

PROLETARIAN NEWS

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT
YOUR CHAINS! YOU HAVE A WORLD
TO GAIN! — Karl Marx

A JOURNAL FOR THE WORKING CLASS

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THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

From the very infancy of humanity mankind has been confronted with the problem of understanding its environment. The question of food and shelter, mysterious natural forces, hostile animals etc. compelled man to think. It is this capacity to think and produce artificial tools that separated man from the rest of the animal kingdom of which he is a part. As time went along he kept acquiring increased knowledge and mastery over this environment. Not that animals have no consciousness. They have. But it is elementary and limited to immediate experience. The power of abstraction or generalization is what man possesses exclusively. It is this power to correlate experience, to generalize, abstract the common from the particular, to establish theories that gave man a special weapon which put him in a higher and separate social category.

Hence, the best that animals can do is adapt themselves to a given environment. Man can do more, he can change it. The quest to unravel the mysteries of the endless phenomena of nature has been a long and difficult one, accompanied by many successes and failures.

The many contradictions within nature, between substance and appearance, stability and fluidity, all tended to confuse the human mind and what to make out of it. Where understanding and knowledge was lacking, belief and superstition filled in. The latter is still carried over to this day and plays a considerable role in human relations. It is understandable why primitive peoples would entertain all sorts of fantastic notions about things, tho not so in our own more or less enlightened and scientific age. Today, it seems more like a conscious effort on the part of the propertied classes to perpetuate outmoded and superstitious beliefs to their own economic advantage.

Among primitive peoples knowledge was handed down simply by word of mouth, from generation to generation. They had no other means. With the beginning of civilization and writing a great transformation took place. Knowledge henceforth, with the aid of books and literature, could be se-

cured and preserved as the property of humanity, practically for all time.

Among the ancient civilized peoples learning made great advances. This was made possible by the increased productivity of labor, on the one hand, and by the class division on the other. Some members of the leisure class now devoted their time to intellectual pursuit. Philosophy arose and flourished. Elements of science also began. This was especially true of the Greeks who contributed much to philosophic thought. Some great thinkers amongst them, such as Heraclitus and Anaximander had already recog-

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HOME SCENE

Cold War Freeze

At the recent meeting in Paris of the NATO powers, the heads of states attending, despite reluctance of the U.S. delegation, pledged themselves to seek an accommodation with the Soviet Union, an easing of the Cold War. Since that meeting in December, President Eisenhower, on Jan. 9th, delivered his State of the Union message, which calls for a still greater outlay for arms, aggravating the Cold War, as well as an intensified effort to meet the Soviet challenge economically in the undeveloped areas of Asia and Africa.

The immediate reaction of Congressional leaders was one of approval, who, at least, on arms

spending, are more anxious than the President to pump more billions into the war machine. An arms race has never led to peace. This armament build-up will threaten the solvency of U.S. capitalism and constitutes a danger to the world's peoples, what with modern death weapons.

It would appear, the way arms spending meets the approval from most in both classes, capitalist as well as labor, here, that we all have a stake, a material interest, in keeping the arms race alive. Sure, the tax bite hurts, but the \$40 billions spent annually, helps the munition kings, keeps a sizeable number of workers directly engaged in the armament industry employed; as well as those businesses and workers busy catering to their needs and comforts. David Lawrence wrote several years ago: "It makes one shudder to think what the sudden outbreak of peace might mean to the American economy." The arms spending is an important factor, so far, in holding up the economy to where it is. Where would it be now, without the billions spent on armaments?

However, we do not contend that the principle aim of arms spending is to keep capitalist prosperity alive. While it has that favorable effect on business, its main purpose, the armament build-up, is to defend and to expand capitalist material interest, all over the world. That's what it has always meant and that's what it means today "Whatever the sacrifices," said Eisenhower, in his State of the Union message, we must build up the defense program. That policy and program will tend to freeze, i.e. prolong the Cold War.

