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**Editorial Staff
David P. Berenberg
Anna Bercowitz
Haim Kantorovitch**

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THESE are days of great change. Capitalism is being tried to the utmost. New wars are in the offing. In the East, Japan is making its long-due effort to annex Manchuria. In Spain, the democratic revolution often attempted and as often defeated, seems at last to have come. In England, the classic home of industrialism, Capital is making a last desperate effort to survive. In Germany, dictatorship is imminent—the left dictatorship of the Communists, or fascist dictatorship with Hitler in power. Russia is trying to set at naught the laws of evolution, and to forge Socialism out of an undeveloped agrarian society. In Italy, there is an ominous silence.

In America, too, there is change. Only a few years ago many thought that American Capitalism would make a jest of Socialist theories. Here at last, thought some, is the Capitalist State that can keep its workers well fed, content with a standard of life well above the subsistence level. These dreams are gone today. On the contrary, men who never thought to question Capitalism are brought face to face with a stubborn fact: that Capitalism has failed to make good its boasts,—that, in fact, it is not able to keep going the vast machine that the Industrial Revolution created.

In the present crisis many voices are heard, offering this counsel and that. Plans without number are being framed to put new life into a Capitalism that is at last admittedly sick. One voice that ought to speak out clearly and insistently is hardly heard at all: **the Socialist voice**. There are today too few American journals that steadily, in season and out, present the Socialist view; too few Socialist journals to comment on wars and treaties of peace, on falling wages, and on the failure of the labor movement to use its opportunities; on politics

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and the pitiful efforts of Capitalism to meet disaster with charity.

Many Socialists, and many who sympathize with Socialism and believe it ought to be heard, have deplored this situation. The sponsors of THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY have done with deploring. They have decided to act.

With this issue the AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY begins what its editors believe will be a long term of service to the Socialist movement. The A S Q will be a Socialist journal of opinion. It will have a policy. It will have a definite direction.

The AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY, while not a Socialist Party organ, is published by members of the Socialist Party who believe that

the Marxian theories are the philosophic basis of the Socialist movement;

that Socialist activity should always be predicated on the class struggle;

that by democratic methods, and not by methods of cabal and dictatorship will Socialism be attained;

that work among the unions, that the industrial organization of labor, is of equal importance with political action; that political action is necessary, both to achieve immediate improvement of working conditions, and for the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth;

that the mere winning of votes and of office is meaningless, and that political action is without value unless the Socialist objective is always before the movement;

that the Socialist party should not enter into fusions or coalitions with groups that do not accept the Socialist philosophy;

that Russia is not sacrosanct; that the theories and the acts of the Soviet Republic are as properly subject to critical comment as are the theories and acts of other governments.

The AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY will contain in each issue one or more articles pertaining to Socialist

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theory. Its editors believe that the startling rise of Socialist strength on some occasions, and the equally startling recessions are due in part, perhaps, to sharp fluctuations in our economic conditions; but due in part, too, to a sadly prevalent misunderstanding of the fundamental principles of Socialism; to lack of sound thinking in the movement itself. In its treatment of theory the A S Q will take the Marxian position.

Its editors believe that Marxism is a way of interpreting history and life; that it has developed since the death of Marx and is still developing. It is not a dogma. They will not permit the journal to become an exercise in Marxian quotation.

The AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY will contain in each issue one or more articles on current happenings in all parts of the world, but more particularly in America. These articles will deal with matters political, industrial, social and educational. The Quarterly will open its pages to discussion of moot points in the matter of political and labor tactics. In such discussions it will welcome the expression of opinions not its own. It reserves the right to disclaim any views which its editors do not hold.

The A S Q will publish frequent articles dealing with the labor unions, and particularly with the relations of the Socialist Party to the labor movement.

Books of interest to Socialists will be reviewed. It will publish poems if and when any are submitted that are at once good and have recognizable bearing on the purposes of the paper. Fiction it will not publish.

