarchy incapable of restoration, the republic secured.

Otherwise the people will be deceived. Promises are cheap ; promises cost nothing. It is on promises that all the bourgeois politicians in *all* the bourgeois revolutions have been feeding the people and fooling the workers.

" Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, therefore the workers must support the bourgeoisie," say the worthless politicians among the *Liquidators*.

" Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution," say we Marxists, " therefore the workers must open the eyes of the people to the deceptive practices of the bourgeois politicians, must teach the people not to believe in words, but to depend wholly on their own strength, on their own organisation, on their own unity, and on their own arms."

The government of the Octobrists and Cadets, of the Guchkovs and Miliukovs, could give neither peace, nor bread, nor freedom, even if it were sincere in its desire to do so.

It cannot give peace because it is a government for war, a government for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter, a government of conquest, a government that has not uttered one word to renounce the tsarist policy of seizure of Armenia, Galicia, Turkey, of capturing Constantinople, of reconquering Poland, Courland, Lithuania, etc. This government is bound hand and foot by

Anglo-French imperialist capital. Russian capital is merely one branch of the world "firm" known as "England and France" manipulating hundreds of billions of roubles.

It cannot give bread, since it is a bourgeois government. At best it may give the people, as the government of Germany has done, "hunger organised with the ability of genius." But the people will not put up with hunger. The people will learn, probably very soon, that there is bread, and it can be obtained in no other way than by means that do not show any respect for the sanctity of capital and landownership.

It cannot give freedom, since it is a government of landowners and capitalists, which is afraid of the people.

In another article we will speak of the tactical problems confronting us in our immediate behaviour towards this government. There we shall show wherein consists the peculiarity of the present moment, which is a period of transition from the first stage of the revolution to the second, and why the slogan, the "order of the day" in the *present* moment must be: "Workers, you have displayed marvels of proletarian and popular heroism in the civil war against tsarism; you must display marvels of proletarian and nation-wide organisation in order to prepare your victory in the second stage of the revolution."

Limiting ourselves in the meanwhile to an analysis of the class struggle and the interrelation of class forces in this stage of the revolution, we must also raise the question: Who are the allies of the proletariat in this revolution?

It has two allies: first, the broad mass of the semi-proletarian and, partly, the petty peasant population of Russia, numbering scores of millions and forming the overwhelming majority of the population. This great mass needs peace, bread, liberty, land. This mass will inevitably be under a certain influence of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the petty bourgeoisie, which it resembles rather closely in its conditions of life, vacillating, as it does, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel

lessons of the war, which will become all the more cruel as Guchkov, Lvov, Miliukov and Co. carry on the war with greater energy, will inevitably push this mass toward the proletariat, compelling it to follow the proletariat. We must now, taking advantage of the freedom under the new régime and of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, strive, first of all and above all, to enlighten and organise this mass. Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, Soviets of Agricultural Workers—these are among our most urgent tasks. We shall thereby strive not only that the agricultural workers should establish special Soviets of their own, but also that the poorest and propertyless peasants should organise separately from the well-to-do peasants. The special tasks and special forms of the organisation urgently needed at present, will be dealt with in another letter.

The second ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of the warring countries and of all countries in general. At present, it is to a considerable degree weighed down by the war, and by the social-chauvinists who, like Plekhanov, Gvozdev, Potresov in Russia, have deserted to the bourgeoisie, but all too often speak in the workers' name. The liberation of the workers from their influence has progressed with every month of the imperialist war, and the Russian Revolution will necessarily accelerate this process tremendously.

Hand in hand with these two allies, the proletariat of Russia can and will proceed, while utilising the peculiarities of the present transition moment, to win, first, a democratic republic and the victory of the peasantry over the landlords, then Socialism, which alone can give peace, bread, and freedom to the peoples exhausted by the war.

### *On Proletarian Militia*

. . . I cannot judge from here, my accursed exile, how near the second revolution is. Skobelev, who is there on the spot, can see it better. I therefore do not occupy myself

with the questions for the answer to which I have no concrete data and can have none. I simply emphasise the fact that a "stranger," i.e., one who does not belong to our party, Skobelev, confirms the *very* conclusion that I arrived at in the first letter, namely : that the March revolution was only the *first stage* of the revolution. Russia is going through a unique historical period of *transition* from the first to the next stage of the revolution or, as Skobelev expresses it, to "a second revolution."

If we want to be Marxists and to learn from the experience of the revolutions the world over, we must try to understand just wherein lies the *uniqueness* of this transition period, and what are the tactics that follow from its objective peculiarities.

The uniqueness of the situation lies in the fact that the Guchkov-Miliukov government has won the first victory with unusual ease because of the three following main circumstances : 1. The help received from Anglo-French finance capital and its agents ; 2. The help received from the upper layers of the army ; 3. The fact that the entire Russian bourgeoisie had been organised in zemstvo and city institutions, in the Imperial Duma, in the war industries committees, etc.

The Guchkov government finds itself between the upper and nether millstones. Bound by capitalist interests, it is compelled to strive to prolong the predatory war for plunder, to protect the monstrous profits of the capitalists and the landlords, to restore the monarchy. Bound by its revolutionary origin and the necessity of an abrupt change from tsarism to democracy, finding itself under the pressure of the hungry masses that clamour for peace, the government is forced to lie, to shift about, to procrastinate, to make as many "declarations" and promises as possible (promises are the only things that are very cheap even in an epoch of insanely high prices), and to carry out as few of them as possible, to make concessions with one hand, and to withdraw them with the other.

Under certain conditions, if circumstances are most favourable to it, the new government, relying on the organising abilities of the entire Russian bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia, may temporarily avert the final crash. But even under such conditions it cannot escape the crash altogether, for it is *impossible* to escape the claws of that terrible monster, begotten by world-capitalism—the imperialist war and famine—without abandoning the whole basis of bourgeois relations, without resorting to revolutionary measures, without appealing to the greatest historical heroism of the Russian and the world proletariat.

Hence the conclusion: We shall not be able to overthrow the new government with one stroke or, should we be able to do so (in revolutionary times the limits of the possible are increased a thousandfold), we could not retain power, *unless we met* the splendid organisation of the entire Russian bourgeoisie and the entire bourgeois intelligentsia with an *organisation of the proletariat* just as splendid, leading the vast mass of the city and country poor, the semi-proletarians and the petty proprietors.

It matters little whether the “second revolution” has already broken out in Petrograd (I have stated that it would be absurd to attempt to estimate from abroad the actual tempo of its growth), whether it has been postponed for a time, or whether it has begun in isolated localities in Russia (there are some indications that this is the case)—*in any case* the slogan of the hour right now, on the eve of the revolution, during the revolution, and on the day after the revolution, must be—*proletarian organisation*.

Comrade-workers! Yesterday you displayed wonders of proletarian heroism when you overthrew the tsarist monarchy. Sooner or later (perhaps even now, while I am writing these lines) you will inevitably be called upon again to display wonders of similar heroism in overthrowing the power of the landowners and the capitalists who are waging the imperialist war. But you will not be able to win a *permanent victory* in this forthcoming “true”

revolution, unless you display *wonders of proletarian organisation* !

The slogan of the hour is organisation. But organisation in itself does not mean much, because, on the one hand, organisation is always necessary, and, hence, the mere insistence on "the organisation of the masses" does not yet clarify anything, and because, on the other hand, he who contents himself with organisation only is merely echoing the views of the liberals ; for the liberals, to strengthen their rule, desire nothing better than to have the workers refuse to go *beyond the usual "legal"* forms of organisation (from the point of view of "normal" bourgeois society), i.e., to have them *merely* become members of their party, their trade union, their co-operative society, etc., etc.

The workers, guided by their class instinct, have realised that in revolutionary times they need an entirely different organisation, of a type above the ordinary. They have taken the right attitude suggested by the experience of our revolution of 1905 and by the Paris Commune of 1871 : they have created a *Soviet of Workers' Deputies*, they have set out to develop it, widen and strengthen it, by attracting to it representatives of the soldiers and no doubt of the hired agricultural workers, as well as (in one form or another) of the entire poor section of the peasantry.

To create similar organisations in all the localities of Russia without exception, for all the trades and layers of the proletarian and semi-proletarian population without exception, i.e., for all the toilers and the exploited (to use an expression that is less exact from the point of view of economics but more popular), is our most important and most urgent task. I will note right here that to the peasant masses our party (whose specific rôle in the proletarian organisations of the new type I shall have occasion to discuss in one of the forthcoming letters) must recommend with special emphasis the organisation of Soviets of hired workers and petty agriculturists, such as do not sell their

grain, those Soviets *to have no connection* with the prosperous peasants—otherwise it will be impossible to pursue a true proletarian policy, in a general sense,<sup>1</sup> nor will it be possible correctly to approach the most important practical question involving the life and death of millions of people, i.e., the question of an equitable assessment of food deliveries, of increasing its production, etc.

The question, then, is : What is to be the work of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies ? We repeat what we once said in No. 47 of the *Geneva Social-Democrat* (October 13, 1915) : "They must be regarded as organs of insurrection, as organs of revolutionary power."

This theoretical formula, derived from the experience of the Commune of 1871 and of the Russian Revolution of 1905, must be elucidated and concretely developed on the basis of the practical experience gained at this very stage of this very revolution in Russia.

We need revolutionary *power*, we need (for a certain period of transition) the *State*. Therein we differ from the Anarchists. The difference between revolutionary Marxists and Anarchists lies not only in the fact that the former stand for huge, centralised, communist production, while the latter are for decentralised, small-scale production. No, the difference as to government authority and the state consists in this, that we stand *for* the revolutionary utilisation of revolutionary forms of the State in our struggle for Socialism, while the Anarchists are *against* it.

We need the State. But we need none of those types of State varying from a constitutional monarchy to the most democratic republic which the bourgeoisie has established everywhere. And herein lies the difference between us and the opportunists and Kautskians of the old, decaying

<sup>1</sup>There will now develop in the village a struggle for the petty, and partly the middle, peasantry. The landowners, basing themselves on the well-to-do peasants, will lead them to submission to the bourgeoisie.

We, basing ourselves on the hired agricultural workers and poor peasants, must lead them to the closest possible alliance with the proletariat of the cities.



Socialist parties who have distorted or forgotten the lessons of the Paris Commune and the analysis of these lessons by Marx and Engels.<sup>1</sup>

We need the State, but not the kind needed by the bourgeoisie, with organs of power in the form of police, army, bureaucracy, distinct from and opposed to the people. All bourgeois revolutions have merely perfected this government apparatus, have merely transferred it from one party to another.

The proletariat, however, if it wants to preserve the gains of the present revolution and to proceed further to win peace, bread, and freedom, must "*destroy*," to use Marx's word, this "ready-made" State machinery, and must replace it by another one, *merging* the police, the army, and the bureaucracy *with the universally armed people*. Advancing along the road indicated by the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Revolution of 1905, the proletariat must organise and arm *all* the poorest and most exploited sections of the population, so that they *themselves* may take into their own hands all the organs of State power, that they *themselves* may constitute these organs.

The workers of Russia have already, with the very first stage of the first revolution, March 1917, *entered* on this course. The whole problem now is to understand clearly the nature of this new course and courageously, firmly, and persistently, to continue on it.

The Anglo-French and the Russian capitalists wanted "only" to displace, or merely to "scare," Nicholas II, leaving the old machinery of the State—the police, the army, the bureaucracy—intact.

<sup>1</sup>In one of the forthcoming letters or in a special article I shall dwell in detail on this analysis as given particularly in Marx's *Civil War in France*, in Engels' preface to the third edition of that work, in Marx's letter dated April 12, 1871, and in Engel's letters of March 18-28, 1875, also on the complete distortion of Marxism by Kautsky in his 1912 polemics against Pannekoek relative to the so-called "destruction of the State."

The workers have gone further ; they have smashed it. And now not only the Anglo-French, but even the German capitalists howl with rage and horror when they see Russian soldiers shooting their officers, some of whom were even supporters of Guchkov and Miliukov, as Admiral Nepenin, for example.

I have said that the workers have smashed the old State machinery. To be more precise. They *have begun* to smash it.

Let us take a concrete example.

The police of Petrograd and many other places have been partly killed off, and partly removed. The Guchkov-Miliukov government will not be able to restore the monarchy, nor even to retain power, unless it re-establishes the police as an organisation of armed men separated from and opposed to the people and under the command of the bourgeoisie. This is as clear as the clearest day.

On the other hand, the new government must reckon with the revolutionary masses, must humour them with half-concessions and promises, trying to gain time. Hence it agrees to half-measures : it institutes a "people's militia" with elected officers (this sounds terribly imposing, terribly democratic, revolutionary, and beautiful !). But . . . but . . . first of all, it places the militia under the control of the local zemstvo and city organs of self-government, i.e., under the control of landowners and capitalists elected under the laws of Nicholas the Bloody and Stolypin the Hangman !! Secondly, though it calls it the "people's" militia to throw dust into the eyes of the "people," it does not, as a matter of fact, call the people for *universal service* in this militia, nor does it compel the bosses and the capitalists to *pay* their employees the usual wage for the hours and the days they devote to public service, i.e., to the militia.

There is where the main trick is. That is how the land-owner and capitalist government of the Guchkovs and Miliukovs achieves its aim of keeping the "people's

militia" on paper, while in reality it is quietly and step by step organising a bourgeois militia hostile to the people, first of "8,000 students and professors" (as the foreign Press describes the present militia in Petrograd)—which is obviously a mere toy!—then, gradually, of the old and the new police.

Do not permit the re-establishment of the police! Do not let go the local government organs! Create a really universal militia, led by the proletariat! This is the task of the day, this is the slogan of the present hour, equally in accord with the correctly understood requirements of the further development of the class struggle, and further course of the revolution, and with the democratic instinct of every worker, every peasant, every toiler, everyone who is exploited, who cannot but hate the police, the constables, the command of landowners and capitalists over armed men who wield power over the people.

What kind of police do *they* need, these Guchkovs and Miliukovs, these landowners and capitalists? The same kind that existed during the tsarist monarchy. Following very brief revolutionary periods, *all* the bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic republics of the world organised or re-established precisely that kind of police—a special organisation of armed men, separated from and opposed to the people, and in one way or another subordinated to the bourgeoisie.

What kind of militia do we need, we, the proletariat, all the toilers? A real people's militia, i.e., first of all, one that consists of the entire population, of all the adult citizens of both sexes; secondly, one that combines the functions of a people's army with those of the police, and with the functions of the main and fundamental organ of the State system and the State administration.

To give more concreteness to these propositions, let us try a schematic example. Needless to say, the idea of laying out any "plan" for a proletarian militia would be

absurd : when the workers, and all the people as a real mass, take up this task in a practical way, they will work it out and secure it a hundred times better than any theoretician can propose. I am not offering a plan—all I want is to illustrate my thought.

Petrograd has a population of about two million, more than half of which is between the ages of 15 and 65. Let us take a half—one million. Let us deduct one-fourth to allow for the sick or other instances where people cannot be engaged in public service for a valid reason. There still remain 750,000 persons, who, working in the militia one day out of every fifteen (and continuing to receive payment from their employers for this time), would make up an army of 50,000 people.

This is the type of "state" that we need !

This is the kind of militia that would be, in deed, and not only in name, a "people's militia."

This is the road we must follow if we wish to make impossible the re-establishment of a special police, or a special army, separated from the people.

Such a militia would, in ninety-five cases out of a hundred, be composed of workers and peasants, and would express the real intelligence and the will, the strength and the authority of the overwhelming majority of the people. Such a militia would actually arm and give military training to the people at large, thus making sure, in a manner not employed by Guchkov, nor Miliukov, against all attempts to re-establish reaction, against all efforts of the tsarist agents. Such a militia would be the executive organ of the "Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies," it would enjoy the *full* respect and confidence of the population, because it would, itself, be an organisation of the entire population. Such a militia would change democracy from a pretty signboard, hiding the enslavement and deception of the people by the capitalists, into a real means for *educating the masses* so that they might be able to take part in *all* the affairs of the State. Such a militia would draw

the youngsters into political life, training them not only by word, but by deed and *work*. Such a militia would develop those functions which belong, to use learned terms, to the welfare police, sanitary supervision, etc., by drawing into such activities all the adult women without exception. Without drawing the women into social service, into the militia, into political life, without tearing the women away from the stupefying domestic and kitchen atmosphere it is impossible to secure real freedom, it is impossible to build a democracy, let alone Socialism.

Such a militia would be a proletarian militia, because the industrial and the city workers would just as naturally and inevitably assume in it the leadership of the masses of the poor, as naturally and inevitably as they took the leading position in all the revolutionary struggles of the people in the years 1905-1907, and in 1917.

Such a militia would guarantee absolute order and a comradely discipline practised with enthusiasm. At the same time, it would afford a means of struggling in a real democratic manner against the crisis through which all the warring nations are now passing ; it would make possible the regular and prompt assessment of food and other supply levies, the establishment of " universal labour duty " which the French now call " civil mobilisation " and the Germans—" obligatory civil service," and without which, as has been demonstrated, it is impossible to heal the wounds that were and are being inflicted by this predatory and horrible war.

Has the proletariat of Russia shed its blood only to receive luxurious promises of mere political democratic reforms? Will it not demand and make sure that every toiler should see and feel a certain improvement in his life right now? That every family should have sufficient bread? That every child should have a bottle of good milk, and that no adult in a rich family should dare take extra milk until all the children are supplied? That the palaces and luxurious homes left by the Tsar and the

aristocracy should not stand idle but should provide shelter to the homeless and the destitute? What other organisation except a universal people's militia with women participating on a par with the men can effect these measures?

Such measures *do not yet* constitute Socialism. They deal with distribution of consumption, not with the reorganisation of industry. They do not yet constitute the "dictatorship of the proletariat," but merely a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry." Theoretical classification doesn't matter now. It would indeed be a grave error if we tried now to fit the complex, urgent, rapidly unfolding practical tasks of the revolution into the Procrustean bed of a narrowly-conceived "theory," instead of regarding theory first of all and above all as a *guide to action*.

Will the mass of Russian workers have sufficient class-consciousness, self-discipline and heroism to show "wonders of proletarian organisation" after they have displayed wonders of courage, initiative and self-sacrifice in direct revolutionary struggle? This we do not know, and to make conjectures about it would be idle, for such questions are answered *only* by life itself.

What we do know definitely and what we must as a party explain to the masses is that we have on hand an historic motive power of tremendous force that causes an unheard-of crisis, hunger and countless miseries. This motive power is the war which the capitalists of *both* warring camps are waging for predatory purposes. This "motive power" has brought a number of the richest, freest, and most enlightened nations to the brink of an abyss. It *forces* nations to strain all their strength to the breaking point, it places them in an insufferable position, it makes imperative the putting into effect not of "theories" (that is out of the question, and Marx had repeatedly warned Socialists against this illusion), but of most extreme yet practical measures, because *without* these

extreme measures there is death, immediate and indubitable death for millions of people through hunger.

That revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the most advanced class can accomplish much when objective conditions demand extreme measures from the entire people, need not be argued. *This* aspect of the case is clearly seen and felt by every one in Russia.

It is important to understand that in revolutionary times the objective situation changes as rapidly and as suddenly as life itself. We should be able to adjust our tactics and our immediate objectives to the peculiarities of every given situation. Up to March 1917, our task was to conduct a bold revolutionary-internationalist propaganda, to awaken and call the masses to struggle. In the March days there was required the courage of heroic struggle to crush tsarism—the most immediate foe. We are now going through a transition from the first stage of the revolution to the second, from a “grapple” with tsarism to a “grapple” with the imperialism of Guchkov-Miliukov, of the capitalists and the landowners. Our immediate problem is organisation, not in the sense of effecting ordinary organisation by ordinary methods, but in the sense of drawing large masses of the oppressed classes in unheard-of numbers into the organisation, and of embodying in this organisation military, State, and national economic problems.

The proletariat has approached this unique task and will approach it in a variety of ways. In some localities of Russia the March revolution has given the proletariat almost full power—in others, the proletariat will begin to build up and strengthen the proletarian militia perhaps by “usurpation”—in still others, it will, probably, work for immediate elections, on the basis of universal suffrage, to the city councils and zemstvos, in order to turn them into revolutionary centres, etc., until the growth of proletarian organisation, the *rapprochement* of soldiers and workers, the stirring within the peasantry, the disillusionment of very many about the competence of the militarist-imperialist

government of Guchkov and Miliukov shall have brought nearer the hour when that government will give place to the "government" of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

Nor must we forget that right near Petrograd there is one of the most advanced, actually republican, countries—Finland—a country which from 1905 up to 1917, shielded by the revolutionary struggles in Russia, has developed a democracy by comparatively peaceful means, and has won the majority of its population over to Socialism. The Russian proletariat will insure the freedom of the Finnish republic, even to the point of separation (there is hardly a Social-Democrat who would hesitate on this score now, when the Cadet Rodichev is so shamefully haggling in Helsingfors over bits of privileges for the Great Russians), and thus gain the full confidence and comradely aid of the Finnish workers for the all-Russian proletarian cause. In a difficult and great cause errors are unavoidable, nor shall we avoid them; the Finnish workers are better organisers, they will help us in this and, *in their own way*, bring nearer the establishment of a Socialist republic.

Revolutionary victories in Russia itself—quiet organisational successes in Finland shielded by the above victories—the Russian workers taking up revolutionary-organisational tasks on a new scale—conquest of power by the proletariat and the poorest strata of the population—encouraging and developing the Socialist revolution in the West—this is the path that will lead us to peace and Socialism.



V. I. Lenin

## THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

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[Immediately after Lenin's arrival in Petrograd on April 16, 1917, he presented his ideas on the development of the revolution (already outlined in his letters from Switzerland), to meetings of Social Democratic members of the national conference of Soviets. The document put forward by Lenin (subsequently known as "The April Theses"), indicated the policy to be pursued by the Bolshevik Party; together with a more detailed statement also written by Lenin at this time, these theses were the main material for the April (1917) Conference of the Bolsheviks, and guided their tactics up to the November revolution. The April theses are reprinted below, and also the section of the expanded statement which deals with changing the name of the Party from Social Democratic to Communist.]

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### ON THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRESENT REVOLUTION

As I only arrived in Petrograd on the night of April 16, I could, of course, only on my own responsibility and admittedly without sufficient preparation render a report on April 17 on the problems of the revolutionary proletariat.

The only thing I could do to facilitate matters for myself and for honest opponents was to prepare written theses. I read them, and gave the text to Comrade Tsereteli.

I read them twice, very slowly : First at the meeting of the Bolsheviks, then at the joint meeting of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

I am publishing these personal theses, provided with very short explanatory notes, which were developed in more detail in the report :

#### THESES

1. In our attitude towards the war not the smallest concession must be made to "revolutionary defencism," for under the new government of Lvov and Co., owing to the capitalist nature of this government, the war on Russia's part remains a predatory imperialist war.

The class-conscious proletariat may give its consent to a revolutionary war, actually justifying revolutionary defencism, only on condition (a) that all power be transferred to the proletariat and its ally, the poorest section of the peasantry ; (b) that all annexations be renounced in deeds, not merely in words ; (c) that there be a complete break in practice, with all interests of capital.

In view of the undoubted honesty of the mass of rank and file representatives of revolutionary defencism who accept the war only as a necessity and not as a means of conquest, in view of their being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary most thoroughly, persistently, patiently to explain to them their error, to explain the inseparable connection between capital and the imperialist war, to prove that without the overthrow of capital, it is *impossible* to conclude the war with a really democratic, non-oppressive peace.

This view is to be widely propagated among the army units in the field.

Fraternisation.

2. The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution, which, because of the inadequate organisation

and insufficient class-consciousness of the proletariat, led to the assumption of power by the bourgeoisie—to its second stage which is to place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry.

This transition is characterised, on the one hand, by a maximum of legality (Russia is now the freest of all the belligerent countries of the world); on the other, by the absence of oppression of the masses, and, finally, by the trustingly ignorant attitude of the masses toward the capitalist government, the worst enemy of peace and Socialism.

This peculiar situation demands of us an ability to adapt ourselves to specific conditions of party work amidst vast masses of the proletariat just awakened to political life.

3. No support to the Provisional Government; exposure of the utter falsity of all its promises, particularly those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Unmasking, instead of admitting, the illusion-breeding "demand" that *this* government, a government of capitalists, cease being imperialistic.

4. Recognition of the fact that in most of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies our party constitutes a minority, and a small one at that, in the face of the *bloc* of all the petty-bourgeois opportunist elements from the People's Socialists, the Socialists-Revolutionists down to the Organisation Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc., Steklov, etc., etc.) who have yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie and have been extending this influence to the proletariat as well.

It must be explained to the masses that the Soviet of Workers' Deputies is the only possible form of revolutionary government and, therefore, our task is, while this government is submitting to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic, and persistent analysis of its errors and tactics, an analysis especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses.

While we are in the minority, we carry on the work

of criticism and of exposing errors, advocating all along the necessity of transferring the entire power of state to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, so that the masses might learn from experience how to rid themselves of errors.

5. Not a parliamentary republic—a return to it from the Soviet of Workers' Deputies would be a step backward—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies, throughout the land, from top to bottom.

Abolition of the police, the army, the bureaucracy.<sup>1</sup>

All officers to be elected and to be subject to recall at any time, their salaries not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

6. In the agrarian programme, the emphasis must be shifted to the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

Confiscation of all private lands.

Nationalisation of all lands in the country, and management of such lands by local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. A separate organisation of Soviets of Deputies of the poorest peasants. Creation of model agricultural establishments out of large estates (from 100 to 300 desiatinas, in accordance with local and other conditions and with the estimates of local institutions) under the control of the Soviet of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies, and at public expense.

7. Immediate merger of all the banks in the country into one general national bank, over which the Soviet of Workers' Deputies should have control.

8. Not the "introduction" of Socialism as an immediate task, but the immediate placing of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies in control of social production and distribution of goods.

9. Party tasks :

A. Immediate calling of a party convention.

B. Changing the party programme, mainly :

<sup>1</sup> Substituting for the standing army the universal arming of the people.

- (1) Concerning imperialism and the imperialist war.
- (2) Concerning our attitude toward the state and our demand for a "commune state."<sup>1</sup>
- (3) Amending our antiquated minimum programme.

C. Changing the name of the party.<sup>2</sup>

10. Rebuilding the International.

Taking the initiative in the creation of a revolutionary International, an International against the social-chauvinists and against the "centre."<sup>3</sup>

A NAME FOR OUR PARTY WHICH WOULD BE  
SCIENTIFICALLY SOUND AND CONDUCTIVE TO  
PROLETARIAN CLASS THINKING

I am coming to the last point, the name of our party. We must call ourselves the Communist Party—just as Marx and Engels called themselves Communists.

We must insist that we are Marxists and that we have as a basis *The Communist Manifesto*, which has been perverted and betrayed by the Social-Democracy on two important points: (1) The workers have no country; "national defence" in an imperialist war is a betrayal of Socialism; (2) Marx's teaching about the state has been perverted by the Second International.

The term "Social-Democracy" is unscientific, as Marx showed repeatedly, particularly in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in 1875, and as Engels restated in a more popular form, in 1894. Mankind can pass directly from capitalism only into Socialism, i.e., into social ownership

<sup>1</sup> A state the model for which was given by the Paris Commune.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of "Social-Democracy," whose official leaders throughout the world have betrayed Socialism by going over to the bourgeoisie (defencists and vacillating Kautskians), we must call ourselves the *Communist Party*.

<sup>3</sup> The "centre" in the international Social-Democracy is the tendency vacillating between chauvinists ("defencists") and internationalists, i.e. Kautsky and Co. in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Turati and Co. in Italy, MacDonald and Co. in England, etc.

of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the work of the individual. Our party looks farther ahead than that : Socialism is bound sooner or later to ripen into Communism, whose banner bears the motto : "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

That is the first reason.

Here is my second : The second part of the term "Social-Democracy" is scientifically wrong. Democracy is only a form of state, while we Marxists are opposed to every form of state.

The leaders of the Second International (1889-1914), Messrs. Plekhanov, Kautsky and their ilk, perverted and debased Marxism.

The difference between Marxism and Anarchism is that Marxism admits the necessity of the state during the transition from capitalism to Socialism ; but (and here is where we differ from Kautsky and Co.) not the kind of state found in the usual, parliamentary, bourgeois, democratic republic, but rather something like the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies of 1905 and 1917.

There is a third reason : Life and the revolution have already established here in a concrete way (although in a form which is still weak and embryonic), this new type of "state," though it is not really a state in the proper sense of the word.

It is now a question of the action of the masses and not merely the theories of leaders.

Essentially the state is the power exercised over the masses by a group of armed men separated from the people.

Our new state, which is now in process of being born, is also a real state, for we, too, need detachments of armed men ; we, too, need the strictest order, and the ruthless crushing of all attempts at a tsarist as well as a Guchkov-bourgeois counter-revolution.

But our forming, new state is not yet a state in the proper sense of the word, for detachments of armed men found in many parts of Russia are really the masses themselves, the people, and not simply privileged individuals, practically unremovable, placed above and separated from the people.

We ought to look forward, not backward ; we ought to look away from the usual bourgeois type of democracy which has been strengthening the domination of the bourgeoisie by the means of the old, monarchistic organs of government—the police, the army, and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the advent of the newly born democracy, which is already ceasing to be a democracy, for democracy means the people's rule, while, obviously, an armed people could not rule over itself.

The word democracy is not only not scientific when applied to the Communist Party, but, since March 1917, it has simply become a blinker placed upon the eyes of the revolutionary people, preventing the latter from establishing boldly, freely, and on its own initiative a new form of power : the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', etc., Deputies, as the sole power in the state and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state as such.

There is a fourth reason : We must take into account the objective international condition of Socialism.

Its condition is no longer what it was between the years 1871 and 1914, when Marx and Engels consciously allowed the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social-Democracy." For history proved that what was most needed in those days, i.e., right after the defeat of the Paris Commune, was slow work of organisation and enlightenment. Nothing else was possible. The Anarchists were then, as they are now, theoretically, economically, and politically wrong. The Anarchists made a wrong estimate of the time, for they did not understand the world situation : the worker of England corrupted by imperialist profits ; the Paris Commune destroyed ; the bourgeois-national movement

in Germany flushed with recent victory ; and semi-feudal Russia still sleeping the sleep of centuries.

Marx and Engels gauged the hour accurately ; they understood the international situation ; they realised the need of a slow approach toward the beginning of the Social Revolution.

We, in turn, must understand the peculiarities and the tasks of the new epoch. Let us not imitate the woe-Marxians of whom Marx himself said : " I sowed dragons and I reaped fleas."

The objective needs of capitalism which has grown into imperialism have brought forth the imperialist war. This war has brought mankind to the brink of a precipice, to the destruction of civilisation, the ruin and brutalisation of countless millions of human beings.

There is no other way out, except a proletarian revolution.

And just when that revolution is beginning, when it is taking its first awkward, timid, weak, unconscious steps, when it is still trusting the bourgeoisie, at that moment the majority (it is the truth, it is a fact) of the Social-Democratic leaders, of the Social-Democratic parliamentarians, of the Social-Democratic papers, in a word, all those who could spur the masses to action, or at least the majority of them, are betraying Socialism, are selling Socialism, are going to fight the battles of their national bourgeoisie.

The masses are distracted, baffled, deceived by their leaders.

And should we aid and abet that deception by retaining the old and worn-out party name, which is as decayed as the Second International ?

It may be that many workers understand the meaning of Social-Democracy honestly. It is high time that we learn to distinguish between the objective and the subjective.

Subjectively, these workers, who are Social-Democrats, are the most loyal leaders of the proletarian masses.



Objectively, however, the world situation is such that the old name of our party helps to fool the masses and retard their onward march. Every day, in every paper, in every parliamentary group, the masses see leaders, i.e., people whose voice carries far, whose acts are very much in evidence, who also call themselves Social-Democrats, who are "for unity" with the betrayers of Socialism, the social-chauvinists, and who are trying to collect on the notes issued by Social-Democracy. . . .

Are there any reasons against the new name? We are told that one may confuse us with Anarchists-Communists.

Why are we not afraid of being confused with the Social-Nationalists, the Social-Liberals, the Radical-Socialists, the foremost, the most adroit bourgeois party in the French Republic at deceiving the masses? We are told: "The masses have grown used to the name, the workers have learned to love their Social-Democratic Party."

That is the only reason, but this reason goes counter to the teachings of Marxism, disregards the revolutionary tasks of to-morrow, the objective position of Socialism the world over, the shameful breakdown of the Second International, and the injury done to the cause by the pack of "also Social-Democrats" surrounding the proletarians.

This reason is based solely on laziness, somnolence, and love of routine.

We want to rebuild the world. We want to end this imperialist World War in which hundreds of millions of people are involved and billions of dollars are invested, a war which cannot be ended in a truly democratic way without the greatest proletarian revolution in history.

And here we are, afraid of our own shadow. Here we are, keeping on our backs the same old soiled shirt. . . .

It is high time to cast off the soiled shirt, it is high time to put on clean linen.

N. LENIN.

*J. Stalin*

## REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION, AUGUST 1917

*English translation contained in "Preparing for October" (the Minutes of the VIth Congress of the Bolshevik Party), Modern Books Ltd., 1931.*

[ At the Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party in August 1917, Stalin made the political report on behalf of the Central Committee. This report on the political situation, midway between the March and November revolutions, is an analysis of all the circumstances driving the revolution forward to its completion.]

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## REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION, AUGUST 1917

THE question of the moment is the question of the fate of our revolution, of the forces moving the revolution forward and of the forces undermining it.

Who made the revolution? A coalition of four forces: the proletariat, the peasantry, the liberal bourgeoisie and capitalists of the Allied countries. Why did the proletariat take part in the revolution? Because it is the mortal foe of Tsarism. Why did the peasantry take part in it? Because it trusted the proletariat and was hungry for land. Why did the liberal bourgeoisie take part in the revolution? Because during the war it had become disillusioned with Tsarism. It thought Tsarism would enable it to conquer fresh lands. Having lost hope in the expansion of the home market, it chose the path of least resistance: the expansion of the foreign market. But it made a mistake. Tsarism

and its forces were unable even to protect the frontiers and gave up fifteen provinces to the enemy. Hence, the betrayal of Tsarism by the liberal bourgeoisie. But what of Allied capital? It regarded Russia as an auxiliary means for attaining its imperialist aims. Meanwhile, Tsarism, which during the first two years offered some hopes for maintaining a united front, began to incline toward a separate peace. Hence, the betrayal of Tsarism by Allied capital.

Tsarism proved to be isolated and quietly and peacefully passed away.

These four forces, which jointly made the February Revolution, had various aims in view. The liberal bourgeoisie and Allied capital wanted a little revolution for the sake of a big war. But it was not for this that the mass of workers and peasants participated in the revolution. They had other aims in view: (1) to put an end to the war, and (2) to overthrow the big landlords and the bourgeoisie.

These are the fundamental contradictions of the revolution. The crisis of May 3rd-4th was the first manifestation of these contradictions. Miliukov tried to transform passive imperialism into active imperialism. As a result of the mass movement, a coalition government was formed. As experience has shown, the principle of coalition is the most effective means the bourgeoisie possesses for deceiving the masses and sweeping them along with it. From the moment the coalition government was formed the mobilisation of the counter-revolution from above and from below was begun. Meanwhile, the war continued, economic ruin was intensified, the revolution continued to develop and to assume more and more a socialist character. The revolution invades the sphere of production, it raises the question of control of industry. The revolution invades the sphere of agriculture, the question arises, not only of confiscating the land, but also of confiscating livestock and implements. The Bolsheviks, in so far as they were the harbingers of the

proletarian revolution, correctly analysed its character. Those who proposed to confine themselves to consolidating the conquests of the revolution were not revolutionaries. The path of compromise, which has been chosen by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, meant condemning themselves to impotence. There was no power, there was no possibility of stopping the revolution half-way. Thus, the fact that the revolution has been developing and moving forward has brought us up against the necessity of passing over the bourgeois revolution to the socialist revolution.

Several comrades have said that since capitalism is only feebly developed here, it is Utopian to raise the question of a socialist revolution. They would be right if it were not for the war, if it were not for the devastation, if the foundations of national economy had not been shaken. But these questions of interfering in the economic sphere are being raised in all countries as vital questions. In Germany this question has been raised and settled without the direct and active participation of the masses. It is quite otherwise here in Russia. Here economic collapse has assumed more ominous dimensions. On the other hand, in no other country has there ever been such freedom in time of war as here in Russia. Then, there is the high degree of organisation of the workers : for example, in Petrograd 66 per cent of the metal workers are organised. Finally, in no other country has the proletariat such an extensive organisation as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Under these circumstances it was impossible for the workers to refrain from interfering in economic life. This is the real reason why the question of the socialist revolution could arise here in Russia.

In so far as the workers have begun actively to intervene in the process of organising control of production and exchange, the question of the socialist revolution has become a practical issue. Therefore the comrades who object to this are in the wrong.

Inasmuch as the revolution has gone so far ahead, it could not help arousing the vigilance of the counter-revolutionaries ; it was bound to give birth to the counter-revolution ; that is the first factor which is mobilising the counter-revolution.

The second factor is the wild adventure begun by the policy of the offensive at the front, and a whole series of breaches of the line at the front, which have robbed the government of all prestige and have lent wings to the counter-revolution, which has launched its attack on this government. Rumours are afloat to the effect that the period of provocation on a large scale has begun. The delegates from the front consider that both the offensive and the retreat, in a word, all that has taken place at the front, was prepared in order to dishonour the revolution and overthrow the "revolutionary" ministry. I do not know whether they are right or not, but it is remarkable that on July 15th the Cadets retired from the government, that the July events began on July 16th and that on July 17th news was received of the collapse at the front. It is impossible to argue that the Cadets retired because of the decision on the Ukrainian question : the Cadets had declared that the Ukrainian question must be solved. But there is a second fact showing that the period of provocation had actually begun. I refer to the skirmish in the Ukraine. In connection with these facts it must be plain to the comrades that the collapse at the front was one of the facts which helped to discredit the revolution in the eyes of the broad petty-bourgeois masses.

There is yet a third factor which reinforces the strength of the counter-revolution in Russia : that is Allied capital. If Allied capital could betray the government of Nicholas II when it saw that Tsarism was heading for a separate peace, nothing will prevent it from breaking with the present government if the latter proves incapable of maintaining a "united" front.

At one of the meetings of the cabinet Miliukov stated that

the international Exchange regarded Russia as a supplier of men and that she gets money for that. And if it becomes obvious that the new power, represented by the Provisional Government, is incapable of maintaining the united front in the offensive against Germany, then it will not be worth while subsidising such a government. But a government without money and without credit was bound to fail. This explains the secret why the Cadets, in the period of crisis, gained such tremendous force. However, Kerensky and all the ministers proved to be mere puppets in the hands of the Cadets. Wherein lies the strength of the Cadets? It lies in the support given them by Allied capital.

Russia has two paths before her :

Either the war is brought to an end, all financial bonds with imperialism are torn asunder, the revolution moves forward, the foundations of the bourgeois world are shaken and the era of the working-class revolution begins—

Or else the other path, the path of continuing the war, the continuation of the offensive, submission to all the orders of Allied capital and of the Cadets—and in that case, complete financial dependence upon Allied capital (in the Taurida Palace there have been definite rumours that America would give eight billions, would furnish means to restore the national economy) and the triumph of the counter-revolution.

There can be no third path, it does not exist.

The attempt made by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to describe the demonstration of July 16th-17th—the demonstration of the workers who could no longer tolerate the policy of capitalism—as an armed insurrection, is simply ridiculous. If we are to speak of culprits, we must keep in mind the objective conditions: (1) the development of the revolution into a socialist revolution, (2) the collapse at the front which has shown the petty-bourgeoisie the uselessness of the coalition

government, and (3) Allied capital, which is unwilling to subsidise the revolution. As compared with these forces the workers' demonstration is of such small importance as to be scarcely noticeable. The only thing really to blame for the demonstration is that the counter-revolution has become insolvent.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries set about striking at the left, at the Bolsheviks, and by that very fact they opened the revolutionary front to the enemy and betrayed both themselves and us to the counter-revolutionaries. On July 16th we proposed the unity of the revolutionary front against the counter-revolution. Our slogan was "All Power to the Soviets," which meant, form a united revolutionary front. But fearing to break with the bourgeoisie, they turned their backs on us, and that broke the revolutionary front, to the advantage of the counter-revolution. If we are going to speak of who is to blame for the counter-revolution, then the ones to blame are the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, the traitors to the revolution. If we ask wherein lies the strength of the Cadets, who are able to sit in their office and give instructions to the Central Executive Committee, if we ask whence they draw their strength, then there can only be one answer : from Allied capital, from the fact that Russia needs money, needs an internal loan, which the bourgeoisie is unwilling to give, or a guaranteed foreign loan, which Allied capital will not give because it does not like the policy of the coalition government. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, Allied capital and the upper ranks of the officers form the three mainstays of the counter-revolution. Our misfortune is that Russia is a petty-bourgeois country, which follows the lead of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who are compromising with the Cadets, so that until the peasantry is disillusioned with the idea of compromise between the upper and lower classes we shall suffer and the revolution will fail.

But the hidden forces of the revolution are not slumbering : inasmuch as the war is continuing, inasmuch as the collapse of economic life is continuing, no repressions, no executions, no Moscow Conferences will save the government from fresh outbreaks. The peasantry will not get the land, the worker will not secure control over production, the soldier will be sent back to his former slavery. The delegates from the front report that among the soldiers the idea of bloody revenge is ripening and as the counter-revolution triumphs, new battles and new explosions are absolutely inevitable. And if the counter-revolutionaries succeed in keeping the power for another month or two, it will be only because the principle of coalition is not yet discredited.

What is the Provisional Government ? It is a puppet, it is a wretched screen behind which stand the Cadets, the military clique and Allied capital, the three mainstays of the counter-revolution. If the " Socialist " ministers were not in the government, the counter-revolutionaries might already have been overthrown. But the characteristic feature of the present situation is the fact that the measures of the counter-revolutionaries are being carried out by the " Socialists." It is only because such a screen has been put up that the counter-revolution can go on existing for another month or two. But since the forces of the revolution are developing, there will be explosions, and the moment will come when the workers will arouse and rally around them the poorer strata of the peasantry, will unfurl the banner of the workers' revolution and open the era of the socialist revolution in Western Europe.

I should like to explain one passage in the resolution : Until July 16th a peaceful victory was possible, the peaceful transfer of power to the Soviets. If the Congress of Soviets had made up its mind to take power into its hands, the Cadets, I believe, would not have dared to act openly against the Soviets, for such an action would have been doomed to failure. But at the present time, since the



counter-revolution has become organised and strong, to say that the Soviets can peacefully take power into their hands is to talk nonsense. The peaceful period of the revolution is over, the storm period has begun, the period of battle and explosions. . . .

V. I. Lenin

## ON THE EVE OF OCTOBER

*Articles and letters written in the weeks preceding November 7, 1917 ; some only published after the Revolution. English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1932.*

[ First from Finland, and then after his return to Petrograd, Lenin urged on the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks that the situation was ripe for revolution—"armed uprising is inevitable and has fully matured." The Central Committee hesitated, and even after a majority decision in favour of an uprising, the two dissentients, Kamenev and Zinoviev, published a declaration against it. The letters printed below show Lenin's application of the Marxist theory of revolution, and his insistence on action at "the crucial point of the maturing revolution." ]

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## ON THE EVE OF OCTOBER

### MARXISM AND UPRISING

AMONG the most vicious and perhaps most widespread distortions of Marxism practised by the prevailing "Socialist" parties, is to be found the opportunist lie which says that preparations for an uprising, and generally the treatment of an uprising as an art, is "Blanquism."

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, long since gained sad notoriety by accusing Marxism of Blanquism ; and our present opportunists, by shouting about Blanquism, in reality do not in any way improve or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein.

To accuse Marxists of Blanquism for treating uprising as an art ! Can there be a more flagrant distortion of the truth, when there is not a single Marxist who denies that it was Marx who expressed himself in the most definite, precise and categorical manner on this score ; that it was Marx who called uprising nothing but an *art*, who said that uprising must be treated as an art, that one must *gain* the first success and then proceed from success to success without stopping the *offensive* against the enemy and making use of his confusion, etc., etc.

To be successful, the uprising must be based not on a conspiracy, not on a party, but on the advanced class. This is the first point. The uprising must be based on the revolutionary upsurge of the people. This is the second point. The uprising must be based on the *crucial point* in the history of the maturing revolution, when the activity of the vanguard of the people is at its height, when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemies, and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted, undecided friends of the revolution are at their highest point*. This is the third point. It is in pointing out these three conditions as the way of approaching the question of an uprising, that Marxism differs from Blanquism.

But once these conditions exist, then to refuse to treat the uprising *as an art* means to betray Marxism and the revolution.

To show why this very moment must be recognised as the one when it is obligatory for the party to recognise the uprising as placed on the order of the day by the course of objective events, and to treat uprising as an art—to show this, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison and to draw a parallel between July 16-17 and the September days.

On July 16-17 it was possible, without trespassing against the truth, to put the question thus : it would have been more proper to take power, since our enemies would anyway accuse us of revolt and treat us as rebels. This, however, did not warrant a decision to take power at that time, because there were still lacking the objective conditions for a victorious uprising.

1. We did not yet have behind us the class that is the vanguard of the revolution. We did not yet have a majority among the workers and soldiers of the capitals. Now we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created *only* by the history of July and August, by the experience of ruthless punishment meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov affair.

2. At that time there was no general revolutionary upsurge of the people. Now there is, after the Kornilov affair. This is proven by the situation in the provinces and by the seizure of power by the Soviets in many localities.

3. At that time there were no *vacillations* on a serious, general, political scale among our enemies and among the undecided petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillations are enormous ; our main enemy, the imperialism of the Allies and of the world (for the " Allies " are at the head of world imperialism), has begun to vacillate between war to a victory and a separate peace against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having obviously lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, rejecting a bloc, i.e., a coalition with the Cadets.

4. This is why an uprising on July 16-17 would have been an error : we would not have retained power either physically or politically. Not physically, in spite of the fact that at certain moments Petrograd was in our hands, because our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* at that time for the sake of holding Petrograd ; at that time people had not yet become so " brutalised " ; there was not in existence such a burning hatred both towards the Kerenskys and towards the Tseretelis and Chernovs ; and

our own people were not yet hardened by the experience of the Bolsheviks being persecuted, while the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks took part in the persecuting.

We could not have retained power July 16-17 politically, for, *before the Kornilov affair*, the army and the provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd.

Now the picture is entirely different.

We have back of us the majority of a *class* that is the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, and is capable of drawing the masses along.

We have back of us a *majority* of the people, for Chernov's resignation, far from being the only sign, is only the most striking, the most outstanding sign showing that the peasantry *will not receive land* from a bloc with the S.-R.'s, or from the S.-R.'s themselves. And in this lies the essence of the popular character of the revolution.

We are in the advantageous position of a party which knows its road perfectly well, while *imperialism as a whole*, as well as the entire bloc of the Mensheviks and the S.-R.'s, is vacillating in an extraordinary manner.

*Victory is assured* to us, for the people are now very close to desperation, and we are showing the whole people a sure way out, having demonstrated to the whole people the significance of our leadership during the "Kornilov days," and then having *offered* the bloc politicians a compromise which they *rejected* at a time when their vacillations continued uninterruptedly.

It would be a very great error to think that our compromise offer has *not yet* been rejected, that the "*Democratic Conference*" *still* may accept it. The compromise was offered from *party to parties*. It could not have been offered otherwise. The *parties* have rejected it. The Democratic Conference is nothing but a *conference*. One must not forget one thing, namely, that this conference does not represent the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poorest and most embittered peasantry. One must not forget the self-evident truth that this conference represents a *minority of the people*.

It would be a very great error, a very great parliamentary idiocy on our part, if we were to treat the Democratic Conference as a parliament, for even *if* it were to proclaim itself a parliament, the sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would not be able to *decide* anything. The decision lies *outside* of it, in the workers' sections of Petrograd and Moscow.

We have before us all the objective prerequisites for a successful uprising. We have the advantages of a situation where *only* our victory in an uprising will put an end to the most painful thing on earth, the vacillations that have sickened the people ; a situation where *only our* victory in an uprising will *put an end* to the game of a separate peace against the revolution by openly offering a more complete, more just, more immediate peace *in favour* of the revolution.

Only our party, having won a victory in an uprising, *can* save Petrograd, for if our offer of peace is rejected, and we obtain not even a truce, then *we* shall become "defensists," then we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the most "warring" party, and we shall carry on a war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away from the capitalists all the bread and all the shoes. We shall leave them crumbs. We shall dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and all the shoes to the front.

And then we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, of a truly revolutionary war are still immense in Russia ; there are ninety-nine chances in a hundred that the Germans will at least grant us a truce. And to secure a truce at present means to conquer the *whole world*.

Having recognised the absolute necessity of an uprising of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow for the sake of saving the revolution and of saving Russia from being "separately" divided among the imperialists of both coalitions, we must first adapt our political tactics at the conference to the conditions of the maturing uprising ; secondly, we must prove that we accept, and not only in

words, the idea of Marx about the necessity of treating uprising as an art.

At the conference, we must immediately consolidate the Bolshevik fraction without worrying about numbers, without being afraid of leaving the vacillators in the camp of the vacillating : they are more useful *there* to the cause of revolution than in the camp of the resolute and courageous fighters.

We must compose a brief declaration in the name of the Bolsheviks in which we sharply emphasise the irrelevance of long speeches, the irrelevance of "speeches" generally, the necessity of quick action to save the revolution, the absolute necessity of breaking completely with the bourgeoisie, of completely ousting the whole present government, of completely severing relations with the Anglo-French imperialists who are preparing a "separate" partition of Russia, the necessity of all power immediately passing into the hands of *revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat*.

Our declaration must be the briefest and sharpest formulation of this conclusion ; it must connect up with the points in the programme of peace to the people, land to the peasants, confiscation of scandalous profits, and a halt to the scandalous damage to production done by the capitalists.