Military Shake-up

Ever since the Soviet Union successfully launched her Sputniks, the American ruling class has been jittery. The capitalist class of this country had thought that the billions of dollars spent annually, had given them comfortable security. They believed they had an insured military lead. But the Russians exploded their cock-sureness.

Now, Congress and the Executive branches of government are engaged in a search for the reason

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JOHN KERACHER

Jan. 16, 1880 — Jan. 11, 1958

The Marxian movement as a whole, and the Proletarian Party in particular, suffered a great loss when Comrade John Keracher died recently, on January 11, 1958, from a heart ailment in Los Angeles, California.

Two memorial meetings were held in commemoration of his life and work. The first was held in Los Angeles on January 16th, which by coincidence happened to be on the 78th anniversary of John Keracher's birth. The second meeting was held in Chicago on Sunday, February 2nd, at the Proletarian Hall. Both meetings were addressed by Comrade Al Wysocki, the National Secretary of the Proletarian Party, and were well attended by friends, members and Proletarian News readers.

At this time the Proletarian Party wishes to thank those friends and Proletarian News readers who have contributed and sent their letters of condolences.

We call the attention of our readers to two articles in this issue. On page 3 is an editorial on "John Keracher — His Life and Work."

The following article is a "tribute" by a friend, Alexander MacKay of San Luis Obispo, Calif., who sent it in lieu of being unable to attend the Los Angeles meeting because of illness. It was read at both memorial meetings and by popular request appears here:

A TRIBUTE TO MY FRIEND JOHN KERACHER

Comrades in the Cause of Humanity:

I am truly sorry that I cannot be in your midst when you say: HAIL AND FAREWELL to my dear friend, John Keracher. I valued his friendship above anyone I met in the Socialist movement in over half a century. I do not mourn for my friend, John. It is for myself I feel sorry, for the world will not be the same to me for the rest of my short time without the pleasure of meeting and conversing with John on my frequent visits to Los Angeles. I see no reason to mourn for John's sake, he lived a good life and reaped a rich reward in personal satisfaction in the knowledge that he had done his best for the best of causes—the liberation of mankind from its age-old mental and physical chains. While it is true I have lost one of the best friends I ever had, still I rejoice when I think how easy was his passing. I am glad he escaped the sad fate that awaits so many of our kind. I mean the terrible catastrophe of a long, lingering, painful disease that ends only when life ends, which may be long, weary years. . . .

I am glad I had the privilege of the friendship of such a first-class specimen of mankind as John Keracher. Yes, John was a good man in the highest, finest and best sense

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HOME SCENE

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or individual responsible for America's lag to maintain the military supremacy it achieved with atomic explosion. It is evident that the capitalists themselves, privately, are engaged in soul-searching, as witness, the Rockefeller Group Report.

The "Rockefeller group," a collection of big capitalists and their expert hirelings, came out with a report, which, in essence, advocates a duplication of the military organization, including the General Staff, as obtained in Germany, prior to its smash-up after the last World War. Ironically, one of the alleged objectives of the opponents of Germany in both World Wars, was the destruction of "German militarism" with its arrogant General Staff. Yet the Rockefeller group report has the audacity to advocate the revival of the very evils of German militarism upon America.

A private investigation, such as by the Rockefeller group, or a public inquest by a Congressional committee, upon examining America's military establishment, find the obvious, inter-service rivalry — that is rivalry between the Army, Navy and Air forces. That rivalry amongst them for recruits, money, the development of military hardware as well as prestige is well known. This inter-service rivalry is blamed for the falling behind of the U.S. in the space-age commencement by these investigating groups. The Rockefeller group offers the simple "solution" of a centralized authority, as a means of overtaking the Soviet advance, in the arms race.

That proposal seems simple enough and logical, yet the highly

centralized military machine of Germany, in both World Wars, didn't save the super race from defeat from their opponents not so soundly centralized. Not all the military brass are in favor of the German and now Rockefeller scheme. Admiral Burke, Chief of Naval Operations, speaking before the National Press Club, on Jan. 5th, said: "We are told that we need some better kind of military decision. Faster decision? Wiser decision? If we believe that one man, a military Solomon, is necessarily wiser than many men, then why not carry this logic further—why not carry it to its almost inevitable conclusion and abolish the Congress, make the people's elected Chief Executive a figurehead, and place our future in the hands of a single military national protector?"