One thing the AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY wishes to make clear at the outset: Socialism is not Communism, and a Socialist journal is not a Communist forum. Communism, Fascism and exaggerated nationalisms; the opportunism of the extreme right and the errors of the left will all be critically analyzed so that the Socialist position may be put before the American workers clearly, and any lingering doubts as to the line of demarcation between Socialism and other movements may be dispelled.

The AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY believes that self-criticism is essential to the well-being of any move-

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ment. The movement that cannot bear criticism is doomed. Its editors believe that there is no incompatibility between whole-hearted adherence to the Socialist Party, and earnest criticism of the acts and policies of that party. On the contrary, by furnishing a forum for the discussion of conflicting views as to party theory and tactics, the A S Q believes it will do no inconsiderable service to the Socialist Party in building up a body of fact and theory which will prevent the tragicomic aberrations of recent years.

Every effort will be made to keep the pages of the A S Q clear of personal animosities, of the scurrility and slander that have been an apparently ineradicable feature of polemic journalism. We shall, if necessary, criticize men and women, institutions and policies, but at all times the tone of such criticism will be impersonal and moderate, and the criticism itself will be directed at those words and deeds that have direct bearing on the movement.

What of the Class Struggle?

by

DAVID P. BERENBERG

IN "America's Way Out" Norman Thomas, after admitting in general the existence of the Class Struggle, says: "the idea of the Class Struggle is a very effective organizing 'myth' to hold the workers together." On the same page he says: "Nevertheless it takes more than shouting Class Struggle effectively to organize a Socialist world, or even a Socialist party. 'Workers of the World, unite. You have only your chains to lose: you have a world to gain,' is a magnificent slogan. It is not an exact statement of fact." And after pointing out how on occasion workers and employers have cooperated, as in the fur industry and the coal industry, he says: "The Class Struggle is not, therefore, the sole principle on which to get political action. It is something that has to be taught."

"Myth" as used by Comrade Thomas, means an idea broadly rather than precisely valid, which can be dramatized and so made the emotional basis of a popular movement. Woodrow Wilson's war for democracy was a myth of this sort. Perhaps a better example is the Lutheran slogan of freedom of the will, which is indeed a myth.

Thomas's attack on the place given to the Class Struggle in Socialist teaching hitherto is no isolated phenomenon. It is not the expression of one man's opinion. It is part of a reasoned philosophy, of a movement to "broaden" the appeal of Socialism; to "Americanize" it. It therefore calls for criticism and analysis.

The Class Struggle is no myth, in this sense or in any other. That it takes more than shouting Class Struggle to organize either a Socialist world or a Socialist Party is self-

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evident. It is just as self-evident that no Socialist movement can be organized except on the basis of the Class Struggle. Theory and experience unite in demonstrating this.

What do the votes cast for a Socialist program mean, if they are not class votes? What is the mandate of an inchoate group of voters who have supported a Socialist candidate because he is the only honest man among those competing for a given office, or because they wish to voice protest against a corrupt political machine? What power has a Socialist Party if it is kept in office by a voting strength representing a dozen tendencies, ranging from a very mild reformism to parlor-communism?

The experience of the British Labor Party is here illuminating. The Labor Government that took office in 1929 had, it is true, the backing of five million members of the trades unions, but it held power only with the consent of the liberal members of the upper and middle classes. And in saying this I refer to voting strength, and not to the fact that the Liberal members of the House of Commons gave to the Labor Party their support. This was a fatal circumstance. Effective labor action was impossible because of divided and irreconcilable councils. Any measure that could have meant significant gains for Labor was hamstrung at the outset by the need of watering it down to gain liberal support. Any measure like the capital levy or the nationalization of the coal mines would have met with instant defeat. At this distance both in time and space, it would seem better strategy to court defeat, rather than to accept defeat as the MacDonald Government finally did on an issue not of its own making. In the end the MacDonald government fell a victim to its own internal contradictions. It is not my intention to put the blame for the debacle on the shoulders of one man. The fault lies in the confused nature of the Labor Party itself; in its appeal to "national and public" rather than labor support; in its effort to be something "more" than a class party.