The briefer, the sharper the declaration, the better. Only two more important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are tired of vacillations, that they are tortured by the lack of decisiveness on the part of the S.-R.'s and Mensheviks ; and that we are definitely severing relations with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

The other point. In offering an immediate peace without annexations, in breaking at once with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, we obtain either an immediate truce or a going over of the entire revolutionary proletariat to the side of defence, and a truly just, truly revolutionary war will then be waged by revolutionary democracy under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having made this declaration, having appealed for *decisions* and not talk ; for *actions*, not writing resolutions, we must *push* our whole fraction *into the factories and barracks* : its place is there ; the pulse of life is there ; the source of saving the revolution is there ; the moving force of the Democratic Conference is there.

In heated, impassioned speeches we must make our programme clear and we must put the question this way : either the conference accepts it *fully*, or an uprising follows. There is no middle course. Delay is impossible. The revolution is perishing.

Having put the question this way, having concentrated our entire fraction in the factories and barracks, *we shall correctly estimate the best moment to begin the uprising.*

And in order to treat uprising in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise the staff of the insurrectionary detachments ; designate the forces ; move the loyal regiments to the most important points ; surround the Alexander theatre ; occupy Peter and Paul Fortress ; arrest the general staff and the government ; move against the military cadets, the Wild Division, etc., such detachments as will die rather than allow the enemy to move to the centre of the city ; we must mobilise the armed workers, call them to a last desperate battle, occupy at once the telegraph and telephone stations, place *our* staff of the uprising at the central telephone station, connect it by wire with all the factories, the regiments, the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of an example, to *illustrate* the idea that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to the revolution *without treating uprising as an art.*

Written September 26-27, 1917.

#### THE CRISIS HAS MATURED

... What, then, is to be done ? We must *aussprechen*, was ist, "say what is," admit the truth, that in our Central

Committee and at the top of our party there is a tendency in favour of *awaiting* the Congress of Soviets, *against* the immediate seizure of power, *against* an immediate uprising. We must *overcome* this tendency or opinion.

Otherwise the Bolsheviks would *cover themselves with shame for ever* ; they would be *reduced to nothing* as a party.

For to miss such a moment and to "await" the Congress of Soviets is either *absolute idiocy* or *complete betrayal*.

It is a complete betrayal of the German workers. Indeed, we must not wait for the *beginning* of their revolution !! When it begins, even the Liberdans will be in favour of "supporting" it. But it *cannot* begin as long as Kerensky, Kishkin and Co. are in power.

It is a complete betrayal of the peasantry. To have the Soviets of *both capitals* and to allow the uprising of the peasants to be suppressed means *to lose, and justly so*, all the confidence of the peasant ; it means to become in the eyes of the peasants equal to the Liberdans and other scoundrels.

To "await" the Congress of Soviets is absolute idiocy, for this means losing *weeks*, whereas weeks and even days now decide *everything*. It means timidly to *refuse* the seizure of power, for on November 14-15 it will be impossible (both politically and technically, since the Cossacks will be mobilised for the day of the foolishly "appointed"<sup>1</sup> uprising).

To "await" the Congress of Soviets is idiocy, for the Congress *will give nothing, it can give nothing* !

The "moral" importance? Strange indeed ! The "importance" of resolutions and negotiations with the Liberdans when we know that the Soviets are *in favour* of the peasants and that the peasant uprising is *being suppressed* !! Thus, we will reduce the Soviets to the rôle of miserable chatterers. First vanquish Kerensky, then call the Congress.

The victory of the uprising is now *secure* for the Bolsheviks:

<sup>1</sup>To "call" the Congress of Soviets for November 2, in order to decide upon the seizure of power—is there any difference between this and a foolishly "appointed" uprising? Now we can seize power, whereas November 2-11 you will not be allowed to seize it.



(1) we can<sup>1</sup> (if we do not "await" the Soviet Congress) launch a *sudden* attack from three points, from Petrograd, from Moscow, from the Baltic fleet; (2) we have slogans whose support is guaranteed: down with the government that suppresses the uprising of the peasants against the landowners! (3) we have a majority *in the country*; (4) complete disorganisation of the Mensheviks and S.-R.'s; (5) we are technically in a position to seize power in Moscow (which might even be the one to start, so as to deal the enemy a surprise blow); (6) we have *thousands* of armed workers and soldiers in Petrograd who can seize *at once* the Winter Palace, the General Staff Building, the telephone exchange and all the largest printing establishments. They will not be able to drive us out from there, whereas there will be such propaganda *in the army* that it will be *impossible* to fight against this government of peace, of land for the peasants, etc.

If we were to attack at once, suddenly, from three points, in Petrograd, Moscow, and the Baltic fleet, there are ninety-nine out of a hundred chances that we would gain a victory with fewer victims than on July 16-18, because *the troops will not advance* against the government of peace. Even if Kerensky has *already* "loyal" cavalry, etc., in Petrograd, when we attack from two sides and when the army is in sympathy *with us*, Kerensky will be compelled to *surrender*. If, with chances like the present, we do not seize power, then all talk of Soviet rule becomes a *lie*.

To refrain from seizing power at present, to "wait," to "chatter" in the Central Committee, to confine ourselves to "fighting for the organ" (of the Soviet), to "fighting for the Congress," means to *ruin the revolution*.

Seeing that the Central Committee has left *even without an answer* my writings insisting on such a policy since the beginning of the Democratic Conference, that the Central Organ *is deleting* from my articles references to such

<sup>1</sup> What has the party done by way of *studying* the location of the troops, etc.? What has it done for the carrying out of the uprising as "an art"? Only talk in the Central Committee, etc.!!

glaring errors of the Bolsheviks as the shameful decision to participate in the pre-parliament, as giving seats to the Mensheviks in the Presidium of the Soviets, etc., etc.—seeing all that, I am compelled to recognise here a “gentle” hint as to the unwillingness of the Central Committee even to consider this question, a gentle hint at gagging me and at suggesting that I retire.

I am compelled to *tender my resignation from the Central Committee*, which I hereby do, leaving myself the freedom of propaganda *in the lower ranks* of the party and at the Party Congress.

For it is my deepest conviction that if we “await” the Congress of Soviets and let the present moment pass, we *ruin* the revolution.

P.S. A whole series of facts has proven that even the Cossack troops will not move against the government of peace! And how many are they? Where are they? And will not the entire army delegate units in *our favour*?

#### LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

COMRADES!

I am writing these lines on the evening of the 6th. The situation is extremely critical. It is as clear as can be that delaying the uprising now really means death.

With all my power I wish to persuade the comrades that now everything hangs on a hair, that on the order of the day are questions that are not solved by conferences, by congresses (even by Congresses of Soviets), but only by the people, by the masses, by the struggle of armed masses.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovists, the removal of Verkhovsky show that we must not wait. We must at any price, this evening, to-night, arrest the Ministers, having disarmed (defeated if they offer resistance) the military cadets, etc.

We must not wait! We may lose everything!

The immediate gain from the seizure of power at present

is : defence of *the people* (not the congress, but the people, in the first place, the army and the peasants) against the Kornilovist government which has driven out Verkhovsky and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who should seize power ?

At present this is not important. Let the Military Revolutionary Committee seize it, or "some other institution" which declares that it will relinquish the power only to the real representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the Army (immediate offer of peace), the interests of the peasants (take the land immediately, abolish private property), the interests of the hungry.

It is necessary that all the boroughs, all regiments, all forces should be mobilised and should immediately send delegations to the Military Revolutionary Committee, to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks, insistently demanding that under no circumstances is power to be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 7th, by no means !—but that the matter must absolutely be decided this evening or to-night.

History will not forgive delay by revolutionists who could be victorious to-day (and will surely be victorious to-day), while they risk losing much to-morrow, they risk losing all.

If we seize power to-day, we seize it not against the Soviets but for them.

Seizure of power is the point of the uprising ; its political task will be clarified after the seizure.

It would be a disaster or formalism to wait for the uncertain voting of November 7. The people have a right and a duty to decide such questions not by voting but by force ; the people have a right and duty in critical moments of a revolution to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This has been proven by the history of all revolutions, and the crime of revolutionists would be limitless if they let go the proper moment, knowing that upon them depends the *saving of the revolution*, the offer of peace, the saving of

Petrograd, the saving from starvation, the transfer of the land to the peasants.

The government is tottering. We must *deal it the death blow* at any cost.

To delay action is the same as death.

Written November 6, 1917.

*J. Stalin*

## THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

*Articles and speeches on the Soviet Revolution, published in various Soviet journals between 1918 and 1927. English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1934.*

[Two of these articles are reprinted below. The first, on the National Question, was published in *Pravda*, November 6 and 19, 1918. It shows the Marxist attitude to the national question—this “is only part of the general question of the transformation of the existing order of society”; and that the Russian Revolution has changed the content of the national question “into a general question of liberating the oppressed nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism.” The second article, on the “middle strata,” brings out the importance to the revolution of its “reserves,” possible allies—in Russia, chiefly the peasantry. This was published in *Pravda*, Nov. 7, 1923.]

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## THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

### THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

THE NATIONAL QUESTION is not something that is self-sufficient, fixed once for all time. Being only part of the

general question of the transformation of the existing order of society, the national question is wholly determined by the conditions of the social environment, the character of the government of the country and, generally, by the whole course of social development. This is particularly noticeable during revolutionary epochs, when the national question and the national movement rapidly change their content in full view of everyone, according to the course and outcome of the revolution.

### *I. The February Revolution and the National Question*

In the epoch of the bourgeois revolution in Russia (dating from February 1917) the national movement in the borderlands bore the character of a bourgeois emancipatory movement. The nationalities of Russia, for ages oppressed and exploited by the "old régime," now for the first time felt that they possessed strength and hurled themselves into the combat with their oppressors. "Liquidate national oppression" was the slogan of the movement. The borderlands of Russia were instantly covered with "all-national" institutions. The movement was headed by the national bourgeois-democratic intelligentsia. "National Councils" in Latvia, in the Esthonian region, in Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, in the cities of the Caucasus, in Kirghizstan and the Middle Volga region; the "Rada" in the Ukraine and in White Russia; "Sfatul Tarei" in Bessarabia; "Kurultai" in the Crimea and in Bashkiria; the "Autonomous Government" in Turkestan—such were the "all-national" institutions around which the national bourgeoisie was gathering strength. The question at issue was emancipation from tsarism as the "basic cause" of national oppression, and the formation of national bourgeois States. The right of nations to self-determination was interpreted to mean the right of the national bourgeoisie in the borderlands to take power into its own hands and make use of the February Revolution for the

purpose of forming its "own" national state. The above-mentioned bourgeois institutions did not contemplate and could not contemplate developing the revolution further. At the same time it was overlooked that naked, barefaced, imperialism was coming to take the place of tsarism, and that this imperialism was a stronger and more dangerous enemy of nationalities, was the basis of a new national oppression.

The abolition of tsarism and the coming into power of the bourgeoisie did not, however, lead to the abolition of national oppression. The old, coarse form of national oppression gave way to a new, refined, yet more dangerous, form of oppression. The government of Lvov-Miliukov-Kerensky not only did not break with the policy of national oppression but organised a new campaign against Finland (dispersion of the Sejm in the summer of 1917) and the Ukraine (destruction of the cultural institutions of the Ukraine). More than that. This government, imperialist by nature, called on the population to continue the war in order to subjugate new lands, new colonies and nationalities. It was impelled to take this course not only by its intrinsic imperialist character but also by the existence of the old imperialist States in Western Europe which were irresistibly endeavouring to subjugate new lands and nationalities and threatened to constrict its sphere of influence. A struggle by the imperialist States to subjugate the small nationalities as a condition of the existence of these States was the picture revealed in the course of the imperialist war. The annihilation of tsarism and the appearance on the scene of the Miliukov-Kerensky government wrought virtually no improvement in this ungainly picture. Naturally, in so far as the "all-national" institutions in the borderlands displayed a tendency towards political independence, they encountered the irresistible opposition of the imperialist government of Russia. However, in so far as they consolidated the power of the national bourgeoisie and remained deaf to the vital interests of "their own"

workers and peasants, they evoked grumbling and discontent among the latter. The so-called "national regiments" only poured oil on the flames; they were powerless as against the danger from above, and merely intensified and aggravated the danger from below. The "all-national" institutions were left without defence against the blows dealt from without as well as against an explosion within. The budding bourgeois national States began to fade before blossom-time.

Thus the old bourgeois-democratic interpretation of the principle of self-determination became a fiction and lost its revolutionary meaning. In such conditions there could clearly be no question of the abolition of national oppression and of the independence of small and national States. It was becoming obvious that the liberation of the toiling masses of the oppressed nationalities and the abolition of national oppression were inconceivable without a break with imperialism, without overthrowing "one's own" national bourgeoisie and without the seizure of power by the toiling masses themselves.

This became especially apparent after the October Revolution.

## *II. The October Revolution and the National Question*

The February Revolution concealed in its bosom irreconcilable inner contradictions. The revolution was accomplished through the efforts of workers and peasants (soldiers), whereas, as a result of the revolution, power passed, not to the workers and peasants, but to the bourgeoisie. By making the revolution the workers and peasants wanted to put an end to the war, wanted to secure peace, whereas the bourgeoisie, which assumed power, strove to use the revolutionary ardour of the masses to continue the war, was against peace. The economic ruin of the country and the food crisis demanded the expropriation of capital and of the industrial enterprises for the benefit of the

workers, the confiscation of the landlord estates for the benefit of the peasants, whereas the bourgeois Miliukov-Kerensky government was standing guard over the interests of the landlords and capitalists, resolutely protecting the latter against attack by workers or peasants. That was a bourgeois revolution, effected at the hands of the workers and peasants for the benefit of "their own" exploiters.

Meanwhile the country continued to groan under the burden of the imperialist war, of economic disintegration and of the collapse of the food supply. The front was falling to pieces and was fast melting away. Factories and mills were stopping work. Famine was on the increase in the country. The February Revolution with its inner contradictions proved obviously inadequate to "save the country." The Miliukov-Kerensky government proved obviously incapable of solving the basic problems of the revolution.

A new, *socialist* revolution was necessary to lead the country out of the impasse of imperialist war and economic ruin.

This revolution came about as a result of the October insurrection.

By overthrowing the power of the landlords and the bourgeoisie and placing a government of the workers and peasants in its stead, the October Revolution at one blow solved the contradictions of the February Revolution. The abolition of landlord-kulak omnipotence and the transfer of the use of the land to the toiling masses of the villages ; the expropriation of the factories and mills, and their transfer to the management of the workers ; the break with imperialism and the termination of the predatory war ; the publication of the secret treaties and the exposure of the policy of foreign territorial annexations ; finally the proclamation of self-determination for the toiling masses of the oppressed nations and the recognition of the independence of Finland constitute the principal measures carried into effect by the Soviet government in the course of the revolution.



This was a truly *socialist* revolution.

The revolution which started at the centre could not be long confined to the narrow territory of the central area. After being victorious at the centre, it was absolutely bound to spread to the border regions. And, indeed, the revolutionary wave, from the very first days of the revolution spread from the North throughout the whole of Russia, engulfing one borderland after another. However, here it struck a rampart in the form of the "national councils" and regional "governments" (Don, Kuban, Siberia) which had been formed prior to October. The fact of the matter was that these "national governments" would not hear of a socialist revolution. Bourgeois by nature, they had no intention whatever of destroying the old bourgeois world ; on the contrary, they considered it their duty to exert all their energy to preserve and consolidate it. Imperialist in essence, they had not the slightest intention of breaking with imperialism ; on the contrary, they were never averse to capturing and subjugating bits and morsels of "foreign" nationalities, whenever an opportunity to do so presented itself. No wonder then that these "national governments" in the borderlands declared war on the socialist government at the centre. Once they had declared war, they naturally became hotbeds of reaction, to which everything counter-revolutionary in Russia gravitated. It is no secret to anyone that all the counter-revolutionaries cast out of Russia rushed to these hotbeds, and that there, around these hotbeds, they formed white guard "national" regiments.

However, in addition to "national" governments, the borderlands also have national workers and peasants. Even before the October Revolution they were organised in their own revolutionary Soviets of Deputies, after the model of the Soviet of Deputies obtaining in the central parts of Russia, and never severed their connections with their brothers in the North. They, too, strove for victory over the bourgeoisie ; they, too, fought for the triumph of socialism. No wonder the conflict between them and

"their own" national governments increased from day to day. The October Revolution only consolidated the alliance between the workers and peasants of the borderlands and the workers and peasants of Russia, inspiring them with faith in the triumph of socialism. And the war of the "national governments" against the Soviet government brought their conflict with these "governments" to a complete break with them, brought them to open rebellion against them.

Thus was formed the socialist alliance between the workers and peasants of all Russia against the counter-revolutionary alliance of the national-bourgeois "governments" of Russia's borderlands.

Some people depict the struggle of the borderland "governments" as a struggle for national liberation and against the "soulless centralism" of the Soviet government. This, however, is wrong. No government in the world ever granted such extensive decentralisation, no government in the world ever afforded its peoples such plenary national freedom as does the Soviet government of Russia. The struggle of the borderland "governments" was and remains a struggle of the bourgeois counter-revolution against socialism. The national flag is tacked on to the cause only to deceive the masses, only as a popular flag which conveniently covers up the counter-revolutionary designs of the national bourgeoisie.

However, the struggle of the "national" and regional "governments" proved to be an unequal struggle. Attacked from two quarters—from without by the Soviet government, and from within by "their own" workers and peasants—the "national governments" had to retreat after the very first battles. The uprising of the Finnish workers and agricultural labourers and the flight of the bourgeois "Senate"; the uprising of the Ukrainian workers and peasants and the flight of the bourgeois "Rada"; the uprising of the workers and peasants in the Don region, in Kuban, in Siberia and the downfall of

Kaledin, of Kornilov and of the Siberian "government"; the uprising of the poor of Turkestan and the flight of the "autonomous government"; the agrarian revolution in the Caucasus and the utter helplessness of the "national councils" of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan—these are facts of common knowledge demonstrating the complete isolation of the borderland "governments" from "their own" masses. Having been completely defeated, the "national governments" were "forced" to appeal to the imperialists of Western Europe, to the age-long oppressors and exploiters of the small nations of the whole world, for aid against "their own" workers and peasants.

Such was the beginning of the period of foreign intervention in, and occupation of, the borderlands—a period revealing once more the counter-revolutionary nature of the "national" and regional "governments."

Only now has it become obvious to all that the national bourgeoisie is striving not for the liberation of "its own people" from national oppression but for the liberty of wringing profits from it, for the liberty of preserving its own privileges and capital.

Only now has it become obvious that the liberation of the oppressed nationalities is inconceivable without breaking with imperialism, without overthrowing the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, without power passing into the hands of the toiling masses of those nationalities.

Thus the old bourgeois conception of the principle of self-determination with the slogan "All Power to the National Bourgeoisie" was exposed and rejected by the very course of the revolution. The socialist conception of self-determination with the slogan "All Power to the Toiling Masses of the Oppressed Nations" obtained full recognition and opportunity of application.

Thus the October Revolution, after putting an end to the old bourgeois emancipatory national movement, inaugurated the era of a new socialist movement of the

workers and peasants of the oppressed nations, directed against all—which signifies also national—oppression, against the rule of the bourgeoisie, whether “its own” or foreign, against imperialism in general.

### *III. The International Importance of the October Revolution*

After being victorious in the central part of Russia and taking possession of a number of borderlands, the October Revolution could not stop short at the territorial boundaries of Russia. In the atmosphere of imperialist world war and general discontent among the lower classes, it could not but spread to the neighbouring countries. The break with imperialism and the liberation of Russia from the predatory war, the publication of the secret treaties and the solemn abrogation of the policy of seizing foreign soil, the proclamation of national freedom and the recognition of the independence of Finland, the declaration of Russia as a “Federation of Soviet National Republics” and the militant battle-cry of a resolute struggle against imperialism broadcast all over the world by the Soviet government in millions of pamphlets, newspapers and leaflets in the mother tongues of the peoples of the East and West—all this could not fail to have its effect on the enslaved East and the bleeding West.

And, in truth, the October Revolution is the first revolution in the history of the world that has broken the sleep of centuries of the toiling masses of the oppressed nations of the East and drawn them into the struggle against world imperialism. The formation of workers’ and peasants’ soviets in Persia, China and India, modelled after the soviets in Russia, is sufficiently convincing proof of this.

The October Revolution is the first revolution in the world that provided the workers and peasants of the West with a living and salutary example and urged them on to the path of real liberation from the yoke of war and

imperialism. The uprising of the workers and soldiers in Austria-Hungary and Germany, the formation of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the revolutionary struggle of the nations of Austria-Hungary against national oppression are quite eloquent proofs of this.

That the struggle in the East and even in the West has not yet succeeded in shedding the bourgeois-nationalist features is not at all the point at issue—the point is that the struggle against imperialism *has begun*, that it goes on and is inevitably bound to reach its logical termination.

Foreign intervention and the policy of occupation pursued by the “foreign” imperialists only intensify the revolutionary crisis, drawing new nations into the struggle and extending the area of revolutionary clashes with imperialism.

Thus the October Revolution, by establishing ties between the nations of the backward East and the advanced West, draws them together into the joint camp of the struggle against imperialism.

The national question thus grows from the partial question of struggling against national oppression to the general question of liberating the nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism.

The mortal sin of the Second International and its leader Kautsky consists incidentally in this: that they were always deviating towards a bourgeois conception of national self-determination, that they did not understand the revolutionary meaning of the latter, that they did not know how, or did not want, to put the national question on the revolutionary basis of an open struggle against imperialism, that they did not know how, or did not want, to link the national question to the question of liberating the colonies.

The thick-headedness of the Austrian Social-Democrats of the type of Bauer and Renner consists indeed in that they failed to understand the indissoluble bond between the national question and the question of power, and tried to

separate the national question from politics and confine it within the scope of cultural and educational questions, oblivious of the existence of such "trifles" as imperialism and the colonies enslaved by it.

It is said that the principles of self-determination and of the "defence of the fatherland" have been abrogated by the very course of events in the conditions of an ascendent socialist revolution. In fact it is not self-determination and the "defence of the fatherland" that have been abrogated, but their bourgeois interpretation. It is sufficient to cast a glance at the occupied regions, languishing under the yoke of imperialism and yearning for liberation; sufficient to cast a glance at Russia conducting a revolutionary war for the defence of the socialist fatherland against the pirates of imperialism; sufficient to ponder the events that are now transpiring in Austria-Hungary; sufficient to glance at the enslaved colonies and semi-colonies, that have already organised soviets in their respective countries (India, Persia, China)—one need but cast a glance at all this to realise the full revolutionary significance of the principle of self-determination in its socialist interpretation.

Indeed the great international importance of the October Revolution consists mainly in that this revolution :

(1) has widened the scope of the national question, transforming it from a partial question of struggling against national oppression into a general question of liberating the oppressed nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism ;

(2) has ushered in vast opportunities and disclosed the actual means for this liberation, thus considerably facilitating the task of the oppressed nations of the West and East to accomplish their liberation and drawing them into the common channel of a victorious struggle against imperialism ;

(3) has thereby erected a bridge between the socialist West and the enslaved East, by setting up a new front of revolutions extending from the proletarians of the West on

through the Russian Revolution to the oppressed nations of the East *against* world imperialism.

This, in effect, explains the indescribable enthusiasm now displayed by the toiling and exploited masses of the East and West with regard to the Russian proletariat.

This largely explains the brutal fury with which the imperialist robbers of the whole world have hurled themselves against Soviet Russia.

#### THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE STRATA

The question of the middle strata undoubtedly presents one of the fundamental questions of the workers' revolution. The middle strata are the peasantry and the petty labouring populace of the cities. In this category must also be classified the oppressed nationalities, which consist nine-tenths of middle strata. As you see, these are precisely the strata which, by their economic position, are situated between the proletariat and the capitalist class. The relative importance of these strata is determined by two circumstances : in the first place, these strata represent the majority, or, at any rate, a considerable minority of the population of the existing States ; second, they represent the important reserves from among which the capitalist class recruits its army against the proletariat. The proletariat cannot maintain power without the sympathy and support of the middle strata, primarily of the peasantry, especially in a country like our union of republics. The proletariat cannot even seriously think of seizing power unless these strata have at least been neutralised, unless these strata have already had time to divorce themselves from the capitalist class, if they still constitute, in their mass, an army of the capitalists. Hence the struggle for the middle strata, the struggle for the peasantry, which passes like a coloured thread through the whole fabric of our

revolution, from 1905 to 1917, a struggle which is far from over and which will go on in the future as well.

The Revolution of 1848 in France suffered defeat because, among other things, it failed to evoke sympathetic response among the French peasants. The Paris Commune fell because, among other things, it encountered the opposition of the middle strata, especially of the peasantry. The same must be said of the Russian Revolution of 1905. Some of the vulgar Marxists, with Kautsky at their head, basing themselves on the experience of the European revolutions, arrived at the conclusion that the middle strata, especially of the peasantry, were well-nigh born enemies of the workers' revolution, and that it was necessary on that account to steer towards a more lengthy period of development, as a result of which the proletariat would become the majority of the nation whereby the actual conditions prerequisite to a victory of the workers' revolution would be created. On the basis of this conclusion, these vulgar Marxists warned the proletariat against a "premature" revolution. On the basis of this conclusion, they, for "considerations of principle," placed these middle strata at the complete disposal of the capitalists. On the basis of this conclusion, they prophesied to us the doom of the Russian October Revolution, referring to the fact that the proletariat constituted a minority in Russia, that Russia was a peasant country and that on that account a victorious workers' revolution was impossible in Russia.

It is characteristic that Marx himself evaluated the middle strata, especially the peasantry, quite differently. Whereas the vulgar Marxists, after giving up the peasantry and placing it at the complete disposal of capital, vociferously swaggered about their "unswerving adherence to principles"—Marx, most consistent of all Marxists in questions of principle, insistently advised the party of the Communists not to lose sight of the peasantry, to win it over to the side of the proletariat and to make sure of its support in



the coming proletarian revolution. It is well known that in the 'fifties, after the defeat of the February Revolution in France and in Germany, Marx wrote to Engels, and through him to the Communist Party of Germany, as follows :

The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War.

This was written about the Germany of the 'fifties, a peasant country, in which the proletariat formed an insignificant minority, in which the proletariat was less organised than in the Russia of 1917, and in which the peasantry, owing to its position, was less disposed to support a proletarian revolution than was the case in the Russia of 1917.

The October Revolution undoubtedly presented the happy combination of a "peasant war" and a "proletarian revolution" of which Marx wrote, all the chatterboxes and their "principles" notwithstanding. The October Revolution proved that such a combination is both possible and feasible. The October Revolution proved that the proletariat can seize power and maintain it, provided it is able to wrest the middle strata, especially the peasantry, from the capitalist classes, provided it knows how to transform these strata from reserves of capitalism into reserves of the proletariat.

In brief : the October Revolution was the first of all the revolutions of the world to advance to the forefront the question of the middle strata, primarily the peasantry, and to settle it victoriously, all the "theories" and lamentations of the heroes of the Second International notwithstanding.

This constitutes the first service of the October Revolution, if one may speak altogether of services in this case.

However, matters did not rest there. The October Revolution went further, trying to rally the oppressed

nationalities round the proletariat. It was stated above that these nationalities consist nine-tenths of peasants and the petty labouring populace of the cities. However, this does not fully characterise the concept "oppressed nationality." The oppressed nationalities are usually oppressed not only as peasantry and the labouring populace of the cities but also as nationalities, i.e., as workers of a definite statehood, language, culture, manner of life, customs and habits. The double weight of oppression cannot but revolutionise the toiling masses of the oppressed nationalities, cannot but urge them on to the struggle against the principal force of oppression—to the struggle against capital. This circumstance served as the base on which the proletariat succeeded in realising the combination of a "proletarian revolution" and not only a "peasant war" but also a "national war." All this could not fail to extend the field of action of the proletarian revolution far beyond the confines of Russia, could not fail to jeopardise the most deep-seated reserves of capitalism. If the struggle for the middle strata of a given dominating nationality means the struggle for the immediate reserves of capitalism, the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed nationalities could not but be transformed into a struggle for the conquest of the separate, most deep-seated reserves of capitalism, into a struggle for the liberation of the colonial and partly disfranchised nations from the yoke of capitalism. This latter struggle is not over by far—besides, it has not yet had time to yield even the first decisive successes. However, this struggle for the deep-seated reserves owes its commencement to the October Revolution, and it will undoubtedly develop step by step, commensurate with the development of imperialism, commensurate with the increase in power of our union of republics, commensurate with the development of the proletarian revolution in the West.

In brief: the October Revolution has actually initiated the struggle of the proletariat for the deep-seated reserves

of capitalism from among the masses of the people in the oppressed and partly disfranchised countries ; it was the first to raise the standard of struggle for winning these reserves—this constitutes its second service.

Winning the peasantry proceeded in our country under the banner of socialism. The peasantry, which had received land at the hands of the proletariat, which had defeated the landlords with the aid of the proletariat, and which had risen to power under the leadership of the proletariat, could not but feel, could not but understand that the process of its liberation proceeded, and would proceed in the future, under the banner of the proletariat, under its Red Banner. This circumstance could not fail to transform the banner of socialism, which was formerly a bogey to the peasantry, into a standard attracting its attention and facilitating its liberation from wretchedness, destitution and oppression. The same must be said with even more emphasis in regard to the oppressed nationalities. The call to struggle for the liberation of the nationalities, a call reinforced by facts such as the liberation of Finland, the evacuation of troops from Persia and China, the formation of the Union of Republics, open moral support to the peoples of Turkey, China, Hindustan, Egypt—this call was first sounded by the people who were the victors in the October Revolution. The fact that Russia, which formerly served as the symbol of oppression in the eyes of the oppressed nationalities, has now, after it has become socialist, been transformed into a symbol of liberation, cannot be described as a mere chance. Nor is it accidental that the name of Comrade Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution, is now the most cherished name of the downtrodden, browbeaten peasants and revolutionary intelligentsia of the colonial and semi-enfranchised countries. If formerly Christianity was considered an anchor of salvation among the oppressed and downtrodden slaves of the vast Roman Empire, now things are heading towards a point where socialism can serve (and is already beginning to

serve !) as a banner of liberation for the many millions in the vast colonial States of imperialism. It is hardly susceptible of doubt that this circumstance considerably facilitated the struggle to combat the prejudices against socialism and opened the road to the ideas of socialism in the most remote corners of the oppressed countries. If formerly it was difficult for a socialist to show himself with open visor among the non-proletarian middle strata of the oppressed or oppressing countries, to-day he can openly propagate the idea of socialism among these strata and expect to be listened to and perhaps even followed, for he possesses so cogent an argument as the October Revolution. This is also a result of the October Revolution.

In brief : the October Revolution cleared the path to the ideas of socialism for the middle non-proletarian peasant strata of all nationalities and tribes ; it popularised the banner of socialism among them—which constitutes the third service of the October Revolution.

*V. I. Lenin*

## THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND KAUTSKY THE RENEGADE

*Published 1919. English Edition, Modern Books Ltd., 1929.*

[ After the Soviet Government had been in existence over a year, and when many parts of Central Europe were approaching revolutionary crisis, a large section of Social Democracy in Western Europe began to carry on active

propaganda against the "dictatorship of the proletariat," on the same general grounds as the more recent statement of the British Labour Party and the Second International—"we are for democracy and against dictatorship." Not only Vandervelde (*Socialism versus the State*), but also Karl Kautsky, once a Marxist, entered the campaign against the Soviets. In his pamphlet *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* Kautsky attacked the dictatorship in Russia, partly distorting the facts, but more particularly advancing the theory of "pure democracy" as essential in the advance to Socialism. Lenin replied in *The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade*, bringing out the theories of Marx and Engels on the State (see also Lenin's *The State and Revolution*), and showing the Soviets as the highest form of democracy yet seen, proletarian democracy. Parts of the chapters dealing with democracy and dictatorship are reprinted here. ]

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## THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND KAUTSKY THE RENEGADE

### BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

#### (Ch. II)

. . . Proletarian democracy, of which the Soviet régime constitutes one of the forms, has given to the world a hitherto unknown expansion and development of democracy for the gigantic majority of the population, for the Exploited and labouring masses. To have written a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky has done (who devotes two pages to the question of dictatorship and scores of pages to that of "pure democracy") and *not* to have noticed this fact, means simply that he has distorted the facts, after the approved Liberal manner.

Or take foreign policy. In no bourgeois State, not even in the most democratic one, is it carried out openly. Everywhere the masses are deceived—in democratic France, Switzerland, America, or England in an incomparably more refined and wholesale manner than in other countries. It was the Soviet Government which by a revolutionary act has torn off the veil of mystery from foreign policy. But Kautsky has not noticed this, and passes it over in silence, although in the present era of predatory wars and secret treaties about spheres of influence (that is, about the partition of the world between the capitalist bandits), the subject is one of cardinal importance, on which the happiness and the life and death of millions depend.

Or take the organisation of the State. Kautsky seizes upon all manner of petty things, including the system of "indirect" elections under the Soviet constitution, but the essence of things wholly escapes him. He does not see the *class* nature of the State machinery. By a thousand-and-one tricks the capitalists, in a bourgeois democracy—and these tricks are the more skilful and the more effective the further "pure" democracy has developed—keep the masses out of the administration and frustrate the freedom of the Press, the right of meeting, etc. The Soviet régime, on the contrary, is the first in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Commune of Paris attempted to do the same thing) to *attract* the masses, that is, the *exploited* masses, to the work of administration. The labouring masses are kept away from the bourgeois parliament (which *never* decides the most important questions in a bourgeois democracy, as they are decided by the Stock Exchange and the banks) by a thousand-and-one barriers, in consequence of which the working class perfectly well realises that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *foreign* to them, are an *instrument of oppression* of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, are an institution of the hostile class of the exploiting minority.

As against this, the Soviets are the direct organisation of the labouring and exploited masses themselves, which enables them to organise and to administer the State by their own efforts and their own manner. The urban proletariat, the advance guard of the toiling and exploited, enjoys under this arrangement a position of advantage, due to its being best organised by the large industrial concerns, which enables it best to hold elections and to control the elected. The Soviet system automatically facilitates the rally of all those who work and are exploited round their advance guard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus, the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc., which are the more varied, the more highly bourgeois democracy has developed—all this disappears under the Soviet system. Freedom of the Press ceases to be an hypocrisy, because the printing presses and the paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. It is the same with the best buildings, the palaces, the villas, and the country houses. Thousands and thousands of these best buildings have been taken away from the exploiters by the Soviet authority, which has thereby made the right of meeting for the masses a thousand times more "democratic" than before, since without this right all democracy is a fraud and a delusion. The indirect elections of the non-local Soviets make it easier to arrange for congresses of the Soviets, render the entire apparatus cheaper, more elastic, more accessible to the workers and peasants at the time when life is overflowing and it is necessary to be able rapidly to recall a delegate or to send him to the General Congress of Soviets. Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy, and the Soviet régime is a million times more democratic than the most democratic régime in a bourgeois republic.

This could only have remained unnoticed by a person who is either the deliberate henchman of the bourgeoisie or is politically dead, does not see life except from behind

the dusty pages of bourgeois books, is permeated through and through by bourgeois democratic prejudices, and thereby, objectively speaking, becomes the lackey of the bourgeoisie.

This could only have remained unnoticed by a man who is incapable of putting the question from the point of view of the exploited classes : is there one single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the ordinary rank-and-file worker, the ordinary rank-and-file village labourer or village semi-proletarian (that is, the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* of giving utterance to his ideas and of protecting his interests in print by means of the best printing works and largest stocks of paper, such liberty of appointing men and women of his own class to administer and to organise the State, as in Soviet Russia ?

The mere thought is absurd that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country one single worker or agricultural labourer in a thousand who, on being informed of the facts, would hesitate in replying to this question. Instinctively, through reading the bare fragments of truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the entire world sympathise with the Soviet Republic, just because they see in it *proletarian* democracy, a democracy *for the poor*, and not a democracy for the rich, as is the case with every bourgeois democracy, even the best. "We are ruled, and our State is run, by bourgeois bureaucrats, by capitalist parliaments, by capitalist judges"—such is the simple, indisputable, and obvious truth, which is known and felt, through their own daily experience, by tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic. In Russia, on the other hand, the bureaucratic apparatus has been completely smashed up, the old judges have all been driven from their seats, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed, and instead the workers



and peasants have received a much more *popular* representation, their Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or are controlling them, and their Soviets have become the authorities who elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to justify all the oppressed classes in regarding the Soviet régime, that is, the Soviet form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

But Kautsky does not understand this truth, so obvious to every worker, because he has forgotten how to put the question : democracy for what class ? If he starts from "pure" (does it mean non-class ? or above-class ?) democracy and simply says : Without equality of all citizens there can be no democracy, one has to ask the learned Mr. Kautsky, the "Marxist" and the "Socialist," the following question : Can there be any equality between the exploited and the exploiters ? It is monstrous, it is incredible, that one should have to ask such a question in discussing a book by the leading thinker of the Second International. But there is no way of escaping from this necessity. In writing about Kautsky one has to explain to him, learned man that he is, why there can be no equality between the exploiters and the exploited.

*Can there be Equality between the Exploiters  
and the Exploited ?*

Kautsky says "The exploiters always formed but a small minority of the population" (p. 14).

This is certainly true. Taking it as the starting point, what should be the argument ? One may argue in a Marxist, in a Socialist way, taking as a basis the relation between the exploited and the exploiter, or one may argue in a Liberal, in a bourgeois-democratic way, taking as a basis the relation of the majority to the minority.

If we argue in the Marxist way we must say : The exploiters must inevitably turn the State (we are speaking

of a democracy, that is, one of the forms of State) into an instrument of domination of their class over the class of exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters ruling the majority of exploited, the democratic State must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. The State of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a State ; it must be a democracy for the exploited, a political order of suppression of the exploiters. But the suppression of a class means inequality in so far as this class is concerned, and its exemption from the privileges of " democracy."

If, on the other hand, we argue in a bourgeois-Liberal way, we have to say : The majority decides and the minority obeys. Those who do not obey are punished. And this is all. There is no need of talking about the class character of the State in general, or about " pure democracy " in particular, since it would not be relevant. The majority is the majority and the minority is the minority. That ends the matter. And this is just Kautsky's way of reasoning. He says :

" Why should the rule of the proletariat necessarily receive a form which is incompatible with democracy ? " (p. 21). There follows a very detailed and a very verbose explanation, garnished with a quotation from Marx and the figures of the elections to the Paris Commune, of the fact that the proletariat is always in a majority. The conclusion is : " A régime which is so strongly rooted in the masses has not the slightest reason for infringing democracy. It cannot, it is true, always do without violence, as, for instance, in cases when violence is employed to put down democracy. Force is the only reply to force. But a régime which is aware of the support of the masses will only employ force and violence for the *protection*, and not for the *destruction*, of democracy. It would simply commit suicide if it wanted to destroy its own most secure basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority." (p. 22).

You see that the relation between the exploited and the

exploiters has entirely vanished in Kautsky's arguments, and all that remains is a majority in general, a minority in general, a democracy in general, that is, the "pure democracy" which is already familiar to us. And all this, mark you, is said *à propos* of the Commune of Paris ! Let us quote, by the way of illustration, how Marx and Engels discuss the subject of dictatorship, also *à propos* of the Commune : Marx : " When the workers put in the place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie . . . their revolutionary dictatorship . . . in order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie . . . the workers invest the State with a revolutionary and temporary form . . ." Engels : " The party which has triumphed in the revolution is necessarily compelled to maintain its rule by means of that fear with which its arms inspire the reactionaries. If the Commune of Paris had not based itself on the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie, would it have maintained itself more than twenty-four hours ? Are we not, on the contrary, justified in blaming the Commune for having made too little use of its authority ? "

Engels : " As the State is only a temporary institution which is to be made use of in the revolution, in order forcibly to suppress the opponents, it is a perfect absurdity to speak about the free popular State ; so long as the proletariat still needs the State, it needs it, not in the interest of freedom but in order to suppress its opponents, and when it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the State as such ceases to exist."

The distance between Kautsky, on the one hand, and Marx and Engels, on the other, is as great as between heaven and earth, as between the bourgeois Liberal and the proletarian revolutionary. Pure democracy, or simple "democracy," of which Kautsky speaks, is but a paraphrase of the "free popular State," that is, a perfect *absurdity*. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned arm-chair fool, or else with the innocent air of a ten-year-old girl, is asking : Why do we need a dictatorship when we have

a majority? And Marx and Engels explain: In order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie; in order to inspire the reactionaries with fear; in order to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie; in order that the proletariat may forcibly suppress its enemies!

But Kautsky does not understand these explanations. He is infatuated with the "pure democracy," he does not see its bourgeois character, and "consistently" urges that the majority, once it is the majority, has no need "to break down the resistance" of the minority, has no need "forcibly to suppress" it: it is sufficient to suppress cases of *infraction* of the democracy infatuated with the "purity" of democracy. Kautsky unwittingly commits the same little error which is committed by all bourgeois democrats, namely, he accepts the formal equality, which under capitalism is only a fraud and a piece of hypocrisy, at its face value as a *de facto* equality. Quite a bagatelle!

But the exploiter cannot be equal to the exploited. This is a truth which, however disgraceful to Kautsky, is nevertheless of the essence of Socialism. Another truth is that there can be, in reality, no *de facto* equality, unless and until the possibility of exploitation of one class by another has been abolished.

It is possible, by means of a successful insurrection in the centre or of a mutiny in the army, to defeat the exploiters at one blow, but except in very rare and particular cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at once. It is impossible to expropriate at one blow all the landlords and capitalists of a large country. In addition, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not by far settle the matter, since it is necessary practically to replace the landlords and capitalists, to substitute for theirs another, a *working class*, management of the factories and estates. There can be no equality between the exploiters, who, for many generations have enjoyed education and the advantages and habits of prosperity, and the exploited,

the majority of whom, even in the most advanced and the most democratic bourgeois republics, are cowed, frightened, ignorant, unorganised. It is inevitable that the exploiters should still enjoy a large number of great practical advantages for a considerable period after the revolution. They still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money at once), some moveable property (often of a considerable extent), social connections, habits of organisation and management, knowledge of all the secrets (customs, methods, means, and possibilities) of administration, higher education, closeness to the higher personnel of technical experts (who live and think after the bourgeois style), and incomparably higher knowledge and experience in military affairs (which is very important), and so forth, and so forth. If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is the rule, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they still remain stronger than the exploited, because the international connections of the exploiters are enormous. And that a portion of the exploited from among the least intelligent section of the "middle" peasant and artisan class may and, indeed, do follow the exploiters has been shown hitherto by all revolutions, including the Commune of Paris (since there were proletarians also among the troops of Versailles, which the most learned Kautsky seems to have forgotten).

In these circumstances to suppose that in any serious revolution the issue is decided by the simple relation between majority and minority is the acme of stupidity, a typical delusion of an ordinary bourgeois Liberal, as well as a *deception of the masses* from whom a well-established historical truth is concealed. This truth is that in any and every serious revolution a long, obstinate, desperate resistance of the exploiters, who for many years will yet enjoy great advantages over the exploited, constitutes the rule. Never, except in the sentimental Utopia of the sentimental Mr. Kautsky, will the exploiters submit to the decision of the

exploited majority without making use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or in a series of battles.

The transition from capitalism to Communism forms a whole historical epoch. Until it is complete, the exploiters will still retain the hope of a restoration, and this hope will inevitably express itself in *attempts* at restoration. After the first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters who did not expect their overthrow, did not believe in it, did not admit even the thought of it, will with tenfold energy, with mad passion, and with a hate intensified to an extreme degree, throw themselves into the fray in order to get back their lost paradise for themselves and their families, who formerly led such a pleasant life, and who are now condemned by the "rascals," the "mob," to ruin or penury (or "ordinary" labour). And these capitalist exploiters will necessarily be followed by a wide stream of the petty bourgeoisie, as to whom decades of historical experience of all countries bear witness that they are constantly oscillating and hesitating, to-day following the proletariat, and to-morrow taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution, succumbing with panic after the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, giving way to "nerves," whining, running hither and thither, deserting from one camp to another—just like our Mensheviks and Socialist revolutionaries!

And in face of this condition of things, at the time of a most desperate war, when history is placing on the order of the day the question of the life and death of age-long privileges—at this time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about the superfluity of the dictatorship, and equality between the exploiter and the exploited—what bottomless stupidity and philistinism are needed to do it! But, of course, the decades of comparatively "peaceful" capitalism between 1871 and 1914 had accumulated in the opportunist-minded Socialist parties whole Augean stables of Philistinism, imbecility, and mockery.

The reader will have noticed that Kautsky, in the above-quoted passage from his pamphlet, speaks of an attempt against universal suffrage (extolling it, by the way, as a deep source of mighty moral authority, as against Engels who *à propos* of the same Commune and of the same question of dictatorship spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the Philistine's and the revolutionist's view of "authority"). One may say in this connection that the question about the suppression of the franchise of the exploiter is *entirely a Russian question*, and not at all one of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. If Kautsky, without hypocrisy, had entitled his pamphlet: "Against the Bolsheviks," the title would have corresponded to the contents of this pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking of the question of franchise. But Kautsky wanted to write as a "theoretician." He called his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. He speaks about the Soviets and about Russia in the second part of the pamphlet only, beginning with its fifth section. In its first part, from which I quoted, the subject matter is democracy and dictatorship in general. Kautsky, by raising the question of the franchise, has given himself away as a literary opponent of the Bolsheviks, who cares not a brass farthing for theory. For a theoretical discussion of the *general* (in contradiction to national and particular) class-basis of democracy and dictatorship ought to deal not with a *special* question, such as that of the franchise, but with the general question whether democracy can be preserved for the rich and the exploiters as well as for the exploited, at the historical moment of the overthrow of the former, and the substitution, in the place of *their* State, of the State of the exploited? This is the only form in which the question can be put by a theoretical inquirer.

We all know the example of the Commune, we all know what the founders of Marxism said in connection with it. On the strength of their pronouncement I examined the

question of democracy and dictatorship in my book, *The State and Revolution*, which I wrote before the November revolution. The restriction of the franchise was not touched by me at all. At present it might be added that the question of the restriction of the franchise is a specific national question, and not one relating to dictatorship in general. One must study the question of the restriction of the franchise in the light of the specific conditions of the Russian revolution and the specific course of its development. This will be done in subsequent pages. But it would be rash to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolution in Europe will all, or for the most part, be accompanied by a restriction of the franchise in the case of the bourgeoisie. This may be so. In fact, after the war and after the experience of the Russian revolution it will probably be so. But it is not absolutely necessary for the establishment of a dictatorship. It is not necessarily implied in the idea of dictatorship, it does not enter as a necessary condition into the historical or class conception of dictatorship. What forms a necessary aspect, or a necessary condition of dictatorship, is the forcible suppression of the exploiters as a class, and consequently an infringement of "pure democracy," that is, of equality and freedom, in respect of that class.

In this way alone can the question be theoretically discussed ; and, by not doing so, Kautsky has proved that he came forward against the Bolsheviks not as a theoretical inquirer, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and of the bourgeoisie.

The question : In what countries and under what national peculiarities of this or that Capitalism a wholesale or partial restriction of democracy will be applied to the exploiters, is the question of just those national peculiarities of capitalism and of this or that revolution, and has nothing to do with the theoretical question at issue, which is this : Is a dictatorship of the proletariat possible without an infringement of democracy in respect of the class of



exploiters? Kautsky has evaded this, the only theoretically important, question. He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, except the one relating to the subject, and quoted by me. He talks about everything that may be pleasant to bourgeois Liberals and democrats and does not go beyond their system of ideas. As for the main thing, namely, that the proletariat cannot triumph without breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, without forcibly suppressing its enemies, and that where there is forcible suppression there is, of course, no "freedom," no democracy—this Kautsky did not understand. . . .

*J. Stalin*

## FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM

*A lecture delivered in April 1924 ; published in a collection of Stalin's works, 1926. English edition, "Leninism," Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1928. A better translation was published by the Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., 1935 ; the section given below is from this edition.*

[ This was a lecture delivered by Stalin at Sverdlov University, in April, 1924. In the introduction, Stalin defines Leninism as " the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution." The lecture covers the Historical Roots of Leninism ; Method ; Theory ; the Dictatorship of the Proletariat ; the Peasant Problem ; the National Question ; Strategy and Tactics ; the Party, and Style in the Work. It is the most important study of Leninism that exists, bringing out the development of Marxism made by Lenin " in a period of fully developed imperialism ; in a period when the proletarian revolution was already under way . . ." The section reprinted below, on The Party, shows the development of the revolutionary

party of the proletariat under Lenin's guidance, and the part played by the Party both before and after the revolution. ]

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## FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM

### THE PARTY

IN the pre-revolutionary period, in the period of more or less peaceful development, when the parties of the Second International were the predominant force in the labour movement and parliamentary forms of struggle were regarded as the principal forms, the Party neither had nor could have that great and decisive importance which it acquired afterwards in the midst of open revolutionary battles. In defending the Second International against the attacks that were made upon it, Kautsky says that the parties of the Second International are instruments of peace and not of war, that for that very reason they were powerless to take any far-reaching steps during the war, during the period of revolutionary action by the proletariat. That is absolutely true. But what does it prove? It proves that the parties of the Second International are not suitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, that they are not militant parties of the proletariat leading the workers to power, but an election apparatus suitable for parliamentary elections and parliamentary struggle. This, properly speaking, explains why, in the days when the opportunists of the Second International were dominant, it was not the Party but the parliamentary fraction that was the fundamental political organisation of the proletariat. It is well known that the Party at that time was really an appendage or an auxiliary of the parliamentary fraction. It is superfluous to add that under such circumstances and with such a Party at its head, it was utterly impossible to prepare the proletariat for revolution.

With the dawn of the new period, however, matters

changed radically. The new period is a period of open collisions between the classes, a period of revolutionary action by the proletariat, a period of proletarian revolution ; it is the period of the immediate mustering of forces for the overthrow of imperialism, for the seizure of power by the proletariat. This period confronts the proletariat with new tasks of reorganising all Party work on new, revolutionary lines ; of educating the workers in the spirit of the revolutionary struggle for power ; of preparing and moving up the reserves ; of establishing an alliance with the proletarians of neighbouring countries ; of establishing durable contact with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, etc., etc. To imagine that these new tasks can be fulfilled by the old Social-Democratic parties, brought up as they were in the peaceful atmosphere of parliamentarism, can lead only to hopeless despair and to inevitable defeat. To have such tasks to shoulder under the leadership of the old parties is tantamount to being left completely disarmed. It goes without saying that the proletariat could not accept such a position.