"The final decision cannot be left to a single man in uniform if our constitutional republic is to survive and remain free. Ultimate control must rest with civilian authority."

A supreme military commander, as advocated by the rich Rockefellers, contains the seeds of militarizing the country. The danger of military dictatorship is implicit in the Rockefeller proposal as implied by Admiral Burke's comments. The domination of the military over all walks of civilian life in Germany and its dreadful consequences are recorded in history.

Capitalism is in a state of crisis. U.S. loss of leadership in the space-age is bringing forth desperate schemes. With a military setup as the German General Staff or without it—the capitalist system is doomed.

L.B.

JOHN KERACHER

Jan. 16, 1880 — Jan. 11, 1958

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of the word. For if to live an unselfish life in the highest interests of mankind is good, then few have a better record than my friend, John Keracher. If to devote every talent of mind and body to the betterment of mankind is good, then few have exceeded my friend, John. If to love knowledge and dispense it for the good of mankind is good, then John rates with the best and most beloved of men. If to work devotedly and unselfishly for more than half a century wholly and solely on the side of the underdog is good, then John will go marching on long after his body is cremated. If to sow the seeds of social science is a service to humanity, then we, his friends, can count John among the choicest spirits of our time, for he was a wonderful sower of seeds. If to live a long life and ever be faithful to the highest ideals of life and literature is worthy of praise, then we, his friends and admirers, can hardly praise him enough, for he

was faithful to the end. If it is good to have lived an honest, useful and kindly life, without a thought of self, then we are lucky to have had the privilege of the friendship of that good man, John Keracher.

John Keracher was a BUILDER, and I can do no better than conclude my tribute to him than to quote a verse from MAN-MAKING by Edwin Markham:

"We are blind until we see
That in the human plan
Nothing is worth the making, if
It does not make the man.
Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilt goes?
In vain we build the world,
unless
The builder also grows."

John Keracher builded well, for as he built he grew in stature into the finest person I ever knew in over a half century of work in the Socialist movement. Yes, John Keracher was a MASTER-BUILDER.

HAIL AND FAREWELL, John,
my friend. Your old pal Mac.

THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

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nized the materiality and dialectic nature of things. This was a great achievement in their day, since they were lacking in scientific data to substantiate their hypotheses. Thus tho they correctly grasped the general outlines of the world picture as a whole it wasn't complete. The details, the component parts comprising the picture, were to be furnished by the special sciences which came in a later period.

Following the decline of the ancient civilizations was the period of the Dark Ages and feudalism when intellectual thought suffered retrogression mired in the mental swamp of religion and scholasticism. Efforts to understand worldly phenomena came to a complete halt. Nothing mattered except the spiritual world and the many beliefs concerning it. Faith, blind faith overtook reason and understanding. To inquire, to analyze, was taboo.

With the early beginnings of capitalism, a new spirit was born, the Renaissance. It was the rebirth of learning. Men began to think again. Greek philosophy was looked to again and natural science began its modern march. Capitalism needed science, new, fresh thinking, a concrete knowledge of things and their properties.

Two schools of philosophic thought which already had its roots in Greece came to the fore, idealism and materialism. To understand the difference and the conflict between these two schools is important. The idealist lays stress upon the mind as the PRIUS; to the materialist, matter is the prius. From the standpoint of idealist philosophy mind or the world of ideas is independent and preceded matter or material experience. The question then follows: Where do we get our ideas from? Or are they innate? Or, as some contend are they a reduced

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"BALANCE OF POWER"

Big nations have always been striving to maintain a "balance of power" favorable to them. Such international political and diplomatic tactics are aimed at building up, and, or, preserving the dominance of one nation over the others.