A Socialist Party that is not also a class organization has no rudder. It veers from right to left, and from left to right again as momentary fancy takes it. It is to-day Utopian, to-

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morrow impossiblist, the next day it may decide to abandon political action altogether and put its faith in the regeneration of mankind through the education of the individual.

To say that the Socialist Party must be a class party, and must accept the implications of the Class Struggle, is not equivalent to the assertion that the Socialist Party must take any position that the workers happen at the moment to take. At the moment—the workers in New York are an essential part of the Tammany machine. In Chicago they are part of the Republican train. In national politics they, with the farmers, keep the absurd Republican party in power.

Socialism is a reasoned philosophy. There are laws governing historic processes, and Socialists believe they have grasped the essence of these laws. Socialist political and social theories are outgrowths of these laws. In response to their dictates the Socialist movement concentrates on an appeal to the workers. The Socialist cannot yield his philosophy to a penny-wise pound-foolish opportunism.

When Norman Thomas says that the Class Struggle must be taught; when he implies that it is not a self-evident condition that the worker senses of his own accord, he is stating what is in America largely true. That it must be taught makes it none the less the sole principle on which to base Socialist political action. We have to be taught that the earth is round, and that the horizon is not a mile away; that germs cause disease and that matter is motion. None of these things is apparent to untutored observation. The worker must indeed be taught the idea of the inevitable struggle. He will then, and not until then, see the importance of independent political action, as a small percentage of the workers in the United States today see the importance of labor unions.

No Socialist argues that the worker is necessarily aware of the struggle. On the contrary, it is very clear that in America the worker has little class consciousness, and little class solidarity. The poverty of the unions in number, in funds, in power and in philosophy is sufficient evidence of this. If further testimony is needed it is to be found in the division of the working class on racial lines (white against black; white

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against Chinese and Japanese); on national lines (natives against recent immigrants); on sectional lines; on religious lines; and even on occupational lines (farmers vs. factory workers).

Thomas calls for an ethical appeal which will cause the workers to overcome the differences, racial and otherwise, that divide them. There is no question that the fragmentary condition of the working class is its basic weakness. Yet it is hard to imagine any ethical appeal that will bring them together. Ethical appeals without number have been made, and have fallen on deaf ears. What new ethical appeal has Comrade Thomas in mind? What ethical innovation that he thinks stronger than the laws of the Class Struggle can he convey?

An appeal to the working class is needed. It must be an appeal to the minds and to the emotions of the workers. We must teach class-consciousness. Class lines must at last become clear. The identity of essential interests among workers, and the fundamental antagonism of interests as between employer and wage worker must be emphasized. So, and not through ethical concepts can black, white, yellow, Catholic, Protestant, and Jew; farmer and factory worker, Northerner, Southerner, hilly-billy, be welded together into an industrial and political unit.

Recently there has been among some Socialists a tendency to "play down" the Class Struggle for reasons that are illuminating. Chief among them is a desire to make the movement more American, to wean it away from European ideology and phraseology; to make the movement more acceptable to the conservative American worker who shies away from the phrase the Class Struggle because of his thought habits, and because the word has, to him, unpleasant associations. There is a hope, too, that if the theory of the Class Struggle is dropped, there will be an influx of middle class liberals who will lend the lustre of their names, their campaign contributions, their votes, to the movement.

I am not asserting that the Socialist Party has deserted its historic position as the political expression of the working class. I am pointing out that to many men and women with

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whom I come in contact, it has seemed to do so. They receive this apparent change in the Party's philosophy variously, as their own tastes and interests incline them. Among some there is sincere regret; others welcome the "change" precisely as was intended, as a step toward the Americanization of the movement; still others take deep delight in the new mood of the party because, as one leader of the Dewey movement has told me, "There is no Class Struggle. The reason why the Socialist Party has made no headway in America is because it has insisted on teaching the Class Struggle."