Hence the necessity for a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, bold enough to lead the proletarians to the struggle for power, with sufficient experience to be able to orientate itself in the complicated problems that arise in a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of any submerged rocks on the way to its goal.

Without such a party it is futile to think of overthrowing imperialism and achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This new party is the party of Leninism.

What are the special features of this new party ?

### (1) *The Party as the Vanguard of the Working Class*

The Party must first of all constitute the *vanguard* of the working class. The Party must absorb all the best elements of the working class, their experience, their revolutionary

spirit and their unbounded devotion to the cause of the proletariat. But in order that it may really be the vanguard, the Party must be armed with a revolutionary theory, with a knowledge of the laws of the movement, with a knowledge of the laws of revolution. Without this it will be impotent to guide the struggle of the proletariat and to lead the proletariat. The Party cannot be a real Party if it limits itself to registering what the masses of the working class think or experience, if it drags along at the tail of the spontaneous movement, if it does not know how to overcome the inertness and the political indifference of the spontaneous movement, or if it cannot rise above the transient interests of the proletariat, if it cannot raise the masses to the level of the class interests of the proletariat. The Party must take its stand at the head of the working class, it must see ahead of the working class, lead the proletariat and not trail behind the spontaneous movement. The parties of the Second International which preach "tailism" are the exponents of bourgeois politics which condemn the proletariat to being a tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Only a party which adopts the point of view of the vanguard of the proletariat, which is capable of raising the masses to the level of the class interests of the proletariat, is capable of diverting the working class from the path of craft unionism and converting it into an independent political force. The Party is the political leader of the working class.

I have spoken above of the difficulties encountered in the struggle of the working class, of the complicated nature of this struggle, of strategy and tactics, of reserves and manœuvring operations, of attack and defence. These conditions are no less complicated, perhaps more so, than war operations. Who can understand these conditions, who can give correct guidance to the vast masses of the proletariat? Every army at war must have an experienced General Staff if it is to avoid certain defeat. All the more reason therefore why the proletariat must have such a

General Staff if it is to prevent itself from being routed by its mortal enemies. But where is this General Staff? Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can serve as this General Staff. A working class without a revolutionary party is like an army without a General Staff. The Party is the Military Staff of the proletariat.

But the Party cannot be merely a *vanguard*. It must at the same time be a unit of the *class*, be part of that class, intimately bound to it with every fibre of its being. The distinction between the vanguard and the main body of the working class, between Party members and non-Party workers, will continue as long as classes exist, as long as the proletariat continues replenishing its ranks with newcomers from other classes, as long as the working class as a whole lacks the opportunity of raising itself to the level of the vanguard. But the Party would cease to be a party if this distinction were widened into a rupture: if it were to isolate itself and break away from the non-Party masses. The Party cannot lead the class if it is not connected with the non-Party masses, if there is no close union between the Party and the non-Party masses, if these masses do not accept its leadership, if the Party does not enjoy moral and political authority among the masses. Recently, two hundred thousand new workers joined our Party. The remarkable thing about this is that these workers did not *come* into the Party, but were rather *sent* there by the mass of other non-Party workers who took an active part in the acceptance of the new members and without whose approval no new member was accepted. This fact proves that the broad masses of non-Party workers regard our Party as *their* Party, as a Party near *and dear* to them, in the expansion and consolidation of which they are vitally interested and to whose leadership they willingly entrust their destinies. It goes without saying that without these intangible moral ties connecting the Party with the non-Party masses, the Party could never become the decisive force of its class. The Party is an inseparable part of the working class.

We are the party of a class—says Lenin—and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, during the period of civil war, the entire class) must act under the leadership of our Party, must link itself up with our Party as closely as possible. But we would be guilty of Manilovism and “khvostism” if we believed that at any time under capitalism nearly the whole class, or the whole class, would be able to rise to the level of the class consciousness and degree of activity of its vanguard, of its socialist party. No sensible Socialist has ever yet doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organisations (which are more primitive and more accessible to the intelligence of the undeveloped strata) are unable to embrace nearly the whole, or the whole, working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses gravitating towards it, to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to *raise* these increasingly widening strata to this advanced level, only means deceiving oneself, shutting one’s eyes to the immensity of our tasks and narrowing them. (*Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. VI, pp. 205–206.)

## (2) *The Party as the Organised Detachment of the Working Class*

The Party is not only the *vanguard* of the working class. If it desires really to lead the struggle of the class it must at the same time be the *organised* detachment of its class. Under the capitalist system the Party’s tasks are huge and varied. The Party must lead the struggle of the proletariat under the exceptionally difficult circumstances of inner as well as outer development; it must lead the proletariat in its attack when the situation calls for an attack, it must withdraw the proletariat from the blows of a powerful opponent when the situation calls for retreat; it must imbue the millions of unorganised non-Party workers with the spirit of discipline and system in fighting, with the spirit of organisation and perseverance. But the Party can acquit itself of these tasks only if it itself is the embodiment of discipline and organisation, if it itself is the *organised* detachment of the proletariat. Unless these conditions are fulfilled it is idle to talk about the Party really leading the

vast masses of the proletariat. The Party is the organised detachment of the working class.

The conception of the Party as an organised whole has become firmly fixed in Lenin's well-known formulation of the first point of our Party rules in which the Party is regarded as the *sum total* of the organisations and the Party member as a member of one of the organisations of the Party. The Mensheviks, who had objected to this formulation as early as 1903, proposed to substitute for it a "system" of self-enrolment in the Party, a "system" of conferring the "title" Party member upon every "professor" and "high school student," upon every "sympathiser" and "striker" who gave support to the Party in one way or another, but who did not belong and had no inclination to belong to any one of the Party organisations. We need not stop to prove that had this odd "system" become firmly entrenched in our Party it would have been inundated with professors and students, it would have degenerated into a widely diffused, amorphous, disorganised "body" lost in a sea of "sympathisers," that would have obliterated the line of demarcation between the Party and the class and would have frustrated the aim of the Party to raise the unorganised masses to the level of the vanguard. It goes without saying that under such an opportunist "system" our Party would not have been able to accomplish its mission as the organising nucleus of the working class during the course of our revolution.

From Martov's point of view—says Lenin—the boundary line of the Party remains absolutely unfixed inasmuch as "every striker could declare himself a member of the Party." What advantage is there in this diffuseness? Spreading wide a "title." The harmfulness of it lies in that it introduces the *disruptive* idea of identifying the class with the Party. (*Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. VI, p. 211.)

But the Party is not merely the *sum total* of Party organisations. The Party at the same time represents a single system

of these organisations, their formal unification into a single whole, possessing higher and lower organs of leadership, with submission of the minority to the majority, where decisions on questions of practice are obligatory upon all members of the Party. Unless these conditions are fulfilled the Party is unable to form a single organised whole capable of exercising systematic and organised leadership of the struggle of the working class.

*Formerly*—says Lenin—our Party was not a formally organised whole, but only the sum total of separate groups. Therefore, no other relations except that of ideological influence were possible between these groups. *Now*, we have become an organised Party, and this implies the creation of a power, the conversion of the authority of ideas into the authority of power, the subordination of the lower Party bodies to the higher Party bodies. (*Ibid.*, p. 291.)

The principle of the minority submitting to the majority, the principle of leading Party work from a centre, has been a subject of repeated attacks by wavering elements who accuse us of “bureaucracy,” “formalism,” etc. It hardly needs to be proved that systematic work of the Party, as one whole, and the leadership of the struggle of the working class would have been impossible without the enforcement of these principles. On the organisational question, Leninism stands for the strict enforcement of these principles. Lenin terms the fight against these principles “Russian nihilism” and “gentleman’s anarchism” which deserve only to be ridiculed and thrown aside.

This is what Lenin has to say about these wavering elements in his book entitled *One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward* :

The Russian nihilist is especially addicted to this gentleman’s anarchism. To him the Party organisation appears to be a monstrous “factory,” the subordination of the part to the whole and the submission of the minority to the majority appears to him to be “serfdom” . . . the division of labour under the



leadership of a centre evokes tragi-comical lamentations about people being reduced to mere "cogs and screws" . . . the bare mention of the Party rules on organisation calls forth a contemptuous grimace and some disdainful . . . remark to the effect that we could get along without rules. . . . It seems clear, however, that these outcries against the alleged bureaucracy are an attempt to conceal the dissatisfaction with the personnel of these centres, a fig leaf. . . . "You are a bureaucrat because you were appointed by the Congress without my consent and against my wishes : you are a formalist because you seek support in the formal decisions of the Congress and not in my approval : you act in a crudely mechanical way, because your authority is the 'mechanical' majority of the Party Congress and you do not consult my desire to be co-opted ; you are an autocrat because you do not want to deliver power into the hands of the old gang."<sup>1</sup> (*Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. VI, pp. 310 and 287.)

### (3) *The Party as the Highest Form of Class Organisation of the Proletariat*

The Party is the organised detachment of the working class. But the Party is not the only organisation of the working class. The proletariat has in addition a great number of other organisations which are indispensable in its correct struggle against the capitalist system—trade unions, co-operative societies, factory and shop organisations, parliamentary fractions, non-Party women's associations, the press, cultural and educational organisations, youth leagues, military revolutionary organisations (in times of direct revolutionary action), soviets of deputies as the State form of organisation (where the proletariat is in power), etc. Most of these organisations are non-Party and only a certain part of these adhere directly to the Party, or represent its offshoots. All these organisations, under certain conditions, are absolutely necessary for the working class, as without them it is impossible to consolidate the

<sup>1</sup> The "old gang" here referred to is that of Axelrod, Martov, Potresov and others who would not submit to the decisions of the Second Congress and who accused Lenin of being a "bureaucrat."—J. S.

class position of the proletariat in the diversified spheres of struggle, and without them it is impossible to steel the proletariat as the force whose mission it is to replace the bourgeois order by the socialist order. But how can unity of leadership become a reality in the face of such a multiplicity of organisations? What guarantee is there that this multiplicity of organisations will not lead to discord in leadership? It might be argued that each of these organisations carries on its work in its own field in which it specialises and cannot, therefore, interfere with the others. That, of course, is true. But it is likewise true that the activities of all these organisations ought to be directed into a single channel, as they serve *one* class, the class of the proletariat. The question then arises: who is to determine the line, the general direction along which the work of all these organisations is to be conducted? Where is that central organisation which is not only able, having the necessary experience, to work out such a general line, but also capable, because of its authority, of prevailing upon all these organisations to carry out this line, in order to attain unity of direction and preclude the possibility of working at cross purposes?

This organisation is the party of the proletariat.

The Party possesses all the necessary qualifications for this purpose because, in the first place, it is the common meeting ground of the best elements in the working class that have direct connections with the non-Party organisations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the meeting ground of the best members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organisation of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and authority, the only organisation capable of centralising the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat and in this way of transforming each and every non-Party organisation of the

working class into an auxiliary body, a transmission belt linking it with the class. The Party is the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat.

This does not mean, of course, that non-Party organisations like trade unions, co-operative societies, etc., must be formally subordinated to Party leadership. It means simply that the members of the Party who belong to these organisations and doubtless exercise influence in them should do all they can to persuade these non-Party organisations to draw nearer to the Party of the proletariat in their work and voluntarily accept its political guidance.

That is why Lenin says that "the Party is the *highest* form of class association of proletarians" whose political leadership ought to extend to every other form of organisation of the proletariat. ("*Left-Wing*" *Communism, etc.*, Chap. VI.)

That is why the opportunist theory of the "independence" and "neutrality" of the non-Party organisations, which theory is the progenitor of *independent* parliamentarians and publicists who are *isolated* from the Party, and of *narrow-minded* trade unionists and co-operative society officials who have become petty bourgeois, is wholly incompatible with the theory and practice of Leninism.

#### (4) *The Party as the Weapon of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

The Party is the highest form of organisation of the proletariat. The Party is the fundamental leading element within the class of the proletariat and within the organisations of that class. But it does not follow by any means that the Party can be regarded as an end in itself, as a self-sufficing force. The Party is not only the highest form of class association of the proletarians ; it is at the same time a *weapon* in the hands of the proletariat *for* the achievement of the dictatorship where that has not yet been achieved ; *for* the consolidation and extension of the dictatorship

where it has already been achieved. The Party would not rank so high in importance and it could not overshadow all other forms of organisation of the proletariat if the latter were not face to face with the question of power, if the conditions of imperialism, the inevitability of wars and the presence of a crisis did not demand the concentration of all the forces of the proletariat on one point and the gathering together of all the threads of the revolutionary movement in one spot, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat needs the Party first of all as its General Staff, which it must have for the successful seizure of power. Needless to say, the Russian proletariat could never have established its revolutionary dictatorship without a Party capable of rallying around itself the mass organisations of the proletariat and of centralising the leadership of the entire movement during the progress of the struggle.

But the proletariat needs the Party not only to achieve the dictatorship, it needs it still more to maintain, consolidate and extend its dictatorship in order to attain complete victory for socialism.

Certainly almost everyone now realises—says Lenin—that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half years, and not even for two and a half months, without the strictest discipline, the truly iron discipline, in our Party, and without the fullest and unreserved support rendered it by the whole mass of the working class, that is, by all those belonging to this class who think, who are honest, self-sacrificing, influential, and capable of leading and attracting the backward masses. (*"Left-Wing" Communism, etc.*, Chap. II.)

Now what is meant by "maintaining" and "extending" the dictatorship? It means imbuing these millions of proletarians with the spirit of discipline and organisation: it means creating among the proletarian masses a bulwark against the corrosive influences of petty-bourgeois spontaneity and petty-bourgeois habits; it means that the organising work of the proletarians in re-educating and remoulding the

petty-bourgeois strata must be reinforced ; it means that assistance must be given to the masses of the proletarians in educating themselves so that they may become a force capable of abolishing classes and of preparing the ground for the organisation of socialist production. But it is impossible to accomplish all this without a Party, which is strong by reason of its cohesion and discipline.

The dictatorship of the proletariat—says Lenin—is a persistent struggle—sanguinary and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and of tens of millions is a terrible force. Without an iron party steeled in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of keeping track of and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully. (*"Left-Wing" Communism, etc., Chap. V.*)

The proletariat needs the Party *for* the purpose of achieving and maintaining the dictatorship. The Party is the instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

From this it follows that when classes disappear and the dictatorship of the proletariat dies out, the Party will also die out.

(5) *The Party as the Expression of Unity of Will, Which is Incompatible With the Existence of Factions*

The achievement and maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat are impossible without a party strong in its cohesion and iron discipline. But iron discipline in the Party is impossible without unity of will and without absolute and complete unity of action on the part of all members of the Party. This does not mean, of course, that the possibility of a conflict of opinion within the Party is thus excluded. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes criticism and conflicts of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that this discipline must be "blind" discipline. On the contrary, iron

discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after a discussion has been closed, after criticism has run its course and a decision has been made, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members become indispensable conditions without which Party unity and iron discipline in the Party are inconceivable.

In the present epoch of intensified civil war—says Lenin—the Communist Party can discharge its duty only if it is organised with the highest degree of centralisation, ruled by iron discipline bordering on military discipline, and if its Party centre proves to be a potent authoritative body invested with broad powers and enjoying the general confidence of the Party members. (*Conditions of Affiliation to the Communist International.*)

This is the position in regard to discipline in the Party in the period of struggle preceding the establishment of the dictatorship.

The same thing applies, but to a greater degree, to discipline in the Party after the establishment of the dictatorship.

In this connection, Lenin said :

Whoever in the least weakens the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during its dictatorship) actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. ("*Left-Wing*" *Communism, etc.*, Chap. V.)

It follows that the existence of factions is incompatible with Party unity and with its iron discipline. It need hardly be emphasised that the existence of factions leads to the creation of a number of centres, and the existence of a number of centres connotes the absence of a common centre in the Party, a breach in the unity of will, the weakening and disintegration of discipline, the weakening and disintegration of the dictatorship. It is true that the parties of the Second International, which are fighting against the dictatorship of the proletariat and have no desire to lead the proletariat to power, can permit themselves the luxury of such liberalism as freedom for factions, for they have no need whatever of iron discipline. But the parties of the

Communist International, which organise their activities on the basis of the task of achieving and strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot afford to be "liberal" or to permit the formation of factions. The Party is synonymous with unity of will, which leaves no room for any factionalism or division of authority in the Party.

Hence Lenin's warning on the "danger of factionalism from the point of view of Party unity and of the realisation of unity of will in the vanguard of the proletariat as the primary prerequisite for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat," which is embodied in a special resolution of the Tenth Congress of our Party, *On Party Unity*.

Hence Lenin's demand for the "complete extermination of all factionalism" and the "immediate dissolution of all groups, without exception, that had been formed on the basis of this or that platform" on pain of "unconditional and immediate expulsion from the Party." (Cf. the resolution, *On Party Unity*.)

#### (6) *The Party Is Strengthened by Purging Itself of Opportunist Elements*

The opportunist elements in the Party are the source of Party factionalism. The proletariat is not an isolated class. A steady stream of peasants, small tradesmen and intellectuals, who have become proletarianised by the development of capitalism, flows into the ranks of the proletariat. At the same time the upper strata of the proletariat—principally the trade union leaders and labour members of parliament—who have been fed by the bourgeoisie out of the super-profits extracted from the colonies, are undergoing a process of decay.

This stratum of the labour aristocracy or of workers who have become bourgeois—says Lenin—who have become quite petty-bourgeois in their mode of life, in their earnings, and in their outlook, serve as the principal bulwark of the Second International, and, in our days, the principal *social* (not military)

*support of the bourgeoisie. They are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, channels of reformism and chauvinism. (Imperialism, Preface to the French and German editions.)*

All these petty-bourgeois groups somehow or other penetrate into the Party into which they introduce an element of hesitancy and opportunism, of disintegration and lack of self-confidence. Factionalism and splits, disorganisation and the undermining of the Party from within are principally due to them. Fighting imperialism with such "allies" in one's rear is as bad as being caught between two fires, coming both from the front and rear. Therefore, no quarter should be given in fighting such elements, and their relentless expulsion from the Party is a condition precedent for the successful struggle against imperialism.

The theory of "overcoming" opportunist elements by ideological struggle within the Party; the theory of "living down" these elements within the confines of a single Party are rotten and dangerous theories that threaten to reduce the Party to paralysis and chronic infirmity, that threaten to abandon the Party to opportunism, that threaten to leave the proletariat without a revolutionary party, that threaten to deprive the proletariat of its main weapon in the fight against imperialism. Our Party could not have come out on to the high road, it could not have seized power and organised the dictatorship of the proletariat, it could not have emerged victorious from the civil war, if it had had within its ranks people like Martov and Dan, Potresov and Axelrod. Our Party succeeded in creating true unity and greater cohesion in its ranks than ever before, mainly because it undertook in time to purge itself of opportunist pollution and expelled the liquidators and Mensheviks from its ranks. The proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists. The Party becomes strong by ridding itself of opportunist elements.



With reformists and Mensheviks in our ranks—says Lenin—we cannot be victorious in the proletarian revolution *nor can we* defend it against attack. This is clearly so in principle. It is strikingly confirmed by the experiences of Russia and Hungary. . . . Russia found itself in a tight corner *many* a time, when the Soviet régime would certainly have been overthrown had the Mensheviks, reformists or petty-bourgeois democrats remained within our Party. . . . It is generally admitted that in Italy events are heading towards decisive battles of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie for the capture of State power. At such a time not only does the removal of the Mensheviks, reformists and Turatists from the Party become absolutely necessary, but it may even prove useful to remove certain excellent Communists who might and who do waver in the direction of desiring to maintain “unity” with the reformists—to remove these from all responsible positions. . . . On the eve of the revolution and in the midst of the desperate struggle for victory, the slightest hesitancy within the Party is apt to *ruin* everything, to disrupt the revolution and to snatch the power out of the hands of the proletariat, since that power is as yet insecure and the attacks upon it are still too violent. The retirement of wavering leaders at such a time does not weaken but strengthens the Party, the labour movement and the revolution. (*Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XXV, pp. 462-4.)

V. I. Lenin

## “LEFT-WING” COMMUNISM: AN INFANTILE DISORDER

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[ After the end of the world war and the formation of the Third International, Lenin was continually discussing with representatives of revolutionary groups in other countries the practical problems of Marxist strategy and tactics in

their own countries. He found particularly strong tendencies of an ultra-left character, as well as a general misunderstanding of the international significance of the Russian revolution and the strategy and tactics of the Bolshevik Party. Before the Second Congress of the Third International (August 1920) he wrote this book as a general guide to the revolutionary movements outside Russia. It was of great importance in helping the consolidation of the sections of the Third International on a Marxist basis. The passages reprinted here deal with the need for a revolutionary Party, work in the Trade Unions, the use of Parliament, and the general conditions for a successful revolution.]

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## “LEFT-WING” COMMUNISM: AN INFANTILE DISORDER

IN WHAT SENSE CAN WE SPEAK OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN  
REVOLUTION?

(Ch. I)

**D**URING the first months after the conquest of political power by the proletariat in Russia (November 7, [October 25] 1917) it might have appeared that the tremendous difference between backward Russia and the advanced countries of western Europe will cause the proletarian revolution in these latter countries to have very little resemblance to ours. Now we already have very considerable international experience which very definitely establishes the fact that some of the fundamental features of our revolution have a significance which is not local, not peculiarly national, not Russian only, but international. I speak here of international significance not in the broad sense of the term : Not some but all fundamental and many secondary features of our revolution are of international

significance in the sense of the influence it has upon all countries. I speak of it in the narrower sense, i.e., by international significance I mean the international significance or the historical inevitability of a repetition on an international scale of what has taken place here, and it must be admitted that some of the fundamental features of our revolution possess such international significance.

Of course, it would be a very great mistake to exaggerate this truth and to apply it to more than some of the fundamental features of our revolution. It would also be a mistake to lose sight of the fact that, after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, things will, in all probability, take a sharp turn, viz., Russia will cease to be the model country and once again become a backward (in the “Soviet” and in the socialist sense) country.

But at the present historical moment the situation is precisely that the Russian model reveals to *all* countries something that is very essential in their near and inevitable future. The advanced workers in every land have long understood this, although in most cases they did not so much understand it as grasp it, sense it, by their revolutionary class instinct. Herein lies the international “significance” (in the narrow sense of the term) of the Soviet power as well as of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics. . . .

#### SHOULD REVOLUTIONARIES WORK IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS?

(Ch. VI)

. . . Capitalism inevitably leaves to Socialism a heritage of old trade and craft distinctions among the workers created in the course of centuries, and trade unions which only very slowly and in the course of years can and will develop into broader, industrial unions having much less of the craft union about them (embracing whole industries,

not merely crafts and trades). Later these industrial unions will, in their turn, lead to the abolition of division of labour among people, to the education, training and preparation of people who will have an *all-round* development, an *all-round* training, people who *will be able to do everything*. Towards this goal communism is marching, and must march, and it must reach it—but only after very many years. To attempt in practice to-day to anticipate this future result of a fully developed, fully stabilised and formed, fully expanded and mature communism would be like trying to teach higher mathematics to a four-year-old child.

We can (and must) begin to build up socialism not with the fantastic human material especially created by our imagination but with the material bequeathed us by capitalism. This, no doubt, is very “difficult,” but any other approach to this task is not serious enough to deserve discussion.

Trade unions represented a gigantic step forward for the working class at the beginning of the development of capitalism, as the transition from the disintegration and helplessness of the workers to the *rudiments* of a class organisation. When the *highest* form of proletarian class organisation began to arise, viz., the *revolutionary Party of the proletariat* (which does not deserve the name until it learns to bind the leaders with the class and with the masses into one single indissoluble whole), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary traits, a certain craft narrowness, a certain tendency towards becoming non-political, a certain inertness, etc. But the development of the proletariat did not and could not, anywhere in the world, proceed otherwise than through the trade unions, through their inter-action with the Party of the working class. The conquest of political power by the proletariat is a gigantic step forward for the proletariat as a class, and the Party must more and more than ever, and in a new way, not merely in the old way, educate and guide the trade unions; at the same time it must not forget that they are, and will

long remain, a necessary “school of communism,” a preparatory school for training the proletariat to exercise its dictatorship, an indispensable organisation of the workers for gradually transferring the management of the whole economy of the country to the hands of the working *class* (and not of the separate trades) and later to the hands of all the toiling masses.

A certain “reactionism” in the trade unions, in the sense mentioned, is *inevitable* under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not to understand this means to fail completely to understand the fundamental conditions of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism. To fear *this* “reactionism,” to try to *avoid* it or skip it, is the greatest folly, for it means fearing to assume the rôle of proletarian vanguard which implies training, educating, enlightening and attracting into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and the peasantry. On the other hand, to postpone the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat until such time as not a single worker with narrow craft interests, not a single worker with guild and trade union prejudices is left, would be a still greater mistake. The art of statesmanship (and the correct understanding by a Communist of his tasks) lies in correctly gauging the conditions and the moment when the vanguard of the proletariat can successfully seize power, when it will be able during and after this seizure of power to obtain adequate support from sufficiently broad strata of the working class and of the non-proletarian toiling masses, and when, thereafter, it will be able to maintain, consolidate and extend its rule, educating, training and attracting ever broader masses of the toilers.

Further : in countries more advanced than Russia a certain reactionism in the trade unions has been revealed, and was unquestionably bound to be revealed, much more strongly than in our country. Our Mensheviks found (and in a very few trade unions still find some) support in trade unions precisely because of their craft narrowness, craft

egoism, and opportunism. In the West the Mensheviks have acquired a much firmer "footing" in the trade unions. There the *trade union* "labour aristocracy" constitutes a much thicker stratum of narrow-minded, selfish, hard-hearted, covetous, petty-bourgeois elements—imperialistically-minded, bribed and corrupted by imperialism. This is incontestable. The struggle against the Gomperses and Hendersons, against Jouhaux, Merrheim, Legien and Co. in western Europe, is much more difficult than the struggle against our Mensheviks, who represent an *absolutely similar* social and political type. This struggle must be waged ruthlessly to the very end, as we waged it, until all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism have been completely discredited and expelled from the trade unions. It is impossible to capture political power (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until this struggle has reached a *certain* stage. Moreover, in different countries and under different circumstances this "certain stage" will not be the same; it can be correctly gauged only by thoughtful, experienced, and well-informed political leaders of the proletariat in each separate country. (In Russia, the measure of success in the struggle was gauged by the elections to the Constituent Assembly in November 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of November 7, 1917. In these elections the Mensheviks were utterly defeated; they obtained 700,000 votes—1,400,000, if the vote of Transcaucasia be added—as against 9,000,000 votes obtained by the Bolsheviks. See my article, "Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," No. 7-8 of the *Communist International*.)

But we wage the struggle against the "labour aristocracy" in the name of the working masses and in order to attract the latter to our side; we wage the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to attract the working class to our side. To forget this most elementary and self-evident truth would be stupid. But the German "Left" Communists are guilty of just this

stupidity when, because of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the *heads* of the trade unions, they jump to the conclusion that it is necessary to leave the trade unions, to refuse to work in them, to create new, *fantastic* forms of labour organisations ! ! This is an unpardonable blunder that would equal the greatest service the Communists could render the bourgeoisie. Our Mensheviks, like all opportunist, social-chauvinist, Kautskyist trade union leaders, are nothing more nor less than “ agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement ” (as we have always characterised the Mensheviks) or “ labour lieutenants of the capitalist class ” (to use the excellent and profoundly true expression of the followers of Daniel De Leon in America). To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward working masses under the influence of reactionary leaders, agents of the bourgeoisie, labour aristocrats, or “ bourgeoisified workers.” (See Engels’s letter to Marx in 1852 concerning the British workers.)

It is just this absurd “ theory ” that Communists must not belong to reactionary trade unions that demonstrates most clearly how frivolously these “ Left ” Communists regard the question of influence over “ the masses,” how they misuse their outcries about “ the masses.” In order to be able to help “ the masses ” and to win the sympathy, confidence, and support of “ the masses,” it is necessary to brave all difficulties and to be unafraid of the pinpricks, obstacles, insults, and persecution of the “ leaders ” (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are, in most cases, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), and it is imperatively necessary to *work wherever the masses are to be found*. Every sacrifice must be made, the greatest obstacles must be overcome, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, stubbornly, insistently, and patiently, precisely in all those institutions, societies, and associations to which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses belong, however ultra-reactionary

they may be. And the trade unions and workers' co-operatives (the latter, at least sometimes), are precisely the organisations in which the masses are to be found. In England, according to figures quoted in the Swedish paper, *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* of March 10, 1919, the membership of the trade unions increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6,600,000 at the end of 1918, i.e., an increase of 19 per cent. At the end of 1919 the membership was 7,500,000. I have not at hand the corresponding figures for France and Germany, but the facts testifying to the rapid growth in membership of the trade unions in these countries as well are absolutely incontestable and generally known.

These facts very clearly indicate what is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms : the growth of class consciousness and of the desire for organisation precisely among the proletarian masses, among the "rank and file," among the backward elements. Millions of workers in England, France, and Germany are *for the first time* passing from complete lack of organisation to the lowest, most elementary, most simple, and (for those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most easily accessible form of organisation, namely, the trade unions. And the revolutionary but foolish Left Communists stand by, shouting, "the masses, the masses!"—and *refuse to work within the trade unions*, refuse on the pretext that they are "reactionary," and invent a brand-new, pure "Workers' Union," guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices, innocent of craft or narrow trade sins!! and which they claim, will be (will be!) a wide organisation, and the only (only!) condition of membership of which will be "recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship!!" (See the citation above.)

Greater stupidity, and greater damage to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries cannot be imagined! If, in Russia to-day, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, we were to make the "recognition of the



dictatorship ” a condition of membership in the trade unions, we should be doing a stupid thing, we should damage our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to *convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childish “ Left-wing ” slogans.

There can be no doubt that Messieurs the Gomperses, Hendersons, Jouhaux, Legiens, and the like, are very grateful to such “ Left ” revolutionaries, who, like the German opposition “ on principle ” (heaven preserve us from such “ principles ! ”) or like some revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World, advocate leaving the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them. Undoubtedly, Messieurs the “ leaders ” of opportunism will resort to every trick of bourgeois diplomacy, to the aid of bourgeois governments, the priests, the police, and the courts, in order to prevent Communists from getting into the trade unions, to force them out by every means, to make their work in the trade unions as unpleasant as possible, to insult, to hound, and persecute them. It is necessary to be able to withstand all this, to agree to any and every sacrifice, and even—if need be—to resort to all sorts of devices, manœuvres, and illegal methods, to evasion and subterfuge, in order to penetrate into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on Communist work in them at all costs. Under Tsarism, until 1905, we had no “ legal possibilities,” but when Zubatov, the secret service agent, organised Black Hundred workers’ meetings and workmen’s societies for the purpose of trapping revolutionaries and combating them, we sent members of our Party to these meetings and into these societies. (I personally remember one such comrade, Babushkin, a prominent St. Petersburg workman, who was shot by the Tsar’s generals in 1906.) They established contacts with the masses, managed to carry on their propaganda, and succeeded in wresting the workers from the influence of Zubatov’s

agents. Of course, in western Europe, which is particularly saturated with inveterate legalist, constitutionalist, bourgeois-democratic prejudices, it is more difficult to carry on such work. But it can and must be carried on and carried on systematically.

The Executive Committee of the Third International must, in my opinion, directly condemn, and should call upon the next Congress of the Communist International to condemn, the policy of refusing to join reactionary trade unions in general (stating in detail why this refusal to join is unreasonable and pointing out the extreme harm it does to the cause of the proletarian revolution) and, in particular, the line of conduct of the Dutch Tribunists, who, either directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, wholly or partially, supported this erroneous policy. The Third International must break with the tactics of the Second International and not evade or cover up sore points, but raise them bluntly. The whole truth has been put squarely to the "Independents" (Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany) ; the whole truth must likewise be told to the "Left" Communists.

#### SHOULD WE PARTICIPATE IN BOURGEOIS PARLIAMENTS?

(Ch. VII)

. . . The surest way of discrediting a new political (and not only political) idea, and to damage it, is to reduce it to an absurdity while ostensibly defending it. For every truth, if carried to "excess" (as Dietzgen Senior said), if it is exaggerated, if it is carried beyond the limits within which it can be actually applied, can be reduced to absurdity, and, under the conditions mentioned, is even inevitably converted into an absurdity. This is just the kind of back-handed service the Dutch and German Lefts are rendering the new truth about the superiority of the Soviet form of government over bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of

course, any one who would say in the old way and in general that refusal to participate in bourgeois parliaments is under no circumstances permissible would be wrong. I cannot attempt to formulate here the conditions under which a boycott is useful, for the task of this treatise is far more modest, namely, to study Russian experience in connection with certain topical questions of international Communist tactics. Russian experience has given us one successful and correct (1905) and one incorrect (1906) example of the application of the boycott by the Bolsheviks. Analysing the first case, we see that we succeeded in *preventing the convocation* of a reactionary parliament by a reactionary government in a situation in which extra-parliamentary, revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) was growing with exceptional rapidity, when not a single stratum of the proletariat or of the peasantry could support the reactionary government, when the revolutionary proletariat was acquiring influence over the broad, backward masses by means of the strike struggle and the agrarian movement. It is quite obvious that *this* experience is not applicable to present-day European conditions. It is also quite obvious, on the strength of the foregoing arguments, that even a conditional defence of the refusal to participate in parliaments by the Dutch and other "Lefts," is fundamentally wrong and harmful to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat.

In western Europe and America parliament has become an object of special hatred to the advanced revolutionaries of the working class. This is incontestable and quite comprehensible, for it is difficult to imagine anything more base, abominable and treacherous than the behaviour of the overwhelming majority of Socialist and Social-Democratic deputies in parliament during and after the war. But it would be not only unreasonable but actually criminal to yield to this mood when deciding the question of *how* to fight against this generally recognised evil. In many countries of western Europe the revolutionary mood is at

present, we might say, a "novelty," a "rarity," for which we have been vainly and impatiently waiting for a long time, and perhaps that is why we so easily give way to moods. Of course, without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions favouring the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never be converted into action ; but we in Russia have been convinced by long, painful and bloody experience of the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built up on revolutionary moods alone. Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective estimation of *all* the class forces in a given State (in neighbouring states and in all states, i.e., on a world scale), as well as on an evaluation of the experience of revolutionary movements. To express one's "revolutionism" solely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, solely by refusing to participate in parliaments, is very easy ; but, just because it is too easy, it is not the solution of a difficult, a very difficult problem. It is much more difficult to create a really revolutionary parliamentary fraction in a European parliament than it was in Russia. Of course. But this is only a particular expression of the general truth that it was easy for Russia, in the concrete, historically exceedingly unique, situation of 1917, to start a Socialist revolution, but that it will be more difficult for Russia to *continue* and bring it to its consummation than for the European countries. Even in the beginning of 1918 I had occasion to point this out, and our experience of the last two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this argument. Certain specific conditions existed in Russia which do not at present exist in western Europe, and a repetition of these or similar conditions is not very probable. These specific conditions were : (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet Revolution with the ending (as a consequence of this revolution) of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree ; (2) the possibility of taking advantage, for a certain time, of the mortal conflict between two world-powerful groups of imperialist

plunderers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy : (3) the possibility of holding out in a comparatively lengthy civil war, owing partly to the gigantic dimensions of the country and the poor means of communication ; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the Party of the proletariat was able to adopt the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, a party which, in the main, was very hostile to Bolshevism) and at once realise them, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat. The absence of these specific conditions—not to mention a number of other causes—accounts for the fact that it will be more difficult to start a socialist revolution in western Europe than it was in Russia. To attempt to “circumvent” this difficulty by “skipping” the difficult task of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You wish to create a new society, and yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming in a reactionary parliament a good parliamentary fraction consisting of convinced, devoted, heroic Communists ! Is not this childish ? If Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Höglund in Sweden were able, even without the support of the masses from below, to give examples of a truly revolutionary utilisation of reactionary parliaments, why, then, should a rapidly growing revolutionary mass party, under the conditions of the post-war disillusionment and exasperation of the masses, be unable to *forge* for itself a Communist fraction in the worst of parliaments ? It is just because the backward masses of the workers and, to a still greater degree, of the small peasants in western Europe are much more strongly imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they are in Russia that it is *only* within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and stubborn struggle—undaunted by difficulties—to expose, dispel and overcome these prejudices. . . .

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN ENGLAND  
(Ch. IX)

In England there is not yet a Communist Party, but there is a fresh, broad, powerful and rapidly growing Communist movement among the workers which justifies the brightest hopes. There are several political parties and organisations (British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, the Workers' Socialist Federation) which desire to form a Communist Party and are already carrying on negotiations towards this end. The *Workers' Dreadnought*, the weekly organ of the last-mentioned organisation, in its issue of February 21, 1920 (No. 48, Vol. VI), contains an article by the editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, entitled: "Towards a Communist Party." In this article she outlines the progress of the negotiations taking place between the four organisations mentioned for the formation of a united Communist Party on the basis of affiliation to the Third International, the recognition of the Soviet system instead of parliamentarism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It appears that one of the greatest obstacles to the immediate formation of a united Communist Party is the disagreement on the question of parliamentary action and the question of whether the new Communist Party should affiliate to the old, trade unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party. The Workers' Socialist Federation and the Socialist Labour Party<sup>1</sup> are opposed to taking part in parliamentary elections and in Parliament and are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party, and in this disagree with all, or with the majority, of the members of the British Socialist Party, which they regard as the "Right wing of the Communist Parties" in England. (P. 5, Sylvia Pankhurst's article.)

Thus, the main division is the same as that in Germany,

<sup>1</sup> I believe this party is opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party, but is not altogether opposed to parliamentary action.

notwithstanding the enormous difference in the form in which the disagreement manifests itself (in Germany the form is more analogous to the Russian than to the English) and in a number of other things. Let us examine the arguments of the “Lefts.”

On the question of parliamentary action, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst refers to an article in the same issue of her paper by Comrade W. Gallacher, who, in the name of the Scottish Workers’ Council in Glasgow, writes :

The above “Council” is definitely anti-parliamentarian, and has behind it the Left wing of the various political bodies.

We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland, striving continually to build up a revolutionary organisation within the industries, and a Communist Party, based on social committees, throughout the country. For a considerable time we have been sparring with the official parliamentarians. We have not considered it necessary to declare open warfare on them, *and they are afraid* to open attacks on us.

But this state of affairs cannot long continue. We are winning all along the line.

The rank and file of the I.L.P. in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the thought of Parliament, and soviets or workers’ councils are being supported by almost every branch.

This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade their members to come back into the parliamentary fold.

Revolutionary comrades *must not* give any support to this gang. Our fight here is going to be a difficult one. One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more impelling force than their regard for the revolution.

Any support given to parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes. Hendersons, Clynes and Co. are hopelessly reactionary. The official I.L.P. is more and more coming under the control of middle class Liberals, who, since the rout of the Liberal Party, have found their spiritual home in the camp of Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden and Co. The official I.L.P. is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it. Any support to the parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former.

The B.S.P. doesn't count at all here. . . .

What is wanted here is a sound, revolutionary, industrial organisation and Communist Party working along clear, well-defined, scientific lines. If our comrades can assist us in building these, we will take their help gladly ; if they cannot, for God's sake let them keep out altogether, lest they betray the revolution by lending their support to the reactionaries, who are so eagerly clamouring for parliamentary honours (?) [the query belongs to the author of the letter], and who are anxious to prove that *they* can rule as effectively as the boss class politicians themselves.

In my opinion this letter excellently expresses the temper and point of view of the young Communists, or rank and file workers, who are only just coming over to communism. This temper is very gratifying and valuable ; we must learn to prize it and to support it, because without it, it is hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in England, or in any other country for that matter. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, who can rouse such temper (very often dormant, not realised, not roused) among the masses, must be prized and every assistance must be given them. At the same time we must openly and frankly tell them that temper *alone* is not sufficient to lead the masses in the great revolutionary struggle, and that the mistakes that these very loyal adherents of the cause of the revolution are about to make, or are making, can damage the cause of the revolution. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly betrays the embryos of *all* the mistakes committed by the German "Left" Communists and which were committed by the "Left" Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

The writer of the letter is imbued with noble, proletarian (intelligible and near, not only to the proletarians but also to all toilers, to all "small men," to use a German expression) hatred for the bourgeois "class politicians." The hatred felt by this representative of the oppressed and exploited masses is in truth the "beginning of all wisdom," the very basis of every socialist and communist movement, and of its success. But the author apparently fails to take



into account the fact that politics is a science and an art that does not drop from the skies, is not acquired for nothing, and that if it wants to conquer the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must train *its own* proletarian "class politicians" who shall be as skilled as the bourgeois politicians.

The writer of the letter understands excellently that it is not parliament but workers' Soviets that alone can serve as instruments for achieving the aims of the proletariat, and, of course, those who have failed to understand this up to now are hopeless reactionaries, no matter whether they are the most highly educated people in the world, the most experienced politicians, the most sincere socialists, the most erudite Marxists, the most honest citizens and family men. But the writer of the letter does not raise the question, does not think of raising the question, as to whether it is possible to bring about the victory of the Soviets over Parliament without getting our "Soviet" politicians *into* Parliament, without disrupting parliamentarism from *within*, without preparing the ground within Parliament for the success of the Soviets' forthcoming task of dispersing Parliament. And yet the writer of the letter expresses the correct idea that the Communist Party in England must operate on the basis of *scientific* principles. Science demands, first, the calculation of the experience of other countries, especially if these other countries, also capitalist countries, are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a very similar experience; second, science demands the calculation of *all* the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in the given country, and does not demand that policy be determined by mere desires and views, degree of class consciousness and readiness for battle of only one group or party.

It is true that the Hendersons, the Clynes, the MacDonalds and the Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary. It is also true that they want to take power in their own hands (although they prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to govern according to the old bourgeois rules, and that when they do get into power they will

certainly act in the same way as the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All this is true. But the logical conclusion to be drawn from this is not that to support them is treachery to the revolution, but that in the interests of the revolution the revolutionaries in the working class should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support. In order to explain this idea I will take two contemporary English political documents : (1) the speech delivered by the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, on March 18, 1920 (reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of March 19, 1920) and (2) the arguments of the "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in the article mentioned above.

Arguing against Asquith (who was especially invited to attend this meeting, but declined) and against those Liberals who do not want a coalition with the Conservatives but a *rapprochement* with the Labour Party (Comrade Gallacher in his letter also points to the fact that Liberals have joined the Independent Labour Party), Lloyd George said that a coalition, and a *close* coalition, with the Conservatives was essential because otherwise there would be a victory of the Labour Party, which Lloyd George "prefers to call" the Socialist Party and which is striving to "collectivise" the means of production.

In France this is called communism, the leader of the British bourgeoisie explained to his hearers (members of the Liberal Party who probably up to that time had been unaware of it). "In Germany it is called socialism, and in Russia it is called Bolshevism." This is opposed to Liberal principles, explained Lloyd George, because Liberalism stands for private property. "Civilisation is in danger," declared the orator, and, therefore, the Liberals and Conservatives must unite. . . .

. . . If you go to the agricultural areas—said Lloyd George—I agree that you have the old party divisions as strong as ever, they are far removed from the danger. It does not walk their lanes. But when they see it, they will be as strong as some of these industrial constituencies now are. Four-fifths of this

country is industrial and commercial ; hardly one-fifth is agricultural. It is one of the things I have constantly in mind when I think of the dangers of the future here. In France the population is agricultural, and you have a solid body of opinions which does not move very rapidly, and which is not very easily excited by revolutionary movements. That is not the case here. This country is more top-heavy than any country in the world, and if it begins to rock, the crash here, for that reason, will be greater than in any land.

From this the reader will see that Lloyd George is not only a clever man, but that he has also learned a great deal from the Marxists. It would not be a sin to learn from Lloyd George.

It is interesting to note the following episode that occurred in the course of the discussion which followed Lloyd George's speech :

*Mr. Wallace, M.P.* : I should like to ask what the Prime Minister considers the effect might be in the industrial constituencies upon the industrial workers, so many of whom are Liberals at the present time and from whom we get so much support. Would not a possible result be to cause an immediate overwhelming accession of strength to the Labour Party from men who are at present our cordial supporters ?

*The Prime Minister* : I take a totally different view. The fact that Liberals are fighting among themselves undoubtedly drives a very considerable number of Liberals in despair to the Labour Party, where you get a considerable body of Liberals, very able men, whose business it is to discredit the Government. The result is undoubtedly to bring a good accession of public sentiment to the Labour Party. It does not go to the Liberals who are outside, it goes to the Labour Party, the by-elections show that.

Incidentally, I would like to say that this argument shows especially how even the cleverest people among the bourgeoisie have got themselves entangled and cannot avoid committing irreparable acts of stupidity. This will bring about their downfall. But our people may do stupid things (provided they are not very serious and are rectified

in time) and yet, in the last resort, they will prove the victors.

The second political document is the following argument advanced by the "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst :

. . . Comrade Inkpin (the General Secretary of the British Socialist Party) refers to the Labour Party as "the main body of the working class movement." Another comrade of the British Socialist Party, at the conference of the Third International just held, put the British Socialist Party view more strongly. He said : "We regard the Labour Party as the organised working class."

But we do not take this view of the Labour Party. The Labour Party is very large numerically, though its membership is to a great extent quiescent and apathetic, consisting of many workers who have joined the trade unions because their workmates are trade unionists, and to share the friendly benefits.

But we recognise that the great size of the Labour Party is also due to the fact that it is the creation of a school of thought beyond which the majority of the British working class has not yet emerged, though great changes are at work in the mind of the people which will presently alter this state of affairs. . . .

The British Labour Party, like the social-patriotic organisations of other countries, will, in the natural development of society, inevitably come into power. It is for the Communists to build up the forces which will overthrow the social-patriots, and in this country we must not delay or falter in that work.

We must not dissipate our energy in adding to the strength of the Labour Party ; its rise to power is inevitable. We must concentrate on making a Communist movement that will vanquish it.

The Labour Party will soon be forming a government ; the revolutionary opposition must make ready to attack it.

Thus, the liberal bourgeoisie is abandoning the historical "two-party" (exploiters') system which has been sanctified by age-long experience and which has been extremely advantageous to the exploiters, and considers it necessary to unite their forces to fight the Labour Party. A section of the Liberals are deserting the Liberal Party, like rats leaving a sinking ship, and are joining the Labour Party. The Left Communists are of the opinion that the Labour

Party's rise to power is inevitable and they admit that at present it has the support of the majority of the workers. From this they draw the strange conclusion which Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst formulates as follows :

The Communist Party must not enter into compromises. . . . The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate ; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution.

On the contrary, from the fact that the majority of the workers in England still follow the lead of the English Kerenskys or Scheidemanns and that they have not yet had the experience of a government composed of these people, which experience was necessary in Russia and in Germany in order to secure the mass transition of workers to Communism, from this fact it undoubtedly follows that the British Communists *should* participate in parliament, should from *within* Parliament help the masses of the workers see the results of a Henderson and Snowden government, should help the Hendersons and Snowdens to defeat the combined Lloyd Georges and Churchills. To act in a different way would mean to place difficulties in the way of the cause of the revolution, because, revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, never by propaganda alone. “ To march forward without compromise, without turning from the path ”—if this is said by an obviously impotent minority of the workers who know (or at all events should know) that very soon, when the Hendersons and Snowdens will have gained the victory over the Lloyd Georges and Churchills, the majority will be disappointed in their leaders and will begin to support Communism (or at all events will adopt an attitude of neutrality, and largely an attitude of friendly neutrality towards the Communists), then this slogan is obviously mistaken. It is like 10,000 soldiers going into battle against 50,000 enemy soldiers,

when it would be wise to "halt," to "turn from the path" and even enter into a "compromise" in order to gain time until the arrival of the reinforcements of 100,000 which are bound to come, but which cannot go into action immediately. This is intellectual childishness and not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class.

The fundamental law of revolution, confirmed by all revolutions and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: it is not sufficient for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; for revolution it is necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the "lower classes" *do not want* the old and when the "upper classes" *cannot continue in the old way* then only can the revolution be victorious. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a national crisis affecting both the exploited and the exploiters. It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for revolution and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes be in a state of governmental crisis which draws even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is: the rapid tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of hitherto apathetic representatives of the toiling and oppressed masses capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.

In England, as can be seen incidentally from Lloyd George's speech, both conditions for the successful proletarian revolution are obviously maturing. And the mistakes the Left Communists are making are particularly dangerous at the present time precisely because certain revolutionaries are not displaying a sufficiently thoughtful,

attentive, intelligent and calculating attitude towards either of these conditions. If we—not a revolutionary group, but the Party of the revolutionary *class*—if we want the *masses* to follow us (and unless they do, we stand the risk of remaining mere talkers) we must, first, help Henderson or Snowden beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or to be more correct : compel the former to beat the latter, because the former are *afraid to win*) ; secondly, help the majority of the working class to become convinced by their own experience that we are right, i.e., that the Hendersons and Snowdens are utterly worthless, that they are petty-bourgeois and treacherous and that their bankruptcy is inevitable ; thirdly, bring nearer the moment when, on the basis of the disappointment of the majority of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible with good chances of success to overthrow the government of the Hendersons at once, because if the very clever and solid, not petty bourgeois but big bourgeois, Lloyd George, betrays utter consternation and weakens himself (and the whole of the bourgeoisie) more and more by his “friction” with Churchill one day and his “friction” with Asquith the next day, how much more so will this be the case with the Henderson government !