This takes the form of "coalition" or "pacts" with other nations. In plain slang terms it's just a case of "ganging up" against your rival or potential enemy. Great Britain, when she was the "top dog," that is the foremost imperial power, practiced the "balance of power" tactics, and has not stopped doing it to this day.

However, the most powerful and aggressive imperial nation today is the United States of America. Its capitalist ruling class is so gluttoned with its own conceit that it refers to its country as "America," notwithstanding that the U.S. is only a minor part, in area and population, of the whole Western Hemisphere, that is, North and South America. But its conceit is reinforced by the fact, that, not only is the U.S. the most industrialized and best armed of these Western nations, but that it dominates the whole Western Hemisphere. This is something the "less fortunate" nations can sneer at, but they cannot deny it.

The United States has been using the "balance of power" tactics with a vengeance. At present it is engaged in the most "noble" of capitalist endeavors: of dominating the world under the slogan (cloak) of the "crusade for freedom" against communism. And it has 'ganged up' with others, thru the "NATO," the "Baghdad Pact," the "SEATO," etc. These tactics are backed up by the U.S. armed bases

(with nuclear weapons, and missiles also) throughout the whole world, that is along the border of the Soviet Union.

But behind this smoke-screen of anti-communist "crusade," business goes on as usual, to the profit of the big American capitalists engaged in foreign trade, as, e.g., the oil flowing from the Middle East. So it's the material, monetary interests that dominate U.S. foreign policy.

Such "balance of power" tactics in the past have inevitably resulted in open conflict on a world-wide scale. The United States and its "allies" were just as much responsible for precipitating World Wars Number One and Two as Germany and her "Axis allies."

The Soviet Union, aware of the present war danger, and knowing that as long as capitalism prevails the peace of the world is far from secure, is doing its utmost to arrange a meeting "at the summit" that of all the top leaders of the big nations, particularly the U.S. The purpose: how to preserve the peace of the world. What will be the outcome, even if such a meeting is held? No one knows in advance.

However, this much is certain: the most numerous victims in all wars are the vast majority, the toiling, sweating, working people of the world. But in a "modern war" with atomic-hydrogen bombs and missiles, no one is safe, not even the capitalists. This should be sufficient warning to those whose hatred of communism are always threatening "massive retaliation."

As some one once said: "Peaceful co-existence is much better than no-existence."

A.W.

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JOHN KERACHER — HIS LIFE AND WORK

It is on this editorial page that the readers of the Proletarian News would find those profound Marxian articles by John Keracher. So it is only fitting that we record here not only the sad news that his life has ended, but also some of the most significant features of the work he accomplished.

John Keracher died on January 11th, 1958 from a heart ailment at the General Hospital in Los Angeles (the city in which he had been living for the past few years). Had he lived but five days longer, he would have been 78 years old.

He did not suffer long, spent less than three days in the hospital. It was a recurrent prostatic condition that caused his ailing heart to finally stop beating. News of his death came as a shock to most of his comrades and friends; for John, despite his heart ailment, had been an active member of the Proletarian Party. In fact, just a few days before his death, he had delivered a lecture for the Social Science Forum of Los Angeles, of which he was one of the main founders and speakers.

Most keenly will the loss of John Keracher be felt by the Proletarian Party membership. However, they and all the readers of the Proletarian News are heartened by the thought that John had lived a full, active and useful life. He was one of the Party's main founders, and had been its Secretary for many years. He set all his comrades and friends an enduring and splendid example of complete devotion to the cause of working class emancipation from the yoke of capitalist exploitation.

John Keracher's intellectual accomplishments speak for themselves. His writings, the clear and consistent articles in the Proletarian Magazine of some years back, and the Proletarian News, plus the numerous pamphlets he wrote, have proven to be of inestimable value, an "intellectual weapon," to the class-conscious workers in their struggles against the exploiters.