When the Industrial Revolution deprived the hand workers of their place in industry, and reduced them to the position of wage-slaves without property the modern Class Struggle came into being. Struggle there has always been since the beginning of history; even Class Struggle. There has been no period of history that has not seen a ruling class living at the expense of a subject class. The ancients had their vast slave masses. The feudal lords, their serfs. Modern industry has its proletariat.

Men in exploited classes may for periods accept their slavery. They never cease to resent it; they never give over the struggle against their masters. Sometimes this rebellion, to which the exploited are impelled by forces stronger than their will, takes the form of ineffectual grumbling; sometimes it expresses itself in sabotage, in secret, persistent, rat-like gnawing at the foundation of the master's power; sometimes it finds a vent in open rebellion.

Always the members of the ruling classes invent ways and means of keeping their slaves under their feet. They use myths and religions, the law and its cohorts, armies, the fear of a foreign foe, factional quarrels that keep their slaves divided into mutually hostile groups; cajolery, and treachery. They win away the potential leader of slave revolt by bribery, subtle and direct; when they cannot seduce him they destroy him in other ways. If they must they kill him.

It has been so throughout the ages. It is so to-day. So long as there are exploiters and exploited it must be so. Gentle souls who shy away in horror from the thought of conflict

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wish that it were not true. They would prefer a world in which kindness, good-will, the spirit of brotherhood and humanity govern human action. No civilized person will deny the desirability of a world in which economic and political questions are settled amicably, on the basis of generous and friendly understanding. Nobody but a Utopian will say that there is any remote possibility to-day that matters of economic and political importance will be so approached in the spirit of good-will and kindness.

For this nobody is to blame. Man being what he is, the struggle between exploiter and exploited must go on. It is inherent in the very nature of the master-slave relationship. And that relationship is as inherent in Capitalism as it was in the ancient and medieval worlds.

That the laborer is exploited becomes obvious when we reflect that the only reason why an employer engages a worker is that he expects to make money out of his labor. He could have no other possible motive for entering into relations with him. The amount of his exploitation will vary with the ability of the worker to strike a bargain with him.

If the worker's position is strong, as was that of the Railway Brotherhoods when in 1916 they wrested the eight-hour day from a reluctant government, they can exact a larger share of the product. Where the workers are weak—as in the textile industry, in the steel mills, in the unskilled trades, the exploiter has his day, and reaps his harvest.

Every once in a while there is an open revolt—a strike. More seldom the revolt achieves considerable proportions. Then we have a general strike. In a few instances abroad the revolt has reached the stage of social revolution. These overt expressions are merely outward signs of the perpetual conflict. The conflict itself is to be found rather in class laws, class justice, class morality, and class pride, from which there is no escape. All that the ancients did in Egypt, Greece and Rome, all that the Feudal lords did in medieval Europe to keep their slaves in subjection, the capitalists seek (not so successfully) to do to-day.

Where the ancients used ignorance and superstition and

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the Feudal lords the mental and spiritual dominance of the church to keep the slaves in mental darkness, modern capitalism uses slogans, catch phrases, oceans of ink, and tons of print paper, to keep the minds of the workers innocent of thought and understanding. Where the ancients gave the slaves Saturnalia and Circuses, and the Feudal lord spectacles and feast days to keep them quiet, we have a motion picture dreamland, baseball, football, the prize-ring. The trick is old. The ruling class mind does not change.

The Class Struggle cannot be denied, nor can it be eliminated so long as the master-slave relationship exists. It is not important that many members of the working class are unaware of their position, and unaware of the origin of their difficulties. It is to be expected that the exploiters will deny that they do exploit labor. In a country like ours, where the Middle Classes are so numerous, it is further to be expected that there will be many in doubt as to their class affiliation; many unable to choose between conflicting loyalties. All this does not obviate the fact that classes exist, and that the struggle goes on.