I will speak more concretely. In my opinion, the British Communists should unite their four (all very weak and some of them very, very weak) parties and groups into a single Communist Party on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of *obligatory* participation in Parliament. The Communist Party should propose to the Hendersons and Snowdens that they enter into a “compromise” election agreement, viz., march together against the alliance of Lloyd George and the Conservatives, divide the seats in Parliament in proportion to the number of votes cast for the Labour Party and Communist Party respectively (not at parliamentary elections, but in a special ballot), while the Communist Party retains *complete liberty* to carry on agitation, propaganda and

political activity. Without the latter condition, of course, no such *bloc* could be concluded, for that would be an act of betrayal: the British Communists must insist on and secure complete liberty to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (for fifteen years—1903–17) the Russian Bolsheviks insisted on and secured it in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviks.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens accept the *bloc* on these terms, then we gain, because the number of seats in Parliament is not a matter of importance to us; we are not chasing after seats, therefore we can yield on this point (the Hendersons and particularly their new friends—or is it their new masters?—the Liberals, who have joined the Independent Labour Party, are particularly eager to get seats). We will gain, because we will carry *our* agitation among the *masses* at a moment when Lloyd George *himself* has “incensed” them, and we will not only help the Labour Party establish its government more quickly, but also help the masses understand more quickly the Communist propaganda that we will carry on against the Hendersons without curtailment and without evasions.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject the *bloc* with us on these terms we will gain still more, because we will have at once shown the *masses* (note that even in the purely Menshevik and utterly opportunist Independent Labour Party the *rank and file* is in favour of Soviets) that the Hendersons prefer *their* closeness with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers. We will immediately gain in the eyes of the *masses* who, particularly after the brilliant, very correct and very useful (for communism) explanations given by Lloyd George, will sympathise with the idea of uniting all the workers against the Lloyd George-Conservative alliance. We will gain immediately because we will demonstrate to the masses that the Hendersons and the Snowdens are afraid to beat Lloyd George, afraid to take power themselves and are *secretly* striving to get the support of Lloyd George, who is *openly* stretching out his hand to the



Conservatives against the Labour Party. It should be noted that in Russia, after the Revolution of March 12 [February 27], 1917, the propaganda of the Bolsheviks against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (i.e., the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens) gained a great deal precisely because of a circumstance like this. We said to the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries: take complete power without the bourgeoisie, because you have the majority in the Soviets (at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had only 13 per cent of the votes). But the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens feared to take power without the bourgeoisie, and when the bourgeoisie delayed the convocation of the Constituent Assembly because they knew perfectly well that the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries would have the majority in it<sup>1</sup> (the latter had entered into a close political *bloc* and both really represented *nothing but* petty-bourgeois democracy), the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were not able to put up a consistent and strenuous struggle against these delays.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject the *bloc* with the Communists, the Communists will gain immediately in regard to winning the sympathy of the masses and in discrediting the Hendersons and Snowdens, and if, as a result, we do lose a few parliamentary seats it is not a matter of importance. We would put up candidates in a very few, but absolutely safe constituencies, i.e., where our candidate would not let the Liberal in, in opposition to the Labour candidate. We would take part in the election campaign, distribute leaflets advocating communism, and in *all* constituencies where we have no candidates urge the electors *to vote for the Labour candidate against the bourgeois*

<sup>1</sup>The elections to the constituent Assembly in November 1917 resulted in the following (based on returns covering over 36,000,000 votes: the Bolsheviks obtained 25 per cent of the votes cast; the various parties of the landlords and capitalists obtained 13 per cent and the petty bourgeois democratic parties, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and a number of kindred groups, obtained 62 per cent.

*candidate*. Comrades Sylvia Pankhurst and Gallacher are mistaken in thinking that this is the betrayal of communism, the abandonment of the struggle against the social-traitors. On the contrary, the communist revolution undoubtedly stands to gain by it.

At the present time the British Communists very often find it hard to approach the masses and even to get them to listen to them. If I as a Communist come out and call upon the workers to vote for the Hendersons against Lloyd George, they will certainly listen to me. And I will be able to explain in a popular manner not only why Soviets are better than Parliament and why the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (which is concealed behind the signboard of bourgeois "democracy"), but I will also be able to explain that I want to support Henderson with my vote in the same way as a rope supports one who is hanged—that the establishment of a Henderson government will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, and will accelerate the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens as was the case with their friends in Russia and Germany.

And if the objection is raised : these tactics are too "subtle" or too complicated, the masses will not understand them, they will split up and scatter our forces, will prevent us from concentrating our forces in the Soviet revolution, etc.—I will reply to the "Left" who raise this objection : don't put the blame for your dogmatism upon the masses ! In all probability the masses in Russia are not more educated than the masses in England ; if anything they are less so. And yet the masses understood the Bolsheviks ; and the fact that on the *eve* of the Soviet revolution, in September 1917, the Bolsheviks put up their candidates for a bourgeois parliament (the Constituent Assembly) and on the *morrow* of the Soviet revolution, in November, 1917, took part in the election of this Constituent Assembly which they dispersed on January 18 [5].

1918—this fact did not hamper the Bolsheviks, but on the contrary, it helped them.

I cannot deal here with the second point of disagreement among the British Communists, viz., the question of affiliation to the Labour Party. I have too little material at my disposal on this question, which is a particularly complicated one in view of the peculiar character of the Labour Party, the very structure of which is so unlike the ordinary political party on the Continent. It is beyond doubt, however, first, that on this question also, those who think that they will be able to deduce the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat from principles like : “A Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure and its independence of reformism inviolate ; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution”—will fall into error. For such principles are merely a repetition of the mistakes committed by the French Communard-Blanquists, who, in 1874, “repudiated” all compromises and all the intermediary stations. Secondly, it is beyond doubt that in this question, too, the task is to apply the general and main principles of communism to the *peculiar* relations between classes and parties, to the *peculiar features* in the objective development towards communism which are observed in every country and which one must know, study, seek, divine.

But this must be discussed not only in connection with British communism alone but in connection with the general conclusions concerning the development of communism in all capitalist countries. We shall now proceed to deal with this theme.

#### SOME CONCLUSIONS

##### (Ch. X)

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 marked a very peculiar turn in world history : on one of the most backward capitalist countries the strike movement attained a breadth

and power unprecedented in the world. In the *first month of 1905 alone* the number of strikers was ten times the average yearly number of the previous ten years (1895-1904) ; and from January to October 1905, strikes grew continuously and on an enormous scale. Under the influence of a number of entirely unique historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show to the world not only a spasmodic growth of independent activity on the part of the oppressed masses during revolution (this happened in all great revolutions), but also a proletariat whose significance was infinitely greater than its numerical proportion to the total population, the combination of the economic and political strike, the transformation of the latter into an armed uprising, and the birth of a new form of mass struggle and mass organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism, viz., the Soviets.

The February and October Revolutions of 1917 resulted in the all-round development of the Soviets on a national scale, and in their victory in the proletarian, socialist revolution. And in less than two years the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this method of struggle and form of organisation to the working class movement of the whole world, and the historical mission of the Soviets to be the grave-digger, the heir, and the successor of bourgeois parliamentarism, of bourgeois democracy in general, became revealed.

More than that, the history of the working class movement now shows that in all countries it is about to experience (and it has already begun to experience) the struggle of nascent communism—which is becoming strong and is marching towards victory—with, first and foremost, *its own* (of each particular country) “Menshevism,” i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism, and, second, as a sort of supplement, with “Left-wing” Communism. The first struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without a single exception, as a struggle between the Second International already virtually dead and the Third

International. The second struggle can be observed in Germany, in England, in Italy, in America (at least a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and the anarcho-syndicalist elements in America defend the errors of “ Left ” Communism while simultaneously there is an almost universal, almost unanimous acceptance of the Soviet system), and in France (the attitude of a section of the former syndicalists towards the political party and parliamentarism, and here, too, while at the same time accepting the Soviet system), i.e., the struggle, undoubtedly, is being waged not only on a national but also on an international scale.

But, while the working class movement is everywhere passing through what is practically a similar preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, it is in each country achieving this development in *its own way*. The big, advanced capitalist countries are marching along this road *much more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, which history granted a period of fifteen years to prepare itself for victory as an organised political trend. The Third International has already scored a decisive victory in the short space of one year; it has defeated the yellow, social-chauvinist Second International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International and which seemed to be firm and strong, enjoying the all-round support—direct and indirect, material (ministerial posts, passports, the press) and ideological—of the world bourgeoisie.

The main thing now is that the Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account the fundamental tasks of the struggle against opportunism and “ Left ” doctrinairism as well as the concrete *peculiar features* which this struggle assumes and inevitably must assume in each separate country in accordance with the peculiar features of its economics, politics, culture, national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, etc. Everywhere we observe widening and growing

dissatisfaction with the Second International because of its opportunism, its inability or incapability, to create a really centralised, really leading centre which would be capable of guiding the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for the world Soviet republic. We must clearly realise that such a leading centre cannot under any circumstances be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equalised, identical tactical rules of the struggle. As long as national and state differences exist among peoples and countries—and these differences will continue to exist for a very long time, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world scale—the unity of international tactics of the communist working class movement of all countries demands not the elimination of variety, not the abolition of national differences (this is a foolish dream at the present moment), but such an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) as will *correctly modify* these principles in *certain particulars*, will properly adapt them to the national and national-state differences. To investigate, study, seek out, divine, grasp that which is specifically national in the *concrete manner* in which each country *approaches* the fulfilment of the *single* international task, the victory over opportunism and “Left” doctrinairism in the working class movement, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—this is the main task of the historical period through which all the advanced (and not only the advanced) countries are now passing. The main thing—not everything, by a very long way—but the main thing has already been achieved in that the vanguard of the working class has been won over, in that it has gone over to the side of the Soviet power against parliamentarism, to the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat against bourgeois democracy. Now all efforts, all attention must be concentrated on the *next* step—which seems, and from a certain standpoint really is, less fundamental, but which in

fact is much closer to the practical carrying out of the task—namely, on seeking out the forms of *transition or approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been ideologically won over. This is the most important thing. Without this, we cannot take even the first step towards victory. But from this first step it is still a long way to victory. With the vanguard alone victory is impossible. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle when the whole class, when the broad masses have not yet taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would not merely be folly, but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of toilers and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not sufficient. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, confirmed now with astonishing force and vividness not only in Russia but also in Germany. It has been necessary—not only for the uncultured, often illiterate, masses of Russia, but for the highly cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany—to realise through their own painful experience the absolute impotence and characterlessness, the absolute helplessness and servility before the bourgeoisie, the absolute baseness of the government of the knights of the Second International, the absolute inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp and Co. in Germany) as the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to turn them resolutely toward communism.

The immediate task that confronts the class conscious vanguard of the international labour movement, i.e., the Communist Parties, groups and trends, is to be able to *lead* the broad masses (now, for the most part, slumbering, apathetic, hidebound, inert, and dormant) to their new

position, or, rather, to be able to lead *not only* their own Party but also the masses during the course of their approach, their transition to the new position. While the first historical task (viz., that of winning over the class conscious vanguard of the proletariat to the side of the Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not be accomplished without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social-chauvinism, the second task, which now becomes the immediate task, and which is to lead *the masses* to the new position that will assure the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, this immediate task cannot be accomplished without the liquidation of Left doctrinairism, without completely overcoming and getting rid of its mistakes.

As long as the question was (and in so far as it still is) one of winning over the vanguard of the proletariat to the side of communism, so long and to that extent propaganda took first place; even propaganda circles, with all the imperfections that circles suffer from, are useful under these conditions and produce fruitful results. But if it is a question of the practical activities of the masses, a question of the disposition, if one may so express it, of vast armies, of the alignment of all the class forces of the given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propaganda alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" communism are of no avail. In these circumstances one must count, not up to a thousand—as is really done by the propagandist who belongs to a small group which does not yet lead the masses; but one must count in millions and tens of millions. In these circumstances one must not only ask oneself whether the vanguard of the revolutionary class has been convinced but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—positively of all the classes in the given society without exception—are aligned in such a way that the decisive battle is fully matured, in such a way that (1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently confused, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently



weakened themselves in a struggle beyond their capacities ; that (2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democracy as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves before the people and have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy ; and that (3) among the proletariat a mass mood in favour of supporting the most determined, unreservedly bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begins to grow powerfully. Then, indeed, revolution is ripe ; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions outlined above, and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured.

The disagreements between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national differences, these types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite unimportant and petty from the point of view of pure, i.e., abstract communism, i.e., communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical, mass, political action. But from the point of view of this practical mass action, these differences are very, very important. It is the very important business and task of the Communist who wants to be not merely a class conscious, convinced and ideological propagandist, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution to take them into account, to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these “friends,” which will weaken *all the “friends” taken together* and render them impotent, will have completely matured. It is necessary to combine the strictest loyalty to the ideas of communism with the ability to make all necessary practical compromises, to “tack,” to make agreements, zig-zags, retreats and so on, in order to accelerate the coming into political power of the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to speak of individuals who represent petty-bourgeois democracy but who call themselves socialists) and then their loss of power ; to accelerate

their inevitable practical bankruptcy which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of communism ; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and complete disunity between the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and Churchills (Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Constitutional Democrats, Monarchists, Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie, the Kappists, etc.) and to select the moment when the disunity among these "pillars of the sacred right of property" is at its highest, in order to defeat them all by a determined attack of the proletariat and capture political power.

History generally, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more many-sided, more lively and "subtle" than the best parties and the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced class imagine. This is understandable, because the best vanguards express the class consciousness, the will, the passion, the fantasy of tens of thousands, while the revolution is made, at the moment of its climax and the exertion of all human capabilities, by the class consciousness, the will, the passion and the fantasy of tens of millions who are urged on by the very acutest class struggle. From this follow two very important practical conclusions : first, that the revolutionary class, in order to fulfil its task, must be able to master *all* forms or sides of social activity without exception (and complete after the capture of political power, sometimes at great risk and amidst very great dangers, what it did not complete before the capture of power) ; second, that the revolutionary class must be ready to pass from one form to another in the quickest and most unexpected manner.

Everyone will agree that an army which does not train itself to wield all arms, all means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses or may possess, is behaving in an unwise or even in a criminal manner. This applies to politics to a greater degree than it does to war. In politics it is harder to forecast what methods of warfare will be

applied and be considered useful for us under certain future conditions. Unless we are able to master all methods of warfare we stand the risk of suffering great and sometimes decisive defeat if the changes in the position of the other classes, which we cannot determine, will bring to the front forms of activity in which we are particularly weak. If, however, we are able to master all methods of warfare, we shall certainly be victorious, because we represent the interests of the really advanced, of the really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to use weapons that are most dangerous for the enemy, weapons that are most quickly death-dealing. Inexperienced revolutionaries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because in this field the bourgeoisie very frequently (especially in “peaceful,” non-revolutionary times) deceived and fooled the workers, and they think that illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. But this is not true. What is true is that the opportunists and the traitors to the working class are those parties and leaders who are not able or who do not want (don’t say : you cannot ; say : you won’t ; *wer will, kann*) to apply illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as, for example, prevailed during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries deceived the workers in the most impudent and brutal manner and prohibited everyone from speaking the truth about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are unable to combine illegal forms of struggle with every form of legal struggle are very bad revolutionaries. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when the revolution has already flared up, when everybody joins the revolution simply because they are carried away by it, because it is the fashion and sometimes even because it might open a career. After the victory the proletariat has to exert extreme effort, to suffer pains and one might say martyrdom to “liberate” itself from such alleged revolutionaries. It is much more difficult—and much more useful—to be a revolutionary when the

conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle have *not yet* matured, to be able to defend the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organisation) in non-revolutionary bodies and even in reactionary bodies, in non-revolutionary circumstances, among the masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the necessity for revolutionary methods of action. The main task of contemporary Communism in western Europe and America is to acquire the ability to seek, to find, to determine correctly the concrete path, or the particular turn of events that will *bring* the masses *right up* to the real, decisive, last and great revolutionary struggle.

Take England, for example : We cannot say, and no one is in a position to say beforehand, how soon the real proletarian revolution will flare up there and *what* will serve as the *cause* to rouse it, to kindle it and move into the struggle very wide masses who are at present dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on our preparatory work in such a manner as to be "well shod on all four legs," as the late Plekhanov was fond of saying when he was a Marxist and revolutionary. It is possible that a parliamentary crisis will cause the "breach," will "break the ice" ; perhaps it will be a crisis caused by the hopelessly entangled and increasingly painful and acute colonial and imperialist contradictions, perhaps some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in England (not a single Communist has any doubts on that score ; as far as we are concerned, this question is settled and definitely settled). What we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will rouse the proletarian masses, at present dormant, and bring them right up to the revolution.

Let us not forget that in the bourgeois French Republic for example, in a situation which from both the international and national aspect was a hundred times less revolutionary than the present one, one out of the thousands

and thousands of dishonest tricks the reactionary military caste play (the Dreyfuss case) was enough to serve as the “unexpected” and “petty” cause which brought the people to the verge of civil war !

In England the Communists should uninterruptedly, unfalteringly and undeviatingly utilise the parliamentary struggle and all the perturbations of the Irish, colonial and world imperialist policy of the British government and all other spheres and sides of social life and work in all of them in a new way, in a communist way, in the spirit not of the Second but of the Third International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the methods of “Russian,” “Bolshevik” participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle, but I can assure the foreign Communists that this was not anything like the usual West-European parliamentary campaign. From this the conclusion is usually drawn : “Well, that was in Russia, but in our country parliamentarism is something different.” This conclusion is wrong. The very purpose of the existence of Communists in the world, adherents of the Third International in all countries, is to *change* all along the line, in all spheres of life, the old socialist, trade unionist, syndicalist parliamentary work into *new* communist work. In Russia, too, we had a great deal of opportunist and purely bourgeois, money-making and capitalist swindling during elections. The Communists in western Europe and America must learn to create a new, unusual, non-opportunist, non-careerist parliamentarism ; the Communist Parties must issue their slogans, real proletarians with the help of the unorganised and very poorest people should scatter and distribute leaflets, canvass the workers’ houses and the cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are not nearly so many remote villages in Europe as there are in Russia, and in England there are very few), they should go into the most common inns, penetrate into the unions, societies and casual meetings where the common people gather and

talk to the people, not in scientific (and not very parliamentary) language, not in the least to strive to "get seats" in Parliament, but everywhere to rouse the thoughts of the masses and draw them into the struggle, to take the bourgeoisie at their word, to utilise the apparatus they have set up, the elections they have called for, the appeal to the country that they have made and to tell the people what Bolshevism is in a way that has not been possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (not counting, of course, times of big strikes, when in Russia a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in western Europe and America—very, very difficult—but it can and must be done, because generally speaking the tasks of communism cannot be fulfilled without effort, and every effort must be made to fulfil the *practical* tasks, ever more varied, ever more connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch from the *bourgeoisie*.

In England, also, it is necessary to organise in a new way (not in a socialist manner but in a communist manner, not in a reformist manner but in a revolutionary manner) the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the armed forces and among the oppressed and disfranchised nationalities in "one's own" state (Ireland, the colonies). Because in all these spheres of social life, in the epoch of imperialism generally, and particularly now, after the war which tortured nationalities and quickly opened their eyes to the truth (viz., tens of millions killed and maimed only for the purpose of deciding whether the British or German pirates shall plunder the largest number of countries)—all these spheres of social life are becoming particularly filled with inflammable material and create numerous causes of conflict, crises and the intensification of the class struggle. We do not know and we cannot know which spark—out of the innumerable sparks that are flying around in all countries as a result of the political and economic world crises—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of specially

rousing the masses, and we must, therefore, with the aid of our new, communist principles, set to work to “stir up” all, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, we will not be all-sided, we will not be able to master all weapons and we will not be prepared either for victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all sides of social life, and has now disarranged all sides of social life in a bourgeois way) nor for the forthcoming communist reorganisation of the whole of social life after the victory. . . . .

*J. Stalin*

## THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, AUGUST 1927

*English translation published in “The Communist International,” October 15, 1927.*

[This was a speech delivered at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, on August 1st, 1927. At this time the Trotskyist Opposition was making attacks on the policy of the Communist International, especially in connection with the situation in China. The section of Stalin’s speech reprinted below, dealing with the situation in China, is of great importance not only as an answer to the Trotskyist criticisms, but as a positive statement of Marxist tactics in the development of the national revolutionary movements.]

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## THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, AUGUST 1927

### ABOUT CHINA

LET US TURN to the question of China. I am not going to enlarge upon the mistakes of the Opposition on the question of the character and the outlook of the Chinese revolution. I am not going to do so, because there has been said a good deal, and with sufficient conviction, so that it is not worth while to repeat all that has been said. Neither am I going to enlarge upon the fact that the Chinese revolution at its present stage appears to be a revolution for tariff autonomy (Trotsky). Nor is it worth while enlarging upon the fact that in China there appear to exist no survivals of feudalism, and that if they do exist, they are not of any serious importance, so that the agrarian revolution in China thus becomes quite incomprehensible (Trotsky and Radek). With these and similar errors of the Opposition on the Chinese question, you are probably familiar from our Party press.

Let us pass on to the question of the fundamental starting points of Leninism in the solution of questions relating to the revolutionary movement in the colonial and subject countries?

What is the starting point of the Comintern, and generally of the Communist Parties, in settling the questions relating to the revolutionary movement in the colonial and subject countries?

It consists in drawing a rigid distinction between the revolution in the imperialist countries, in the countries which oppress other peoples, and the revolution in the colonial and subject countries, in the countries which suffer from the imperialist yoke of other countries. The revolution is one thing in the imperialist countries: there the bourgeoisie is the oppressor of other nations; there the bourgeoisie is counter-revolutionary through all the stages of



the revolution ; there the national aspect is lacking as a factor in the struggle for freedom. Quite a different thing is the revolution in the colonial and subject countries : there the imperialist yoke of other countries constitutes one of the factors of the revolution ; there the yoke is bound to affect also the national bourgeoisie ; there the national bourgeoisie may, at a certain stage and for a certain length of time, support the revolutionary movement of their country against imperialism ; there the national aspect, as a factor in the struggle for freedom, becomes a factor of revolution. To ignore this distinction, to fail to see the difference, to identify the revolution in the imperialist countries with the revolution in the colonial countries, is to stray from the path of Marxism, from the path of Leninism, and to follow the path of the adherents of the Second International.

Here is what Lenin said on this subject in his report on the national and colonial question at the Second Congress of the Comintern :

What constitutes the *most important, the fundamental* idea of our theses ? The *distinction* between the *oppressed* and the *oppressing* nations. We lay stress on this distinction, as against the position of the Second International and the bourgeois democracy.

The fundamental error of the Opposition is that it fails to *appreciate* and to *recognise* this distinction between the revolution of one type and that of another type.

The fundamental mistake of the Opposition is that it *identifies* the revolution of 1905 in Russia, an imperialist country oppressing other nations, with the revolution in China, an oppressed, semi-colonial country, compelled to fight against the imperialistic oppression of other countries.

Here, in Russia, the revolution in 1905 went against the bourgeoisie, against the liberal bourgeoisie, despite the fact that it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Why ? Because the liberal bourgeoisie of an imperialist country

cannot help being counter-revolutionary. It was for this very reason that the Bolsheviks then could not even talk about temporary blocs and understandings with the liberal bourgeoisie. On these grounds it is asserted by the Opposition that the same policy should be pursued in China through all the stages of the revolutionary movement, that never and under no circumstances are temporary understandings and blocs with the national bourgeoisie admissible in China. But the Opposition forgets that such assertions can be made only by people who fail to understand and to recognise the difference between a revolution in the oppressed countries, and a revolution in the oppressing countries, by people who break away from Leninism, drifting into the fold of the Second International.

Here is what Lenin said about the admissibility of temporary understandings and blocs with the bourgeois emancipation movement in the colonial countries :

The Communist International should form *temporary understandings*, even *alliances*, with the bourgeois democracy of the colonies and the backward countries, but not merge with it, unconditionally preserving the independence of the proletarian movement, even in its most embryonic form. . . . We, as Communists, must and will *support bourgeois emancipation* movements in the colonial countries only in those cases when these movements are really revolutionary, when their representatives will not hinder us in educating and organising the peasantry and the large masses of the exploited in the revolutionary spirit.

But could it "happen" that Lenin, who thundered against any understandings with the bourgeoisie in Russia, admitted such understandings and blocs in China? Perhaps Lenin made a mistake? Perhaps he turned from revolutionary tactics to those of opportunism? Of course not. It "happened" because Lenin understood the difference between a revolution in an oppressed country and a revolution in an oppressing country. It "happened" because Lenin understood that at a certain stage of development the national bourgeoisie in the colonial countries may

support the revolutionary movement of their country against foreign imperialism. This the Opposition refuses to understand, and it does so because it breaks with the revolutionary tactics of Lenin, and with the revolutionary tactics of Leninism.

Did you notice that the Opposition leaders in their speeches have carefully evaded these points made by Lenin, although Bukharin in his report has confronted them with these points? Why do they evade these well-known points of policy given by Lenin in regard to colonial and subject countries? Why are they afraid of the truth? Because the policy of Lenin upset the whole political ideology of Trotskyism on questions of the Chinese revolution.

As to the stages of the Chinese revolution. The Opposition has become so entangled that it now denies the existence of any stages whatsoever in the development of the Chinese revolution. But can there be a revolution without certain stages of development? Was our own revolution without its stages? Take the April theses of Lenin and you will see that Lenin recognised in our revolution two stages: the first stage, the bourgeois-democratic revolution with the agrarian movement as its principal axis, and the second stage, the October revolution with the capture of power by the proletariat as its principal axis. What are the stages of the Chinese revolution? To my mind, there ought to be three: the first stage, the revolution of the common national united front, the Canton period, when the revolution levelled its chief blow against foreign imperialism, whilst the national bourgeoisie supported the revolutionary movement; the second stage, the bourgeois-democratic revolution, after the emergence of the national troops on the Yangtse river, when the national bourgeoisie turned its back on the revolution, whilst the agrarian movement grew into a mighty upheaval involving the teeming millions of the peasantry (just now the Chinese revolution is in the second stage of its development); the third stage, the Soviet

revolution, which has not yet arrived, but which will come. He who fails to see that a revolution cannot but be without certain stages of development, he who fails to see the existence of three stages in the development of the Chinese revolution, is perfectly ignorant both of Marxism and of the Chinese question.

What is the characteristic feature of the first stage in the Chinese revolution? The characteristic feature of the first stage in the Chinese revolution is that, firstly, it was the revolution of the common national united front, and secondly, that it was chiefly directed against the yoke of foreign imperialism (the Hong Kong strike, etc.). Was Canton then the centre of the revolutionary movement in China? Decidedly, it was. This can now be denied only by the blind.

Is it true that the first stage of the colonial revolution must be precisely of such character? I believe it is. In the "Supplementary Theses" of the Second Congress of the Comintern dealing with the revolution in China and in India, it is explicitly stated that in those countries, "the foreign aggression has been obstructing the development of social life all along," that "therefore the *first step* of the revolution in the colonies should be the overthrow of foreign capitalism."

The outstanding feature of the Chinese revolution consists in the fact that it has gone through this "first step," through the first stage of its development, that it has passed through the period of the revolution of the common national united front, and has entered into the second stage of development—into the period of agrarian revolution.

On the other hand, the outstanding feature, say, of the Turkish revolution (the Kemalists) consists in the fact that it got stranded on the "first step," on the first stage of the bourgeois liberation movement, making no attempt even to pass on to the second stage of its development, to that of the agrarian revolution.

What did the Kuomintang and its government represent

in the first stage of the revolution, during the Canton period? They represented then a bloc of workers, peasants, bourgeois intellectuals, and the national bourgeoisie. Was Canton then the centre of the revolutionary movement? Was it then the proper policy to support the Canton Kuomintang, as the government of the fight of emancipation against imperialism? Were we right then in extending aid to Canton in China, and, let us say, to Angora in Turkey, when Canton and Angora were waging a fight against imperialism? Yes, we were. We were right, and we followed then in the footsteps of Lenin, for the struggle of Canton and Angora were scattering the forces of imperialism, weakening and depriving imperialism of its glory, thereby facilitating the cause of the development of the centre of world revolution, the U.S.S.R. Is it true that the present Opposition leaders supported then, together with us, both Canton and Angora, rendering them a certain amount of assistance? Yes, it is. Let anybody try to question this.

But how is the united front with the national bourgeoisie during the first stage of the colonial revolution to be understood? Does it mean that the Communists should not accentuate the fight of the workers and peasants against the landowners and the national bourgeoisie, that the proletariat should sacrifice its independence in the least degree, even for a single instant? No, it does not mean that. The united front can have a revolutionary meaning only on condition that it does not hinder the Communist Party in conducting its own independent political and organisational activity, in organising the proletariat into an independent political force, in arousing the peasantry against the landlords, and in openly organising the workers' and peasants' revolution, thus creating the conditions for the proletarian hegemony. I believe the case has been proved up to the hilt by comrade Bukharin in his report, on the basis of documents with which everyone is familiar, that it was precisely such an understanding of the united front

that was suggested to the Chinese Communist Party by the Comintern.

Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev alluded here to one single telegram sent to Shanghai on October 26, 1926, which advised for the time being, until the capture of Shanghai, not to accentuate the agrarian movement. Far be it from me to consider that telegram as right and proper. I never thought, nor do I think, our Central Committee to be infallible. Mistakes do happen now and then, and that telegram was incontestably a mistake. But, firstly, that very telegram was retracted by ourselves a few weeks afterwards (in November 1926) without any advice on the part of the Opposition. Secondly, why has the Opposition recollected the telegram now, after a lapse of nine months, and why does it conceal from the Party that the telegram was retracted by us nine months ago? It would, therefore be a malicious calumny to assert that the telegram in question determined the line of our leadership. As a matter of fact, it was an incidental, isolated telegram which was in no way characteristic of the line of the Comintern, and the line of our leadership. This, I repeat, is already clear from the fact that it was retracted a few weeks afterwards in a series of documents which were absolutely characteristic of the line of our leadership.

Permit me to refer to those documents.

Here, for instance, is a passage from the resolution of the Seventh Plenum of the Comintern in November, 1926, that is, one month after the date of the afore-mentioned telegram :

The unique feature of the present situation is its transitional character, when the proletariat has to choose between the prospect of a bloc with considerable strata of the bourgeoisie, and the prospect of further consolidating its alliance with the peasantry. *If the proletariat fails to launch a radical agrarian programme, it will not be able to draw the peasantry into the revolutionary struggle and will lose the leadership in the national emancipation movement.*

And further ;

The National Government of Canton will not be able to retain power, the revolution will not advance towards the complete victory over foreign imperialism and native reaction, unless national liberation is identified with agrarian revolution.

Here you have a document which really defines the line of the Comintern leadership.

It is very strange that the Opposition leaders avoid mentioning this well-known Comintern document.

Perhaps I shall not sin against modesty if I refer to my own speech in the Chinese Commission of the Comintern, which in the same November, 1926, was working out—of course, not without my participation—the resolution of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum on the Chinese question. That speech has since been published in pamphlet form, under the title of “ Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution.” Here are a few quotations from that speech :

I know that among the Kuomintang people, and even among the Chinese Communists, there are people who do not believe it possible to develop the revolution in the village, fearing that by having the peasantry drawn into the revolutionary movement, the united anti-imperialist front would be broken. This is a profound error, comrades. The anti-imperialist front in China will become stronger and more powerful the quicker and the more thoroughly the Chinese peasantry are drawn into the revolution.

And further :

I know that among the Chinese Communists there are comrades who believe workers' strikes for better material and legal conditions undesirable, and dissuade the workers from striking.

This is a great mistake, comrades. It implies a grave under-estimation of the rôle and specific weight of the proletariat in China. This should be put down in the theses as an absolutely negative phenomenon. It would be a great mistake for the Chinese Communists not to take advantage of the present favourable situation to help the workers improve their material and legal conditions, even if by means of strikes. What good is, then, the revolution in China ?

And here is a third document, *dated December 1926*, at a moment when the C.I. was bombarded with declarations from all the cities of China, to the effect that the development of the workers' struggle was leading to a crisis, to unemployment, and to the closing down of factories and workshops :

The general policy of retreat in the cities, and of ceasing the struggle of the workers for better conditions, *is incorrect*. In the villages the struggle should be developed, but at the same time the favourable moment should be utilised to improve the material and legal status of the workers, endeavouring in every way to give an organised character to the workers' struggle, so as to prevent excesses and premature action. Particular care should be taken to get the struggle in the cities directed against the big imperialists, so as to retain the petty and middle bourgeoisie of China as far as possible in the united front against the common foe. The system of conciliation boards, arbitration courts, etc., we consider expedient, providing that a proper labour policy be secured in these institutions. At the same time we deem it necessary to say that it is absolutely inadmissible to issue decrees prohibiting strikes, workers' meetings, etc. In view of the importance of this question, we ask you to send regular information.

A fourth document, issued six weeks prior to Chiang Kai Shek's *coup d'état* :

It is necessary to increase the activity of the Kuomintang and Communist nuclei in the army, and to organise them where none exist, but where it is possible to organise them. Where the organisation of Communist nuclei is impossible, it is necessary to carry on increased activity with the aid of secret Communists.

It is necessary to steer our course towards the arming of the workers and the peasants, the transformation of the local peasant committees into actual organs of authority, with the organisation of self-defence, and so on.

It is necessary that everywhere the Communist Party shall act as such : the policy of voluntary semi-legality is inadmissible ; the Communist Party may not act as a brake on the mass movement ; the Communist Party should not shield the treacherous and reactionary policy of the Kuomintang right wingers : in order to expose them, it is



*necessary to mobilise the masses around the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party.*

"It is necessary to draw the attention of workers who are faithful to the revolution to the fact that at the present time the Chinese revolution, in view of the re-grouping of the class forces and the concentration of the imperialist armies, is passing through a critical period, and that further victories will be possible only if a determined course will be taken to develop the mass movement. Otherwise the revolution is menaced with grave peril. For this reason following the policy laid down is just now more essential than ever.

And at a still earlier date, in April 1926, a whole year prior to the *coup d'état* by the Kuomintang right wing and Chiang Kai Shek, the Comintern had warned the Chinese Communist Party, urging that it was "essential to work either for the withdrawal or expulsion of the right wingers from the Kuomintang."

This is how the Comintern understood, and continues to understand the tactics of the united front against imperialism during the first stage of the colonial revolution.

Does the Opposition know about these documents? Of course it does. Why, then, does it hold its tongue about them? Because it wants a quarrel, and not the truth.

And yet there was a time when the present Opposition leaders, particularly comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev, did understand something about Leninism, and, in the main, they advocated the same policy in regard to the Chinese revolutionary movement as was carried out by the Comintern, and which had been outlined to us by comrade Lenin in his theses. I have in mind the Sixth Plenum of the Communist International in February-March 1926, when comrade Zinoviev was the president of the Comintern, when he was still a Leninist and had not yet gone over to the Trotsky camp. I refer to the Sixth Plenum of the Communist International because there exists a resolution of that Plenum on the Chinese revolution, unanimously adopted in February-March 1926, containing approximately the same evaluation of the first stage of the Chinese

revolution, of the Canton Kuomintang and the Canton Government, as is given by the Comintern and the Soviet C.P., and which is now disowned by the Opposition: I refer to that resolution because comrade Zinoviev voted for it, whilst no one of the C.C. members raised any objection to it, including comrades Trotsky, Kamenev and other leaders of the present Opposition.

Permit me to quote a few passages from that resolution. Here is what the resolution has to say on the Kuomintang:

The Shanghai and Hong Kong political strikes of the Chinese workers (June-September 1925), have brought about a momentous departure in the fight for liberation of the Chinese people against the foreign imperialists. . . . The political action of the proletariat has given a wonderful impulse to the further development and consolidation of all the revolutionary-democratic organisations of the country, and in the first place, of the national-revolutionary Kuomintang Party and the revolutionary government at Canton. The Kuomintang Party, whose main body has acted in alliance with the Chinese Communists, represents a *revolutionary bloc of workers, peasants, intellectuals and urban democracy* on the grounds of the common class interests of these elements in the fight against the foreign imperialists and the whole of the militarist and feudal system, for the independence of the country, and for a united revolutionary-democratic national authority.

Here, then, we have the Canton Kuomintang as the alliance of four classes. Here, as you see, we get something near to the "Martynov doctrine" sanctioned by none other than the then president of the Comintern, comrade Zinoviev.

*The revolutionary government at Canton formed by the Kuomintang Party has already established contact with the largest masses of the workers, the peasants and the urban democracy, and, relying on them, it has smashed the counter-revolutionary bands supported by the imperialists and is now working on the radical democratisation of the whole political life of the Kwantung Province. Constituting thus the vanguard in the struggle of the Chinese people for independence, the Canton Government constitutes a model for the future revolutionary-democratic building of the country.*

Thus we find that the Canton Kuomintang government, representing a bloc of four classes, was a revolutionary government, and not only that, but even a model for the future revolutionary-democratic government in China.

In the face of the new dangers the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang should develop the most extensive political activity, organising mass action in support of the fight of the people's army, taking advantage of internal friction in the imperialist camp, and opposing to them the *united national-revolutionary front of the widest elements of the population* (workers, peasants and the *bourgeoisie*) under the guidance of the revolutionary-democratic organisations.

Thus we find that temporary blocs and understandings with the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries at a certain stage in the colonial revolution are not only admissible, but even necessary.

Don't you think that this resembles very closely what Lenin told us in his famous thesis on the tactics of Communists in the colonial and subject countries? It is only a pity that comrade Zinoviev has already managed to forget all about it.

Individual strata of the upper bourgeoisie of China, who temporarily grouped themselves around the Kuomintang Party, have deserted it during the last year, which has caused the formation of a little group of the right wing of the Kuomintang who are openly opposed to the close alliance of the Kuomintang with the toiling masses, who want the Communists expelled from the Kuomintang, and who oppose the revolutionary policy of the Canton Government. *The denunciation of this right wing at the Second Congress of the Kuomintang (January 1926) and the confirmation of the need of the militant alliance of the Kuomintang with the Communists consolidates the revolutionary trend of the activities of the Kuomintang and the Canton Government, and ensures to the Kuomintang the revolutionary backing of the proletariat.*

Thus we find that the withdrawal of the Communists from the Kuomintang during the first stage of the Chinese revolution would have constituted a serious mistake. It was only a pity that comrade Zinoviev, who voted for this

revolution, has managed to forget all about it a month or so afterwards. For we find that in April 1926 (one month after) Zinoviev demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Communists from the Kuomintang.

The political self-determination of the Chinese Communists will grow in the course of combating two equally harmful deviations : the right wing liquidators which ignore the independent class tasks of the Chinese proletariat and which leads to a formless fusion with the general democratic national movement, and the extreme left tendencies which are trying to *jump over the revolutionary-democratic stage of the movement* directly to the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship and Soviet rule, *forgetting about the peasantry*, this fundamental and deciding factor of the Chinese national emancipation movement.

Here, as you see, there is everything to show up the present Opposition in regard to jumping over the Kuomintang stage of development in China, under-estimating the peasant movement, and leaping in the direction of Soviets. What a give-away this is.

Are comrades Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky aware of this resolution ?

Presumably they are. At any rate, it ought to be known to comrade Zinoviev, who was President of the Comintern when it was adopted by the Sixth Plenum, and he himself voted for it. Why is it that the Opposition leaders now avoid mentioning this resolution carried by the supreme organ of the International Communist movement ? Why do they keep quiet about it ? Because it turns against them on all questions relating to the present Trotskyist argument of the Opposition. Because they have gone astray from the Comintern, astray from Leninism, and now, afraid of their own past, afraid of their own shadow, they are constrained to resort to cowardly evasion of the resolution of the Sixth Plenum of the Comintern.

This much in regard to the first stage of the Chinese revolution.

Let us now turn to the second stage of the Chinese revolution.

If the essential feature of the first stage consisted in the fact that the edge of the revolution was directed mainly against foreign imperialism, the characteristic feature of the second stage consists in the fact that the edge of the revolution is directed chiefly against the internal enemies, and above all, against the feudal landlords and the feudal régime. Has the first stage accomplished its tasks of overthrowing foreign imperialism? No, it has not. It has left the accomplishment of this task as a legacy to the second stage of the Chinese revolutionary masses to rise against imperialism, to call a halt and to leave this work for the future. It should be presumed that the second stage of the revolution too will fail in the complete achievement of the task of chasing out the imperialists. It will give a further impetus to the fight of the masses of the Chinese workers and peasants against imperialism; but whilst doing this, it will leave the final achievement of the task to the next stage of the Chinese revolution, to the Soviet stage.

And in this, there is nothing to be wondered at. Do we not recollect similar facts in the history of our own revolution, if under different circumstances? Do we not know that the first stage of our own revolution did not completely fulfil its task of accomplishing the agrarian revolution, leaving this task to the next stage of the revolution, the October revolution, which has completely and entirely accomplished the task of stamping out the survivals of feudalism? Therefore, it will be no surprise if the second stage of the Chinese revolution does not succeed in bringing about the agrarian revolution in full, and if the second stage of the revolution, after having aroused the teeming millions of the peasantry to the fight against the survivals of feudalism, leaves the final accomplishment of this task to the next stage of the revolution, to the Soviet stage. And this will constitute another task for the future Soviet revolution in China.

What was the essential task of the Communists at the second stage of the revolution in China, when the centre of the revolutionary movement had been clearly transferred from Canton to Wuhan, and as a counterpoise to the revolutionary government of Wuhan a counter-revolutionary centre was formed at Nanking? Their task was to take full advantage of the possibility of open organisation of the Party, the proletariat (the trade unions), the peasantry (the peasant unions), and the revolution in general. Their task was to drive the Wuhan Kuomintang people towards the left, towards the agrarian revolution. Their task was to turn the Wuhan Kuomintang into the centre of the fight against the counter-revolution, and into the nucleus of the future revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

Was this policy the correct one? The facts have shown it to have been the only correct policy, capable of educating the wide masses of the workers and peasants in the spirit of the further development of the revolution.

The Opposition demanded at that time immediate formation of Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies. But this was adventurism, an adventurous leap forward; for the immediate formation of Soviets would have meant them jumping over the left Kuomintang phase of development. Why? Because the Kuomintang at Wuhan, which was allied with the Communists, had not yet discredited and exposed itself before the wide masses of the workers and peasants, had not yet spent itself as a bourgeois revolutionary organisation. Because to launch the slogan of Soviets and the overthrow of the Wuhan government at a moment when the masses had not yet become convinced from their own experience about the rottenness of that government, and about the need to overthrow it, was to leap forward, to break away from the masses, to lose the support of the masses, and thus leap to defeat. The Opposition thinks that if it could see the hopelessness, the instability, and the lack of revolutionary principle on the

part of the Wuhan Kuomintang (and this could easily be seen by any politically qualified worker) the situation was equally clear to the masses, so much so that the masses could be induced to form Soviets instead of the Kuomintang. But this is the usual ultra-left error of the Opposition, which takes its own consciousness and understanding for the consciousness and understanding of the millions of workers and peasants.

The Opposition is right in saying that the Party should move onward. This is the usual Marxian rule, and no real Communist Party can exist without abiding by it. But this is only part of the truth. The whole truth is that the Party should not only move onward, but should also lead the masses behind it. To move onward without the masses following is really to lag behind, to stay in the tail of the movement. To move onward while breaking away from the rearguard, failing to get the rearguard to follow, is to take a headlong leap which may have the result of arresting the onward movement of the masses for some time to come. It is the essence of Leninist leadership that the vanguard should get the rearguard to follow, that the vanguard should move onward without breaking away from the masses. But in order that the vanguard might not break away from the masses, that the vanguard should lead behind it the millions, there is one essential condition that is of decisive import, namely, that the masses themselves should become convinced from their own experience of the correctness of the instructions, policy and slogans of the vanguard. It is precisely the trouble with the Opposition that it fails to recognise this simple Leninist rule of leading the masses, that a single party, a single advanced group, without the support of the teeming millions of the masses, is unable to bring about a revolution, that the revolution is "made" in the long run by the teeming millions of the toiling masses.

*J. Stalin*

REPORT AT SEVENTEENTH  
CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST  
PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION,  
1934

*English edition, Stalin Reports on the Soviet Union, Martin  
Lawrence Ltd., 1934*

[Stalin's report on the work of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is not only a record of facts ; it is a theoretical statement of the first importance. The report is in three main sections : The Continuing Crisis of World Capitalism and the Foreign Relations of the Soviet Union ; The Continued Progress of the National Economy and the Internal Position of the U.S.S.R. ; and The Party. Parts of the first and third sections are reprinted here. The first is an analysis of " the general crisis of capitalism in the midst of which the economic crisis is proceeding." The third section raises theoretical questions of great practical interest in the Soviet Union, questions on which there has been considerable misunderstanding among socialists in other countries : the stages in the building of classless society ; the question of equality ; the national question ; organisational leadership as against bureaucracy.]

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REPORT AT SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE  
SOVIET UNION, 1934

THE CONTINUING CRISIS OF WORLD CAPITALISM  
AND THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE  
SOVIET UNION

COMRADES, more than three years have passed since the Sixteenth Congress. The period is not a very long one. But it has been fuller in content than any other period. I do not think a single period in the last decade has been so rich in events as this.

In the *economic* sphere these years have been years of continuing world economic crisis. The crisis has affected not only industry but even agriculture as a whole. The crisis has not only raged in the sphere of production and trade, but has also swept into the sphere of credit and the circulation of money, and has overturned the established credit and currency relationships between countries. Formerly, there were disputes here and there as to whether there was a world economic crisis or not, but now nobody argues about this because the existence of the crisis and its devastating effects are only too obvious. Now the controversy centres around another question, viz., is there a way out of the crisis or not? And if there is a way out, where is it to be found?

In the *political* sphere these years have been years of growing acuteness in relations both as between capitalist countries as well as within the respective countries. The war between Japan and China and the occupation of Manchuria which have strained relations in the Far East; the victory of fascism in Germany and the triumph of the idea of *revanche* which have strained relations in Europe; the withdrawal of Japan and Germany from the League of Nations which has given a new impetus to the growth of armaments and to the preparations for an imperialist war; the defeat of fascism in Spain, which once again showed that the

revolutionary crisis is maturing and that fascism is not long lived by a long way—such are the most important facts of the period under review. It is not surprising that bourgeois pacifism is living its last hours and that the trend towards disarmament is openly and directly being replaced by a trend towards arming and re-arming.

Amidst the surging waves of economic shocks and military-political catastrophes, the U.S.S.R. stands out alone, like a rock, continuing its work of socialist construction and its fight to preserve peace. While in capitalist countries the economic crisis is still raging, in the U.S.S.R. progress is continuing both in the sphere of industry as well as in the sphere of agriculture. While in capitalist countries feverish preparations are in progress for a new war, for a new redistribution of the world and spheres of influence, the U.S.S.R. is continuing its systematic and stubborn struggle against the menace of war and for peace ; and it cannot be said that the efforts of the U.S.S.R. in this sphere have been quite unsuccessful.

Such is a general picture of the international situation at the present moment.

Let us pass on to examine the main data on the economic and political position of the capitalist countries.

### *1. The Movement of the Economic Crisis in Capitalist Countries*

The present economic crisis in capitalist countries differs from all analogous crises, among other things, by the fact that it is the longest and most protracted crisis. Formerly, crises lasted one or two years ; the present crisis, however, is now in its fifth year and from year to year has devastated the economy of capitalist countries and has wasted the fat it accumulated in previous years. It is not surprising that this crisis is the severest of all crises.

How is the unprecedentedly protracted character of the present industrial crisis to be explained ?

It is to be explained first of all by the fact that the industrial crisis affected every capitalist country without exception and made it difficult for some countries to manoeuvre at the expense of others.

Secondly, it is to be explained by the fact that the industrial crisis became interwoven with the agrarian crisis which affected all the agrarian and semi-agrarian countries without exception, and this could not but make the industrial crisis more complicated and profound.

Thirdly, it is to be explained by the fact that the agrarian crisis became more acute in this period and affected all branches of agriculture, including cattle-raising, degrading it to the level of passing from machine labour to hand labour, to the substitution of the horse for the tractor, to the sharp diminution in the use, and sometimes to the complete abandonment of, artificial fertilisers, which caused the industrial crisis to become still more protracted.

Fourthly, it is to be explained by the fact that the monopolist cartels which dominate industry strive to maintain the high prices of goods, and this circumstance makes the crisis particularly painful and hinders the absorption of stocks of commodities.

Lastly, and what is most important, it is to be explained by the fact that the industrial crisis broke out amidst the conditions of the *general* crisis of capitalism, when capitalism no longer has, nor can have, either in the home states or in the colonial and dependent countries, the strength and stability it had before the war and the October revolution, when industry in the capitalist countries is suffering from the heritage it received from the imperialist war in the shape of the chronic working of enterprises under capacity, and of an army of unemployed numbering millions from which it is no longer able to release itself.

Such are the circumstances which determine the extremely protracted character of the present industrial crisis. It is these circumstances, too, that explain the fact that the crisis has not been restricted to the sphere of production

and trade, but has also affected the credit system, currency, the sphere of debt obligations, etc., and has broken down the traditionally established relations both between separate countries as well as between social groups in the separate countries.

An important rôle in this was played by the drop in the price of commodities. Notwithstanding the resistance of the monopolist cartels, the drop in prices increased with elemental force, and the drop in prices occurred primarily and mostly in regard to the commodities of the unorganised commodity owners, viz., peasants, artisans, small capitalists; the drop was gradual and smaller in degree in regard to the prices of commodities offered by the organised commodity owners, viz., the capitalists united in cartels. The drop in price made the position of debtors (manufacturers, artisans, peasants, etc.) intolerable, while on the other hand it placed the creditors in an unprecedentedly privileged position. Such a situation had to lead, and really did lead, to the colossal bankruptcy of firms and of separate *entrepreneurs*. During the past three years tens of thousands of joint stock companies were ruined in this way in the United States, in Germany, in England and in France. The bankruptcy of joint stock companies was followed by the depreciation of the currency, which to some extent eased the position of the debtors. Depreciation of currency was followed by the legalised non-payment of debts, both foreign and internal. The collapse of such banks as the Darmstadt and Dresden Banks in Germany, the Kredit Anstalt in Austria and also concerns like the Kreuger concern in Sweden, the Insull Company in the United States, etc., is well known to all.

It goes without saying that these phenomena which shook the foundations of the credit system had to bring in their train, and did bring in their train, the cessation of payments on credits and foreign loans, the cessation of payments of inter-Allied debts, the cessation of the export of capital, the further diminution of foreign trade, the further diminution of the export of commodities, the intensification of the

struggle for foreign markets, trade war between countries and—dumping. Yes, comrades, dumping. I do not mean the alleged Soviet dumping, about which only very recently certain noble deputies in the noble parliaments of Europe and America were shouting until they were hoarse. I mean the real dumping that is now being practised by nearly all the “civilised” states, about which the gallant and noble deputies maintain a prudent silence.