Yes, John Keracher was a builder indeed! **But above all he was a courageous Marxist, a class-conscious "rebel" against capitalism to the very end!**

His Early Life

Most of John Keracher's lifetime was identified with the development of the Marxian movement in America, a period of almost 50 years. That is a long period, replete with historical events. Hence, in this brief sketch it is impossible to fully cover even the most significant aspects of his life, let alone the numerous details of less significance however interesting and instructive.

John was modest; he never bragged about his mental accomplishments or organizational ability. A few years ago he was pressed upon by members and some of the supporters to write a history of the Proletarian Party. He began the task with characteristic initiative and had already most of it written, 92 pages, before his life ended. This manuscript will some day be published under the title of "Proletarian Party of America," but by way of a preview we quote some of the introductory remarks of its author, John Keracher, as follows:

"Many men, as they grow old, develop a

desire to write the story of their life. They think that people will be interested in them and what they have done. I have no such illusion. Therefore, I have been reluctant to write about the Proletarian Party of America because it becomes necessary to tell of my part in its development. But, so many Party members, and supporters . . . have urged me to tell of how the Party was started, and the part that it has played in working-class activities, that I feel it is an obligation."

John points out that such a history of the Proletarian Party will be of benefit even if only Party members read it, and "especially the younger members who have no first-hand knowledge of the early years of the Party, or the background out of which it arose." He further states, to wit:

"In the development of the Marxian movement of the U.S.A. many people have played a part. In looking back over a period of fully forty years, I am happy to have taken a part in that development. I am convinced that much of our work will live and be of lasting benefit to the American proletariat.

"As for myself, I was born in Scotland on January 16th, 1880. Of my early life there is little to relate. I left Scotland in my early twenties and lived in England for a number of years, but came to America in 1909. For the purpose of this story, I wish to say that my organizational activities began in April, 1910, when I joined the Socialist Party in Detroit, where I was then living. My ideas of socialism were then very vague. Municipal ownership of utilities was about as far as I went. I had advocated city ownership of the street cars, of gas and electric-lighting plants, and such, having come by these ideas while living in England. I considered myself a liberal, but I was told most emphatically that such ideas were Socialism in America.

John Keracher became a very active member, but he soon discovered that there was very little understanding of Marxism, i.e. scientific socialism, within the Socialist Party. Even for him it was not easy to absorb that knowledge, as he states: "Among the first pamphlets I bought were 'The Communist Manifesto' and 'Value, Price and Profit' by Marx. I also procured a copy of Engels' 'Socialism, Utopian and Scientific.' During the winter of 1912 and 1913, I read those books over and over, until I lost count of the number of times. I learned very slowly, and that is the only way I could make headway, by re-reading."

It was when John read Frederick Engels: "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," that he found the solution as to the question of political power and how it was to be taken. Then he knew that the Socialist Party was not out to abolish capitalism but simply to patch it up; that it was a reform organization, and not revolutionary.

The great need then was a revolutionary working-class party directly based on Marxian principles. But when John looked around, he found that the rest of the organizations no more suited that purpose than did the Socialist Party.

It was the Russian Revolution of November 7, 1917 that provided the answer. It split the Socialist Party wide open. The reactionary Hillquit officialdom, rather than lose control, expelled the whole left-wing, more than half the 100,000 membership of the Socialist Party, including the Proletarian group which thereupon issued a call for the formation of a new party.

Birth of The Proletarian Party

In a brief but significant article, that John Keracher wrote, in the mimeographed issue of July 1955, entitled "Thirty-Five Years of Proletarian Party," he states as follows:

"In looking back, a period of thirty-five

years may seem short, yet that period has been fraught with tremendous world-shaking events, with far-reaching changes.

"It was on June 27th and 28th, 1920, that the Proletarian Party was organized. Those who launched it had few illusions as to the nature of the task which confronted them. They had already acquired much experience through their organizational and educational efforts within the Socialist Party. And, of course, they fully comprehended the political backwardness of the American workers.

"In the early part of 1920, the then Attorney-General, J. Mitchell Palmer, began his infamous 'Red Raids,' usually referred to as 'The Palmer Raids.' A number of those who later organized the Proletarian Party had been thrown into prison during those 'raids' and given a taste of American democracy in action. It was not the best time, nor the most favorable circumstances, for starting a new political party, except for one advantage, it had eliminated the timid ones who had been frightened away from the movement.