Every demand for increased wages, and, what is to-day more important, every attempt to force wages down, is a phase in the Class Struggle. The soft-peddalling of discussion over the radio of "controversial issues", the closing of the moving pictures to any but a shabby middle class point of view; the jailing of Mooney and Billings; the spreading of Power Trust propaganda in public school text books; the perversion of the Socialist theories in the same or other text books; the expulsion of Mufson, Schmalhausen and Schneer from the New York city schools in 1917; the exclusion of five Socialist Assemblymen from the New York State Legislature in 1920; the Republican-Democratic coalition in Reading in 1931; the jailing of Debs in 1917; the lynching of Frank Little in the same year; the founding of the *New Yorker* with its appeal to the snobbery of an audience that can pay \$15,000 for a year's rent of a penthouse; the establishment of the Central Park Casino; the freeing of Harry Thaw who murdered Stanford White; the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti

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who were innocent of all crime; the resistance to the "dole" or to unemployment insurance in the present crisis; all are expressions of the Class Struggle, or of class morality.

This is as it must be. Words will not change it. A man thinks as his conditioning makes him, and men are chiefly conditioned by their material backgrounds. The employer of labor must think as an employer of labor. The worker thinks, however, foolishly or aimlessly, as a worker.

The Belgian Socialist, Henri de Man, makes an effort to prove that the dominant factor in the Class Struggle is not so much the material background as an inferiority complex that arises out of his exploited and submerged condition. Entirely apart from the fact that this position is based upon the unproved theories of the psycho-analytical school of psychology, even this statement of the situation does not change the Socialist contention that there is a Class Struggle. It does to some extent rob the Socialist concept of the struggle of some of its dignity. It reduces the worker to a jealous infant reaching out for the baubles of wealth, power and position that the exploiters now have. That is not the Marxian picture of the struggle.

To the Marxian the Class Struggle has all the grandeur and dignity of inexorable forces contending in an inevitable conflict in which one or another of the two forces must be destroyed. What moves them is not a sense of power on the one hand, or a sense of inferiority on the other—but the inner necessity of the situation. The exploiter, so long as he is exploiter **must** act to keep his workers in subjection. Should he falter, should he seek to compromise with his workers and give them substantially more in wages and advantages than do his fellow exploiters, then they—his fellows—will turn and rend him. Sometimes Henry Ford is cited as the example **par excellence** of the exploiter who goes beyond the necessities and who so disproves the Class Struggle. In the first place, Ford never did go materially beyond the market price for labor. And in 1931 Ford's none too subtle subterfuge in discharging the men who worked at \$8 per day, later to rehire them at \$6 per day, should put an end to all talk that makes

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of Henry Ford an exception to all laws. He, like all other capitalists, is tied to the wheel. He must act as he does, or perish as an exploiter.

And the workers? How can they act other than they do? What moved them at Gastonia? At Elizabethton? Look back to the early days of the industrial revolution, when the new machines brought into being child labor, the enslavement of women, and the degradation of the worker. Was it an inferiority complex that then created the Chartist Movement, the finest and clearest of the early protests against Capitalism? Was it an inferiority complex that produced the British Labor Party when the Taff Vale decision threatened the existence of organized labor? Perhaps it was the inferiority complex that brought on the Steel Strike of 1919 or the threatened Railway Strike of 1916 which gave us the Adamson Law.

There have been attempts in America to organize parties of political revolt. The Greenback party, the Populist Party, the Non-partisan League, the LaFollette campaign have all been the outgrowth of a vague class revolt. In all the cases cited there was an attempt to appeal to the public as a whole rather than to the working class. All achieved a certain quick success. And all vanished soon, because the incoherent elements they contained were incapable of working out a philosophy and a direction.

Shall the Socialist Party cease to be a class party and disintegrate, as have the movements mentioned above. Will it give up its reason for existence? Will it become one more party bidding for votes on vague issues, the more vague for seeming to be clear and concrete?