It goes without saying also that these destructive phenomena accompanying the industrial crisis which operated outside the sphere of production could not but in their turn influence the course of the industrial crisis and make it more intense and more complicated.

Such is the general picture of the movement of the industrial crisis.

Here are a few figures taken from official materials which illustrate the movement of the industrial crisis in the period under review.

#### VOLUME OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

(Per cent. of 1929)

	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
U.S.S.R.	100·0	129·7	161·9	184·7	201·6
U.S.A.	100·0	80·7	68·1	53·8	64·9
England	100·0	92·4	83·8	83·8	86·1
Germany	100·0	88·3	71·7	59·8	66·8
France	100·0	100·7	89·2	69·1	77·4

As you see, this table speaks for itself.

While industry in the principal capitalist countries declined from year to year compared with 1929 and began to recover somewhat only in 1933—although it has not reached the level of 1929 by a long way yet—industry in the U.S.S.R. increased from year to year and experienced a process of uninterrupted rise.

While industry in the principal capitalist countries shows

on the average a *reduction* of 25 per cent and more in the volume of production at the end of 1933 compared with the level of 1929, the industry of the U.S.S.R. during this period *grew* more than twice its size, i.e., increased more than 100 per cent.

Judging by this table it may seem that of the four capitalist countries England occupies the most favourable position. But that is not quite so. If we take the industry of these countries and compare it with the pre-war level, we shall get a somewhat different picture.

Here is the corresponding table:

#### VOLUME OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

(Per cent. of pre-war level)

	1913	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
U.S.S.R.	100.0	194.3	252.1	314.7	359.0	391.9
U.S.A.	100.0	170.2	137.3	115.9	91.4	110.2
England	100.0	99.1	91.5	83.0	82.5	85.2
Germany	100.0	113.0	99.8	81.0	67.6	75.4
France	100.0	139.0	140.0	124.0	96.1	107.6

As you see, the industry of England and Germany has not yet reached the pre-war level, while that of the United States and France has exceeded it by several per cent and the U.S.S.R. has increased its industrial production during this period by 290 per cent compared with the pre-war level.

But there is still another conclusion that must be drawn from these tables.

While industry in the principal capitalist countries has been steadily declining since 1930, and particularly since 1931, and reached its lowest point in 1932, it began slightly to recover and rise in 1933. If we take the monthly returns for 1932 and 1933 we will find that they still further confirm this conclusion because they show that, in spite of fluctuations of production in the course of 1933, industry in these

countries has not revealed any tendency for these fluctuations to drop to the level of the lowest point reached in the summer of 1932.

What does that mean?

It means that, apparently, industry in the principal capitalist countries had already passed the lowest point of decline and did not return to it in the course of 1933.

Some people are inclined to ascribe this phenomenon to the influence of exclusively artificial factors, such as a war-inflation boom. There cannot be any doubt that the war-inflation boom plays a not unimportant rôle here. It is particularly true in regard to Japan, where this artificial factor is the principal and decisive force in some revival, principally in the munition branches of industry. But it would be a crude mistake to attempt to explain everything by the war-inflation boom. Such an explanation is wrong, if only for the reason that the changes in industry which I have described are observed, not in separate and chance districts, but in all, or nearly all, industrial countries, including those countries which have a stable currency. Apparently, side by side with the war-inflation boom the operation of the internal economic forces of capitalism also has effect here.

Capitalism has succeeded in somewhat easing the position of industry *at the expense of the workers*—increasing their exploitation by increasing the intensity of their labour ; *at the expense of the farmers*—by pursuing a policy of paying the lowest prices for the product of their labour, for foodstuffs and partly for raw materials ; *at the expense of the peasants in the colonies and in the economically weak countries*—by still further forcing down the prices of the products of their labour, principally of raw materials, and also of foodstuffs.

Does this mean that we are witnessing a transition from a crisis to an ordinary depression which brings in its train a new boom and flourishing industry ? No, it does not mean that. At all events at the present time there are no data, direct or indirect, that indicate the approach of an

industrial boom in capitalist countries. More than that, judging by all things, there cannot be such data, at least in the near future. There cannot be, because all the unfavourable conditions which prevent industry in the capitalist countries from rising to any serious extent still continue to operate. I have in mind the continuing *general* crisis of capitalism in the midst of which the *economic* crisis is proceeding, the chronic working of the enterprises under capacity, the chronic mass unemployment, the interweaving of the industrial crisis with the agricultural crisis, the absence of tendencies towards any serious renewal of fixed capital which usually heralds the approach of a boom, etc.

Apparently, what we are witnessing is the transition from the lowest point of decline of industry, from the lowest depth of the industrial crisis to a depression, not an ordinary depression, but to a depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline.

## *2. The Growing Acuteness of the Political Situation in Capitalist Countries*

A result of the protracted economic crisis was the hitherto unprecedented acuteness of the political situation in capitalist countries, both within the respective countries as well as between them.

The intensified struggle for foreign markets, the abolition of the last vestiges of free trade, prohibitive tariffs, trade war, currency war, dumping and many other analogous measures which demonstrate extreme *nationalism* in economic policy, have caused the relations between the countries to become extremely acute, have created the soil for military conflicts, and have brought war to the front as a means for a new redistribution of the world and spheres of influence in favour of the strongest states.



Japan's war against China, the occupation of Manchuria, Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations and her advance in North China have served to make the situation still more acute. The intensified struggle for the Pacific and the growth of the naval armaments of Japan, United States, England and France, represent the results of this increased acuteness.

Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations and the spectre of *revanche* have given a fresh impetus to the acuteness of the situation and to the growth of armaments in Europe.

It is not surprising that bourgeois pacifism is now dragging out a miserable existence, and that idle talk about disarmament is being replaced by "business-like" talk about arming and re-arming.

Again as in 1914 the parties of bellicose imperialism, the parties of war and *revanche* are coming into the foreground.

Quite clearly things are moving towards a new war.

In view of the operation of these same factors the internal situation of the capitalist countries is becoming still more acute. Four years of industrial crisis have exhausted the working class and reduced it to despair. Four years of agricultural crisis have finally ruined the poorer strata of the peasantry, not only in the principal capitalist countries but also—and particularly—in the dependent and colonial countries. It is a fact that notwithstanding all the attempts to manipulate statistics in order to show a diminution in the number of unemployed, the number of unemployed according to the official returns of bourgeois institutions reaches 3,000,000 in England, 5,000,000 in Germany and 10,000,000 in the United States, not to speak of other countries in Europe. Add to this the number of workers employed part-time, which exceeds 10,000,000, add the millions of ruined peasants—and you will get an approximate picture of the poverty and despair of the toiling masses. The masses of the people have not yet reached the stage when they are ready to storm the citadel of capitalism,

but the idea of storming it is maturing in the minds of the masses—there can hardly be any doubt about that. This is eloquently testified to by such facts as, say, the Spanish revolution which overthrew the fascist régime, and the expansion of the Soviet regions in China which the united counter-revolution of the Chinese and foreign bourgeoisie is unable to stop.

This, as a matter of fact, explains the fact that the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are zealously destroying, or nullifying, the last vestiges of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors, the fact that they are driving the Communist parties underground and resorting to open terrorist methods in order to maintain their dictatorship.

Chauvinism and preparation for war as the main elements of foreign policy, bridling the working class and terror in the sphere of home policy as a necessary means for strengthening the rear of future war fronts—this is what is particularly engaging the minds of contemporary imperialist politicians.

It is not surprising that fascism has now become the most fashionable commodity among bellicose bourgeois politicians. I do not mean fascism in general, I mean, primarily, fascism of the German type, which is incorrectly called National-Socialism, for the most searching examination will fail to reveal even an atom of socialism in it.

[I]n this connection the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and as a result of the betrayal of the working class by Social-Democracy, which paved the way for fascism ; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom of the fact that the bourgeoisie is already unable to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and, as a consequence, is compelled in its home policy to resort to terroristic methods of administration—it must be taken as

a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, as a consequence of which it is compelled to resort to a policy of war.

That is the position.

Thus, you see that things are moving towards a new imperialist war as a way out of the present situation.

Of course there are no grounds for assuming that the war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it must confuse the situation still more. More than that, it will certainly unleash revolution and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. And if, notwithstanding the experience of the first imperialist war, the bourgeois politicians clutch at war as a drowning man clutches at a straw, it shows that they have become utterly confused, have reached an impasse, and are ready to rush headlong over the precipice.

It will not be amiss, therefore, to briefly examine the plans for the organisation of war which are now being hatched in the circles of bourgeois politicians.

Some think that war must be organised against one of the Great Powers. They think of imposing a crushing defeat upon it and of improving their own affairs at its expense. Let us assume that they organise such a war. What can come of it? As is well known, during the first imperialist war it was intended to destroy one of the Great Powers, viz., Germany, and to profit at her expense. And what came of it? They did not destroy Germany, but in Germany they sowed such a hatred for the victors and created such a rich soil for *revanche* that they have not been able to clear up the revolting mess they have made even to this day, and will not, perhaps, be able to do so for some time. But instead, they got the smash-up of capitalism in Russia, the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia and—of course—the Soviet Union. What guarantee is there that the second imperialist war will produce “better” results for

them than the first? Would it not be more correct to assume that the opposite will be the case?

Others think that war should be organised against a country that is militarily weak, but which represents an extensive market—for example, against China, which moreover, they have discovered, cannot be described as a state in the strict sense of the word, but which merely represents “unorganised territory” which needs to be seized by strong states. Apparently, they want to divide it up completely and improve their affairs at its expense. Let us assume that they organise such a war. What will come of it? It is well known that in the beginning of the nineteenth century the same opinion was held in regard to Italy and Germany as is now held in regard to China, viz., they were regarded as “unorganised territories” and not states, and they were enslaved. But what came of it? As is well known, it resulted in wars of independence waged by Germany and Italy and their unification into independent states. It resulted in increased hatred in the hearts of the peoples of these countries for the oppressors, the results of which have not been liquidated to this day and will not, perhaps, be liquidated for some time. The question arises: What guarantee is there that the same thing will not happen as a result of an imperialist war against China?

Still others think that war should be organised by a “superior race,” say, the German “race,” against an “inferior race,” primarily against the Slavs, that only such a war can provide a way out of the situation because it is the mission of the “superior race” to fertilise the “inferior race” and rule over it. Let us assume that this queer theory, which is as far removed from science as heaven is from earth, is put into practice. What will come of it? It is well known that ancient Rome regarded the ancestors of the present-day Germans and French in the same way as the representatives of the “superior race” now regard the Slavonic tribes. It is well known that ancient Rome treated them as an “inferior race,” as “barbarians” whose destiny

it was to be eternally subordinated to the "superior race," to "great Rome," and, between ourselves let it be said, ancient Rome had some grounds for this, which cannot be said about the representatives of the present "superior race." But what came of it? The result was that the non-Romans, i.e., all the "barbarians" united against the common enemy, hurled themselves against Rome and overthrew it. The question arises: what guarantee is there that the claims of the representatives of the present "superior race" will not lead to the same deplorable results? What guarantee is there that the fascist-literary politicians in Berlin will be more fortunate than the ancient and experienced conquerors in Rome? Would it not be more correct to assume that the opposite will be the case?

Still others, again, think that war should be organised against the U.S.S.R. Their plan is to smash the U.S.S.R., divide up its territory and profit at its expense. It would be a mistake to believe that it is only certain military circles in Japan who think in this way. We know that similar plans are being hatched in the circles of political leaders of certain states of Europe. Let us assume that these gentlemen pass from words to deeds. What can come of it? There can hardly be any doubt that such a war would be a very dangerous war for the bourgeoisie. It would be a very dangerous war, not only because the peoples of the U.S.S.R. would fight to the very death to preserve the gains of the revolution; it would be a very dangerous war for the bourgeoisie also because such a war will be waged not only at the fronts but also in the rear of the enemy. The bourgeoisie need have no doubt that the numerous friends of the working class of the U.S.S.R. in Europe and in Asia will be sure to strike a blow in the rear at their oppressors who commenced a criminal war against the fatherland of the working class of all countries. And let not Messieurs the bourgeoisie blame us if on the morrow of the outbreak of such a war they will miss certain of the governments that are near and dear to them and who are to-day happily ruling "by the

grace of God." One such war against the U.S.S.R. has been waged, already, if you remember, fifteen years ago. As is well known, the universally esteemed Churchill clothed this war in a poetic formula—"the invasion of fourteen states." You remember of course that this war rallied the toilers of our country in a single camp of heroic warriors who defended their workers' and peasants' homeland against the foreign foe tooth and nail. You know how it ended. It ended with the invaders being driven from our country and the establishment of revolutionary Councils of Action in Europe. It can hardly be doubted that a second war against the U.S.S.R. will lead to the complete defeat of the aggressors, to revolution in a number of countries in Europe and in Asia, and to the overthrow of the bourgeois-landlord governments in these countries.

Such are the war plans of the perplexed bourgeois politicians.

As you see, they are not distinguished either for their brilliance or valour.

But if the bourgeoisie chooses the path of war, then the working class in the capitalist countries, who have been reduced to despair by four years of crisis and unemployment, takes the path of revolution. That means that a revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature. And the more the bourgeoisie becomes entangled in its war combinations, the more frequently it resorts to terroristic methods in the struggle against the working class and the toiling peasantry, the sooner will the revolutionary crisis mature.

Some comrades think that as soon as a revolutionary crisis occurs the bourgeoisie must drop into a hopeless position, that its end is predetermined, that the victory of the revolution is assured, and that all they have to do is to wait for the bourgeoisie to fall, and to draw up victorious resolutions. This is a profound mistake. The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can

prepare for and win victory. Moments occur when the situation is revolutionary, when the rule of the bourgeoisie is shaken to its very foundations, and yet the victory of the revolution does not come, because there is no revolutionary party of the proletariat sufficiently strong and authoritative to lead the masses and take power. It would be unwise to believe that such "cases" cannot occur.

In this connection, it will not be amiss to recall Lenin's prophetic words on a revolutionary crisis, uttered at the Second Congress of the Communist International :

We have now come to the question of the revolutionary crisis as the basis of our revolutionary action. And here we must first of all note two widespread errors. On the one hand, the bourgeois economists depict this crisis simply as "unrest," to use the elegant expression of the English. On the other hand, revolutionaries sometimes try to prove that there is absolutely no way out of the crisis. That is a mistake. There is no such thing as absolutely hopeless positions. The bourgeoisie behaves like an arrogant brigand who has lost his head, it commits blunder after blunder, thus making the position more acute and hastening its own doom. All this is true. But it cannot be "proved" that there are absolutely no possibilities whatever for it to lull a certain minority of the exploited with certain concessions, for it to suppress a certain movement or uprising of a certain section of the oppressed and exploited. To try to "prove" beforehand that a position is "absolutely" hopeless would be sheer pedantry or playing with concepts and catchwords. Practice alone can serve as real "proof" in this and similar questions. The bourgeois system all over the world is experiencing a great revolutionary crisis. And the revolutionary parties must now "prove" by their practice that they are sufficiently intelligent and organised, have contacts with the exploited masses, are sufficiently determined and skilful to utilise this crisis for a successful and victorious revolution. (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, 1920, Russian edition.)

### 3. *The Relations Between The U.S.S.R. and the Capitalist States*

It is quite easy to understand how difficult it has been for the U.S.S.R. to pursue its peace policy in this atmosphere poisoned with the miasma of war combinations.

In the midst of this eve-of-the-war hullabaloo which is going on in a number of countries, the U.S.S.R. during these years has stood firmly and indomitably by its position of peace, fighting against the menace of war, fighting to preserve peace, going out to meet those countries which in one way or another stand for the preservation of peace, exposing and tearing the masks from those who are preparing for and provoking war.

What did the U.S.S.R. rely on in this difficult and complex struggle for peace?

- (a) On its growing economic and political might.
- (b) On the moral support of millions of the working class in every country who are vitally interested in the preservation of peace.
- (c) On the common sense of those countries which for this or that motive are not interested in disturbing the peace, and which want to develop commercial relations with such a punctual client as the U.S.S.R.
- (d) Finally—on our glorious army, which is ready to defend our country against attack from without.

On this basis arose our campaign for the conclusion of pacts of non-aggression and of pacts defining the aggressor with our neighbouring states. You know that this campaign has been successful. As is known, pacts of non-aggression have been concluded not only with the majority of our neighbours in the west and in the south, including Finland and Poland, but also with such countries as France and Italy; and pacts defining the aggressor have been concluded with these same neighbouring states, including the Little Entente.

On this basis also the friendship between the U.S.S.R. and Turkey was consolidated, relations between the U.S.S.R. and Italy have improved and have become indisputably satisfactory, relations with France, Poland and other Baltic states have improved, relations have been restored with the U.S.A., China, etc.



Of these facts reflecting the successes of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. two of indisputably serious significance should be noted and singled out.

1. I have in mind, first, the change for the better that has taken place recently in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland, between the U.S.S.R. and France. As is well known, our relations with Poland in the past were not at all good. Representatives of our state were assassinated in Poland. Poland regarded herself as the barrier of the Western states, against the U.S.S.R. All and sundry imperialists looked upon Poland as the vanguard in the event of a military attack upon the U.S.S.R. The relations between the U.S.S.R. and France were not much better. It is sufficient to recall the facts in the history of the trial of The Ramzin wreckers' group in Moscow in order to restore in one's mind the picture of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and France. But now these undesirable relations are gradually beginning to disappear. They are being replaced by other relations, which cannot be otherwise described than relations of *rapprochement*. It is not only that we have concluded pacts of non-aggression with these countries, although these pacts in themselves are of very serious importance. The most important thing first of all is that the atmosphere charged with mutual distrust is beginning to be dissipated. This does not mean, of course, that the incipient process of *rapprochement* can be regarded as sufficiently stable and as guaranteeing ultimate success. Surprises and zigzags in policy, for example in Poland, where anti-Soviet moods are still strong, cannot be regarded as being excluded by a long way. But a change for the better in our relations, irrespective of its results in the future, is a fact worthy of being noted and put in the forefront as a factor in the advancement of the cause of peace.

What is the cause of this change? What stimulates it?

First of all, the growth of the strength and might of the U.S.S.R. In our times it is not the custom to give any consideration to the weak—consideration is only given to

the strong. Then there have been certain changes in the policy of Germany which reflect the growth of *revanche-ist* and imperialist moods in Germany.

In this connection certain German politicians say that now the U.S.S.R. has taken an orientation towards France and Poland, that from being an opponent of the Versailles Treaty it has become a supporter of it and that this change is to be explained by the establishment of a fascist régime in Germany. This is not true. Of course, we are far from being enthusiastic about the fascist régime in Germany. But fascism is not the issue here, if only for the reason that fascism, for example in Italy, did not prevent the U.S.S.R. establishing very good relations with that country. Nor are the alleged changes in our attitude towards the Versailles Treaty the point of issue. It is not for us, who have experienced the shame of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, to sing the praises of the Versailles Treaty. We merely do not agree to the world being flung into the throes of a new war for the sake of this treaty. The same thing must be said in regard to the alleged new orientation taken by the U.S.S.R. We never had any orientation towards Germany nor have we any orientation towards Poland and France. Our orientation in the past and our orientation at the present time is towards the U.S.S.R. and towards the U.S.S.R. alone. And if the interests of the U.S.S.R. demand *rap-prochement* with this or that country which is not interested in disturbing peace, we shall take this step without hesitation.

No, that is not the point. The point is that the policy of Germany has changed. The point is that even before the present German politicians came into power, and particularly after they came into power, a fight between two political lines broke out in Germany, between the old policy which found expression in the well-known treaties between the U.S.S.R. and Germany and the "new" policy which in the main recalls the policy of the ex-Kaiser of Germany who at one time occupied the Ukraine, undertook a march

against Leningrad and transformed the Baltic countries into a *place d'armes* for this march ; and this " new " policy is obviously gaining the upper hand over the old policy. The fact that the supporters of the " new " policy are gaining supremacy in all things while the supporters of the old policy are in disgrace cannot be regarded as an accident. Nor can the well-known action of Hugenberg in London, nor the equally well-known declarations of Rosenberg, the director of the foreign policy of the ruling party in Germany, be regarded as accidents. That is the point, comrades.

2. Secondly, I have in mind the restoration of normal relations between the U.S.S.R. and the United States. There cannot be any doubt that this act has very serious significance for the whole system of international relations. It is not only that it improves the chances of preserving peace, that it improves the relations between the two countries, strengthens commercial intercourse between them and creates a base for mutual co-operation ; it is a landmark between the old, when the United States in various countries was regarded as the bulwark for all sorts of anti-Soviet tendencies, and the new, when this bulwark was voluntarily removed, to the mutual advantage of both countries.

Such are the two main facts which reflect the successes of the Soviet peace policy.

It would be wrong, however, to think that everything went smoothly in the period under review. No, not everything went smoothly by a long way.

Recall, say, the pressure that was brought to bear upon us by England, the embargo on our exports, the attempt to interfere in our internal affairs and to put out feelers to test our power of resistance. It is true that nothing came of this attempt and that later the embargo was removed ; but the aftermath of these attacks is still felt in all things that affect the relations between England and the U.S.S.R., including the negotiations for a commercial treaty. And

these attacks upon the U.S.S.R. must not be regarded as accidental. It is well known that one section of the English conservatives cannot live without such attacks. And precisely because they are not accidental we must bear in mind that attacks on the U.S.S.R. will be made in the future, that all sorts of menaces will be created, attempts to damage it will be made, etc.

Nor can we lose sight of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan which stand in need of very considerable improvement. Japan's refusal to conclude a pact of non-aggression, of which Japan stands in need no less than the U.S.S.R., once again emphasises the fact that all is not well in the sphere of our relations. The same thing must be said in regard to the rupture of negotiations concerning the Chinese Eastern Railway due to no fault of the U.S.S.R., and also in regard to the outrageous deeds the Japanese agents are committing on the C.E.R., the illegal arrests of Soviet employees on the C.E.R., etc. This is quite apart from the fact that one section of the military men in Japan are openly advocating in the Press the necessity for a war against the U.S.S.R. and the seizure of the Maritime Province with the avowed approval of another section of the military, while the government of Japan, instead of calling these instigators of war to order, is pretending that this is not a matter that concerns it. It is not difficult to understand that such circumstances cannot but create an atmosphere of uneasiness and uncertainty. Of course, we will continue persistently to pursue the policy of peace and strive for an improvement in our relations with Japan because we want to improve these relations. But it does not entirely depend upon us. That is why we must at the same time adopt all measures for the purpose of guarding our country against surprises and be prepared to defend it in the event of attack.

As you see, besides successes in our peace policy we also have a number of negative phenomena.

Such are the foreign relations of the U.S.S.R.

Our foreign policy is clear. It is a policy of preserving peace and strengthening commercial relations with all countries. The U.S.S.R. does not think of threatening anybody—let alone of attacking anybody. We stand for peace and champion the cause of peace. But we are not afraid of threats and are prepared to answer blow for blow against the instigators of war. Those who want peace and are striving for business intercourse with us will always receive our support. And those who try to attack our country—will receive a stunning rebuff to teach them not to poke their pig's snout into our Soviet garden again.

Such is our foreign policy.

The task is to continue to pursue this policy with all persistence and consistency. . . .

#### THE PARTY

I come now to the question of the Party.

The present Congress is taking place under the flag of the complete victory of Leninism, under the flag of the liquidation of the remnants of anti-Leninist groups.

The anti-Leninist-Trotskyist group has been defeated and scattered. Its organisers are now hanging around the backyards of the bourgeois parties abroad.

The anti-Leninist Right deviationist group has been defeated and scattered. Its organisers long ago renounced their views and are now trying very hard to expiate the sins they committed against the Party.

The national deviationist groups have been defeated and scattered. Their organisers long ago became finally merged with the interventionist *émigrés*, or else have recanted.

The majority of the adherents of these anti-revolutionary groups have been compelled to admit that the line of the Party was right and have capitulated before the Party.

At the Fifteenth Party Congress it was still necessary to prove that the Party line was right and to wage a struggle against certain anti-Leninist groups ; and at the Sixteenth

Party Congress the last adherents of these groups had to be despatched. At this Congress, however, there is nothing to prove and, perhaps, no one to beat. Everyone now sees that the line of the Party has conquered.

The policy of industrialising the country has conquered. Its results are obvious to everyone. What argument can be advanced against this fact?

The policy of liquidating the kulaks and of mass collectivisation has conquered. Its results also are obvious to everyone. What argument can be advanced against that fact?

The experience of our country has shown that it is quite possible to build socialism in a single country taken separately. What argument can be advanced against that fact?

Evidently, all these successes, and primarily the victory of the Five-Year Plan, have utterly demoralised and smashed to atoms all and sundry anti-Leninist groups.

It must be admitted that the Party to-day is as united as it never has been before.

### *1. Problems of Ideological-Political Leadership*

Does this mean, however, that the fight is ended and that the further offensive of socialism is to be abandoned as something superfluous?

No, it does not mean that.

Does this mean that all is well in the Party, that there will be no more deviations and that we can now rest on our laurels?

No, it does not mean that.

The enemies of the Party, the opportunists of all shades, the national-deviationists of all types, have been defeated. But remnants of their ideologies still live in the minds of individual members of the Party, and not infrequently they find expression. The Party must not be regarded as something isolated from the people who surround it. It lives and works in its environment. It is not surprising that not infrequently unhealthy moods penetrate the Party from

without. And the soil for such moods undoubtedly still exists in our country, if only for the reason that certain intermediary strata of the population still exist in town and country and represent the medium which fosters such moods.

The Seventeenth Conference of our Party declared that one of the fundamental political tasks in connection with the fulfilment of the Second Five-Year Plan is "to overcome the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the minds of men." This is an absolutely correct idea. But can we say that we have already overcome all the survivals of capitalism in economy? No, we cannot say that. Still less reason would there be for saying that we have overcome the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men. This cannot be said, not only because the development of the mind of man lags behind his economic position but also because the capitalist environment exists, which tries to revive and support the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the minds of the people of the U.S.S.R., and against which we Bolsheviks must always keep our powder dry.

It goes without saying that these survivals cannot but create a favourable soil for the revival of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups in the minds of individual members of our Party. Add to this the not very high theoretical level of the majority of the members of our Party, the weak ideological work of the Party organs and the fact that our Party workers are overburdened with purely practical work, which deprives them of the opportunity of augmenting their theoretical knowledge, and you will understand whence comes the confusion on a number of problems of Leninism that exists in the minds of individual members of the Party, which not infrequently penetrates our Press, and which helps to revive the survivals of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups.

That is why we cannot say that the fight is ended, and that there is no longer any need for the policy of the socialist offensive.

A number of problems of Leninism could be taken to demonstrate how tenacious the survivals of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups are in the minds of certain Party members.

Take, for example, the question of building *classless socialist society*. The Seventeenth Party Conference declared that we are marching towards classless socialist society. It goes without saying that classless society cannot come by itself. It has to be won and built by the efforts of all the toilers, by strengthening the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat, by extending the class struggle, by abolishing classes, by liquidating the remnants of the capitalist classes in battles with the enemy, both internal and external.

The thing is clear, one would think.

And yet, who does not know that the promulgation of this clear and elementary thesis of Leninism has given rise to not a little confusion and unhealthy moods among a certain section of Party members? The thesis—advanced as a slogan—about our advancing towards classless society is interpreted by them as a spontaneous process. And they begin to reason in the following way: if it is classless society then we can relax the class struggle, we can relax the dictatorship of the proletariat and generally abolish the state, which in any case has got to die out soon. And they dropped into a state of moon-calf ecstasy in the expectation that soon there will be no classes and therefore no class struggle, and therefore no cares and worries, and therefore it is possible to lay down our arms and retire—to sleep and to wait for the advent of classless society.

There can be no doubt that this confusion of mind and these moods are as like as two peas to the well-known views of the Right deviationists who believed that the old must automatically grow into the new, and that one fine day we shall wake up and find ourselves in socialist society.

As you see, the remnants of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups can be revived, and have not lost their tenacity by a long way.



It goes without saying that if this confusion of mind and these non-Bolshevik moods overcame the majority of our Party, the Party would find itself demobilised and disarmed.

Now take the question of the agricultural artel and the agricultural commune. Everybody admits now that under present conditions the artel is the only proper form of the collective farm movement. And that is quite understandable :

- (a) The artel properly combines the personal, everyday interests of the collective farmers with their public interests.
- (b) The artel successfully adapts the personal everyday interest to public interests, and thereby helps to educate the individual farmer of yesterday in the spirit of collectivism.

Unlike the artel, where only the means of production are socialised, in the communes, until recently, not only were the means of production socialised, but so also was the everyday life of every member of the commune. That is to say, the members of the commune, unlike the members of an artel, did not personally own domestic poultry, small livestock, a cow, some grain or a kitchen garden. This means that in the commune the personal everyday interests of the members are not so much taken into account and combined with the public interests as eclipsed by the latter in the pursuit of petty bourgeois equalitarianism. It goes without saying that this is the weakest side of the commune. This, properly speaking, explains why the commune is not widespread, and why there are so few of them. For the same reason, in order to preserve their existence and prevent their collapse, the communes were compelled to abandon the system of socialised everyday life and are beginning to work on the work-day principle, have begun to distribute grain among the members, to permit their members to

own their own poultry, small livestock, a cow, etc. But from this it follows that, actually, the commune has passed over to the position of the artel. And there is nothing bad in this because the sound development of the mass collective farm movement demands this.

This does not mean, of course, that the commune is not needed at all, that it does not represent the highest form of the collective farm movement. No, the commune is needed, and, of course, it is the highest form of the collective farm movement. But this applies, not to the present commune, which arose on the basis of undeveloped technique and of a shortage of products, and which is itself passing to the position of the artel, but to the commune of the future which will arise on the basis of a more developed technique and of an abundance of products. The present agricultural commune arose on the basis of an under-developed technique and shortage of products. This, properly speaking, explains why it practised equalitarianism and showed little concern for the personal everyday interests of its members, as a result of which it is now being compelled to pass to the position of the artel, in which the personal and public interests of the collective farmers are sensibly combined. The future commune will arise out of the developed and well-to-do artels. The future agricultural commune will arise when the fields and farms of the artel will be replete with grain, with cattle, with poultry, with vegetables, and all other produce ; when the artels will have their mechanised laundries, modern dining-rooms, bakeries, etc. ; when the collective farmer will see that it is more to his advantage to receive his meat and milk from the farm than to have his own cow and small livestock ; when the woman collective farmer will see that it is more to her advantage to take her meals in a dining-room, to get her bread from the public bakery and to get her linen washed in the public laundry than to prepare all these things herself. The future commune will arise on the basis of a more developed technique and of a more developed artel, on the basis of an

abundance of products. When will that be? Not soon, of course. But it will be. It would be a crime to accelerate the process of transition from the artel to the commune artificially. That would confuse the whole issue, and would facilitate the task of our enemies. The process of transition from the artel to the future commune must be gradual and to the extent that *all* the collective farmers are convinced that such a transition is necessary.

That is the position in regard to the question of the artel and the commune.

One would think that it was clear and almost elementary.

And yet, among a section of the members of the Party there is a fair amount of confusion on this question. They are of the opinion that by declaring the artel to be the fundamental form of the collective farm movement, the Party had removed itself from socialism, had retreated from the commune, from the higher form of the collective farm movement, to the lower form. The question arises—why? Because, it appears, there is no equality in the artel, because differences in the requirements and in the personal life of the members of the artel are preserved, whereas in the commune there is equality, in the commune the requirements and the personal position of all the members are equal. But in the first place, there are no longer any communes in which there is equality, equalitarianism in requirements and in personal life. Practice has shown that the communes would certainly have died out had they not abandoned equality and had they not actually passed to the position of an artel. Hence, it is useless talking about what no longer exists. Secondly, every Leninist knows, if he is a real Leninist, that equality in the sphere of requirements and personal life is a piece of reactionary petty-bourgeois stupidity worthy of a primitive sect of ascetics, but not of socialist society organised on Marxian lines, because we cannot demand that all people should have the same requirements and tastes, that all people shall live their individual lives in the same way. And finally, are not

differences in requirements and in personal life preserved among the workers? Does that mean that the workers are more remote from socialism than the members of an agricultural commune?

These people evidently think that socialism calls for equality, for levelling the requirements and the personal lives of the members of society. Needless to say, such an assumption has nothing in common with Marxism, with Leninism. By equality Marxism means, not equality in personal requirements and personal life, but the abolition of classes, i.e., (a) the equal emancipation of all toilers from exploitation after the capitalists have been overthrown and expropriated; (b) the equal abolition for all of private property in the means of production after they have been transformed into the property of the whole of society; (c) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability and the equal right of all toilers to receive according to the amount of work they have done (*socialist* society); (d) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability and the equal right of all toilers to receive according to their requirements (*communist* society). And Marxism starts out with the assumption that people's tastes and requirements are not, and cannot be, equal in quality or in quantity, either in the period of socialism or in the period of communism.

That is the Marxian conception of equality.

Marxism has not recognised, nor does it recognise, any other equality.

To draw from this the conclusion that socialism calls for equality, for the levelling of the requirements of the members of society, for the levelling of their tastes and of their personal lives, that according to Marxism all should wear the same clothes, and eat the same dishes and in the same quantity—means talking banalities and slandering Marxism.

It is time it was understood that Marxism is opposed to levelling. Even in *The Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels scourged primitive Utopian socialism and

described it as reactionary because it preached "universal asceticism and social levelling in its crudest form." In his *Mr. Dühring Revolutionises Science*, Engels devotes a whole chapter to the withering criticism of the "radical equalitarian socialism" proposed by Dühring to counteract Marxian socialism. And Engels wrote :

... the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that of necessity passes into absurdity.

Lenin said the same thing :

Engels was a thousand times right when he wrote : any demand for equality which goes beyond the demand for the abolition of classes is a stupid and absurd prejudice. Bourgeois professors tried to use the argument about equality in order to expose us by saying that we wanted to make all men equal. They tried to accuse the Socialists of an absurdity that they themselves invented. But owing to their ignorance they did not know that the Socialists—and precisely the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels—said : equality is an empty phrase unless by equality is meant the abolition of classes. We want to abolish classes, and in that respect we are in favour of equality. But the claim that we want to make all men equal to each other is an empty phrase and a stupid invention of the intellectuals. (Lenin's speech, *On Deceiving the People with Slogans about Liberty and Equality*.)

Clear, one would think.

Bourgeois writers are fond of depicting Marxian socialism like the old Tsarist barracks, where everything was subordinated to the "principle" of equality. Marxists cannot be responsible for the ignorance and stupidity of bourgeois writers.

There cannot be any doubt that the confusion in the minds of individual members of the Party concerning Marxian socialism and their infatuation with the equalitarian tendencies of agricultural communes are as like as two peas to the petty-bourgeois views of our "Leftist" blockheads who at one time idealised the agricultural

commune to such an extent that they even tried to implant the commune in the factories where skilled and unskilled workers, each working at his trade, had to put his wages into the common fund which was then shared out equally. We know what harm these infantile equalitarian exercises of our "Leftist" blockheads caused our industry.

As you see, the remnants of the ideology of the defeated anti-Party groups still display rather considerable tenacity.

It goes without saying that if these "Leftist" views were to triumph in the Party, the Party would cease to be Marxian, and the collective farm movement would finally be disorganised.

Or take for example the question of the slogan : "*make every collective farmer well-to-do.*" This slogan not only affects collective farmers ; it affects the workers to a far larger extent, because we want to make all the workers well-to-do, to enable them to lead a well-to-do and cultured existence.

One would think the point was clear. There would have been no use overthrowing capitalism in October 1917, and building socialism for a number of years if we are not going to secure a life of plenty for our people. Socialism means, not poverty and privation, but the abolition of poverty and privation, the organisation of a well-to-do and cultured life for all members of society.

And yet, this clear and essentially elementary slogan has caused perplexity, muddle and confusion among a certain section of our Party members. Is not this slogan, they ask, a reversion to the old slogan "enrich yourselves" that was rejected by the Party? If everyone becomes well-to-do, they continue to argue, and the poor cease to be with us, whom can we Bolsheviks rely upon in our work? How shall we be able to work without the poor?

This may sound funny, but the existence of such naïve and anti-Leninist views among a section of the members of the Party is an undoubted fact, which we must take note of.

Apparently, these people do not understand that a wide

gulf lies between the slogan "enrich yourselves" and the slogan "make the collective farmers well-to-do." In the first place only *individual* persons or groups can enrich themselves, whereas the slogan concerning a well-to-do existence affects, not individual persons or groups, but *all* collective farmers. Secondly, *individual* persons or groups enrich themselves for the purpose of subjecting other people, and of *exploiting* them, whereas the slogan concerning the well-to-do existence of *all* collective farmers—with the means of production in the collective farms socialised—*excludes* all possibility of the exploitation of some persons by others. Thirdly, the slogan, "enrich yourselves," was issued in the period of the initial stage of the New Economic Policy, when capitalism was partly restored, when the kulak was strong, when individual peasant farming predominated in the country, and collective farming was in a rudimentary state, whereas the slogan, "make every collective farmer well-to-do," was issued in the last stage of N.E.P., when the capitalist elements in industry had been destroyed, the kulaks in the countryside crushed, individual peasant farming forced into the background and the collective farms transformed into the predominant form of agriculture. I need not mention that the slogan, "make every collective farmer well-to-do," is not isolated, but is inseparably connected with the slogan, "make all collective farms Bolshevik farms."

Is it not clear that in essence the slogan, "enrich yourselves," was a call for the *restoration* of capitalism, whereas the slogan, "make every collective farmer well-to-do," is a call to *finally crush* the last remnants of capitalism by increasing the economic power of the collective farms and by transforming all collective farmers into well-to-do toilers?

Is it not clear that there is not, nor can there be, anything in common between these two slogans?

The argument that Bolshevik work and socialism are inconceivable without the existence of the poor is so stupid

that one finds it embarrassing to talk about it. The Leninists rely upon the poor when there are capitalist elements and the poor who are exploited by the capitalists. But when the capitalist elements are crushed and the poor are emancipated from exploitation, the task of the Leninists is not to perpetuate and preserve poverty and the poor—the premises of whose existence have already been destroyed—but to abolish poverty and to raise the poor to a well-to-do standard of living. It would be absurd to think that socialism can be built on the basis of poverty and privation, on the basis of reducing personal requirements and the standard of living to the level of the poor, who, moreover, refuse to remain poor any longer and are pushing their way upward to a well-to-do standard of living. Who wants this sort of socialism? This would not be socialism, but a caricature of socialism. Socialism can only be built up on the basis of a rapid growth of the productive forces of society, on the basis of an abundance of products and goods, on the basis of a well-to-do standard of living of the toilers, and on the basis of the rapid growth of culture. For socialism, Marxian socialism, means not the cutting down of personal requirements, but their universal expansion; not the restriction or the abstention from satisfying these requirements, but the all-sided and full satisfaction of all the requirements of culturally developed working people.

There cannot be any doubt that this confusion in the minds of certain members of the Party concerning poverty and prosperity is a reflection of the views of our "Leftist" blockheads, who idealise the poor as the eternal bulwark of Bolshevism under all conditions, and who regard the collective farms as the arena of fierce class struggle.

As you see, here, too, on this question, the remnants of the ideology of the defeated anti-Party groups have not yet lost their tenacity.

It goes without saying that had such blockheaded view achieved victory in our Party, the collective farms would not have achieved the successes they have achieved during the



past two years, and they would have fallen to pieces in a very short time.

Or take, for example, the *national question*. Here too, in the sphere of the national question as in other questions, there is confusion in the minds of a certain section of the Party, which creates a certain danger. I have spoken of the tenacity of the survivals of capitalism. It should be observed that the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men are much more tenacious in the sphere of the national question than in any other sphere. They are more tenacious because they are able to disguise themselves in national costumes. Many think that Skrypnik's fall was an individual case, an exception to the rule. That is not true. The fall of Skrypnik and his group in the Ukraine is not an exception. Similar "dislocations" are observed among certain comrades in other national republics.

What does a deviation towards nationalism mean—irrespective of whether it is a deviation towards Great Russian nationalism or towards local nationalism? The deviation towards nationalism is the adaptation of the internationalist policy of the working class to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie. The deviation towards nationalism reflects the attempts of "one's own" "national" bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and to restore capitalism. As you see, both these deviations have a common source. This source is a *departure* from Leninist internationalism. If you want to keep both these deviations under fire, then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism—irrespective of whether the deviation is towards local nationalism or towards Great Russian nationalism.

There is a controversy as to which deviation represents the major danger, the deviation towards Great Russian nationalism or the deviation towards local nationalism? Under present conditions this is a formal and therefore a purposeless controversy. It would be absurd to attempt to give ready-made recipes for the major and minor dangers

that would be suitable for all times and for all conditions. Such recipes do not exist. The major danger is the deviation against which we have ceased to fight and thereby enabled it to grow into a danger to the state.

Only very recently, in the Ukraine, the deviation towards Ukrainian nationalism did not represent the major danger ; but when we ceased to fight against it and enabled it to grow to the extent that it joined up with the interventionists, this deviation became the major danger. The question as to which is the major danger in the sphere of the national question is determined not by futile and formal controversies but by a Marxian analysis of the situation at the given moment, and by the study of the mistakes that have been committed in this sphere.

The same thing must be said about the *Right* and "*Left*" deviation in the sphere of general policy. Here too, as in other spheres, there is no little confusion in the minds of certain members of the Party. Sometimes while fighting against the Right deviation they take their hands away from the "*Left*" deviation and relax the fight against it on the assumption that it is not dangerous, or only slightly dangerous. This is a very serious and dangerous mistake. This is a concession to the "*Left*" deviation, which is impermissible for a member of the Party. It is all the more impermissible for the reason that recently the "*Lefts*" have completely slipped to the positions of the Rights, so that there is no longer any essential difference between them.

We have always said that the "*Lefts*" are the Rights who mask their Right-ness with Left phrases. Now the "*Lefts*" themselves confirm the correctness of our statement. Take last year's issues of the Trotskyist *Bulletin*. What do Messieurs the Trotskyists demand, what do they write about, in what does their "*Left*" programme express itself? They demand : *the dissolution of the Soviet farms* because they are unprofitable ; *the dissolution of the majority of the collective farms* because they are fictitious ; *the abandonment of the policy*

*of liquidating the kulaks ; reversion to the policy of concessions, and the leasing of a number of our industrial enterprises to concessionaires because they are unprofitable.*

Such is the programme of the contemptible cowards and capitulators, a counter-revolutionary programme of restoring capitalism in the U.S.S.R.

In what way does it differ from the programme of the extreme Rights ? Clearly, it differs in no way. It follows, then, that the " Lefts " have openly associated themselves with the counter-revolutionary programme of the Rights in order to enter into a *bloc* with them and to wage a joint struggle against the Party.

After this, how can anyone say that the " Lefts " are not dangerous, or are only slightly dangerous ? Is it not clear that those who talk such rubbish bring grist to the mill of the bitter enemies of Leninism ?

As you see, here too, in the sphere of deviations from the line of the Party—irrespective of whether they are deviations on general policy, or deviations on the national question—the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men, including the minds of certain members of our Party, are sufficiently tenacious.

These, then, are a few serious and urgent questions concerning our ideological and political work on which lack of clarity, confusion and even direct deviation from Leninism exist among certain strata of the Party. And these are not the only questions which could serve to demonstrate the confusion of mind among certain members of the Party.

After this, can it be said that all is well in the Party ?

Clearly, it cannot.

Our tasks in the sphere of ideological and political work are :

1. To raise the theoretical level of the Party to its proper plane.
2. To intensify ideological work in all the links of the Party.

3. To carry on unceasing propaganda of Leninism in the ranks of the Party.
4. To train the Party organisations and the non-Party *active* which surrounds them in the spirit of Leninist internationalism.
5. Not to gloss over but boldly to criticise the deviations of certain comrades from Marxism-Leninism.
6. Systematically to expose the ideology and remnants of the ideology of trends that are hostile to Leninism.

## *2. Problems of Organisational Leadership*

I have spoken about our successes. I have spoken about the victory of the Party line in the sphere of national economy and culture as well as in the sphere of overcoming anti-Leninist groups in the Party. I have spoken of the world-historical significance of our victories. But this does not mean that victory has been achieved in all things, and that all problems have been solved. Such successes and such victories never occur in real life. Not a few unsolved problems and defects have remained. We are confronted by a heap of problems demanding solution. But it does undoubtedly mean that the major part of the urgent problems are already solved, and, in this sense, the great victory of our Party is beyond question.

But here the question arises : how were these victories achieved, how were they obtained ; in fact, what fight was put up for them, what efforts were exerted for them ?

Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, enunciate it in the form of general theses and resolutions and carry them unanimously in order to make victory come of itself, automatically, so to speak. This, of course, is wrong. Those who think like that are greatly mistaken. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats can think that. As a matter of fact, these successes and victories were obtained not automatically but as a result of a fierce struggle to carry

out the Party line. Victory never comes by itself—it has to be dragged by the hand. Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning, they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organised, on the organisation of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of workers, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being severely damaged. More than that, after the correct political line has been given, the organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, i.e., its success or failure.

As a matter of fact, victory was achieved and won by a systematic and stern struggle against all sorts of difficulties that lay in the path of carrying out the Party line, by overcoming these difficulties, by mobilising the Party and the working class for the purpose of overcoming these difficulties, by organising the struggle to overcome these difficulties, by removing inefficient workers and selecting better ones capable of waging the struggle against difficulties.

What are these difficulties, and where are they concealed?

These difficulties are difficulties of our organisational work, difficulties of our organisational leadership. They are concealed within ourselves, in our leading workers, in our organisation, in the apparatus of our Party, of our Soviets, our economic, trade union, Young Communist League, and all other organisations.

It must be understood that the power and authority of our Party, Soviet, economic and all other organisations, and of their leaders, have grown to an unprecedented degree. And precisely because their power and authority have grown to an unprecedented degree it is their work that now determines everything, or nearly everything. Reference

to so-called objective conditions cannot be justified. After the correctness of the political line of the Party has been confirmed by the experience of a number of years, and after the readiness of the workers and peasants to support this line no longer calls for any doubt, the rôle of so-called objective conditions has been reduced to a minimum, whereas the rôle of our organisations and of their leaders has become decisive, exceptional. What does that mean? It means that from now on nine-tenths of the responsibility for the failure and defects in our work rests not on "objective" conditions but on ourselves, and on ourselves alone.

We have in our Party more than two million members and candidates. In the Young Communist League we have more than four million members and candidates. We have over three million worker and peasant correspondents. The Aviation, Chemical and Defence League has more than twelve million members. The trade unions have a membership of over seventeen millions. It is to these organisations that we are obliged for our successes. And if, notwithstanding the existence of such organisations and of such possibilities which facilitate the achievement of success, we still suffer from a number of defects and not a few failures in our work, then the responsibility for this rests only upon ourselves, upon our organisational work, our bad organisational leadership.

Bureaucracy in the administration departments ; idle chatter about " leadership in general " instead of real and concrete leadership ; the functional system of organisation and the absence of personal responsibility ; depersonalisation in work and equalitarianism in the wages system ; the absence of systematic supervision over the fulfilment of decisions ; fear of self-criticism—these are the sources of our difficulties, that is where our difficulties now lie concealed.

It would be naïve to think that it is possible to combat these difficulties by means of resolutions and orders. The bureaucrats have long become past masters in the art of

demonstrating their loyalty to the decisions of the Party and of the government in words and pigeon-holing them in deed. In order to combat these difficulties it was necessary to abolish the lag between our organisational work and the requirements of the political line of the Party, it was necessary to raise the level of organisational leadership in all spheres of national economy to the level of political leadership, it was necessary to secure that our organisational work guaranteed the practical application of the political slogans and decisions of the Party.

In order to combat these difficulties and achieve success it was necessary to *organise* the struggle to overcome these difficulties, it was necessary to draw the masses of the workers and peasants into this struggle, it was necessary to mobilise the Party itself, it was necessary to purge the Party and the business organisations of unreliable, unstable and demoralised elements.

What was required for that ?

We had to organise :

1. Extensive self-criticism and the exposure of the defects in our work.
2. The mobilisation of the Party, Soviet, business, trade union and Young Communist League organisations for the struggle against difficulties.
3. The mobilisation of the masses of the workers and peasants for the fight to apply the slogans and decisions of the Party and of the government.
4. The extension of competition and shock-brigade work among the toilers.
5. A wide network of political departments of machine and tractor stations and Soviet farms and the bringing of the Party Soviet leadership nearer to the villages.
6. The splitting up of the commissariats, the chief boards and trusts, and bringing the business leadership nearer to the enterprises.
7. The abolition of depersonalisation in work and the liquidation of equalitarianism in the wages system.

8. The abolition of the "functional" system, increasing personal responsibility and taking the line towards liquidating collegiates.

9. Increase supervision of fulfilment of decisions and taking the line towards the reorganisation of the Central Control Commission and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in the direction of still further increasing supervision of the fulfilment of decisions.

10. The transferring of skilled workers from the offices to bring them nearer to production.

11. The exposure and expulsion from the management departments of incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats.

12. Removal from their posts of those who violate the decisions of the Party and the government, of "window-dressers" and idle chatterers and the promotion to their place of new people—business-like people, people capable of securing concrete leadership of the work entrusted to them and the tightening of Party Soviet discipline.

13. The purging of Soviet and business organisations and reduction of their staffs.

14. Lastly, the purging of the Party of unreliable and demoralised persons.

These, in the main, are the means which the Party had to adopt in order to combat difficulties, to raise our organisational work to the level of political leadership and in this way to secure the application of the Party line.

You know that this is exactly the way the Central Committee of the Party carried on its organisational work during the period under review.

In this, the Central Committee was guided by the great thought uttered by Lenin, namely that the main thing in organisational work is *the selection of people and supervision of fulfilment of decisions*.

In regard to the selection of people and the dismissal of those who failed to justify the confidence placed in them, I would like to say a few words.

Apart from incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats, about



the removal of whom there are no differences of opinion among us, there are two other types of workers who retard our work, hinder our work, and prevent us from advancing.