"Less than a year previously, the Communist Party had been launched. It was a mess of confusion, and was premised upon the belief that a revolution was imminent and that it could be successfully carried through by a militant minority. It, also, was hit by the Palmer Raids and immediately lost the bulk of its membership. It was gripped by fear and confusion, which caused it to go 'underground.' Even had it not made that mistake, it was quite impossible for conscious Marxists to throw in their lot with such a mess.

"From the outset, the Proletarian Party realized that it would take time to build a substantial Marxian party, and that it would have to recruit its ranks mainly from new people. This it immediately set about doing. It went into the streets of the cities to hold meetings and explain the principles of Marxism and to tell the workers of what was going on in the world. The Proletarian Party advocated the need for the American workers to use their great numbers to build a revolutionary force, through which to emancipate themselves from capitalist exploitation by establishing their political power, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

A Real Marxian Revolutionist

John Keracher was a real Marxian revolutionist, wide awake, and who clearly understood the objective conditions confronting the working class; for instance, as he declares, to wit:

"The present, as everyone must realize, is a difficult period for carrying on our work, but despite the reaction and repression of capitalism . . . the Proletarian Party carries on with its Marxian revolutionary message.

"What has happened throughout the world during the last 35 years has frightened the rich masters of America, and they have succeeded, in the main, in passing on their fear to the workers. In fact, in their combatting of communism, especially since 1945, they have resorted to the most despicable methods for the purpose of terrorizing the advanced section of the working class."

John points out that the post-war period of prosperity had caused many workers to forget the "starvation period of the Thirties, the Great Depression." That they have become "victims of capitalist propaganda" in thinking that hard times will never return, but "what a bitter awakening is in store for them!"

To that we add: already their "bitter awakening" has begun, what with the present business slump and unemployment that has been estimated to be reaching beyond the 5 million jobless mark!

And we therefore emphasize John Keracher's urgent appeal to all the workers to **join the Proletarian Party of America.** Al Wysocki

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form of a higher mind or spirit? We might prod further and seek an explanation for the evolution and changes in ideas. How come, moreover, that different classes hold conflicting ideas, or even different segments of a given class don't coincide in their thinking? To these questions idealism has no logical answer. It yields us little enlightenment as to the nature of knowledge or as to its limits. Naturally being idealistic, therefore also tainted with religion it sets limits to human mind. Man can only know so much, it claims, beyond which is the province of a higher mind, God. Where science ends, faith and religion takes over. The capitalist class is quite satisfied with this kind of logic. It suits their purpose.

Materialist philosophy has an opposite, more natural and logical approach. To it, matter, the objective world of which man is a part

is real and primary. Mind, thinking is a function of the human brain, a physical organ. Our thoughts are a reflection of the world and the phenomena we come in contact with thru our sense organs. Our sense-perceptions, experience is the fountainhead of all our ideas, concrete and abstract. From concrete experiences and ideas so obtained we formulate abstract ideas or generalizations, theories. The relation between theory and practice is that between the general and the particular. From the particular and concrete we abstract that which is common and general. To materialism the nature of knowledge is its materiality. Knowledge is of materialistic origin. If we want to obtain a knowledge of any phenomena or field, we must go to the phenomenon, observe and study it in all its objective relations and contradiction. Only thru objective analysis can we arrive at any knowledge of given phe-

nomena. Such is the method of science.

The relation between science and philosophy is such that without the proper philosophic or theoretical approach science is handicapped. The method of thinking is of utmost importance in the long run.

To modern materialism, i.e. dialectical materialism, knowledge is both limited and unlimited. That seems like a contradiction. But this contradiction is resolved in the process of things. The knowledge of an individual is certainly very limited and small compared to the total knowledge of society as a whole. But even with society that which wasn't known yesterday is known today. And tomorrow will unravel many mysteries of today. These tomorrow's are endless, as endless as the existence and progression of the human race. In other words knowledge is as limitless as the social process. Given the continued existence of the human species, however long

that might be, knowledge will continue, ever gaining.