One of these types of workers are those who have rendered certain services in the past, people who have become "aristocrats," as it were, who consider that the laws of the Party and Soviets were not written for them but for fools. These are the people who do not think it is their duty to fulfil the decisions of the Party and of the government, and who thus destroy the foundations of Party and state discipline. What do they base their calculations on when they violate Party and Soviet laws? They hope that the Soviet government will not dare touch them because of the services they have rendered in the past. These swelled-headed aristocrats think that they are irreplaceable, and that they can flaunt the decisions of the leading bodies with impunity. What is to be done with workers like that? They must without hesitation be removed from their leading posts, irrespective of the services they have rendered in the past. They must be degraded to lower positions, and this must be announced in the Press. This must be done in order to knock the pride out of these swelled-headed aristocrat-bureaucrats, and to put them in their proper place. This must be done in order to tighten up Party and Soviet discipline in the whole of our work.

And now about the second type of workers. I have in mind the chatterboxes, I would say, honest chatterboxes—people who are honest and loyal to the Soviet government, but who are incapable leaders, who are incapable of organising anything. Last year I had a conversation with one such comrade, a very respected comrade, but an incorrigible chatterbox, who was capable of submerging any living cause in a flood of talk. Well, here is the conversation :

*I* : How are you getting on with the sowing ?

*He* : With the sowing, Comrade Stalin? We have mobilised ourselves.

*I* : Well, and what then ?

*He* : We have put the question bluntly.

*I* : And what next ?

*He* : There is a turn, Comrade Stalin ; soon there will be a turn.

*I* : But still ?

*He* : We can observe some progress.

*I* : But for all that, how are you getting on with the sowing ?

*He* : Nothing has come of the sowing as yet, Comrade Stalin.

Here you have the physiognomy of the chatterbox. They have mobilised themselves, they have put the question bluntly, they have a turn and some progress, but things remain as they were.

This is exactly the way in which a Ukrainian worker once described the state of a certain organisation when he was asked whether this organisation had any definite line : " Well," he said, " they have a line all right, but they do not seem to be doing any work." Evidently there are honest chatterboxes in that organisation as well.

And when such chatterboxes are dismissed from their posts and are given jobs far removed from operative work, they shrug their shoulders in perplexity and ask : " Why have we been dismissed ? Have we not done all that was necessary for the cause ? Have we not organised a rally of shock-brigade workers ? Did we not at conferences of shock-brigade workers proclaim the slogans of the Party and of the government ? Did we not elect the whole of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to the honorary Presidium ? Did we not send greetings to Comrade Stalin—what else do they expect us to do ? "

What is to be done with these incorrigible chatterboxes ? If they were allowed to remain on operative work they would submerge every living cause in a flood of watery and endless speeches. Obviously, they must be dismissed from leading posts and given work other than operative work. There is no place for chatterboxes in operative work.

Everybody now admits that our successes are great and extraordinary. In a relatively short period of time our country has been transferred to the rails of industrialisation and collectivisation. The First Five-Year Plan has been successfully carried out. This rouses a sense of pride and increases the confidence of our workers in their own strength. This is all very good, of course. But successes sometimes have their dark side. They sometimes give rise to certain dangers which, if allowed to develop, may wreck the whole cause. There is, for example, the danger that some of our comrades may have their heads turned by these successes. There have been cases like that, as you know. There is the danger that certain of our comrades, having become intoxicated with success, will get swelled-headed and begin to soothe themselves with boastful songs, such as "We care for nobody," "We'll knock everybody into a cocked hat," etc. This is by no means excluded, comrades. There is nothing more dangerous than moods of this kind, because they disarm the Party and demobilise its ranks. If such moods were to predominate in our Party we would be faced with the danger of all our successes being wrecked. Of course, the First Five-Year Plan has been successfully carried out. This is true. But this does not, and cannot, end the matter, comrades. Before us is the Second Five-Year Plan, which we must also carry out, and also successfully. You know that plans are carried out in the struggle against difficulties, in the process of overcoming difficulties. That means that there will be difficulties and there will be a struggle against them. Comrades Molotov and Kuibyshev will tell you about the Second Five-Year Plan. From their reports you will see what great difficulties we will have to overcome in order to carry out this great plan. That means that we must not lull the Party but rouse its vigilance, we must not lull it to sleep but keep it in a state of fighting preparedness, not disarm but arm it, not demobilise it but keep it in a state of mobilisation for the purpose of fulfilling the Second Five-Year Plan.

Hence, the first conclusion : *we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by the successes achieved, and must not get swelled-headed.*

We achieved successes because we had the correct guiding-line of the Party, and because we were able to organise the masses for the purpose of applying this line. Needless to say, without these conditions we would not have achieved the successes we have achieved, and of which we are justly proud. But it is a very rare thing for ruling parties to have a correct line and to be able to apply it. Look at the countries which surround us : are there many ruling parties there that have a correct line and are able to apply it ? Strictly speaking, there are no longer any such parties in the world, because they are all living without prospects, are wallowing in the chaos of crises, and see no road to lead them out of the swamp. Our Party alone knows where to lead the cause, and it is leading it forward successfully. What is our Party's superiority due to ? It is due to the fact that it is a Marxian Party, a Leninist Party. It is due to the fact that it is guided in its work by the tenets of Marx, Engels and Lenin. There cannot be any doubt that as long as we remain true to these tenets, as long as we have this compass, we will achieve successes in our work.

It is said that in the West, in some countries, Marxism has already been destroyed. It is said that it was destroyed by the bourgeois-nationalist trend known as Fascism. That is nonsense, of course. Only those who are ignorant of history can talk like that. Marxism is the scientific expression of the fundamental interests of the working class. In order to destroy Marxism the working class must be destroyed. And it is impossible to destroy the working class. More than eighty years have passed since Marxism stepped into the arena. During this time scores and hundreds of bourgeois governments have tried to destroy Marxism. And what happened ? Bourgeois governments have come and gone, but Marxism still goes on.

More than that, Marxism has achieved complete victory

on one-sixth of the globe and achieved victory in the very country in which Marxism was considered to have been utterly destroyed.

It is not an accident that the country in which Marxism achieved complete victory is now the only country in the world which knows no crisis and no unemployment, whereas in all other countries, including the Fascist countries, crisis and unemployment have been reigning for four years. No, comrades, it is not an accident.

Yes, comrades, our successes are due to the fact that we worked and fought under the banner of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Hence the second conclusion : *to remain loyal to the end to the great banner of Marx, Engels and Lenin.*

The working class of the U.S.S.R. is strong, not only because it has a Leninist Party that has been tried in battle ; it is strong not only because it enjoys the support of millions of toiling peasants ; it is strong also because it is supported and assisted by the world proletariat. The working class of the U.S.S.R. is part of the world proletariat, its vanguard ; and our republic is the offspring of the world proletariat. There can be no doubt that if it had not been supported by the working class in the capitalist countries it would not have been able to retain power, it would not have secured for itself the conditions for socialist construction, and hence it would not have achieved the successes that it did achieve. International ties between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the workers of the capitalist countries, the fraternal alliance between the workers of the U.S.S.R. and the workers of all countries—this is one of the cornerstones of the strength and might of the Republic of Soviets. The workers in the West say that the working class of the U.S.S.R. is the shock brigade of the world proletariat. That is very good. It shows that the world proletariat is prepared to continue to render all the support it can to the working class of the U.S.S.R. But this imposes a very serious duty upon us. It means that we must prove worthy

of the honourable title of the shock brigade of the proletarians of all countries. It imposes upon us the duty to work better, and to fight better, for the final victory of socialism in our country, for the victory of socialism in all countries.

Hence the third conclusion : *to remain loyal to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism, to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletarians of all countries.*

Such are the conclusions.

*Long live the great and invincible banner of Marx, Engels and Lenin.*

### *J. Stalin*

## ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES FROM THE RED ARMY ACADEMY

*Delivered May 14, 1935.*

[ This speech is in effect a summary of the stages through which the Soviet Union has passed in the process of economic reconstruction. Its special importance lies in its insistence on the development of "cadres"—technically efficient leaders—"cadres decide everything" after the stage has been passed through in which "technique decides everything."]

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## ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES FROM THE RED ARMY ACADEMY

COMRADES, it cannot be denied that we have recently achieved important successes both in the sphere of construction and in the sphere of administration. In this

connection there is too much talk about the merits of chiefs, about the merits of leaders. All or nearly all our achievements are ascribed to them. That, of course, is wrong, it is incorrect. It is not merely a matter of leaders. But it is not of this I wanted to speak to-day. I should like to say a few words about cadres, about our cadres in general and about the cadres of our Red Army in particular.

You know that we inherited from the olden days a technically backward, impoverished and ruined country. Ruined by four years of imperialist war, and ruined again by three years of civil war, a country with a semi-literate population, with a low technical level, with isolated industrial oases lost in a welter of minute peasant farms—such was the country we inherited from the past. The problem was to transfer this country from the lines of mediæval darkness to the lines of modern industry and mechanised agriculture. The problem, as you see, was a serious and difficult one. The question that confronted us was that *either* we solve this problem in the shortest possible time and consolidate socialism in our country, *or* we do not solve it, in which case our country—technically weak and culturally unenlightened—would lose its independence and become a stake in the game of the imperialist powers.

At that time our country was passing through a period of acute famine in technical resources. There were not enough machines for industry. There were no machines for agriculture. There were no machines for transport. There was not that elementary technical base without which the industrial transformation of a country is inconceivable. All that existed were isolated preliminary requisites for the creation of such a base. A first-class industry had to be created. This industry had to be so directed as to be capable of technically reorganising not only industry, but also our agriculture and our railway transport. And for this it was necessary to make sacrifices and to impose the most rigorous economy in everything ; it was necessary to economise on food, on schools and on textiles, in order to accumulate

the funds required for the creation of industry. There was no other way of overcoming the famine in technical resources. So Lenin taught us, and in this matter we followed in the footsteps of Lenin.

Naturally, in so great and difficult a matter unvarying and rapid success could not be expected. In a matter like this success comes only after several years. We had therefore to arm ourselves with strong nerves, Bolshevik grit and stubborn patience in order to counteract the first failures and to march unswervingly towards the great goal, without permitting any wavering or uncertainty in our ranks.

You know that we set about this task in precisely this way. But not all our comrades had the necessary spirit, patience and grit. Among our comrades there proved to be people who at the first difficulties began to call for a retreat. Let bygones be bygones, it is said. That, of course, is true. But man is endowed with memory, and when summing up the results of our work one involuntarily recalls the past. Well then, there were comrades among us who were scared by the difficulties and began to call on the Party to retreat. They said: "What is the good of your industrialisation and collectivisation, your machines, iron and steel industry, tractors, combines, automobiles? It would be better if you gave us more textiles, if you bought more raw materials for the production of consumers' goods and gave the population more of the small things which adorn the life of man. The creation of industry, and a first-class industry at that, when we are so backward, is a dangerous dream."

Of course, we could have used the three billion rubles of foreign currency obtained as a result of the severest economy and spent on the creation of our industry, for the importation of raw materials and for increasing the production of articles in general consumption. That is also a kind of "plan." But with such a "plan" we should not have had a metallurgical industry, or a machine-building industry, or tractors and automobiles, or aeroplanes and tanks. We should have found ourselves unarmed in face of the external



foe. We should have undermined the foundations of socialism in our country. We should have found ourselves in captivity to the bourgeoisie, home and foreign.

It is evident that a choice had to be made between two plans : between the plan of retreat, leading, and bound to lead, to the defeat of socialism, and the plan of advance, which led and, as you know, has already led to the victory of socialism in our country.

We chose the plan of advance and moved forward along the Leninist road, brushing those comrades aside, as being people who saw something only when it was under their noses, but who closed their eyes to the immediate future of our country, to the future of socialism in our country.

But these comrades did not always confine themselves to criticism and passive resistance. They threatened to raise a revolt in the Party against the Central Committee. More, they threatened some of us with bullets. Evidently, they reckoned on frightening us and compelling us to leave the Leninist road. These people, apparently, forgot that we Bolsheviks are people of a special cut. They forgot that you cannot frighten Bolsheviks by difficulties or by threats. They forgot that we were forged by the great Lenin, our leader, our teacher, our father, who did not know fear in the fight and did not recognise it. They forgot that the more the enemies rage and the more hysterical the foes within the Party become, the more red-hot the Bolsheviks become for fresh struggles and the more vigorously they push forward.

Of course, it never even occurred to us to leave the Leninist road. More, having established ourselves on this road, we pushed forward still more vigorously, brushing every obstacle from our path. It is true that in our course we were obliged to handle some of these comrades roughly. But you cannot help that. I must confess that I too took a hand in this business.

Yes, comrades, we proceeded confidently and vigorously along the road of industrialising and collectivising our

country. And now we may consider that the road has been traversed.

Everybody now admits that we have achieved tremendous successes along this road. Everybody now admits that we already have a powerful, a first-class industry, a powerful mechanised agriculture, a growing and improving transport system, an organised and excellently equipped Red Army.

This means that we have in the main outlived the period of famine in technical resources.

But, having outlived the period of famine in technical resources, we have entered a new period, a period, I would say, of famine in the matter of people, in the matter of cadres, in the matter of workers capable of harnessing technique and advancing it. The point is that we have factories, mills, collective farms, Soviet farms, an army; we have technique for all this; but we lack people with sufficient experience to squeeze out of technique all that can be squeezed out of it. Formerly, we used to say that "technique decides everything." This slogan helped us in this respect, that we put an end to the famine in technical resources and created an extensive technical base in every branch of activity for the equipment of our people with first-class technique. That is very good. But it is very, very far from enough. In order to set technique going and to utilize it to the full, we need people who have mastered technique, we need cadres capable of mastering and utilizing this technique according to all the rules of the art. Without people who have mastered technique, technique is dead. Technique in the charge of people who have mastered technique can and should perform miracles. If in our first-class mills and factories, in our Soviet farms and collective farms and in our Red Army we had sufficient cadres capable of harnessing this technique, our country would secure results three times and four times greater than at present. That is why emphasis must now be laid on people, on cadres, on workers who have mastered technique. That is why the old slogan, "Technique decides everything,"

which is a reflection of a period we have already passed through, a period in which we suffered from a famine in technical resources, must now be replaced by a new slogan, the slogan "Cadres decide everything." That is the main thing now.

Can it be said that our people have fully understood and realised the great significance of this new slogan? I would not say that. Otherwise, there would not have been the outrageous attitude towards people, towards cadres, towards workers, which we not infrequently observe in practice. The slogan "Cadres decide everything" demands that our leaders should display the most solicitous attitude towards our workers, "little" and "big," no matter in what sphere they are engaged, cultivating them assiduously, assisting them when they need support, encouraging them when they display their first successes, advancing them, and so forth. Yet in practice we meet in a number of cases with a soulless, bureaucratic and positively outrageous attitude towards workers. This, indeed, explains why instead of being studied, and placed at their posts only after being studied, people are frequently flung about like pawns. People have learnt how to value machinery and to make reports of how many machines we have in our mills and factories. But I do not know of one instance when a report was made with equal zest of the number of people we have developed in a given period, how we assisted people to grow and become tempered in their work. How is this to be explained? It is to be explained by the fact that we have not yet learnt to value people, to value workers, to value cadres.

I recall an incident in Siberia, where I was at one time in exile. It was in the spring, at the time of the spring floods. About thirty men went to the river to pull out timber which had been carried away by the vast, swollen river. Towards evening they returned to the village, but with one comrade missing. When asked where the thirtieth man was, they unconcernedly replied that the thirtieth man had

"remained there." To my question, "How do you mean, remained there?" they replied with the same unconcern, "Why ask—drowned, of course." And thereupon one of them began to hurry away, saying, "I have got to go and water the mare." When I reproached them for having more concern for animals than for men, one of them, amid the general approval of the rest, said, "Why should we be concerned about men? We can always make men. But a mare . . . just try and make a mare." Here you have a case, not very significant perhaps, but very characteristic. It seems to me that the indifference shown by certain of our leaders to people, to cadres, and their inability to value people, is a survival of that strange attitude of man to man displayed in the episode in far-off Siberia just related.

And so, comrades, if we want successfully to overcome the famine in the matter of people and to provide our country with sufficient cadres capable of advancing technique and setting it going, we must first of all learn to value people, to value cadres, to value every worker capable of benefiting our common cause. It is time to realise that of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people, cadres. It must be realised that under our present conditions "cadres decide everything." If we have good and numerous cadres in industry, agriculture, transport and the army—our country will be invincible. If we do not have such cadres—we shall be lame on both feet.

In concluding my speech, permit me to offer a toast to the health and success of our graduates from the Red Army Academy. I wish them success in the cause of organising and leading the defence of our country.

Comrades, you have graduated from the academy, a school in which you received your first steeling. But school is only a preparatory stage. Cadres receive their real steeling in actual work, outside school, in fighting difficulties, in overcoming difficulties. Remember, comrades, that only those cadres are any good who do not fear difficulties, who do not

hide from difficulties, but who, on the contrary, go out to meet difficulties, in order to overcome them and eliminate them. It is only in combating difficulties that real cadres are forged. And if our army possesses genuinely steeled cadres in sufficient numbers it will be invincible.

## THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

*English edition, Modern Books Ltd., 1929.*

[ The Third (Communist) International was founded in March 1919. At the Fifth Congress of the Communist International, in 1924, a draft programme was adopted, and after considerable discussion by all national sections of the International, the programme was adopted in its final form at the Sixth Congress, in 1928. It is, in a sense, a restatement of *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848, in relation to the imperialist stage of capitalism. The first and second sections deal with the The World System of Capitalism, and The General Crisis of Capitalism. The third section states the ultimate aim of the Communist International—World Communism. The fourth section deals with the period of transition from Capitalism to Socialism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; this includes a number of economic and social transitional aims, besides an outline of the transitional form of the State and a statement of national and colonial policy. The fifth section deals with the stages of development in the Soviet Union. The sixth and last section states the strategy and tactics of the Communist International: the struggle against distortions of Marxism, and the work of the Party in each country to win the most important sections of the proletariat for the

revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, together with winning the support of the middle strata of the town and country population and the nationalities oppressed by imperialism. ]

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## THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

### I. THE WORLD SYSTEM OF CAPITALISM, ITS DEVELOPMENT AND INEVITABLE DOWNFALL

#### 1. *The Dynamic Laws of Capitalism and the Epoch of Industrial Capital*

THE CHARACTERISTIC features of capitalist society which arose on the basis of commodity production are the monopoly of the most important and vital means of production by the capitalist class and big landlords ; the exploitation of the wage labour of the proletariat, which, being deprived of the means of production, is compelled to sell its labour power ; the production of commodities for profit ; and, linked up with all this, the planless and anarchic character of the process of production as a whole. Exploitation relationships and the economic domination of the bourgeoisie find their political expression in the organised capitalist State—the instrument for the suppression of the proletariat.

The history of capitalism has entirely confirmed the theories of Marx and Engels concerning the laws of development of capitalist society and concerning the contradictions of this development that must inevitably lead to the downfall of the whole capitalist system.

In its quest for profits the bourgeoisie was compelled to develop the productive forces on an ever-increasing scale and to strengthen and expand the domination of capitalist relationships of production. Thus, the development of capitalism constantly reproduces on a wider scale all the

inherent contradictions of the capitalist system—primarily, the vital contradiction between the social character of labour and private acquisition, between the growth of the productive forces and the property relations of capitalism. The predominance of private property in the means of production and the anarchy prevailing in the process of production have disturbed the equilibrium between the various branches of production ; for a growing contradiction developed between the tendency towards unlimited expansion of production and the restricted consumption of the masses of the proletariat (general over-production), and this resulted in periodical devastating crises and mass unemployment among the proletariat. The predominance of private property also found expression in the competition that prevailed in each separate capitalist country as well as in the constantly expanding world market. This latter form of capitalist rivalry resulted in a number of wars, which are the inevitable accompaniment of capitalist development.

On the other hand, the technical and economic advantages of mass production have resulted in the squeezing out and destruction in the competitive struggle of the pre-capitalist economic forms and in the ever-increasing concentration and centralisation of capital. In the sphere of industry this law of concentration and centralisation of capital manifested itself primarily in the direct ruin of small enterprises or alternatively in their being reduced to the position of auxiliary units of large enterprises. In the domain of agriculture which, owing to the existence of the monopoly in land and in absolute rent, must inevitably lag behind the general rate of development, this law not only found expression in the process of differentiation that took place among the peasantry and in the proletarianisation of broad strata of them, but also and mainly in the open and concealed subordination of small peasant economy to the domination of big capital. Small farming has been able to maintain a nominal independence only at the price of extreme

intensification of labour and systematic under-consumption.

The ever-growing application of machinery, the constant improvement in technique and, consequently, the uninterrupted rise in the organic composition of capital, accompanied by still further division, increased productivity and intensity of labour, meant also increased employment of female and child labour, the formation of enormous industrial reserve armies which are constantly replenished by the proletarianised peasantry who are forced to leave their villages as well as by the ruined small and middle urban bourgeoisie. The collection of a handful of capitalist magnates at one pole of social relationships and of a gigantic mass of the proletariat at the other ; the constantly increasing rate of exploitation of the working class, the reproduction on a wider scale of the deepest contradictions of capitalism and their consequences (crises, wars, etc.) ; the constant growth of social inequality, the rising discontent of the proletariat united and schooled by the mechanism of capitalist production itself—all this has inevitably undermined the foundations of capitalism and has brought nearer the day of its collapse.

Simultaneously, a profound change has taken place in the social and cultural life of capitalist society ; the parasitical decadence of the rentier group of the bourgeoisie ; the break-up of the family, which expresses the growing contradiction between the mass participation of women in social production and the forms of family and domestic life largely inherited from previous economic epochs ; the growing shallowness and degeneracy of cultural and ideological life resulting from the minute specialisation of labour, the monstrous forms of urban life and the restrictedness of rural life ; the incapability of the bourgeoisie, notwithstanding the enormous achievements of the natural sciences, to create a synthetically scientific philosophy, and the growth of ideological, mystical and religious superstition, are all phenomena signalling the approach of the historical end of the capitalist system.



## 2. *The Era of Finance Capitalism (Imperialism)*

The period of industrial capitalism was, in the main, a period of "free competition"; a period of a relatively smooth evolution and expansion of capitalism throughout the whole world, when the as yet unoccupied colonies were being divided up and conquered by armed force; a period of continuous growth of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, the burden of which fell mainly upon the systematically plundered, crushed and oppressed colonial periphery.

Towards the beginning of the twentieth century, this period was replaced by the period of imperialism, during which capitalism developed spasmodically and conflictingly; free competition rapidly gave way to monopoly, the previously "available" colonial lands were all divided up, and the struggle for a redistribution of colonies and spheres of influence inevitably began to assume primarily the form of a struggle by force of arms.

Thus, the full intensity and the truly world-wide extent of the contradictions of capitalism became most glaringly revealed in the epoch of imperialism (finance capitalism), which, from the historical standpoint is a new form of capitalism, a new system of relationships between the various parts of world capitalist economy and a change in the relationship between the principal classes of capitalist society.

The new historical period set in as a result of the operation of the principal dynamic laws of capitalist society. It grew out of the development of industrial capitalism, and is the historical continuation of the latter. It sharpened the manifestations of all the fundamental tendencies and dynamic laws of capitalist development, of all its fundamental contradictions and antagonisms. The law of the concentration and centralisation of capital led to the formation of powerful combines (cartels, syndicates, trusts), to new forms of gigantic combinations of enterprises, linked

up into one system by the banks. The merging of industrial capital with bank capital, the absorption of big land ownership into the general system of capital organisation, and the monopolist character of this form of capitalism transferred the epoch of industrial capital into the epoch of finance capital. "Free competition" of the period of industrial capitalism, which replaced feudal monopoly and the monopoly of merchant capital, became itself transformed into finance capital monopoly. At the same time, although capitalist monopolist organisations grow out of free competition, they do not eliminate competition, but exist side by side with it and hover over it, thus giving rise to a series of exceptionally great and acute contradictions, frictions and conflicts.

The growing use of complex machinery, of chemical processes and of electrical energy ; the resulting higher organic composition of capital ; and the consequent decline in the rate of profit, which only the biggest monopolist combines are able to counteract for a time by their policy of high cartel prices, still further stimulate the quest for colonial super-profits and the struggle for a new division of the world. Standardised mass production creates a demand for more foreign markets. The growing demand for raw materials and fuel intensifies the race for their sources. Lastly, the system of high protection, which hinders the export of merchandise and secures additional profit for exported capital, creates additional stimuli to the export of capital. Export of capital becomes, therefore, the decisive and specific form of economic contact between the various parts of world capitalist economy. The total effect of all this is that the monopolist ownership of colonial markets, of sources of raw materials and of spheres of investment of capital extremely accentuates the general unevenness of capitalist development and sharpens the conflicts between the "great powers" of finance capital over the re-allocation of colonies and spheres of influence.

The growth of the productive forces of world economy

thus leads to the further internationalisation of economic life and simultaneously leads to a struggle for a redistribution of the world, already divided up among the biggest finance capital States, to a change in, and sharpening of, the forms of this struggle and to the older method of bringing down prices being superseded to an increasing degree by the method of direct force (boycott, high protection, tariff wars, wars proper, etc.). Consequently, the monopolist form of capitalism is inevitably accompanied by imperialist wars, which, by the area they embrace and the destructiveness of their technique, have no parallel in world history.

### *3. The Forces of Imperialism and the Forces of Revolution*

Expressing the tendency for unification of the various sections of the dominant class, the imperialist form of capitalism places the broad masses of the proletariat in opposition, not to a single employer, but, to an increasing degree, to the capitalist class as a whole and to the capitalist State. On the other hand, this form of capitalism breaks down the national barriers that have become too restricted for it, widens the scope of the capitalist State power of the dominant Great Powers and brings them into opposition to vast masses of nationally oppressed peoples in the so-called small nations as well as in the colonies. Finally, this form of capitalism brings the imperialist States most sharply into opposition to each other.

This being the case, State power, which is becoming the dictatorship of the finance-capitalist oligarchy and the expression of its concentrated might, acquires special significance for the bourgeoisie. The functions of this multinational imperialist State grow in all directions. The development of State capitalist forms, which facilitate the struggle in foreign markets (mobilisation of industry for war purposes) as well as the struggle against the working class ;

the monstrous growth of militarism (armies, naval and air fleets, and the employment of chemistry and bacteriology) ; the increasing pressure of the imperialist State upon the working class (the growth of exploitation and direct suppression of the workers on the one hand and the systematic policy of bribing the bureaucratic reformist leadership on the other), all this expresses the enormous growth of the power of the State. Under these circumstances, every more or less important action of the proletariat becomes transformed into an action against the State power, i.e., into political action.

Hence the development of capitalism, and particularly the imperialist epoch of its development, reproduces the fundamental contradictions of capitalism on an increasingly magnified scale. Competition among small capitalists ceases, only to make way for competition among big capitalists ; where competition among big capitalists subsides, it flares up between gigantic combinations of capitalist magnates and their governments ; local and national crises become transformed into crises affecting a number of countries and, subsequently, into world crises ; local wars give way to wars between coalitions of States and to world wars ; the class struggle changes from isolated actions by single groups of workers into nation-wide conflicts and, subsequently, into an international struggle of the world proletariat against the world bourgeoisie. Finally, two main revolutionary forces are organising against the organised might of finance capital—on the one hand *the workers in the capitalist States*, on the other hand the victims of the oppression of foreign capital, *the masses of the people in the colonies*, marching under the leadership and the hegemony of the international revolutionary proletarian movement.

However, this fundamental revolutionary tendency is temporarily paralysed by the fact that certain sections of the European, North American and Japanese proletariat are bribed by the imperialist bourgeoisie, and by the treachery of the national bourgeoisie in the semi-colonial

and colonial countries who are scared by the revolutionary mass movement. The bourgeoisie in imperialist countries, able to secure additional surplus profits from the position it holds in the world market (more developed technique, export of capital to countries with a higher rate of profit, etc.), and from the proceeds of its plunder of the colonies and semi-colonies, was able to raise the wages of its "own" workers out of these surplus profits, thus giving these workers an interest in the development of "home" capitalism, in the plunder of the colonies and in being loyal to the imperialist State.

This systematic bribery was and is being very widely practised in the most powerful imperialist countries and finds most striking expression in the ideology and practice of the labour aristocracy and the bureaucratic strata of the working class, i.e., the social-democratic and trade union leaders, who proved to be direct agents of bourgeois influence among the proletariat and stalwart pillars of the capitalist system.

By stimulating the growth of the corrupt upper stratum of the working class, however, imperialism in the end destroys its influence upon the working class, because the growing contradictions of imperialism, the worsening of the conditions of the broad masses of the workers, the mass unemployment among the proletariat, the enormous cost of military conflicts and the burdens they entail, the fact that certain Powers have lost their monopolist position in the world market, the break-away of the colonies, etc., serve to undermine the basis of social-democracy among the masses. Similarly, the systematic bribery of the various sections of the bourgeoisie in the colonies and semi-colonies, their betrayal of the national-revolutionary movement and their rapprochement with the imperialist Powers can paralyse the development of the revolutionary crisis only for a time. In the final analysis, this leads to the intensification of imperialist oppression, to the decline of the influence of the national bourgeoisie upon the masses of the people,

to the sharpening of the revolutionary crisis, to the unleashing of the agrarian revolution of the broad masses of the peasantry and to the creation of conditions favourable for the establishment of the leaders of the proletariat in the popular mass struggle in the colonies and dependencies for independence and complete national liberation.

#### *4. Imperialism and the Downfall of Capitalism*

Imperialism has greatly developed the productive forces of world capitalism. It has completed the preparation of all the material prerequisites for the socialist organisation of society. By its wars it has demonstrated that the productive forces of world economy, which have outgrown the restricted boundaries of imperialist States, demand the organisation of economy on a world, or international scale. Imperialism tries to remove this contradiction by hacking a road with fire and sword towards a single world State-capitalist trust, which is to organise the whole world economy. This sanguinary Utopia is being extolled by the social-democratic ideologists as a peaceful method of newly "organised" capitalism. In reality, this Utopia encounters insurmountable objective obstacles of such magnitude that capitalism must inevitably fall beneath the weight of its own contradictions. The law of uneven development of capitalism, which becomes intensified in the epoch of imperialism, renders firm and durable international combinations of imperialist powers impossible. On the other hand, imperialist wars, which are developing into world wars, and through which the law of the centralisation of capitalism strives to reach its world limit—a single world trust—are accompanied by so much destruction and place such burdens upon the shoulders of the working class and of the millions of colonial proletarians and peasants, that capitalism must inevitably perish beneath the blows of the proletarian revolution long before this goal is reached.

Being the highest phase of capitalist development, imperialism, expanding the productive forces of world economy to enormous dimensions and re-fashioning the whole world after its own image, draws within the orbit of finance capitalist exploitation all colonies, all races and all nations. At the same time, however, the monopolist form of capital develops increasingly the elements of parasitical degeneration, decay and decline within capitalism. In destroying, to some extent, the driving force of competition, by conducting a policy of cartel prices, and by having undivided mastery of the market, monopoly capital reveals a tendency to retard the further development of the forces of production. In squeezing enormous sums of surplus profit out of the millions of colonial workers and peasants and in accumulating colossal incomes from this exploitation, imperialism is creating a type of decaying and parasitically degenerate rentier-class, as well as whole strata of parasites who live by clipping coupons. In completing the process of creating the material prerequisites for socialism (the concentration of means of production, the enormous socialisation of labour, the growth of labour organisations), the epoch of imperialism intensifies the antagonisms among the "Great Powers" and gives rise to wars which cause the break-up of its single world economy. Imperialism is therefore capitalism moribund and decaying. It is the final stage of development of the capitalist system. It is the threshold of world social revolution.

Hence, international proletarian revolution logically emerges out of the conditions of development of capitalism generally, and out of its imperialist phase in particular. The capitalist system as a whole is approaching its final collapse. The dictatorship of finance capital is perishing to give way to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## II. THE GENERAL CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND THE FIRST PHASE OF WORLD REVOLUTION

1. *The World War and the Progress of the Revolutionary Crisis*

The imperialist struggle among the largest capitalist States for the redistribution of the globe led to the first imperialist world war (1914-18). This war shook the whole system of world capitalism and marked the beginning of an epoch of general crisis. The war bent to its service the entire national economies of the belligerent countries, thus creating the mailed fist of State capitalism. It increased unproductive expenditures to enormous dimensions, destroyed enormous quantities of the means of production and human labour power, ruined large masses of the population and imposed incalculable burdens upon the industrial workers, the peasants and the colonial peoples. It inevitably led to the intensification of the class struggle, which grew into open, revolutionary mass action and civil war. The imperialist front was broken at its weakest link, in Tsarist Russia. The February revolution of 1917 overthrew the domination of the autocracy of the big land-owning class. The October revolution overthrew the rule of the bourgeoisie. This victorious proletarian revolution expropriated the expropriators, took the means of production from the landlords and the capitalists, and for the first time in human history set up and consolidated the dictatorship of the proletariat in an enormous country. It brought into being a new, Soviet type of State and laid the foundations for the international proletarian revolution.

The powerful shock to which the whole of world capitalism was subjected, the sharpening of the class struggle and the direct influence of the October proletarian revolution gave rise to a series of revolutions and revolutionary actions on the Continent of Europe as well as in the colonial and semi-colonial countries : January, 1918, the proletarian



revolution in Finland ; August, 1918, the so-called "rice riots" in Japan ; November, 1918, the revolutions in Austria and Germany, which overthrew the semi-feudal monarchist régime ; March, 1919, the proletarian revolution in Hungary and the uprising in Korea ; April, 1919, the Soviet Government in Bavaria ; January, 1920, the bourgeois-national revolution in Turkey ; September, 1920, the seizure of the factories by the workers in Italy ; March, 1921, the rising of the advanced workers of Germany ; September, 1923, the uprising in Bulgaria ; Autumn, 1923, the revolutionary crisis in Germany ; December, 1924, the uprising in Esthonia ; April, 1925, the uprising in Morocco ; August, 1925, uprising in Syria ; May, 1926, the general strike in England ; July, 1927, the proletarian uprising in Vienna. These events, as well as events like the uprising in Indonesia, the deep ferment in India, and the great Chinese revolution, which shook the whole Asiatic continent, are links in one and the same international revolutionary chain, constituent parts of the profound general crisis of capitalism. This international revolutionary process embraced the immediate struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as well as national wars of liberation and colonial uprisings against imperialism, which go together with the agrarian mass-movement of millions of peasants. Thus, an enormous mass of humanity was swept into the revolutionary torrent: World history entered a new phase of development—a phase of prolonged general crisis of the capitalist system. In this process, the unity of world economy found expression in the international character of the revolution, while the uneven development of its separate parts was expressed in the different times of the outbreak of revolution in the different countries.

The first attempts at revolutionary overthrow, which sprang from the acute crisis of capitalism (1918-21) ended in the victory and consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. and in the defeat of the proletariat in a number of other countries. These defeats

were primarily due to the treacherous tactics of the social-democratic and reformist trade union leaders, but they were also due to the fact that the majority of the working class had not yet accepted the lead of the Communists and that in a number of important countries Communist Parties had not yet been established at all. As a result of these defeats, which created the opportunity for intensifying the exploitation of the mass of the proletariat and the colonial peoples, and for severely depressing their standard of living, the bourgeoisie was able to achieve a partial stabilisation of capitalist relations.

## 2. *The Revolutionary Crisis and Counter-Revolutionary Social-Democracy*

During the progress of the international revolution, the leading cadres of the social-democratic parties and of the reformist trade unions on the one hand, and the militant capitalist organisations of the Fascist type on the other, acquired special significance as a powerful counter-revolutionary force actively fighting against the revolution and actively supporting the partial stabilisation of capitalism.

The war crisis of 1914-18 was accompanied by the disgraceful collapse of the social-democratic Second International. Acting in complete violation of the thesis of *The Communist Manifesto* written by Marx-Engels, that the proletariat has no fatherland under capitalism and in complete violation of the anti-war resolutions passed by the Stuttgart and Basle Congresses, the leaders of the social-democratic parties in the various countries, with a few exceptions, voted for the war credits, came out definitely in defence of the imperialist "fatherland" (i.e., the State organisations of the imperialist bourgeoisie) and instead of combating the imperialist war, became its loyal soldiers, bards and propagandists (social-patriotism, which grew into social-imperialism). In the subsequent period, social-

democracy supported the predatory treaties (Brest-Litovsk, Versailles) ; it actively aligned itself with the militarists in the bloody suppression of proletarian uprisings (Noske) ; it conducted armed warfare against the first proletarian republic (Soviet Russia) ; it despicably betrayed the victorious proletariat (Hungary) ; it joined the imperialist League of Nations (Albert Thomas, Paul Boncour, Vandervelde) ; it openly supported the imperialist slave-owners against the colonial slaves (the British Labour Party) ; it actively supported the most reactionary executioners of the working class (Bulgaria, Poland) ; it took upon itself the initiative in securing the passage of imperialist " military laws " (France) ; it betrayed the general strike of the British proletariat ; it helped and is still helping to strangle China and India (the MacDonald Government) ; it acts as the propagandist for the imperialist League of Nations ; it is capital's herald and organiser in its struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. (Kautsky, Hilferding).

In its systematic conduct of this counter-revolutionary policy, social-democracy operates on two flanks. The right wing of social-democracy, avowedly counter-revolutionary, is essential for negotiating and maintaining direct contact with the bourgeoisie ; the left wing is essential for the subtle deception of the workers. While playing with pacifist and at times even with revolutionary phrases, " left " social-democracy in practice acts against the workers, particularly in acute and critical situations (the British I.L.P. and the " left " leaders of the General Council during the general strike in 1926 ; Otto Bauer and Co., at the time of the Vienna uprising), and is therefore the most dangerous faction in the social-democratic parties. While serving the interests of the bourgeoisie in the working class and being wholly in favour of class co-operation and coalition with the bourgeoisie, social-democracy, at certain periods, is compelled to play the part of an opposition party and even to pretend that it is defending the class interests of the

proletariat in its industrial struggle. It tries thereby to win the confidence of a section of the working class and to be in a position more shamefully to betray the lasting interests of the working class, particularly in the midst of decisive class battles.

The principal function of social democracy at the present time is to disrupt the essential militant unity of the proletariat in its struggle against imperialism. In splitting and disrupting the united front of the proletarian struggle against capital, social democracy serves as the mainstay of imperialism in the working class. International social democracy of all shades ; the Second International and its trade union branch, the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, have thus become the last reserve of bourgeois society and its most reliable pillar of support.

### 3. *The Crisis of Capitalism and Fascism*

Side by side with social democracy, with whose aid the bourgeoisie suppresses the workers or lulls their class vigilance, stands Fascism.

The epoch of imperialism, the sharpening of the class struggle and the growth of the elements of civil war—particularly after the imperialist war—led to the bankruptcy of parliamentarism. Hence, the adoption of “new” methods and forms of administration (for example, the system of inner cabinets, the formation of oligarchical groups, acting behind the scenes, the deterioration and falsification of the function of “popular representation,” the restriction and annulment of “democratic liberties,” etc.). Under certain special historical conditions, the progress of this bourgeois, imperialist, reactionary offensive assumes the form of Fascism. These conditions are : instability of capitalist relationships ; the existence of considerable declassed social elements, the pauperisation of broad strata of the urban petty-bourgeoisie and of the intelligentsia ; discontent among the rural petty-bourgeoisie

and, finally, the constant menace of mass proletarian action. In order to stabilise and perpetuate its rule, the bourgeoisie is compelled to an increasing degree to abandon the parliamentary system in favour of the Fascist system, which is independent of inter-party arrangements and combinations. The Fascist system is a system of direct dictatorship, ideologically marked by the "national idea" and by representation of the "professions" (in reality, representation of the various groups of the ruling class). It is a system that resorts to a peculiar form of social demagoguery (anti-semitism, occasional sorties against usurers' capital and gestures of impatience with the parliamentary "talking shop") in order to utilise the discontent of the petty bourgeois, the intellectuals and other strata of society, and to corruption—the creation of a compact and well paid hierarchy of Fascist units, a party apparatus and a bureaucracy. At the same time, Fascism strives to permeate the working class by recruiting the most backward strata of workers to its ranks—by playing upon their discontent, by taking advantage of the inaction of social-democracy, etc. The principal aim of Fascism is to destroy the revolutionary labour vanguard, i.e., the Communist Sections and leading units of the proletariat. The combination of social-demagoguery, corruption and active white terror, in conjunction with extreme imperialist aggression in the sphere of foreign politics, are the characteristic features of Fascism. In periods of acute crisis for the bourgeoisie, Fascism resorts to anti-capitalist phraseology, but, after it has established itself at the helm of State, it casts aside its anti-capitalist prattle and discloses itself as a terrorist dictatorship of big capital.

The bourgeoisie resorts either to the method of Fascism or to the method of coalition with social-democracy according to the changes in the political situation; while social-democracy itself, often plays a Fascist rôle in periods when the situation is critical for capitalism.

In the process of development social-democracy reveals

Fascist tendencies which, however, do not prevent it, in other political situations, from acting as a sort of *Fronde* against the bourgeois government in the capacity of an opposition party. The Fascist method and the method of coalition with social-democracy are not the methods usually employed in "normal capitalist conditions"; they are the symptoms of the general capitalist crisis, and are employed by the bourgeoisie in order to stem the advance of the revolution.

#### 4. *The Contradictions of Capitalist Stabilisation and the Inevitability of the Revolutionary Collapse of Capitalism*

Experience throughout the post-war historical period has shown that the stabilisation achieved by the repression of the working class and the systematic depression of its standard of living can be only a partial, transient and decaying stabilisation.

The spasmodic and feverish development of technique, bordering in some countries on a new technical revolution, the accelerated process of concentration and centralisation of capital, the formation of giant trusts and of "national" and "international" monopolies, the merging of trusts with the State power and the growth of world capitalist economy cannot, however, eliminate the general crisis of the capitalist system. The break-up of world economy into a capitalist and a socialist sector, the shrinking of markets and the anti-imperialist movement in the colonies intensify all the contradictions of capitalism, which is developing on a new, post-war basis. This very technical progress and rationalisation of industry, the reverse side of which is the closing down and liquidation of numerous enterprises, the restriction of production, and the ruthless and destructive exploitation of labour power, leads to chronic unemployment on a scale never before experienced. The absolute deterioration of the conditions of the working class becomes

a fact even in certain highly developed capitalist countries. The growing competition between imperialist countries, the constant menace of war and the growing intensity of class conflicts prepare the ground for a new and higher stage of development of the general crisis of capitalism and of the world proletarian revolution.

As a result of the first round of imperialist wars (the world war of 1914-18) and of the October victory of the working class in the former Russian Tsarist Empire, world economy has been split into two fundamentally hostile camps : the camp of the imperialist States and the camp of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. The difference in structure and in the class character of the government in the two camps, the fundamental differences in the aims each pursues in internal, foreign, economic and cultural policy, the fundamentally different courses of their development, brings the capitalist world into sharp conflict with the victorious proletarian State. Within the framework of a formerly uniform world economy two antagonistic systems are now contesting against each other : the system of capitalism and the system of socialism. The class struggle, which hitherto was conducted in circumstances when the proletariat was not in possession of State power, is now being conducted on an enormous and really world scale ; the working class of the world has now its own State—the one and only fatherland of the international proletariat. The existence of the Soviet Union and the influence it exercises upon the toiling and oppressed masses all over the world is in itself a most striking expression of the profound crisis of the world capitalist system and of the expansion and intensification of the class struggle to a degree hitherto without parallel in history.

The capitalist world, powerless to eliminate its inherent contradictions, strives to establish international associations (the League of Nations) the main purpose of which is to retard the irresistible growth of the revolutionary crisis and to strangle the Soviet Proletarian Republics by war or

blockade. At the same time, all the forces of the revolutionary proletariat and of the oppressed colonial masses are rallying around the U.S.S.R. The world coalition of *Capital*, unstable, internally corroded, but armed to the teeth, is confronted by a single world coalition of *Labour*. Thus, as a result of the first round of imperialist wars a new, fundamental antagonism has arisen of world historical scope and significance; the antagonism between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world.

Meanwhile, the inherent antagonisms within the capitalist sector of world economy itself have become intensified. The shifting of the economic centre of the world to the United States of America and the fact that the "Dollar Republic" has become a world exploiter have caused the relations between United States and European capitalism, particularly British capitalism, to become strained. The conflict between Great Britain—the most powerful of the old, conservative imperialist States and the United States—the greatest of the young imperialist States, which has already won world hegemony for itself—is becoming the pivot of the world conflicts among the finance capitalist States. Germany, though plundered by the Versailles Peace, is now economically recovered; she is resuming the path of imperialist politics, and once again she stands out as a serious competitor on the world market. The Pacific is becoming involved in a tangle of contradictions which centre mainly around the antagonism between America and Japan. Simultaneously, the antagonism of interests among the unstable and constantly changing groupings of powers is increasing, while the minor powers serve as auxiliary instruments in the hands of the imperialist giants and their coalitions.

The growth of the productive capacity of the industrial apparatus of world capitalism, at a time when the European home markets have shrunk as a result of the war, of the Soviet Union's dropping out of the system of purely capitalist intercourse, and of the close monopoly of the



most important sources of raw material and fuel, leads to ever-widening conflicts between the capitalist States. The "peaceful" struggle for oil, rubber, cotton, coal and metals and for a redistribution of markets and spheres for the export of capital is inexorably leading to *another world war*, the destructiveness of which will increase proportionately to the progress achieved in the furiously developing technique of war.

Simultaneously, the antagonisms between the *imperialist home countries and the semi-colonial countries are growing*. The relative weakening of European imperialism as a result of the war, of the development of capitalism in the colonies, of the influence of the Soviet revolution and the centrifugal tendencies revealed in the premier maritime and colonial Empire—Great Britain (Canada, Australia, South Africa)—has helped to stimulate the movement of rebellion in the colonies and semi-colonies. The great Chinese revolution, which roused hundreds of millions of the Chinese people to action, caused an enormous breach in the imperialist system. The unceasing revolutionary ferment among hundreds of millions of Indian workers and peasants is threatening to break the domination of the world citadel of imperialism, Great Britain. The growth of tendencies directed against the powerful imperialism of the United States in the Latin-American countries threatens to undermine the expansion of North American capital. Thus, the revolutionary process in the colonies, which is drawing into the struggle against imperialism the overwhelming majority of the world's population that is subjected to the rule of the finance capitalist oligarchy of a few "Great Powers" of imperialism, also expresses the profound general crisis of capitalism. Even in Europe itself, where imperialism has put a number of small nations under its heel, the national question is a factor that intensifies the inherent contradictions of capitalism.

Finally, the revolutionary crisis is inexorably maturing in the very centres of imperialism: the capitalist offensive

against the working class, the attack upon the workers' standard of living, upon their organisations and their political rights, with the growth of white terror, rouses increasing resistance on the part of the broad masses of the proletariat and intensifies the class struggle between the working class and trustified capital. The great battles fought between Labour and Capital, the accelerated swing to the left of the masses, the growth in the influence and authority of the Communist Parties ; the enormous growth of sympathy among the broad masses of workers for the land of the proletarian dictatorship—all this is a clear symptom of the rise of a new tide in the centres of imperialism.

Thus, the system of world imperialism, and with it the partial stabilisation of capitalism, is being corroded from various causes : First, the antagonisms and conflicts between the imperialist States ; second, the rise of the struggle of vast masses in the colonial countries ; third, the action of the revolutionary proletariat in the imperialist home countries ; and, lastly, the leadership exercised over the whole world revolutionary movement by the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. The international revolution is developing.

Against this revolution, imperialism is gathering its forces. Expeditions against the colonies, a new world war, a campaign against the U.S.S.R., are matters which now figure prominently in the politics of imperialism. This must lead to the release of all the forces of international revolution and to the inevitable doom of capitalism.

### III. THE ULTIMATE AIM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL—WORLD COMMUNISM

The ultimate aim of the Communist International is to replace world capitalist economy by a world system of Communism. Communist society, the basis for which has been prepared by the whole course of historical development, is mankind's only way out, for it alone can abolish the

contradictions of the capitalist system which threaten to degrade and destroy the human race.

Communist society will abolish the class division of society, i.e., simultaneously with the abolition of anarchy in production, it will abolish all forms of exploitation and oppression of man by man. Society will no longer consist of antagonistic classes in conflict with each other, but will present a united commonwealth of labour. For the first time in its history mankind will take its fate into its own hands. Instead of destroying innumerable human lives and incalculable wealth in struggles between classes and nations, mankind will devote all its energy to the struggle against the forces of nature, to the development and strengthening of its own collective might.

After abolishing private ownership of the means of production and converting these means into social property, the world system of Communism will replace the elemental forces of the world market, competitive and blind processes of social production, by consciously organised and planned production for the purpose of satisfying rapidly growing social needs. With the abolition of competition and anarchy in production, devastating crises and still more devastating wars will disappear. Instead of colossal waste of productive forces and spasmodic development of society there will be a planned utilisation of all material resources and a painless economic development on the basis of unrestricted, smooth and rapid development of productive forces.

The abolition of private property and the disappearance of classes will do away with the exploitation of man by man. Work will cease to be toiling for the benefit of a class enemy : instead of being merely a means of livelihood it will become a necessity of life : want and economic inequality, the misery of enslaved classes, and a wretched standard of life generally will disappear ; the hierarchy created in the division of labour system will be abolished together with the antagonism between mental and manual labour ; and the last vestige of the social inequality of the sexes will be

removed. At the same time, the organs of class domination, and the State in the first place, will disappear also. The State, being the embodiment of class domination, will die out in so far as classes die out, and with it all measures of coercion will expire.

With the disappearance of classes the monopoly of education in every form will be abolished. Culture will become the acquirement of all and the class ideologies of the past will give place to scientific materialist philosophy. Under such circumstances, the domination of man over man, in any form, becomes impossible, and a great field will be opened for the social selection and the harmonious development of all the talents inherent in humanity.

In Communist society no social restrictions will be imposed upon the growth of the forces of production. Private ownership in the means of production, the selfish lust for profits, the artificial retention of the masses in a state of ignorance, poverty—which retards technical progress in capitalist society—and unproductive expenditures will have no place in a Communist society. The most expedient utilisation of the forces of nature and of the natural conditions of production in the various parts of the world, the removal of the antagonism between town and country, that under capitalism results from the low technical level of agriculture and its systematic lagging behind industry ; the closest possible co-operation between science and technique, the utmost encouragement of research work and the practical application of its results on the widest possible social scale ; planned organisation of scientific work ; the application of the most perfect methods of statistical accounting and planned regulation of economy ; the rapid growth of social needs, which is the most powerful internal driving force of the whole system—all these will secure the maximum productivity of social labour, which in turn will release human energy for the powerful development of science and art.

The development of the productive forces of world

Communist society will make it possible to raise the well-being of the whole of humanity and to reduce to a minimum the time devoted to material production and, consequently, will enable culture to flourish as never before in history. This new culture of a humanity that is united for the first time in history, and has abolished all State boundaries, will, unlike capitalist culture, be based upon clear and transparent human relationships. Hence, it will bury for ever all mysticism, religion, prejudice and superstition, and will give a powerful impetus to the development of all-conquering, scientific knowledge.

This higher stage of Communism—the stage in which Communist society will have developed on its own foundation, in which an enormous growth of social productive forces has accompanied the manifold development of man, in which humanity has already inscribed on its banner : “From each according to his abilities to each according to his needs !”—presupposes, as an historical condition precedent, a lower stage of development, the stage of socialism. At this lower stage, Communist society only just emerges from capitalist society and bears all the economic, ethical and intellectual birthmarks it has inherited from the society from whose womb it is just emerging. The productive forces of socialism are not yet sufficiently developed to assure a distribution of the products of labour according to needs : these are distributed according to the amount of labour expended. Division of labour, i.e., the system whereby certain groups perform certain labour functions, and especially the distinction between mental and manual labour, still exists. Although classes are abolished, traces of the old class division of society and, consequently, remnants of the proletarian State power, coercion, laws, still exist. Consequently, certain traces of inequality, which have not yet managed to die out altogether, still remain. The antagonism between town and country has not yet been entirely removed. But none of these survivals of former society is protected or defended by any social force. Being

the product of a definite level of development of productive forces, they will disappear as rapidly as mankind, freed from the fetters of the capitalist system, subjugates the forces of nature, re-educates itself in the spirit of Communism, and passes from socialism to complete Communism.

#### IV. THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION FROM CAPITALISM TO SOCIALISM AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

##### 1. *The Transition Period and the Conquest of Power by the Proletariat*

Between capitalist society and Communist society a period of revolutionary transformation intervenes, during which the one changes into the other. Correspondingly, there is also an intervening period of political transition, in which the essential State form is the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. The transition from the world dictatorship of imperialism to the world dictatorship of the proletariat extends over a long period of proletarian struggles with defeats as well as victories ; a period of continuous general crisis in capitalist relationships and growth of social revolutions, i.e., of proletarian civil wars against the bourgeoisie ; a period of national wars and colonial rebellions which, although not in themselves revolutionary proletarian socialist movements, are nevertheless, objectively, in so far as they undermine the domination of imperialism, constituent parts of the world proletarian revolution ; a period in which capitalist and socialist economic and social systems exist side by side in "peaceful" relationships as well as in armed conflict ; a period of formation of a Union of Soviet Republics ; a period of wars of imperialist States against Soviet States ; a period in which the ties between the Soviet States and colonial peoples become more and more closely established, etc.

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. This unevenness is still more pronounced and acute in the epoch of imperialism. Hence, it follows that the international proletarian revolution cannot be conceived as a single event occurring simultaneously all over the world. At first socialism may be victorious in a few, or even in one single capitalist country. Every such proletarian victory, however, broadens the basis of the world revolution and consequently, still further intensifies the general crisis of capitalism. Thus, the capitalist system as a whole reaches the point of its final collapse ; the dictatorship of finance capital perishes and gives place to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Bourgeois revolutions brought about the political liberation of a system of productive relationships which had already established itself and become economically dominant by transferring political power from the hands of one class of exploiters to the hands of another. Proletarian revolution, however, signifies the forcible invasion of the proletariat into the domain of property relationships of bourgeois society, the expropriation of the expropriating classes, and the transference of power to a class that aims at the radical reconstruction of the economic foundations of society and the abolition of all exploitation of man by man. The political domination of the feudal barons all over the world was broken in a series of separate bourgeois revolutions that extended over a period of centuries. The international proletarian revolution, however, although it will not be a single simultaneous act, but one extending over a whole epoch, nevertheless—thanks to the closer ties that now exist between the countries of the world—will accomplish its mission in a much shorter period of time. Only after the proletariat has achieved victory and consolidated its power all over the world will a prolonged period of the intensive construction of socialist world economy set in.

The conquest of power by the proletariat is a necessary condition precedent to the growth of socialist forms of

economy and to the cultural growth of the proletariat, which changes its own nature, perfects itself for the leadership of society in all spheres of life, and draws into this process of transformation all other classes ; this preparing the ground for the abolition of classes altogether.

In the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and later for the transformation of the social system, as against the alliance of capitalists and landlords, an alliance of workers and peasants is formed, under the intellectual and political leadership of the former, an alliance which serves as the basis for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The characteristic features of this transition period as a whole are the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, the organisation of socialist construction, the mass training of men and women in the spirit of socialism and the gradual disappearance of classes. Only to the extent that these great historical tasks are fulfilled will society of the transition period become transformed into Communist society.

Thus, the dictatorship of the world proletariat is an essential and vital condition precedent to the transformation of world capitalist economy into socialist economy. This world dictatorship can be established only when the victory of socialism has been achieved in certain countries or groups of countries, when the newly established proletarian republics enter into a federal union with the already existing proletarian republics, when the number of such federations has grown and extended also to the colonies which have emancipated themselves from the yoke of imperialism, and when these federations of republics have grown finally into a World Union of Soviet Socialist Republics uniting the whole of mankind under the hegemony of the international proletariat organised as a State.

The conquest of power by the proletariat does not mean peacefully "capturing" the ready-made bourgeois State machinery by means of a parliamentary majority. The bourgeoisie resorts to every means of violence and terror



to safeguard and strengthen its predatory property and its political domination. Like the feudal nobility of the past, the bourgeoisie cannot abandon its historical position to the new class without a desperate and frantic struggle. Hence, the violence of the bourgeoisie can be suppressed only by the stern violence of the proletariat. The conquest of power by the proletariat is the violent overthrow of bourgeois power, the destruction of the capitalist State apparatus (bourgeois armies, police, bureaucratic hierarchy, the judiciary, parliaments, etc.), and the substitution in its place of new organs of proletarian power, to serve primarily as instruments for the suppression of the exploiters.

## 2. *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and its Soviet Form*

As has been shown by the experience of the October revolution of 1917 and by the Hungarian revolution, which immeasurably enlarged the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871, the most suitable form of proletarian State is the Soviet State—a new type of State, which differs in principle from the bourgeois State, not only in its class content, but also in its internal structure. This is precisely the type of State which, emerging as it does directly out of the broadest possible mass movement of the toilers, secures the maximum of mass activity and is, consequently, the surest guarantee of final victory.

The Soviet form of State, being the highest form of democracy, namely, proletarian-democracy, is the very opposite of bourgeois-democracy, which is bourgeois-dictatorship in a masked form. The Soviet State is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of a single class—the proletariat. Unlike bourgeois democracy, proletarian-democracy openly admits its class character and aims avowedly at the suppression of the exploiters in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population. It deprives its class enemies of political rights and, under special historical conditions, may grant the proletariat a number

of temporary advantages over the diffused petty bourgeois peasantry in order to strengthen its rôle of leader. While disarming and suppressing its class enemies, the proletarian State at the same time regards this deprivation of political rights and partial restriction of liberty as temporary measures in the struggle against the attempts on the part of the exploiters to defend or restore their privileges. It inscribes on its banner the motto : the proletariat holds power not for the purpose of perpetuating it, not for the purpose of protecting narrow craft and professional interests, but for the purpose of uniting the backward and scattered rural proletariat, the semi-proletariat and the toiling peasants still more closely with the more progressive strata of the workers, for the purpose of gradually and systematically overcoming class divisions altogether. Being an all-embracing form of the unity and organisation of the masses under the leadership of the proletariat, the Soviets, in actual fact, draw the broad masses of the proletariat, the peasants and all toilers into the struggle for socialism, into the work of building up socialism, and into the practical administration of the State. In the whole of their work they rely upon the working-class organisations and practise the principles of broad democracy among the toilers to an extent far greater and immeasurably more close to the masses than does any other form of government. The right of electing and recalling delegates, the combination of the executive with the legislative power, the electoral system based on a productive and not on a residential qualification (election by workshops, factories, etc.)—all this secures for the working class and for the broad masses of the toilers who march under its leadership, systematic, continuous and active participation in all public affairs—economic, social, political, military and cultural—and marks the sharp difference that exists between the bourgeois-parliamentary republic and the Soviet dictatorship of the proletariat.

Bourgeois-democracy, with its formal equality of all citizens before the law, is in reality based on a glaring

material and economic inequality of classes. By leaving inviolable, defending and strengthening the monopoly of the capitalist and landlord classes in the vital means of production, bourgeois-democracy, as far as the exploited classes (especially the proletariat) is concerned, converts this formal equality before the law and these democratic rights and liberties—which in practice are curtailed systematically, into a juridical fiction and, consequently, into a means for deceiving and enslaving the masses. Being the expression of the political domination of the bourgeoisie, so-called democracy is therefore capitalist-democracy. By depriving the exploiting classes of the means of production, by placing the monopoly of these means of production in the hands of the proletariat as the dominant class in society, the Soviet State, first and foremost, guarantees to the working class and to the toilers generally the material conditions for the exercise of these rights by providing them with premises, public buildings, printing plants, travelling facilities, etc.

In the domain of general political rights the Soviet State, while depriving the exploiters and the enemies of the people of political rights, completely abolishes for the first time all inequalities of citizenship, which under systems of exploitation are based on distinctions of sex, religion and nationality; in this sphere it establishes an equality that is not to be found in any bourgeois country. In this respect also, the dictatorship of the proletariat steadily lays down the material basis upon which this equality may be truly exercised by introducing measures for the emancipation of women, the industrialisation of former colonies, etc.

Soviet-democracy, therefore, is proletarian-democracy, democracy of the toiling masses, democracy directed against the exploiters.

The Soviet State completely disarms the bourgeoisie and concentrates all arms in the hands of the proletariat; it is the armed proletarian State. The armed forces under the Soviet State are organised on a class basis, which corresponds to the general structure of the proletarian

dictatorship, and guarantees the rôle of leadership to the industrial proletariat. This organisation, while maintaining revolutionary discipline, ensures to the warriors of the Red Army and Navy close and constant contacts with the masses of the toilers, participation in the administration of the country and in the work of building up socialism.

### *3. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Expropriation of the Expropriators*

The victorious proletariat utilises the conquest of power as a lever of economic revolution, i.e., the revolutionary transformation of the property relations of capitalism into relationships of the socialist mode of production. The starting point of this great economic revolution is the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists, i.e., the conversion of the monopolist property of the bourgeoisie into the property of the proletarian State.

In this sphere the Communist International advances the following fundamental tasks of the proletarian dictatorship :

#### *(A) Industry, Transport and Communication Services*

(a) The confiscation and proletarian nationalisation of all large private capitalist undertakings (factories, works, mines and electric power stations), and the transference of all State and municipal enterprises to the Soviets.

(b) The confiscation and proletarian nationalisation of private capitalist railway, waterway, automobile and air transport services (commercial and passenger air fleet) and the transference of all State and municipal transport services to the Soviets.

(c) The confiscation and proletarian nationalisation of private capitalist communication services (telegraph, telephones and radio) and the transference of State and municipal communication services to the Soviets.

(d) The organisation of workers' management of industry. The establishment of State organs for the management of

industry with provision for the close participation of the trade unions in this work of management. Appropriate functions to be guaranteed for the factory and works councils.

(e) Industrial activity to be directed towards the satisfaction of the needs of the broad masses of the toilers. The reorganisation of the branches of industry that formerly served the needs of the ruling class (luxury trades, etc.). The strengthening of the branches of industry that will facilitate the development of agriculture, with the object of strengthening the ties between industry and peasant economy, of facilitating the development of State farms, and of accelerating the rate of development of national economy as a whole.

#### (B) *Agriculture*

(a) The confiscation and proletarian nationalisation of all large landed estates in town and country (private, church, monastery and other lands) and the transference of State and municipal landed property including forests, minerals, lakes, rivers, etc., to the Soviets with subsequent nationalisation of the whole of the land.

(b) The confiscation of all property utilised in production belonging to large landed estates, such as : buildings, machinery, etc., cattle, enterprises for the manufacture of agricultural products (large flour mills, cheese plants, dairy farms, fruit and vegetable drying plants, etc.).

(c) The transfer of large estates, particularly model estates and those of considerable economic importance to the management of the organs of the proletarian dictatorship and of the Soviet farm organisations.

(d) Part of the land confiscated from the landlords and others—particularly where the land was cultivated by the peasants on a tenant basis and served as a means of holding the peasantry in economic bondage—to be transferred to the use of the peasantry (to the poor and partly also to the

middle strata of the peasantry). The amount of land to be so transferred to be determined by economic expediency as well as by the degree of necessity to neutralise the peasantry and to win them over to the side of the proletariat ; this amount must necessarily vary according to the different circumstances.

(e) Prohibition of buying and selling of land, as a means of preserving the land for the peasantry and preventing its passing into the hands of capitalists, land speculators, etc. Offenders against this law to be severely prosecuted.

(f) To combat usury. All transactions entailing terms of bondage to be annulled. All debts of the exploited strata of the peasantry to be annulled. The poorest stratum of the peasantry to be relieved from taxation, etc.

(g) Comprehensive State measures for developing the productive forces of agriculture ; the development of rural electrification ; the manufacture of tractors ; the production of artificial fertilisers ; the production of pure quality seeds and raising throughbred stock on Soviet farms ; the extensive organisation of agricultural credits for land reclamation, etc.

(h) Financial and other support for agricultural co-operation and for all forms of collective production in the rural districts (co-operative societies, communes, etc.). Systematic propaganda in favour of peasant co-operation (selling, credit and supply co-operative societies) to be based on the mass activity of the peasants themselves ; propaganda in favour of the transition to large-scale agricultural production which—owing to the undoubted technical and economic advantages of large-scale production—provide the greatest immediate economic gain and also a method of transition to socialism most accessible to the broad masses of the toiling peasants.

#### (c) *Trade and Credit*

(a) The proletarian nationalisation of private banks (the entire gold reserve, all securities, deposits, etc., to be

transferred to the proletarian State) ; the proletarian State to take over State, municipal, etc., banks.

(b) The centralisation of banking ; all nationalised big banks to be subordinated to the central State bank.

(c) The nationalisation of wholesale trade and large retail trading enterprises (warehouses, elevators, stores, stocks of goods, etc.), and their transfer to the organs of the Soviet State.

(d) Every encouragement to be given to consumers' co-operatives as representing an integral part of the distributing apparatus, while preserving uniformity in their system of work and securing the active participation of the masses themselves in their work.

(e) The monopoly of foreign trade.

(f) The repudiation of State debts to foreign and home capitalists.

(d) *Conditions of Life, Labour, etc.*

(a) Reduction of the working day to seven hours, and to six hours in industries particularly harmful to the health of the workers. Further reduction of the working day and transition to a five-day week in countries with developed productive forces. The regulation of the working day to correspond to the increase of the productivity of labour.

(b) Prohibition, as a rule, of night work and employment in harmful trades for all females. Prohibition of child labour. Prohibition of overtime.

(c) Special reduction of the working day for the youth (a maximum six-hour day for young persons up to 18 years of age). Socialist reorganisation of the labour of young persons so as to combine employment in industry with general and political education.

(d) Social insurance in all forms (sickness, old age, accident, unemployment, etc.), at State expense (and at the expense of the owners of private enterprises where they still exist), insurance affairs to be managed by the insured themselves.

(e) Comprehensive measures of hygiene ; the organisation of free medical service. To combat social diseases (alcoholism, venereal diseases, tuberculosis).

(f) Complete equality between men and women before the law and in social life : a radical reform of marriage and family laws ; recognition of maternity as a social function ; protection of mothers and infants. Initiation of social care and upbringing of infants and children (crèches, kindergarten, children's homes, etc.). The establishment of institutions that will gradually relieve the burden of house drudgery (public kitchens and laundries), and systematic cultural struggle against the ideology and traditions of female bondage.

#### (E) *Housing*

(a) The confiscation of big house property.

(b) The transfer of confiscated houses to the administration of the local Soviets.

(c) Workers to be removed to bourgeois residential districts.

(d) Palaces and large private and public buildings to be placed at the disposal of labour organisations.

(e) The carrying out of an extensive programme of house construction.

#### (F) *National and Colonial Questions*

(a) The recognition of the right of all nations, irrespective of race, to complete self-determination, that is, self-determination inclusive of the right to State separation.

(b) The voluntary unification and centralisation of the military and economic forces of all nations liberated from capitalism for the purpose of fighting against imperialism and for building up socialist economy.

(c) Wide and determined struggle against the imposition of any kind of limitation and restriction upon any nationality, nation or race. Complete equality for all nations and races.



(d) The Soviet State to guarantee and support with all the resources at its command the national cultures of nations liberated from capitalism, at the same time to carry out a consistent proletarian policy directed towards the development of the content of such cultures.

(e) Every assistance to be rendered to the economic, political and cultural growth of the formerly oppressed "territories," "dominions" and "colonies," with the object of transferring them to socialist lines, so that a durable basis may be laid for complete national equality.

(f) To combat all remnants of chauvinism, national hatred, race prejudices and other ideological products of feudal and capitalist barbarism.

#### (g) *Means of Ideological Influence*

(a) The nationalisation of printing plants.

(b) The monopoly of newspapers and book-publishing.

(c) The nationalisation of big cinema enterprises, theatres, etc.

(d) The utilisation of the nationalised means of "intellectual production" for the most extensive political and general education of the toilers and for the building up of a new socialist culture on a proletarian class basis.

#### 4. *The Basis for the Economic Policy of the Proletarian Dictatorship*

In carrying out all these tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the following postulates must be borne in mind :

(1) The complete abolition of private property in land, and the nationalisation of the land, cannot be brought about immediately in the more developed capitalist countries, where the principle of private property is deep-rooted among a broad strata of the peasantry. In such countries, the nationalisation of all land can only be brought about

gradually, by means of a series of transitional measures.

(2) Nationalisation of production should not, as a rule, be applied to small and middle-sized enterprises (peasants, small artisans, handicrafts, small and medium shops, small manufacturers, etc.). Firstly, because the proletariat must draw a strict distinction between the property of the small commodity producer working for himself, who can and must be gradually brought into the groove of socialist construction, and the property of the capitalist exploiter, the liquidation of which is an essential condition precedent for socialist construction.

Secondly, because the proletariat, after seizing power, may not have sufficient organising forces at its disposal, particularly in the first phases of the dictatorship, for the purpose of destroying capitalism and at the same time to organise with the smaller and medium individual units of production on a socialist basis. These small individual enterprises (primarily peasant enterprises) will be drawn into the general socialist organisation of production and distribution only gradually, with the powerful and systematic aid which the proletarian State will render to organise them in all the various forms of collective enterprises. Any attempt to break up their economic system violently and to complete them to adopt collective methods by force will only lead to harmful results.

(3) Owing to the prevalence of a large number of small units of production (primarily peasant farms, farmers' enterprises, small artisans, small shopkeepers, etc.) in colonies, semi-colonies and economically backward countries, where the petty-bourgeois masses represent the overwhelming majority of the population, and even in centres of capitalist world industry (the United States of America, Germany, and to some degree also England), it is necessary, in the first stage of development, to preserve to some extent market forms of economic contacts, the money system, etc. The variety of prevailing economic forms (ranging from socialist large-scale industry to small

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peasant and artisan enterprises), which unavoidably come into conflict with each other; the variety of classes and class groups corresponding to this variety of economic forms, each having different stimuli for economic activity and conflicting class interests; and finally, the prevalence in all spheres of economic life, of habits and traditions inherited from bourgeois society, which cannot be removed all at once—all this demands that the proletariat, in exercising its economic leadership, shall properly combine, on the basis of market relationships, large-scale socialist industry with the small enterprises of the simple commodity producers, i.e., it must combine them in such a way as to guarantee the leading rôle to socialist industry and at the same time bring about the greatest possible development of the mass of peasant enterprises. Hence, the greater the importance of scattered, small peasant labour in the general economy of the country, the greater will be the volume of market relations, the smaller will be the significance of directly planned management, and the greater will be the degree to which the general economic plan will depend upon forecasts of uncontrollable economic relations. On the other hand, the smaller the importance of small production, the greater will be the proportion of socialised labour, the more powerful will be the concentrated and socialised means of production, the smaller will be the volume of market relations, the greater will be the importance of planned management as compared with unco-ordinated management and the more considerable and universal will be the application of planned management in the sphere of production and distribution.

Provided the proletarian dictatorship carries out a correct class policy, i.e., provided proper account is taken of class-relationships, the technical and economic superiority of large-scale socialised production, the centralisation of all the most important economic key positions (industry, transport, large-scale agriculture enterprises, banks, etc.) in the hands of the proletarian State, planned management of

industry, and the power wielded by the State apparatus as a whole (the budget, taxes, administrative legislation and legislation generally), render it possible continuously and systematically to dislodge private capital and the new outcrops of capitalism which, in the period of more or less free commercial and market relations, will emerge in town and country with the development of simple commodity production (big farmers, kulaks). At the same time by organising peasant farming on co-operative lines, and as a result of the growth of collective forms of economy, the great bulk of the peasant enterprises will be systematically drawn into the main channel of developing socialism. The outwardly capitalist forms and methods of economic activity that are bound up with market relations (money form of accounting, payment for labour in money, buying and selling, credit and banks, etc.), serve as levers for the socialist transformation, in so far as they to an increasing degree serve the consistently socialist type of enterprises, i.e., the socialist section of economy.

Thus, provided the State carries out a correct policy, market relations under the proletarian dictatorship destroy themselves in the process of their own development by helping to dislodge private capital, by changing the character of peasant economy—what time the means of production become more and more centralised and concentrated in the hands of the proletarian State—they help to destroy market relations altogether.

In the probable event of capitalist military intervention, and of prolonged counter-revolutionary wars against the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessity will arise for a war-Communist economic policy ("War Communism"), which is nothing more nor less than the organisation of rational consumption for the purpose of military defence, accompanied by a system of intensified pressure upon the capitalist groups (confiscation, requisitions, etc.), with the more or less complete liquidation of freedom of trade and market relations and a sharp disturbance of the individualist,

economic stimuli of the small producers, which results in a diminution of the productive forces of the country. This policy of "War-Communism," while it undermines the material basis of the strata of the population in the country that are hostile to the working class, secures a rational distribution of the available supplies and facilitates the military struggle of the proletarian dictatorship—which is the historical justification of this policy—nevertheless, cannot be regarded as the "normal" economic policy of the proletarian dictatorship.

### *5. Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Classes*

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a continuation of the class struggle under new conditions. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a stubborn fight—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, pedagogical and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society, against external capitalist enemies, against the remnants of the exploiting classes within the country, against the upshoots of the new bourgeoisie that spring up on the basis of still prevailing commodity production.

After the civil war has been brought to an end the stubborn class struggle continues in new forms ; primarily in the form of a struggle between the survivals of previous economic systems and fresh upshoots of them on the one hand, and socialist forms of economy on the other. The forms of the struggle undergo a change at various stages of socialist development, and in the first stages the struggle, under certain conditions, may be extremely severe.

In the initial stage of the proletarian dictatorship, the policy of the proletariat towards other classes and social groups within the country is determined by the following postulates :

(1) The big bourgeoisie and the landowners, a section of the officer corps, the higher command of the forces, and the higher bureaucracy—who remain loyal to the bourgeoisie

and the landlords—are consistent enemies of the working class against whom ruthless war must be waged. The organising skill of a certain section of these strata may be utilised, but, as a rule, only after the dictatorship has been consolidated and all conspiracies and rebellions of exploiters have been decisively crushed.

(2) In regard to the technical intelligentsia, which was brought up in the spirit of bourgeois traditions and the higher ranks of which were closely linked up with the commanding apparatus of capital—the proletariat, while ruthlessly suppressing every counter-revolutionary action on the part of hostile sections of the intelligentsia, must at the same time give consideration to the necessity of utilising this skilled social force for the work of socialist construction; it must give every encouragement to the groups that are neutral, and especially to those that are friendly towards the proletarian revolution. In widening the economic, technical and cultural perspectives of socialist construction to its utmost social limits, the proletariat must systematically win over the technical intelligentsia to its side, subject it to its ideological influence and secure its close co-operation in the work of social reconstruction.

(3) In regard to the peasantry, the task of the Communist Parties, is, while placing its reliance in the agricultural proletariat, to win over all the exploited and toiling strata of the countryside. The victorious proletariat must draw strict distinctions between the various groups among the peasantry, weigh their relative importance, and render every support to the propertyless and semi-proletarian sections of the peasantry by transferring to them a part of the land taken from the big landowners and by helping them in their struggle against usurer's capital, etc. Moreover, the proletariat must neutralise the middle strata of the peasantry and mercilessly suppress the slightest opposition on the part of the village bourgeoisie who ally themselves with the landowners. As its dictatorship becomes consolidated and socialist construction develops, the proletariat must proceed from the

policy of neutralisation to a policy of durable alliance with the masses of middle peasantry, but must not adopt the viewpoint of sharing power in any form. The dictatorship of the proletariat implies that the industrial workers alone are capable of leading the entire mass of the toilers. On the other hand, while representing the rule of a single class, the dictatorship of the proletariat at the same time represents a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, as the vanguard of the toilers, and the numerous non-proletarian sections of the toiling masses, or the majority of them. It represents an alliance for the complete overthrow of capital, for the complete suppression of the opposition of the bourgeoisie and its attempts at restoration, an alliance aiming at the complete building up and consolidation of socialism.

(4) The petty urban bourgeoisie, which continuously wavers between extreme reaction and sympathy for the proletariat, must likewise be neutralised and, as far as possible, won over to the side of the proletariat. This can be achieved by leaving to them their small property and permitting a certain measure of free trade, by releasing them from the bondage of usurious credit and by the proletariat helping them in all sorts of ways in the struggle against all and every form of capitalist oppression.

#### *6. Mass Organisations in the System of Proletarian Dictatorship*

In the process of fulfilling these tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, a radical change takes place in the tasks and functions of the mass organisations, particularly of the Labour organisations. Under capitalism, the mass labour organisations, in which the broad masses of the proletariat were originally organised and trained, i.e., the trade (industrial) unions, serve as the principal weapons in the struggle against trustified capital and its State. Under the proletarian dictatorship, they become transformed into the

principal lever of the State ; they become transformed into a school of Communism by means of which vast masses of the proletariat are drawn into the work of socialist management of production ; they are transformed into organisations directly connected with all parts of the State apparatus, influencing all branches of its work, safeguarding the permanent and day-to-day interests of the working class and fighting against bureaucracy in the departments of the State. Thus, in so far as they promote from their ranks leaders in the work of construction, draw into this work of construction broad sections of the proletariat and aim at combating bureaucracy, which inevitably arises as a result of the operation of class influences alien to the proletariat and of the inadequate cultural development of the masses, the trade unions become the backbone of the proletarian economic and State organisation as a whole.

Notwithstanding reformist Utopias, working-class co-operative organisations under capitalism are doomed to play a very minor rôle and in the general environment of the capitalist system not infrequently degenerate into mere appendages of capitalism. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, these organisations can and must become the most important units of the distributing apparatus.

Lastly, peasant agricultural co-operative organisations (selling, purchasing, credit and producing), under proper management, and provided a systematic struggle is carried on against the capitalist elements, and that really broad masses of the toilers who follow the lead of the proletariat take a really active part in their work, can and must become one of the principal organisational means for linking up town and country. To the extent that they were able to maintain their existence at all under capitalism, co-operative peasant enterprises inevitably became transformed into capitalist enterprises, for they were dependent upon capitalist industry, capitalist banks and upon capitalist economic environment. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, such



enterprises develop amidst a different system of relationships, depend upon proletarian industry, proletarian banks, etc. Thus, provided the proletariat carries out a proper policy, provided the class struggle is systematically conducted against the capitalist elements outside as well as inside the co-operative organisations, and provided socialist industry exercises its guidance over it, agricultural co-operation will become one of the principal levers for the socialist transformation and collectivisation of the countryside. All this, however, does not exclude the possibility that in certain countries the consumers' societies, and particularly the agricultural co-operative societies led by the bourgeoisie and their social-democratic agents, will at first be hotbeds of counter-revolutionary activity and sabotage against the work of economic construction of the workers' revolution.

In the course of this militant and constructive work, carried on through the medium of these multifarious proletarian organisations—which should serve as effective levers of the Soviet State and the link between it and the masses of all strata of the working class—the proletariat secures unity of will and action, and exercises this unity through the medium of the Communist Party, which plays the leading rôle in the system of the proletarian dictatorship.

The Party of the proletariat relies directly on the trade unions and other organisations that embrace the masses of the workers, and through these relies on the peasantry (Soviets, co-operative societies, Young Communist League, etc.) ; by means of these levers it guides the whole Soviet system. The proletariat can fulfil its rôle as organiser of the new society only if the Soviet Government is loyally supported by all the mass organisations ; only if class unity is maintained, and only under the guidance of the Party.

7. *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Cultural Revolution*

The rôle of organiser of the new human society presupposes that the proletariat itself will become culturally mature, that it will transform its own nature, that it will continually promote from its ranks increasing numbers of men and women capable of mastering science, technique and administration in order to build up socialism and a new socialist culture.

Bourgeois revolution against feudalism presupposes that a new class has arisen in the midst of feudal society that is culturally more advanced than the ruling class, and is already the dominant factor in economic life. The proletarian revolution, however, develops under other conditions. Being economically exploited, politically oppressed and culturally downtrodden under capitalism, the working class transforms its own nature only in the course of the transition period, only after it has conquered State power, only by destroying the bourgeois monopoly of education and mastering all the sciences, and only after it has gained experience in the great work of construction. The mass awakening of Communist consciousness, the cause of socialism itself, calls for a mass change of human nature, which can be achieved only in the course of the practical movement, in revolution. Hence revolution is not only necessary because there is no other way of overthrowing the ruling class, but also because only in the process of revolution is the overthrowing class able to purge itself of the dross of the old society and become capable of creating a new society.

In destroying the capitalist monopoly of the means of production, the working class must also destroy the capitalist monopoly of education, that is, it must take possession of all the schools, from the elementary schools to the universities. It is particularly important for the proletariat to train members of the working class as experts in the sphere of production (engineers, technicians, organisers, etc.), as well

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as in the sphere of military affairs, science, art, etc. Parallel with this work stands the task of raising the general cultural level of the proletarian masses, of improving their political education, of raising their general standard of knowledge and technical skill, of training them in the methods of public work and administration, and of combating the survivals of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois prejudices, etc.

Only to the extent that the proletariat promotes from its own ranks a body of men and women capable of occupying the key positions of socialist construction, only to the extent that this body grows and draws increasing numbers of the working class into the process of revolutionary cultural transformation and gradually obliterates the line that divides the proletariat into an "advanced" and a "backward" section will the guarantees be created for successful socialist construction and against bureaucratic decay and class degeneracy.

However, in the process of revolution the proletariat not only changes its own nature, but also the nature of other classes, primarily the numerous petty-bourgeois strata in town and country and especially the toiling sections of the peasantry. By drawing the wide masses into the process of cultural revolution and socialist construction, by uniting and communistically educating them with all the means at its disposal, by strongly combating all anti-proletarian and narrow craft ideologies, and by persistently and systematically overcoming the general and cultural backwardness of the rural districts, the working class, on the basis of the developing collective forms of economy, prepares the way for the complete removal of class divisions in society.

One of the most important tasks of the cultural revolution affecting the wide masses is the task of systematically and unswervingly combating religion—the opium of the people. The proletarian government must withdraw all State support from the Church, which is the agency of the former ruling class; it must prevent all church interference in State-organised educational affairs, and ruthlessly suppress

the counter-revolutionary activity of the ecclesiastical organisations. At the same time, the proletarian State, while granting liberty of worship and abolishing the privileged position of the formerly dominant religion, carries on anti-religious propaganda with all the means at its command and reconstructs the whole of its educational work, on the basis of scientific materialism.

*8. The Struggle for the World Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Principal Types of Revolution*

The international proletarian revolution represents a combination of processes which vary in time and character ; purely proletarian revolutions ; revolutions of a bourgeois-democratic type which grow into proletarian revolutions ; wars for national liberation ; colonial revolutions. The world dictatorship of the proletariat comes only as the final result of the revolutionary process.

The uneven development of capitalism, which became more accentuated in the period of imperialism, has given rise to a variety of types of capitalism, to different stages of ripeness of capitalism in different countries, and to a variety of specific conditions of the revolutionary process. These circumstances make it historically inevitable that the proletariat will come to power by a multiplicity of ways and degrees of rapidity ; that a number of countries must pass through certain transition stages leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat and must adopt varied forms of socialist construction.

The variety of conditions and ways by which the proletariat will achieve its dictatorship in the various countries may be divided schematically into three main types.

Countries of highly-developed capitalism (United States of America, Germany, Great Britain, etc.), having powerful productive forces, highly centralised production, with small-scale production reduced to relative insignificance, and a long established bourgeois-democratic political system. In

such countries the fundamental political demand of the programme is direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the economic sphere, the most characteristic demands are : expropriation of the whole of the large-scale industry ; organisation of a large number of State Soviet farms and, in contrast to this, a relatively small portion of the land to be transferred to the peasantry ; unregulated market relations to be given comparatively small scope ; rapid rate of socialist development generally, and of collectivisation of peasant farming in particular.

Countries with a medium development of capitalism (Spain, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, the Balkan countries, etc.), having numerous survivals of semi-feudal relationships in agriculture, possessing, to a certain extent, the material prerequisites for socialist construction, and in which the bourgeois-democratic reforms have not yet been completed. In some of these countries a process of more or less rapid development from bourgeois-democratic revolution to socialist revolution is possible. In others, there may be types of proletarian revolution which will have a large number of bourgeois-democratic tasks to fulfil. Hence, in these countries, the dictatorship of the proletariat may not come about at once, but in the process of transition from the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat. Where the revolution develops directly as a proletarian revolution it is presumed that the proletariat exercises leadership over a broad agrarian peasant movement. In general, the agrarian revolution plays a most important part in these countries, and in some cases a decisive rôle : in the process of expropriating large landed property a considerable portion of the confiscated land is placed at the disposal of the peasantry ; the volume of market relations prevailing after the victory of the proletariat is considerable ; the task of organising the peasantry along co-operative lines and, later, of combining them in production occupies an important place among the tasks of

socialist construction. The rate of this construction is relatively slow.

Colonial and semi-colonial countries (China, India, etc.) dependent countries (Argentina, Brazil, etc.), have the rudiments of and in some cases a considerably developed industry—in the majority of cases inadequate for independent socialist construction—with feudal mediæval relationships, or “Asiatic mode of production” relationships prevailing in their economies and in their political superstructures. In these the principal industrial, commercial and banking enterprises, the principal means of transport, the large landed estates (*latifundia*), plantations, etc., are concentrated in the hands of foreign imperialist groups. The principal task in such countries is, on the one hand, to fight against the feudal and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation, and to develop systematically the peasant agrarian revolution; on the other hand, to fight against foreign imperialism for national independence. As a rule, transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in these countries will be possible only through a series of preparatory stages, as the outcome of a whole period of transformation of bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, while in the majority of cases, successful socialist construction will be possible only if direct support is obtained from the countries in which the proletarian dictatorship is established.

In still more backward countries (as in some parts of Africa) where there are no wage workers or very few, where the majority of the population still lives in tribal conditions, where survivals of primitive tribal forms still exist, where the national bourgeoisie is almost non-existent, where the primary rôle of foreign imperialism is that of military occupation and usurpation of land, the central task is to fight for national independence. Victorious national uprisings in these countries may open the way for their direct development towards socialism and their avoidance of the stage of capitalism, provided real and powerful assistance is

rendered them by the countries in which the proletarian dictatorship is established.

Thus, in the epoch in which the proletariat in the most developed capitalist countries is confronted with the immediate task of capturing power—that in which the dictatorship of the proletariat already established in the U.S.S.R. is a factor of world significance—the movement for liberation in colonial and semi-colonial countries, which was brought into being by the penetration of world capitalism, may lead to social development—notwithstanding the immaturity of social relationships in these countries taken by themselves—provided they receive the assistance and support of the proletarian dictatorship and of the international proletarian movement generally.

#### *9. Struggle for the World Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Colonial Revolution*

The special conditions of the revolutionary struggle prevailing in colonial and semi-colonial countries, the inevitably long period of struggle required for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry and for the transformation of this dictatorship into the dictatorship of the proletariat, and, finally, the decisive importance of the national aspects of the struggle, impose upon the Communist Parties of these countries a number of special tasks, which are preparatory stages to the general tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist International considers the following to be the most important of these special tasks :

- (1) To overthrow the rule of foreign imperialism, of the feudal rulers and of the landlord bureaucracy.
- (2) To establish the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry on a Soviet basis.
- (3) Complete national independence and national unification.
- (4) Annulment of State debts.

(5) Nationalisation of large-scale enterprises (industrial, transport, banking and others) owned by the imperialists.

(6) The confiscation of landlord, church and monastery lands. The nationalisation of all the land.

(7) Introduction of the 8-hour day.

(8) The organisation of revolutionary workers' and peasants' armies.

In the colonies and semi-colonies where the proletariat is the leader of and commands hegemony in the struggle, the consistent bourgeois-democratic revolution will grow into proletarian revolution in proportion as the struggle develops and becomes more intense (sabotage by the bourgeoisie, confiscation of the enterprises belonging to the sabotaging section of the bourgeoisie, which inevitably extends to the nationalisation of the whole of large-scale industry). In the colonies where there is no proletariat, the overthrow of the domination of the imperialists implies the establishment of the rule of people's (peasant) Soviets, the confiscation and transfer to the State of foreign enterprises and lands.

Colonial revolutions and movements for national liberation play an extremely important part in the struggle against imperialism, and in the struggle for the conquest of power by the working class. Colonies and semi-colonies are also important in the transition period because they represent the *world rural district* in relation to the industrial countries, which represent the *world city*. Consequently the problem of organising socialist world economy, of properly combining industry with agriculture is, to a large extent, the problem of the relation towards the former colonies of imperialism. Hence the establishment of a fraternal, militant alliance with the masses of the toilers in the colonies represents one of the principal tasks the world industrial proletariat must fulfil as leader in the struggle against imperialism.

Thus, in rousing the workers in the home countries for the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the progress



of the world revolution also rouses hundreds of millions of colonial workers and peasants for the struggle against foreign imperialism. In view of the existence of centres of socialism represented by Soviet Republics of growing economic power, the colonies which break away from imperialism economically gravitate towards and gradually combine with the industrial centres of world socialism, are drawn into the current of socialist construction, and by skipping the further stage of development of capitalism, as a dominating system, obtain opportunities for rapid economic and cultural progress. The Peasants' Soviets in the backward ex-colonies and the Workers' and Peasants' Soviets in the more developed ex-colonies group themselves politically around the centres of proletarian dictatorship, join the growing Federation of Soviet Republics, and thus enter the general system of the world proletarian dictatorship.

Socialism, as the new method of production, thus obtains world-wide scope of development.

#### V. THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE U.S.S.R., AND THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL REVOLUTION

##### 1. *The Building Up of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the Class Struggle*

The principal manifestation of the profound crisis of the capitalist system is the division of world economy into capitalist countries on the one hand, and countries building up socialism on the other. Therefore, the internal consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R., the success achieved in the work of socialist construction, the growth of the influence and authority of the U.S.S.R. among the masses of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the colonies, signify the continuation, intensification and expansion of the international social revolution.

Possessing in the country the necessary and sufficient

material prerequisites not only for the overthrow of the landlord and the bourgeoisie, but also for the establishment of complete socialism, the workers of the Soviet Republic, with the aid of the international proletariat, heroically repelled the attacks of the armed forces of the internal and foreign counter-revolution, consolidated their alliance with the bulk of the peasantry and achieved considerable success in the sphere of socialist construction.

The contacts established between proletarian socialist industry and small peasant economy, which stimulates the growth of the productive forces of agriculture, and at the same time assures a leading rôle to socialist industry ; the linking up of industry with agriculture in place of capitalist production for the satisfaction of the unproductive consumption of parasitic classes that was the system formerly ; production, not for capitalist profit, but for the satisfaction of the growing needs of the masses of the consumers ; the growth of the needs of the masses, which in the final analysis greatly stimulates the entire productive process ; and, finally, the close concentration of the economic key positions under the command of the proletarian State, the growth of planned management and the more economic and expedient distribution of the means of production that goes with it—all this enables the proletariat to make rapid progress along the road of socialist construction.

In raising the level of the productive forces of the whole economy of the country, and in steering a straight course for the industrialisation of the U.S.S.R.—the rapidity of which is dictated by the international and internal situation—the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., notwithstanding the systematic attempts on the part of the capitalist Powers to organise an economic and financial boycott against the Soviet Republics, at the same time increases the relative share of the socialised (socialist) section of national economy in the total means of production in the country, in the total output of industry and in the total trade turnover.

Thus, with the land nationalised, by means of the levers

of State trade and rapidly growing co-operation, and with the increasing industrialisation of the country, State socialist industry, transport and banking are more and more guiding the activities of the small and very small peasant enterprises.

In the sphere of agriculture especially the level of the forces of production is being raised amidst conditions that restrict the process of differentiation among the peasantry (nationalisation of the land, and consequently the prohibition of the sale and purchase of land ; sharply graded progressive taxation ; the financing of poor and middle class peasants' co-operative societies and producers' organisations ; laws regulating the hiring of labour ; depriving the kulaks of certain political and public rights ; organising the rural poor in separate organisations, etc.). However, in so far as the productive forces of socialist industry have not yet grown sufficiently to enable a broad, new technical base to be laid for agriculture, and consequently to render possible the immediate and rapid unification of peasant enterprises into large public enterprises (collective farms), the kulak class tends to grow and establish, first economic and then political contacts with the elements of the so-called "new bourgeoisie."

Being in command of the principal economic key positions in the country, and systematically squeezing out the remnants of urban and private capital, which has greatly dwindled in the last few years of the "New Economic Policy"—restricting in every way the exploiting strata in the rural districts that arise out of the development of commodity and money relationships ; supporting existing Soviet farms in the rural districts and establishing new ones ; drawing the bulk of the peasant simple commodity producers, through the medium of rapidly growing co-operative organisations, into the general system of Soviet economic organisation, and consequently into the work of socialist construction, which, in the conditions prevailing under the proletarian dictatorship, and with the economic

leadership of socialist industry, is identical with the development of socialism ; passing from the process of restoration to the process of expanded reproduction of the entire productive and technical base of the country—the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. sets itself, and is already beginning, to fulfil the task of large-scale capital construction (production of means of production generally, development of heavy industry, and especially of electrification), and developing still further selling, buying and credit co-operation, sets itself the task of organising the peasantry in producing co-operatives on a mass scale and on a collectivist basis, which calls for the powerful material assistance of the proletarian State.

Thus, being already a decisive economic force determining, in the main, the entire economic development of the U.S.S.R., socialism by that very fact makes still further strides in its development and systematically overcomes the difficulties that arise from the petty-bourgeois character of the country and the periods of temporarily acute class antagonism.

The task of re-equipping industry and the need for large investments in capital construction unavoidably give rise to serious difficulties in the path of socialist development which, in the last analysis, are to be attributed to the technical and economic backwardness of the country and to the ruin caused in the years of the imperialist and civil wars. Notwithstanding this, however, the standard of living of the working class and of the broad masses of the toilers is steadily rising and, simultaneously with the socialist rationalisation and scientific organisation of industry, the seven-hour day is gradually being introduced, which opens up still wider prospects for the improvement of the conditions of life and labour of the working class.

Standing on the basis of the economic growth of the U.S.S.R. and on the steady increase in the relative importance of the socialist section of industry ; never for a moment halting in the struggle against the kulaks ; relying

upon the rural poor and maintaining a firm alliance with the bulk of the middle peasantry, the working class, united and led by the Communist Party, which has been hardened in revolutionary battles, draws increasing masses, scores of millions of toilers into the work of socialist construction. The principal means employed towards this aim are : the development of broad mass organisations (the Party, as the guiding force ; the trade unions, as the backbone of the entire system of the proletarian dictatorship ; the Young Communist League ; co-operative societies of all types ; working women's and peasant women's organisations ; the various so-called "voluntary societies" ; worker and peasant correspondents' societies ; sport, scientific, cultural and educational organisations) ; full encouragement of the initiative of the masses and the promotion of fresh strata of workers to high posts in all spheres of industry and administration. The steady attraction of the masses into the process of socialist construction, the constant renovation of the entire State, economic, trade union and Party apparatus with men and women fresh from the ranks of the proletariat, the systematic training in the higher educational establishments and at special courses of workers generally and young workers in particular as new socialist experts in all branches of construction—all these together serve as one of the principal guarantees against the bureaucratic ossification or social degeneration of the stratum of the proletariat directly engaged in administration.

## *2. The Significance of the U.S.S.R. and its World Revolutionary Duties*

Having defeated Russian imperialism and liberated all the former colonies and oppressed nations of the Tsarist Empire, and systematically laid a firm foundation for their cultural and political development by industrialising their territories ; having guaranteed the juridical position of the Autonomous Territories, Autonomous Republics and

Allied Republics in the Constitution of the Union and having granted in full the right of nations to self-determination—the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., by this guarantees, not only formal, but also real equality for the different nationalities in the Union.

Being the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of socialist construction, the land of great working-class achievements, of the union of the workers with the peasants and of a new culture marching under the banner of Marxism, the U.S.S.R. inevitably becomes the base of the world movement of all oppressed classes, the centre of international revolution, the greatest factor in world history. In the U.S.S.R., the world proletariat for the first time acquires a country that is really its own, and for the colonial movements the U.S.S.R. becomes a powerful centre of attraction.

Thus the U.S.S.R. is an extremely important factor in the general crisis of capitalism, not only because it has dropped out of the world capitalist system and has created a basis for a new socialist system of production, but also because it plays an exceptionally great revolutionary rôle generally ; it is the international driving force of proletarian revolution that impels the proletariat of all countries to seize power ; it is the living example proving that the working class is not only capable of destroying capitalism, but of building up socialism as well ; it is the prototype of the fraternity of nationalities in all lands united in the World Union of Socialist Republics and of the economic unity of the toilers of all countries in a single world socialist economic system that the world proletariat must establish when it has captured political power.

The simultaneous existence of two economic systems ; the socialist system in the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist system in other countries, imposes on the Proletarian State the task of warding off the blows showered upon it by the capitalist world (boycott, blockade, etc.), and also compels it to resort to economic manœuvring and the utilisation of economic

contacts with capitalist countries (with the aid of the monopoly of foreign trade—which is one of the fundamental conditions for the successful building up of socialism, and also with the aid of credits, loans, concessions, etc.). The principal and fundamental line to be followed in this connection must be the line of establishing the widest possible contact with foreign countries—within limits determined by their usefulness to the U.S.S.R., i.e., primarily for strengthening industry in the U.S.S.R., for laying the base for its own heavy industry and electrification, and finally, for the development of its socialist engineering industry. Only to the extent that the economic independence of the U.S.S.R. in the capitalist environment is secured can solid guarantees be obtained against the danger that socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. may be destroyed and that the U.S.S.R. may be transformed into an appendage of the world capitalist system.

On the other hand, notwithstanding their interest in the markets of the U.S.S.R., the capitalist States continually vacillate between their commercial interests and their fear of the growth of the U.S.S.R., which means the growth of international revolution. However, the principal and fundamental tendency in the policy of imperialist Powers is to encircle the U.S.S.R. and conduct counter-revolutionary war against it in order to strangle it and to establish a world bourgeois terrorist régime.

### 3. *The Duties of the International Proletariat to the U.S.S.R.*

The systematic imperialist attempts politically to encircle the U.S.S.R., and the growing danger of an armed attack upon her, do not, however, prevent the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—a section of the Communist International and the leader of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R.—from fulfilling its international obligations and from rendering support to all the oppressed, to the

Labour movements in capitalist countries, to colonial movements against imperialism and to the struggle against national oppression in every form.

In view of the fact that the U.S.S.R. is the only fatherland of the international proletariat, the principal bulwark of its achievements and the most important factor for its international emancipation, the international proletariat must on its part facilitate the success of the work of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., and defend it against the attacks of the capitalist Powers by all the means in its power.

The world political situation has made the dictatorship of the proletariat an immediate issue, and all the events of world politics are inevitably concentrating around one central point, namely, the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic, which must inevitably group around itself the Soviet movements of the advanced workers of all countries on the one hand, and all the national liberation movements of the colonial and oppressed nationalities on the other.—(Lenin.)

In the colonies, and particularly the colonies of any imperialist attacking the U.S.S.R., the international proletariat must retaliate by organising bold and determined mass action and struggle for the overthrow of the imperialist governments with the slogan of : Dictatorship of the proletariat and alliance with the U.S.S.R.

In the colonies, and particularly the colonies of the imperialist country attacking the U.S.S.R., every effort must be made to take advantage of the diversion of the imperialist military forces to develop an anti-imperialist struggle and to organise revolutionary action for the purpose of throwing off the yoke of imperialism and of winning complete independence.

The development of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the growth of its international influence not only rouse the hatred of the capitalist States and their social-democratic agents against it, but also inspire the toilers all over the



world with sympathy towards it, and stimulate the readiness of the oppressed classes of all countries to fight with all the means in their power for the land of the proletarian dictatorship, in the event of an imperialist attack thereupon.

Thus the development of the contradictions within modern world economy, the development of the general capitalist crisis, and the imperialist military attack upon the Soviet Union inevitably lead to a mighty revolutionary outbreak which must overwhelm capitalism in a number of the so-called civilised countries, unleash the victorious revolution in the colonies, broaden the base of the proletarian dictatorship to an enormous degree, and thus, with tremendous strides bring nearer the final world victory of socialism.