The importance of understanding the nature and limits of knowledge is that it furnishes that freedom of inquiry and thought, freedom from mental obstructions, the courage and enthusiasm to go ahead with the assurance that there are no road blocks or signs: "forbidden to enter here."

The working class can look confidently to the future. Not alone are the social forces working definitely in the direction of socialism. They are also possessed of a superior, more scientific mental weapon in dialectical materialism, which it alone can safely and successfully employ. Capital can't touch it. It is too scientific and revolutionary for it. Alas for the ruling class it must resort to the reactionary outworn philosophy of idealism.

In this struggle between the two philosophies as between the two classes victory must go to the more socially advanced. To socialism belongs the future. R. Daniels

THUMBNAILS

NEW LOW: We ran across an advertisement in one of the leading magazines which showed a policeman talking to a dining car waiter and pointing to a group of teen age boys gathered around a juke-box in the background. In the story at the bottom the policeman was saying, "You can usually spot a wrong kid just by the way he looks." Then the ad went on to say, "Sure it's unfair, but it's a fact: people today judge a youngster by appearance. And once they've tabbed a boy, it's tough to change their minds ABOUT him, their attitude TOWARD him. Look at your boy. Look at him through his teachers' eyes — your neighbors' eyes. Could the way he looks, the clothes he wears, give them the wrong impression? Are you

making sure he looks right, dresses right, everywhere he goes?"

This was followed by a slogan which said, "Dress Right—You can't afford not to." And guess who signed the advertisement? You're right, it was the American Institute of Men's and Boys' Wear.

This to us is a new low, not only because of what it has to say, but also because it was so well executed by a lot of bright and talented people. The capitalist system is pretty far gone when it can produce the kind of degenerate thinking contained in that ad and at the same time the kind of people to do it so successfully.

DOUBLE DEAL? The NATO meeting in Europe seemed a little like a horse trading deal after all the smoke cleared.

The U.S. got a promise from West European countries for missile sites and West Europe got a promise from Uncle Sam (the old horse trader) for peace talks with the Soviet Union. Trouble is, it looks like both sides went by the old saying — "Never look a gift horse in the mouth," because if they had they would have found no teeth in either deal.

FOOT IN MOUTH APPRAISAL: The auto industry is sharpening its claws early this year in preparation for the big fight over wage increases at contract time. The reason for getting into the act so far ahead of time is to prepare the public far in advance to the illusion that the coming slump in auto production (and profits) is a direct result of labor's demands for more money and shorter hours.

Harlow W. Curtice, president of General Motors, opened with both barrels at the New Year in a public softening-up statement. After sifting out the double talk we were able to glean this from what he said:

1. If organized labor gets its demands for a shorter work week at no cut in pay it will "tend to weaken the national economy."
2. Wage demands are a major factor in the inflationary trend.
3. Studies have shown that bargaining has pushed wage and

benefits costs a good deal ahead of the nation's productivity advances. This is a dangerous path and could lead to very serious economic consequences.

4. Most Americans understand we must work hard to produce more so we can have more (no mention of how we are to buy more) and at the same time keep the nation strong (and capable of defending GM's interests).

5. For certain "labor unions" to publicly announce 1958 economic demands in advance is bad for public confidence in our future.

6. The outlook for 1958 is "difficult to appraise at the present time." What we need is more confidence to replace the shaky attitude of caution now prevailing, etc. etc.

So stated Mr. Curtice in so many words. The one thing we noticed in the overall statement was an open admission that the capitalist system won't work unless everyone is content to let the rich get richer and the poor stay poor, or get poorer, with no thought as to what will be done with all the left over automobiles (in Mr. Curtice's case).

The way we see it, a great contribution to lowering public confidence in the future of the American way of life was contained in the G.M. president's speech.

L.D.

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