#### VI. THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

##### 1. *Ideologies among the Working Class Inimical to Communism*

In its fight against capitalism for the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolutionary Communism encounters numerous tendencies among the working class, which to a greater or less degree express the ideological subordination of the proletariat to the imperialist bourgeoisie, or reflect the ideological influence exercised upon the proletariat by the petty-bourgeoisie, which at times rebels against the shackles of finance capital, but is incapable of adopting sustained and scientifically planned strategy and tactics or of carrying on the struggle in an organised manner on the basis of the stern discipline that is characteristic of the proletariat.

The mighty social power of the imperialist State, with its auxiliary apparatus, schools, press, theatre and church—is primarily reflected in the existence of religious and reformist tendencies among the working class, which represent

the main obstacles on the road towards the proletarian social revolution.

The religious-sectarian tendency among the working class finds expression in religious-sectarian trade unions, which are frequently connected directly with corresponding bourgeois political organisations, and are affiliated to one or other of the church organisations of the dominant class (Catholic trade unions, Young Men's Christian Association, Jewish Zionist organisations, etc.) All these tendencies, being the most striking product of the ideological enslavement of certain strata of the proletariat bear, in most cases, a romantic feudal tinge. By sanctifying all the abominations of the capitalist régime with the holy water of religion, and by terrorising their flock with the spectre of punishment in the world to come, the leaders of these organisations serve as the most reactionary units of the class enemy in the camp of the proletariat.

A cynically commercial, and imperialist-secular mode of subjecting the proletariat to the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie is represented by contemporary "socialist" reformism. Taking its main gospel from the tablets of imperialist politics, its model to-day is the deliberately anti-socialist and openly counter-revolutionary "American Federation of Labour." The ideological dictatorship of the servile American trade union bureaucracy, which in its turn expresses the ideological dictatorship of the American dollar, has become, through the medium of British reformism and His Majesty's Socialists of the British Labour Party, a most important ingredient in the theory and practice of international social-democracy and of the leaders of the Amsterdam International, while the leaders of German and Austrian social-democracy embellish these theories with Marxian phraseology in order to cover up their utter betrayal of Marxism. "Socialist" reformism, the principal enemy of revolutionary Communism in the labour movement, which has a broad organisational base in the social-democratic parties and through these in the reformist trade

unions, stands out in its entire policy and theoretical outlook as a force directed against the proletarian revolution.

In the sphere of foreign politics, the social-democratic parties actively supported the imperialist war on the pretext of "defending the fatherland." Imperialist expansion and "colonial policy" received their wholehearted support. Orientation towards the counter-revolutionary "Holy Alliance" of imperialist Powers ("The League of Nations"), advocacy of ultra-imperialism, mobilisation of the masses under pseudo-pacifist slogans, and at the same time, active support of imperialism in its attacks upon the U.S.S.R. and in the impending war against the U.S.S.R.—are main features of reformist foreign policy.

In the sphere of home politics, social-democracy has set itself the task of directly co-operating with and supporting the capitalist régime. Complete support for capitalist rationalisation and stabilisation, class peace, "peace in industry"; the policy of converting the labour organisations into organisations of the employers and of the predatory imperialist State; the practice of so-called "industrial democracy" which in fact means complete subordination to trustified capital; adoration of the imperialist State and particularly of its false democratic labels; active participation in the building up of the organs of the imperialist State—police, army, gendarmerie, its class judiciary—the defence of the state against the encroachments of the revolutionary Communist proletariat; and the executioner's rôle played in time of revolutionary crisis—such is the line of social-democratic reformist home policy. While pretending to conduct the industrial struggle, reformism considers its function in this field to be to conduct that struggle in such a manner as to guard the capitalist class against any kind of shock, at all events to preserve in complete inviolability the foundations of capitalist property.

In the sphere of theory, social-democracy has utterly and completely betrayed Marxism, having traversed the road from revisionism to complete liberal bourgeois reformism

and avowed social-imperialism. It has substituted in place of the Marxian theory of the contradictions of capitalism the bourgeois theory of its harmonious development ; it has pigeon-holed the theory of crisis and of the pauperisation of the proletariat ; it has turned the flaming and menacing theory of class struggle into prosaic advocacy of class peace ; it has exchanged the theory of growing class antagonisms for the petty-bourgeois fairy-tale about the " democratisation " of capital ; in place of the theory of the inevitability of war under capitalism it has substituted the bourgeois deceit of pacifism and the lying propaganda of " ultra-imperialism " ; it has exchanged the theory of the revolutionary downfall of capitalism for the counterfeit coinage of " sound " capitalism transforming itself peacefully into socialism ; it has replaced revolution by evolution, the destruction of the bourgeois State by its active upbuilding, the theory of proletarian dictatorship by the theory of coalition with the bourgeoisie, the doctrine of international proletarian solidarity by preaching defence of the imperialist fatherland ; for Marxian dialectical materialism it has substituted the idealist philosophy and is now engaged in picking up the crumbs of religion that fall from the table of the bourgeoisie.

Within social-democratic reformism a number of tendencies stand out that are characteristic of the bourgeois degeneracy of social-democracy.

Constructive socialism (MacDonald and Co.), which by its very name suggests the struggle against the revolutionary proletariat and a favourable attitude towards the capitalist system, continues the liberal philanthropic, anti-revolutionary and bourgeois traditions of Fabianism (Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Bernard Shaw, Lord Olivier, etc.). While repudiating the dictatorship of the proletariat and the use of violence in the struggle against the bourgeoisie as a matter of principle, it favours violence in the struggle against the proletariat and the colonial peoples. While acting as the apologists of the capitalist State and preaching

State capitalism under the guise of socialism, and in conjunction with the most vulgar ideologists of imperialism in both hemispheres—declaring the theory of the class struggle to be a “pre-scientific” theory—“constructive socialism” ostensibly advocates a moderate programme of nationalisation with compensation, taxation of land values, death duties, and taxation of surplus profits as a means of abolishing capitalism. Being resolutely opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., “constructive socialism,” in complete alliance with the bourgeoisie, is an active enemy of the Communist proletarian movement and of colonial revolutions.

A special variety of “constructive socialism” is “*co-operativism*” or “*co-operative socialism*” (Charles Gide & Co.), which also strongly repudiates the class struggle and advocates the co-operative organisation of consumers as a means of overcoming capitalism, but which, in fact, does all it can to help the stabilisation of capitalism. Having at its command an extensive propagandist apparatus, in the shape of the mass consumers’ co-operative organisations, which it employs for the purpose of systematically influencing the masses, “co-operativism” carries on a fierce struggle against the revolutionary Labour movement, hampers it in the achievement of its aims, and represents to-day one of the most potent factors in the camp of the reformist counter-revolution.

So-called “*Guild socialism*” (Penty, Orage, Hobson and others) is an eclectic attempt to unite “revolutionary” syndicalism with bourgeois Liberal Fabianism, anarchist decentralisation (“national industrial guilds”) with State capitalist centralisation and mediæval guild and craft narrowness with modern capitalism. Starting out with the ostensible demand for the abolition of the “wage system” as an “immoral” institution which must be abolished by means of workers’ control of industry, guild socialism completely ignores the most important question, viz., the question of power. While striving to unite workers, intellectuals,

and technicians into a federation of national industrial "guilds," and to convert these guilds by peaceful means ("control from within") into organs for the administration of industry within the framework of the bourgeois State, guild socialism actually defends the bourgeois State, obscures its class, imperialist and anti-proletarian character, and allots to it the function of the non-class representative of the interests of the "consumers" as against the guild-organised "producers." By its advocacy of "functional democracy," i.e., representation of classes in capitalist society—each class being presumed to have a definite social and productive function—guild socialism paves the way for the Fascist "corporate State." By repudiating both parliamentarism and "direct action," the majority of the guild socialists doom the working class to inaction and passive subordination to the bourgeoisie. Thus guild socialism represents a peculiar form of trade unionist Utopian opportunism, and as such cannot but play an anti-revolutionary rôle.

Lastly, *Austro-Marxism* represents a special variety of social-democratic reformism. Being a part of the "left-wing" of social-democracy, Austro-Marxism represents a most subtle deception of the masses of the toilers. Prostituting the terminology of Maxism, while divorcing themselves entirely from the principles of revolutionary Marxism (the Kantism, Machism, etc., of the Austro-Marxists in the domain of philosophy), toying with religion, borrowing the theory of "functional democracy" from the British reformists, agreeing with the principle of "building up the republic," i.e., building up the bourgeois State, Austro-Marxism recommends "class co-operation" in periods of so-called "equilibrium of class forces," i.e., precisely at the time when the revolutionary crisis is maturing. This theory is a justification of coalition with the bourgeoisie for the overthrow of the proletarian revolution under the guise of defending "democracy" against the attacks of reaction. Objectively, and in practice, the violence which Austro-Marxism admits in cases of reactionary attacks is converted

into reactionary violence against the proletarian revolution. Hence the "functional rôle" of Austro-Marxism is to deceive the workers already marching towards Communism, and therefore it is the most dangerous enemy of the proletariat, more dangerous than the avowed adherents of predatory social imperialism.

All the above-mentioned tendencies, being constituent parts of "socialist" reformism, are agencies of the imperialist bourgeoisie within the working class itself. But Communism has to contend also against a number of petty-bourgeois tendencies, which reflect and express the vacillation of the unstable strata of society (the urban petty-bourgeoisie, the degenerate city middle class, the *lumpen-proletariat*, the declassed Bohemian intellectuals, the pauperised artisans, certain strata of the peasantry, etc.). These tendencies, which are distinguishable by their extreme political instability, often cover up a right-wing policy with left-wing phraseology, or drop into adventurism, substitute noisy political gesticulation for objective estimation of forces. They often tumble from astounding heights of revolutionary bombast to profound depths of pessimism and downright capitulation before the enemy. Under certain conditions, particularly in periods of sharp changes in the political situation and of forced temporary retreat become disrupters of the proletarian ranks and, consequently, a drag upon the revolutionary movement.

*Anarchism*, the most prominent representatives of which (Kropotkin, Jean Graves and others) treacherously went over to the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the war of 1914-18, denies the necessity for wide, centralised and disciplined proletarian organisations and thus leaves the proletariat powerless before the powerful organisations of capital. By its advocacy of individual terror, it distracts the proletariat from the methods of mass organisation and mass struggle. By repudiating the dictatorship of the proletariat in the name of "abstract" liberty, anarchism deprives the proletariat of its most important and sharpest weapon

against the bourgeoisie, its armies, and all its organs of repression. Being remote from mass movements of any kind in the most important centres of proletarian struggle, anarchism is steadily being reduced to a sect which, by its tactics and actions, including its opposition to the dictatorship of the working class in the U.S.S.R., has objectively joined the united front of the anti-revolutionary forces.

"*Revolutionary*" *syndicalism*, many ideologists of which, in the extremely critical war period, went over to the camp of the Fascist type of "anti-parliamentary" counter-revolutionaries, or became peaceful reformists of the social-democratic type, by its repudiation of political struggle (particularly of revolutionary parliamentarism) and of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, by its advocacy of craft decentralisation of the labour movement generally and of the trade union movement in particular, by its repudiation of the need for a proletarian party, and of the necessity for rebellion, and by its exaggeration of the importance of the general strike (the "fold arms tactics"), like anarchism, hinders the revolutionisation of the masses of the workers, wherever it has any influence. Its attacks upon the U.S.S.R., which logically follow from its repudiation of dictatorship of the proletariat in general, place it in this respect on a level with social-democracy.

All these tendencies take a common stand with social-democracy, the principal enemy of the proletarian revolution, on the fundamental political issue, i.e., the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence, all of them come out more or less definitely in a united front with social-democracy against the U.S.S.R. On the other hand, social-democracy, which has utterly and completely betrayed Marxism, tends to rely more and more upon the ideology of the Fabians, of the Constructive Socialists and of the Guild Socialists. These tendencies are becoming transformed into the official liberal-reformist ideology of the bourgeois "socialism" of the Second International.

In the colonial countries and among the oppressed



peoples and races generally, Communism encounters the influence of peculiar tendencies in the labour movements which played a useful rôle in a definite phase of development, but which, in the new stage of development, are becoming transformed into a reactionary force.

Sun Yat-Senism in China expressed the ideology of petty-bourgeois democratic "socialism." In the "Three Principles" (nationalism, democracy, socialism), the concept "people" obscured the concept "classes"; socialism was presented, not as a specific mode of production to be carried on by a specific class, i.e., by the proletariat, but as a vague state of social well-being, while no connection was made between the struggle against imperialism and the perspectives of the development of the class struggle. Therefore, while it played a very useful rôle in the first stage of the Chinese revolution, as a consequence of the further process of class differentiation that has taken place in the country and of the further progress of the revolution, Sun Yat-Senism has now changed from being the ideological expression of the development of that revolution into fetters of its further development. The epigones of Sun Yat-Senism, by emphasising and exaggerating the very features of this ideology that have become objectively reactionary, have made it the official ideology of the Kuomintang, which is now an openly counter-revolutionary force. The ideological growth of the masses of the Chinese proletariat and of the toiling peasantry must therefore be accompanied by determined decisive struggle against the Kuomintang deception and by opposition to the remnants of the Sun Yat-Senist ideology.

Tendencies like Ghandism in India, thoroughly imbued with religious conceptions, idealise the most backward and economically most reactionary forms of social life, see the solution of the social problem not in proletarian socialism, but in a reversion to these backward forms, preach passivity and repudiate the class struggle, and in the process of the development of the revolution become transformed into

an openly reactionary force. Ghandism is more and more becoming an ideology directed against mass revolution. It must be strongly combated by Communism.

Garveyism which formerly was the ideology of the masses, like Ghandism, has become a hindrance to the revolutionisation of the Negro masses. Originally advocating social equality for Negroes, Garveyism subsequently developed into a peculiar form of Negro "Zionism" which, instead of fighting American imperialism, advanced the slogan: "Back to Africa"! This dangerous ideology, which bears not a single genuine democratic trait, and which toys with the aristocratic attributes of a non-existent "Negro kingdom," must be strongly resisted, for it is not a help but a hindrance to the mass Negro struggle for liberation against American imperialism.

Standing out against all these tendencies is proletarian Communism. The sublime ideology of the international revolutionary working class, it differs from all these tendencies, and primarily from social-democracy, in that, in complete harmony with the teachings of Marx and Engels, it conducts a theoretical and practical revolutionary struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in the struggle, applies all forms of proletarian mass action.

## *2. The Fundamental Tasks of Communist Strategy and Tactics*

The successful struggle of the Communist International for the dictatorship of the proletariat pre-supposes the existence in every country of a compact Communist Party, hardened in the struggle, disciplined, centralised, and closely linked up with the masses.

*The Party* is the vanguard of the working class, and consists of the best, most class-conscious, most active and most courageous members of that class. It incorporates the whole body of experience of the proletarian struggle. Basing itself upon the revolutionary theory of Marxism and

representing the general and lasting interests of the whole of the working class, the Party personifies the unity of proletarian principles, of proletarian will and of proletarian revolutionary action. It is a revolutionary organisation, bound by an iron discipline and strict revolutionary rules of democratic centralism—which can be carried out owing to the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard—to its loyalty to the revolution, its ability to maintain inseparable ties with the proletarian masses and to its correct political leadership, which is constantly verified and clarified by the experiences of the masses themselves.

In order that it may fulfil its historic mission of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party must first of all set itself to accomplish the following fundamental strategic aims :

Extend its influence over the majority of the members of its own class, including working women and the working youth. To achieve this the Communist Party must secure predominant influence in the broad mass proletarian organisations (Soviets, trade unions, factory councils, co-operative societies, sport organisations, cultural organisations, etc.). It is particularly important for this purpose of winning over the majority of the proletariat, to capture the trade unions, which are genuine mass working-class organisations closely bound up with the every day struggles of the working class. To work in reactionary trade unions and skilfully to capture them, to win the confidence of the broad masses of the industrially organised workers, and to remove from their posts and replace the reformist leaders, are all important tasks in the preparatory period.

The achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat pre-supposes also that the proletariat acquires leadership of wide sections of the toiling masses. To accomplish this the Communist Party must extend its influence over the masses of the urban and rural poor, over the lower strata of the intelligentsia, and over the so-called "small man," i.e., the petty-bourgeois strata generally. It is particularly

important that work be carried on for the purpose of extending the Party's influence over the peasantry. The Communist Party must secure for itself the whole-hearted support of that stratum of the rural population that stands closest to the proletariat, i.e., the agricultural labourers and the rural poor. To this end the agricultural labourers must be organised in separate organisations ; all possible support must be given them in their struggles against the rural bourgeoisie, and strenuous work must be carried on among the small allotment farmers and small peasants. In regard to the middle strata of the peasantry in developed capitalist countries, the Communist Parties must conduct a policy to secure their neutrality. The fulfilment of all these tasks by the proletariat—the champion of the interests of the whole people and the leader of the broad masses in their struggle against the oppression of finance capital—is an essential condition precedent for the victorious Communist revolution.

The tasks of the Communist International connected with the revolutionary struggle in colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies are extremely important strategical tasks in the world proletarian struggle. The colonial struggle pre-supposes that the broad masses of the working class and of the peasantry in the colonies must be won over to the banner of the revolution ; but this cannot be achieved unless the closest co-operation is maintained between the proletariat in the oppressing countries and the toiling masses in the oppressed countries.

While organising under the banner of the proletarian dictatorship the revolution against imperialism in the so-called civilised States, the Communist International supports every movement against imperialist violence in the colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies themselves (for example, Latin-America) ; it carries on propaganda against all forms of chauvinism and against the imperialist maltreatment of enslaved peoples and races, big and small (treatment of negroes, "yellow labour," anti-semitism, etc.), and supports their struggles against the bourgeoisie of

the oppressing nations. The Communist International especially combats the chauvinism that is preached in the Empire-owning countries by the imperialist bourgeoisie, as well as by its social-democratic agency, the Second International, and constantly holds up in contrast to the practices of the imperialist bourgeoisie the practice of the Soviet Union, which has established relations of fraternity and equality among the nationalities inhabiting it.

The Communist Parties in the imperialist countries must render systematic aid to the colonial revolutionary liberation movement, and to the movement of oppressed nationalities generally. The duty of rendering active support to these movements rests primarily upon the workers in the countries upon which the oppressed nations are economically, financially or politically dependent. The Communist Parties must openly recognise the right of the colonies to separation and their right to carry on propaganda for this separation, i.e., propaganda in favour of the independence of the colonies from the imperialist State. They must recognise their right of armed defence against imperialism (i.e., the right of rebellion and revolutionary war) and advocate and give active support to this defence by all the means in their power. The Communist Parties must adopt this line of policy in regard to all oppressed nations.

The Communist Parties in the colonial and semi-colonial countries must carry on a bold and consistent struggle against foreign imperialism and unfailingly conduct propaganda in favour of friendship and unity with the proletariat in the imperialist countries. They must openly advance, conduct propaganda for, and carry out the slogan of agrarian revolution, rouse the broad masses of the peasantry for the overthrow of the landlords and combat the reactionary and mediæval influence of the priesthood, of the missionaries and other similar elements.

In these countries, the principal task is to organise the workers and the peasantry independently (to establish class Communist Parties of the proletariat, trade unions, peasant

leagues and committees and—in a revolutionary situation, Soviets, etc.), and to free them from the influence of the national bourgeoisie, with whom temporary agreements may be made only on the condition that they, the bourgeoisie, do not hamper the revolutionary organisation of the workers and peasants, and that they carry on a genuine struggle against imperialism.

In determining its line of tactics, each Communist Party must take into account the concrete internal and external situation, the correlation of class forces, the degree of stability and strength of the bourgeoisie, the degree of preparedness of the proletariat, the position taken up by the various intermediary strata, etc., in its country. The Party determines slogans and methods of struggle in accordance with these circumstances, with the view to organising and mobilising the masses on the broadest possible scale and on the highest possible level of this struggle.

When a revolutionary situation is developing, the Party advances certain transitional slogans and partial demands corresponding to the concrete situation ; but these demands and slogans must be bent to the revolutionary aim of capturing power and of overthrowing bourgeois capitalist society. The Party must neither stand aloof from the daily needs and struggles of the working class nor confine its activities exclusively to them. The task of the Party is to utilise these minor everyday needs as a starting point from which to lead the working class to the revolutionary struggle for power.

When the revolutionary tide is rising, when the ruling classes are disorganised, the masses are in a state of revolutionary ferment, the intermediary strata are inclining towards the proletariat and the masses are ready for action and for sacrifice, the Party of the proletariat is confronted with the task of leading the masses to a direct attack upon the bourgeois State. This it does by carrying on propaganda in favour of increasingly radical transitional slogans (for Soviets, workers' control of industry, for peasant

committees, for the seizure of the big landed properties, for disarming the bourgeoisie and arming the proletariat, etc.), and by organising mass action, upon which, all branches of Party agitation and propaganda, including parliamentary activity, must be concentrated. This mass action includes : strikes ; a combination of strikes and demonstrations ; a combination of strikes and armed demonstrations and finally, the general strike conjointly with armed insurrection against the State power of the bourgeoisie. The latter form of struggle, which is the supreme form, must be conducted according to the rules of war ; it pre-supposes a plan of campaign, offensive fighting operations and unbounded devotion and heroism on the part of the proletariat. An absolutely essential condition precedent for this form of action is the organisation of the broad masses into militant units, which, by their very form, embrace and set into action the largest possible numbers of toilers (Councils of Workers' Deputies, Soldiers' Councils, etc.), and intensified revolutionary work in the army and the navy.

In passing over to new and more radical slogans, the Parties must be guided by the fundamental rôle of the political tactics of Leninism, which call for ability to lead the masses to revolutionary positions in such a manner that the masses may, by their own experience, convince themselves of the correctness of the Party line. Failure to observe this rule must inevitably lead to isolation from the masses, to putschism, to the ideological degeneration of Communism into " leftist " dogmatism, and to petty-bourgeois " revolutionary " adventurism. Failure to take advantage of the culminating point in the development of the revolutionary situation, when the Party of the proletariat is called upon to conduct a bold and determined attack upon the enemy, is not less dangerous. To allow that opportunity to slip by and to fail to start rebellion at that point, means to allow the initiative to pass to the enemy and to doom the revolution to defeat.

When the revolutionary tide is not rising, the Communist Parties must advance partial slogans and demands that correspond to the everyday needs of the toilers, and combine them with the fundamental tasks of the Communist International. The Communist Parties must not, however, at such a time, advance transitional slogans that are applicable only to revolutionary situations (for example workers' control of industry, etc.). To advance such slogans when there is no revolutionary situation means to transform them into slogans that favour merging with the capitalist system of organisation. Partial demands and slogans form generally an essential part of correct tactics ; but certain transitional slogans go inseparably with a revolutionary situation. Repudiation of partial demands and transitional slogans "on principle," however, is incompatible with the tactical principles of Communism, for in effect, such repudiation condemns the Party to inaction and isolates it from the masses. United front tactics also occupy an important place in the tactics of the Communist Parties throughout the whole pre-revolutionary period as a means towards achieving success in the struggle against capital, towards the class mobilisation of the masses and the exposure and isolation of the reformist leaders.

The correct application of united front tactics and the fulfilment of the general task of winning over the masses pre-supposes in their turn systematic and persistent work in the trade unions and other mass proletarian organisations. It is the bounden duty of every Communist to belong to a trade union, even a most reactionary one, provided it is a mass organisation. Only by constant and persistent work in the trade unions and in the factories for the steadfast and energetic defence of the interests of the workers, together with ruthless struggle against the reformist bureaucracy, will it be possible to win the leadership in the workers' struggle and to win the industrially organised workers over to the side of the Party.

Unlike the reformists, whose policy is to split the trade



unions, the Communists defend trade union unity nationally and internationally on the basis of the class struggle, and render every support to, and strengthen, the work of the Red Trade Union International.

In championing universally the current everyday needs of the masses of the workers and of the toilers generally, in utilising the bourgeois parliament as a platform for revolutionary agitation and propaganda, and subordinating all partial tasks to the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Parties of the Communist International advance partial demands and slogans in the following main spheres :

In the sphere of Labour, in the narrow meaning of the term, i.e., questions concerned with the industrial struggle : the fight against the trustified capital offensive, wages questions, the working day, compulsory arbitration, unemployment ; which grow into questions of the general political struggle, big industrial conflicts, fight for the right to organise, right to strike, etc. ; in the sphere of politics proper : taxation, high cost of living, Fascism, persecution of revolutionary parties, white terror and current politics generally ; and finally in the sphere of world politics, viz., attitude towards the U.S.S.R. and colonial revolutions, struggle for the unity of the international trade union movement, struggle against imperialism and the war danger, and systematic preparation for the fight against imperialist war.

In the sphere of the peasant problem, the partial demands are those appertaining to taxation, peasant mortgage indebtedness, struggle against usurer's capital, the land hunger of the peasant small-holders, rent, the metayer (crop-sharing) system. Starting out from these partial needs, the Communist Party must sharpen the respective slogans and broaden them out into the slogans : confiscation of large estates, and workers' and peasants' government (the synonym for the proletarian dictatorship in developed capitalist countries and for a democratic dictatorship of

the proletariat and peasantry in backward countries and in certain colonies).

Systematic work must also be carried on among the proletarian and peasant youth (mainly through the Young Communist International and its Sections) and also among working women and peasant women. This work must concern itself with the special conditions of life and struggle of the working and peasant women, and their demands must be linked up with the general demands and fighting slogans of the proletariat.

In the struggle against colonial oppression, the Communist Parties in the colonies must advance partial demands that correspond to the special circumstances prevailing in each country such as : complete equality for all nations and races ; abolition of all privileges for foreigners ; the right of association for workers and peasants ; reduction of the working day ; prohibition of child labour ; prohibition of usury and of all transactions entailing bondage ; reduction and abolition of rent ; reduction of taxation ; refusal to pay taxes, etc. All these partial slogans must be subordinate to the fundamental demands of the Communist Parties such as : complete political national independence and the expulsion of the imperialists ; workers' and peasants' government, the land to the whole people, eight-hour day, etc. The Communist Parties in imperialist countries, while supporting the struggle proceeding in the colonies, must carry on a campaign in their own respective countries for the withdrawal of imperialist troops, conduct propaganda in the army and navy in defence of the oppressed countries fighting for their liberation, mobilise the masses to refuse to transport troops and munitions, and in connection with this, to organise strikes and other forms of mass protest, etc.

The Communist International must devote itself especially to systematic preparation for the struggle against the danger of imperialist wars. Ruthless exposure of social chauvinism, of social imperialism and of pacifist phrase-mongering

intended to camouflage the imperialist plans of the bourgeoisie; propaganda in favour of the principal slogans of the Communist International; everyday organisational work in connection with this in the course of which constitutional methods must unfailingly be combined with unconstitutional methods; organised work in the army and navy—such must be the activity of the Communist Parties in this connection. The fundamental slogans of the Communist International in this connection must be the following: "Convert imperialist war into civil war"; defeat the "home" imperialist government; defend the U.S.S.R. and the colonies by every possible means in the event of imperialist war against them. It is the bounden duty of all Sections of the Communist International, and of every one of its members, to carry on propaganda for these slogans, to expose the "socialistic" sophisms and the "socialistic" camouflage of the League of Nations, and constantly to keep to the front the experiences of the war of 1914-18.

In order that revolutionary work and revolutionary action may be co-ordinated and in order that these activities may be guided most successfully, the international proletariat must be bound by international class discipline, for which first of all, it is most important to have the strictest international discipline in the Communist ranks.

This international Communist discipline must find expression in the subordination of the partial and local interests of the movement to its general and lasting interests and in the strict fulfilment, by all members, of the decisions passed by the leading bodies of the Communist International.

Unlike the social-democratic Second International, each Section of which submits to the discipline of "its own," national bourgeoisie and of its own "fatherland," the Sections of the Communist International submit to only one discipline, viz., international proletarian discipline, which guarantees victory in the struggle of the world's workers for

world proletarian dictatorship. Unlike the Second International, which splits the trade unions, fights against colonial peoples, and practises unity with the bourgeoisie, the Communist International is an organisation that guards proletarian unity in all countries and the unity of the toilers of all races and all peoples in their struggle against the yoke of imperialism.

Despite the bloody terror of the bourgeoisie, the Communists fight with courage and devotion on all sectors of the international class front, in the firm conviction that the victory of the proletariat is inevitable and cannot be averted.

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their aims can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all the existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

"Working men of all countries, Unite !"

## APPENDICES

## GLOSSARY OF NAMES

*Aristotle* (384-322 B.C.). Celebrated Greek philosopher, called by Marx "the Hegel of the ancient world."

*Axelrod, P. B.* (1850-1928). Russian Menshevik leader after the Social Democratic Labour Party split in 1903.

*Babeuf, F. N.* (1764-97). A radical republican (Jacobin) in the great French Revolution, guillotined for plotting for a Communist state.

*Bakunin, M. A.* (1814-76). Famous Russian revolutionary and leader of the Anarchist wing of the First International.

*Bauer, Bruno* (1809-82). "Young Hegelian" philosopher.

*Bauer, Otto* (1882- ). Leader of Austrian Social Democracy, and prominent theoretician of the Second International.

*Bebel, Auguste* (1840-1913). One of the founders of the German Social Democratic Party. Leader of the Second International before the war.

*Berkeley, G.* (1684-1753). Famous idealist philosopher.

*Bernstein, Eduard* (1850- ). Prominent German Social Democrat, member of the Reichstag, leader of the Second International.

*Bismarck, Otto von* (1815-98). Chancellor of the German Empire. Author of the *Anti-Socialist Laws*.

*Blanc, Louis*. French Utopian Socialist and historian, who entered the French Provisional Government in 1848 as a "workers' representative."

*Blanqui, A.* (1805-81). French revolutionary Socialist who advocated "putchist" tactics as a substitute for mass action.

*Bonaparte, Louis* (1808-73). Nephew of Napoleon I. He was elected French President in 1840, and proclaimed himself Emperor in 1851 by *coup d'état*. Overthrown in 1870, after defeat in Franco-Prussian war.

*Buchanan, G. W.* (1854-1924). British Ambassador to Russia, 1910-18.

*Büchner, L.* (1824-99). German doctor, materialist writer.

*Caussidière* (1808-61). French revolutionary.

*Chernov, Victor* (1876- ). Leader of the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party. Opponent of the Bolsheviks.

*Chkheidze, N. S.* (1864-1926). Menshevik leader from the Caucasus.

- Dan, F. J.* (1871- ). Menshevik leader.
- Danton, G.* (1759-94). A Jacobin leader in the great French Revolution.
- Darwin, Charles* (1809-1882). English naturalist, famous for his development of the theory of Evolution.
- David, E.* (1863- ). German Social Democrat opportunist.
- Denikin.* Tsarist general ; in 1918-19 commanded the counter-revolutionary forces in South Russia.
- Descartes* (1596-1650). French philosopher, whose work contains elements of both materialism and idealism.
- Desmoulins, Camille* (1760-94). A Jacobin leader in the great French Revolution.
- Diderot* (1713-84). French materialist philosopher.
- Dietzgen, Joseph* (1828-88). German socialist and self-educated philosopher. A tanner by trade.
- Favre, Jules.* French Foreign Minister, in the Thiers Government, February 1871.
- Feuerbach, Ludwig* (1804-72). " Young Hegelian " philosopher who turned to materialism, influencing Marx and Engels.
- Fichte, J. G.* (1762-1814). German idealist philosopher.
- Fourier C.* (1772-1837). French Utopian Socialist.
- Gapon, G.* (died 1906). A priest who organised the mass demonstration on " Bloody Sunday " which precipitated the 1905 Revolution.
- Goethe, W.* (1749-1832). German classical writer.
- Golay, Paul.* French Socialist. During the war edited a socialist paper in Lausanne.
- Gompers, S.* (1850-1924). Reactionary president of the American Federation of Labour.
- Gorter, H.* (1864-1927). Dutch left-wing Socialist, later Communist.
- Guchkov, A. I.* (1862- ). Rich Moscow capitalist. Minister of War in the First Provisional Government, 1917.
- Guizot* (1787-1874). French Conservative. Representative of the Finance aristocracy.
- Habakkuk.* Hebrew prophet.
- Haeckel, Ernst* (1834-1919). German biologist.
- Hegel, G. W. F.* (1770-1831). German philosopher who developed the dialectical theory as an idealist.
- Hilferding, Rudolph* (1877- ). Leading theoretician of German Social-Democracy. Attempted to reconcile Marxism with opportunism.
- Hobbes, T.* (1588-1697). English materialist philosopher.
- Hobson, J. A.* (1858- ). English economist.

- Höglund, Z.* (1884- ). Leader of Swedish Left Socialist Party before the war. For a short time Communist.
- Holyoake, G. J.* (1817-1906). English co-operator.
- Hume, David* (1711-76). English "sceptical" philosopher.
- Huxley, T. H.* (1825-95). English biologist, "Agnostic" philosopher.
- Jouhaux, L.* (1876- ). Secretary of the French General Confederation of Labour and leader of the Amsterdam (trade union) International.
- Kant, Emmanuel* (1724-1804). Classical German philosopher.
- Kautsky, Karl* (1854- ). Former leading Marxist theoretician, sank into Opportunism during the Great War, and opposed the Bolshevik Revolution.
- Kerensky, A. F.* (1881- ). Socialist-Revolutionary, Premier in the Provisional Government that was overthrown by the Bolshevik Revolution.
- Kornilov, L. G.* (1876-1918). Tsarist General. Marched on Petrograd in September 1917, in an unsuccessful attempt to set up a military dictatorship.
- Kropotkin, P. A.* (1842-1921). Founder of Anarcho-Communism.
- Lamarck, J.* (1744-1829). French naturalist.
- Lamartine, A.* (1790-1869). French poet.
- Laplace, P.* (1749-1827). French astronomer and mathematician.
- Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-64). One of the outstanding leaders of the early German labour movement. Orator, publicist ; non-Marxist.
- Ledru-Rollin, A.* (1807-74). Bourgeois Republican leader.
- Legien, K.* (1861-1920). German reformist Trade Union leader.
- Liebknecht, Karl* (1871-1919). Left German Social-Democrat ; militant Internationalist and opponent of the Imperialist War ; murdered by German officers.
- Liebknecht, Wilhelm* (1826-1900). One of the founders of German Social-Democracy. Father of Karl Liebknecht.
- Lincoln, Abraham* (1809-65). United States President and leader of the Capitalist North in the Civil War.
- Linnaeus, C.* (1741-83). Swedish naturalist.
- Locke, J.* (1632-1704). English materialist philosopher.
- Lunarcharsky, A. V.* (1875-1934). Bolshevik. People's Commissar for Education after the Bolshevik Revolution.



- Lvov, Prince* (1861-1925). Large landowner and member of the Provisional Government, 1917.
- Macaire*. Type of swindler from French play.
- Mach, Ernst*. German eclectic philosopher who vacillated between idealism and materialism.
- Maine, H. S.* (1822-88). English jurist and historian.
- Malpighi, M.* (1628-94). Italian anatomist.
- Martov, L.* (1873-1923). Leader of the Mensheviks at the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party split in 1903.
- Martynov, A. S.* (1865-1934). Theorist of "Economism," later Menshevik. Became a Bolshevik after the Bolshevik Revolution.
- Metternich* (1773-1859). Chancellor of the Austrian empire, and leader of the European reaction.
- Mignet, F.* (1796-1884). French historian.
- Miliukov, P.* (1859- ). Leader of Constitutional Democratic Party ("Cadets") and of Russian Liberalism. Bitter opponent of the Soviet Government.
- Millerand, A.* (1859- ). French politician. First Socialist to join a bourgeois cabinet (1899-1902). Later expelled from the Socialist Party.
- Moleschott* (1822-93). Dutch naturalist with materialist views.
- Moll, Joseph*. German watchmaker, member of the Communist League. In London associated with Chartist movement. Fell in the German revolutionary struggles of 1849.
- Montesquieu, C.* (1689-1755). French historian.
- Newton, Isaac* (1642-1727). Mathematician, astronomer, physicist. Famous for his work on Gravitation.
- Noske*. German Social-Democrat who suppressed the revolutionary risings of the German workers after the war.
- Ostwald*. German chemist, writer on philosophical questions.
- Owen, Robert* (1771-1858). English Utopian Socialist. Pioneer of the Co-operative Movement.
- Philippe, Louis* (1773-1850). Duke of Orleans. Became "King of the French" as a result of July 1830 revolution. Deposed by February 1848 Revolution.
- Plekhanov, George* (1856-1918). Founder of Russian Marxism. Supported Lenin in his controversies with the idealists, but became a social-patriot during the war, and opposed the Bolshevik revolution.

- Potresov, A. N.* (1869- ). Old Russian Social-Democrat. Leader of extreme right wing of the Mensheviks. Social-patriot during the war.
- Proudhon, P. J.* (1809-65). Petty-bourgeois Utopian Socialist.
- Rakovsky, C.* (1873- ). Rumanian Socialist, then Communist and Soviet official ; later in Trotskyist opposition.
- Rasputin, Gregory* (1872-1916). Siberian priest who attained great influence at the Russian Court.
- Renan, E.* (1823-92). French historian.
- Renner, Karl* (1871- ). Leading theorist of Opportunism in the Austrian Social-Democratic Party.
- Ricardo, David* (1772-1823). English Banker and Economist.
- Robespierre, Maximilien* (1758-1794). French Jacobin ; leader in the Great French Revolution.
- Rodbertus-Jagetzow* (1805-75). A rich Prussian landowner, theorist of " Prussian Junker " socialism.
- Roland-Holst, Henrietta* (1869- ). Dutch writer and Marxist.
- Romanov.* Family name of the Russian Tsar Nicholas II.
- Rousseau, J. J.* (1712-78). French writer, author of the *Social Contract* ; expressed bourgeois revolt against the rule of the feudal aristocracy.
- Royer-Collard, P.* (1763-1845). French liberal.
- Saint-Just, A. L.* (1767-94). Jacobin. Outstanding figure in the French revolution.
- Saint-Simon* (1760-1825). French Utopian Socialist.
- Say, Jean Baptiste* (1767-1832). Leading French economist, and apologist of free-trade capitalism.
- Scheidemann, P.* (1865- ). Right Wing German Social-Democrat. Together with Noske he organised the crushing of the Spartacist rising in 1919.
- Sismondi* (1773-1842). French historian and economist.
- Skobelev, M. I.* (1885- ), Menshevik, member of the Fourth Duma.
- Smith, Adam* (1723-90). Classical English economist.
- Stirner, Max* (1808-56). Associated with " Young Hegelians."
- Strauss, D. F.* (1800-74). German " Young Hegelian " philosopher.
- Struve, Peter* (1870- ). Russian economist. Originally opportunist Social-Democrat, later Liberal.

*Sun-Yat-Sen*. Leader of Chinese bourgeois revolution. Founded Kuomintang Party in 1912. In control of Canton from 1916 until his death in 1925.

*Thiers, A.* (1797-1877). Leader of government that suppressed the Paris Commune in 1871.

*Thierry, A.* (1795-1856). French historian.

*Trochu, L. J.* (1815-96). Military Governor of Paris, after September 4th, 1870, President of the "Government of National Defence."

*Trotsky, L.* (1879- ). Leading Russian Social-Democrat, who vacillated between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks after the Party split in 1903, being continually in opposition to Lenin. He joined the Bolshevik Party just before the Bolshevik Revolution and filled leading posts during the Civil War. Later he became a leader of anti-party fractional struggles and was expelled from the Party.

*Tseretelli, I. G.* (1882- ). Menshevik. Became a Minister of the First Coalition Government in May 1917.

*Turati, F.* (1857- ). Leader of right wing in Italian Socialist Party.

*Turgenev, I. S.* (1818-83). Famous Russian novelist.

*Vogt, Karl* (1817-98). German naturalist, vulgar materialist and petty-bourgeois democrat.

*Vollner, G. von* (1850-1922). German Social-Democrat and outstanding defender of Imperialism.

*Zubatov* (1864-1917). Head of the Tsarist Secret Police in Moscow.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF THE MORE IMPORTANT OTHER WORKS BY MARX, ENGELS, LENIN AND STALIN

### KARL MARX

*A Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right* (1844).  
*On the Jewish Question* (1844).  
*The Holy Family* (written jointly with Engels in 1845).  
*Wage Labour and Capital* (1849).  
*Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial* (1852).  
*Herr Vogt* (1860).  
*Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1890).  
*Value, Price and Profit* (1865).  
*Theories of Surplus Value*.  
*Civil War in America*.  
*Letters to Kugelmann*.  
*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels : Correspondence*.

Among reprints of articles, collections under the titles of *Palmerston* and *The Eastern Question* exist in English editions.

### FRIEDRICH ENGELS

*The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845).  
*Critical Essay of Political Economy* (1845).  
*The Economic Development of Russia* (1892).  
*The Peasant War in Germany*.  
*Dialectics of Nature*.  
*The Franco-German War of 1870-71*. (Articles written in English for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Collected edition in German only.)

### V. I. LENIN

Several volumes of Lenin's Collected Works have already been published in English. These are :

*The Iskra Period*. (Two volumes.)  
*The Imperialist War, 1914-15*.  
*Towards the Seizure of Power, 1917*. (Two volumes.)  
*The Revolution of 1917*. (Two volumes.)

Some of the articles contained in the above have also been reprinted in the "Little Lenin Library." Most of these smaller volumes have been mentioned in the extracts from Lenin given on earlier pages. Others include :

*The War and the Second International.*

*The Paris Commune.*

*Religion.*

*The Threatening Catastrophe.*

*Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power ?*

Other volumes of articles and speeches :

*Marx, Engels—Marxism.*

*Lenin on Britain.*

*Voices of Revolt.*

A number of pamphlets containing separate articles or speeches have also been published in English, including :

*The Deception of the People.*

*The Foundation of the Third International.* (Containing Lenin's Theses on Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Dictatorship.)

*The Historic Significance of the Third International.*

*Democracy and Trade Unions.*

The *Labour Monthly*, *Communist International*, *Communist*, and *Communist Review* have also published a number of other articles or speeches of Lenin's.

#### J. STALIN

The most important collection in English of Stalin's articles and speeches is :

*Leninism.* (Two volumes.)

Other collections and separate articles and speeches include :

*Lenin.*

*Stalin Reports on the Soviet Union* (1933).

*From the First to the Second Five Year Plan* (1934).

*Socialism Victorious* (1935).

## GLOSSARY OF UNFAMILIAR TERMS

*Anti-Socialist Laws* (Germany). Introduced by Bismarck in 1878 to suppress the Social-Democratic organisation. The organisation, however, developed, and when elections were held after the repeal of these laws in 1890, the Social Democratic Party secured 1½ million votes.

*Artel*. A group of workers or peasants engaged in co-operative production.

*Black Hundreds*. The most reactionary landlord group in Russia under the Tsars.

*Boxer Rebellion*. Chinese national revolt against foreign oppression (1900).

*Bund*. The Jewish Labour League in Poland and Russia, established in 1897.

*Cadets*. Constitutional-Democratic Party in Russia.

*Decembriseur*. Member of "Society of December 10th," described by Marx in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*.

*Duma*. Russian "parliament" granted by Tsar after 1905 revolution.

*Gotha Programme*. Programme adopted by the German Social-Democratic Party on the occasion of its formation by the amalgamation of the two previously existing workers' parties (1875).

*Guildmaster*. A full member of a craft guild.

*Holy Alliance*. Alliance of counter-revolutionary monarchies of Russia, Austria and Prussia. Founded in 1815.

*Jacobins*. Radical Republicans, the most radical party representing the petty-bourgeoisie in the French Revolution, 1789.

*Junkers*. Large landowners of Prussia.

*Kienthal* (Switzerland). The second international conference of Socialist groups opposing the war was held there in 1916.

*Kulak*. Rich peasant, also village usurer and exploiter.

*Kustar industry*. Small scale home industry, mainly handicraft.

*Legitimists.* Supporters of the older or "legitimate" branch of the Bourbon Royal family of France, who represented particularly the landlords.

*Liquidators.* Reformist Socialist—Mensheviks—who proposed the liquidation of the underground party organisation and instead favoured only legal activities.

*Lumpenproletariat.* "Ragged proletariat"—The lowest stratum of the town working-class.

*Muzhik, mujik.* Russian peasant.

*Narodniks.* A Russian petty-bourgeois revolutionary group.

*Octobrists.* A Russian (constitutional) political party formed in 1905, when the Tsar promised a Duma.

*Orleanists.* Supporters of the junior branch of the Bourbons (descendants of Louis Philippe). The Party of the merchants, bankers and landlords.

*Phalanstères.* Socialist colonies planned by Charles Fourier.

*Prætorian.* In ancient Rome, the personal bodyguard of a general or emperor.

*Sachsenwald.* The extensive estate presented to the German Chancellor Bismarck.

*Spartacus League.* The anti-war organisation of Karl Liebknecht during the war. (He signed his illegal leaflets "Spartacus"—Spartacus was the leader of a slave revolt in ancient Rome).

*Tuileries.* Traditional residence of the French Kings.

*Vedas.* Hindu Sacred Books.

*White Guards.* The general term used by the Bolsheviks (the "Reds") to describe the counter-revolutionary forces (the "Whites") after November 1917.

*Zemstvo.* Elected provincial representative assembly in Russia. The zemstvos were used by the Liberal bourgeoisie for agitation against the autocracy.

*Zimmerwald* (Switzerland). The first international conference of Socialist groups opposing the war was held there in 1915.

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1. The first part of the book is a general introduction to the subject of the book, which is the history of the United States. It is written in a simple and straightforward manner, and is intended to give the reader a general idea of the book's content.
2. The second part of the book is a detailed account of the early history of the United States, from the time of the first settlers to the time of the American Revolution. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the early history of the United States.
3. The third part of the book is a detailed account of the American Revolution, from the time of the first battles to the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the American Revolution.
4. The fourth part of the book is a detailed account of the early years of the United States, from the time of the signing of the Constitution to the time of the death of George Washington. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the early years of the United States.
5. The fifth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1790 to 1800, from the time of the signing of the Constitution to the time of the death of George Washington. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1790 to 1800.
6. The sixth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1800 to 1810, from the time of the death of George Washington to the time of the death of Thomas Jefferson. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1800 to 1810.
7. The seventh part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1810 to 1820, from the time of the death of Thomas Jefferson to the time of the death of Andrew Jackson. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1810 to 1820.
8. The eighth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1820 to 1830, from the time of the death of Andrew Jackson to the time of the death of Martin Van Buren. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1820 to 1830.
9. The ninth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1830 to 1840, from the time of the death of Martin Van Buren to the time of the death of James K. Polk. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1830 to 1840.
10. The tenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1840 to 1850, from the time of the death of James K. Polk to the time of the death of Zachary Taylor. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1840 to 1850.
11. The eleventh part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1850 to 1860, from the time of the death of Zachary Taylor to the time of the death of Abraham Lincoln. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1850 to 1860.
12. The twelfth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1860 to 1870, from the time of the death of Abraham Lincoln to the time of the death of Ulysses S. Grant. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1860 to 1870.
13. The thirteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1870 to 1880, from the time of the death of Ulysses S. Grant to the time of the death of Grover Cleveland. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1870 to 1880.
14. The fourteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1880 to 1890, from the time of the death of Grover Cleveland to the time of the death of William McKinley. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1880 to 1890.
15. The fifteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1890 to 1900, from the time of the death of William McKinley to the time of the death of Theodore Roosevelt. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1890 to 1900.
16. The sixteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1900 to 1910, from the time of the death of Theodore Roosevelt to the time of the death of Woodrow Wilson. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1900 to 1910.
17. The seventeenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1910 to 1920, from the time of the death of Woodrow Wilson to the time of the death of Warren G. Harding. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1910 to 1920.
18. The eighteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1920 to 1930, from the time of the death of Warren G. Harding to the time of the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1920 to 1930.
19. The nineteenth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1930 to 1940, from the time of the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt to the time of the death of Harry S. Truman. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1930 to 1940.
20. The twentieth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1940 to 1950, from the time of the death of Harry S. Truman to the time of the death of Dwight D. Eisenhower. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1940 to 1950.
21. The twenty-first part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1950 to 1960, from the time of the death of Dwight D. Eisenhower to the time of the death of John F. Kennedy. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1950 to 1960.
22. The twenty-second part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1960 to 1970, from the time of the death of John F. Kennedy to the time of the death of Lyndon B. Johnson. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1960 to 1970.
23. The twenty-third part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1970 to 1980, from the time of the death of Lyndon B. Johnson to the time of the death of Jimmy Carter. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1970 to 1980.
24. The twenty-fourth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1980 to 1990, from the time of the death of Jimmy Carter to the time of the death of George H. W. Bush. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1980 to 1990.
25. The twenty-fifth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 1990 to 2000, from the time of the death of George H. W. Bush to the time of the death of Bill Clinton. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 1990 to 2000.
26. The twenty-sixth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2000 to 2010, from the time of the death of Bill Clinton to the time of the death of George W. Bush. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2000 to 2010.
27. The twenty-seventh part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2010 to 2020, from the time of the death of George W. Bush to the time of the death of Barack Obama. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2010 to 2020.
28. The twenty-eighth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2020 to 2030, from the time of the death of Barack Obama to the time of the death of Donald Trump. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2020 to 2030.
29. The twenty-ninth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2030 to 2040, from the time of the death of Donald Trump to the time of the death of Joe Biden. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2030 to 2040.
30. The thirtieth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2040 to 2050, from the time of the death of Joe Biden to the time of the death of Kamala Harris. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2040 to 2050.
31. The thirty-first part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2050 to 2060, from the time of the death of Kamala Harris to the time of the death of Donald Trump. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2050 to 2060.
32. The thirty-second part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2060 to 2070, from the time of the death of Donald Trump to the time of the death of Joe Biden. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2060 to 2070.
33. The thirty-third part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2070 to 2080, from the time of the death of Joe Biden to the time of the death of Kamala Harris. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2070 to 2080.
34. The thirty-fourth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2080 to 2090, from the time of the death of Kamala Harris to the time of the death of Donald Trump. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2080 to 2090.
35. The thirty-fifth part of the book is a detailed account of the years from 2090 to 2100, from the time of the death of Donald Trump to the time of the death of Joe Biden. It is written in a more detailed and scholarly manner, and is intended to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the years from 2090 to 2100.



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