We must avoid even the appearance of compromise and retreat. We must be at all times conscious of our goal. We must not even seem to worship strange gods. In the presence of an unexampled opportunity to weld the workers into a conscious revolutionary whole it would be folly to abandon the Class Struggle—the corner-stone of our structure—for the quicksand of liberal approval.

Chant for Long Breadlines

A Chant for long breadlines,
Men in the wind
Like winter leaves
Heaped blind;
Men of thin blood
Worn old.
Men long since
Spun to gold
And long spent;
Gnarled men and bent.
Bitter leaves of winter weather
Swept together.

The New Capitalism—And After

by

HAIM KANTOROVITCH

THERE is nothing new in economic crises and depressions in capitalist countries. They come and go with the regularity of natural phenomena. They are part of the capitalist system; unavoidable rules of the game.

Whenever one of these crises comes along economists and sociologists hasten to explain to the people what it is all about. In bulky volumes, with much quotation and many statistical tables they show that there is really nothing basically wrong with our economic machine. Some trifle went wrong; this may happen to the best of machines. The "trifle" will be fixed up in a short while and everything will be all right again.

Politicians, preachers and demagogues popularize this scientific work in newspaper articles, in popular speeches over the radio, through the talkies and the church. Special catch-words are invented and popularized; the starving masses chant them in unison with the rest and all wait patiently until everything is all right again.

There are, of course, economists of another kind also: those who cannot believe that a machine that goes wrong at regular intervals is all right in itself. There must be something basically wrong with this machine. With them it is not a question of repairing a trifle, but of replacing the defective machine by another, newer model. But they are always in a minority. Their books are read by few people. They have neither newspapers, nor radios, nor moving-pictures, nor churches. They are at best ridiculed as chronic pessimists, and at worst declared to be alien enemies, foreign agitators, in a word, the kind of people to whom a good American,

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though starving in the midst of plenty, must not listen. The "good Americans" do their patriotic duty and do not listen.

When the working class has paid its toll to capitalism and a relative prosperity takes the place of the depression, the apologists for Capitalism are jubilant. A flood of "I told you so" books is unloaded on the market and with great skill the spirit of optimism begins again to be cultivated.

"The American public," says Prof. Paul Einzig, in his study of the world crisis, "is inclined to exaggerate everything. . . . It was widely, almost generally believed that prosperity would last forever and would go on increasing." The spirit of optimism that attended our late prosperity had no equal even in America, where exaggerated optimism is the usual thing. In spite of the fact that the fruits of prosperity reached a very small number of the American population, in spite of the fact that tens of thousands of workers labored, even during the years of the greatest prosperity, for wages that would not be considered too high even in times of depression; in spite of the fact that during the years of prosperity most American workers were no more sure of their jobs than they are now, the general belief that this prosperity would last forever and go on increasing was universal. To doubt it was heresy of the worst kind.

The theory of the New Capitalism was created. Its outstanding prophet was Henry Ford; its scientific spokesman, Prof. Thomas Nixon Carver. Henry Ford sums up his philosophy of the New Capitalism in the following four fundamentals:

- 1) To make an ever-increasingly large quantity of goods of best possible quality; to make them in the most economic fashion and to force them out on the market.
- 2) To strive always for higher quality and lower prices as well as lower costs.
- 3) To raise wages gradually but continuously and never cut them down.
- 4) To get the goods to the consumer in the most econom-

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ical manner so that the benefits of low cost production may reach him.¹

"These fundamentals," says Ford, "are all summed up in the single word 'service'."

Another representative of the same school, Owen D. Young, in speaking about the relations of Capital and Labor says: "Gradually we are reducing the area of conflict between the two. Slowly we are learning that low wages for labor do not necessarily mean high profits for capital." And again: "Business . . . will not have accomplished its full service until it shall have provided the opportunity for all men to be economically free."²

This was the theory, and it surely had a glorious ring. Who, when and under what circumstances had ever heard Capitalism using such words? The New Capitalism was a specifically American product; the specific expression of the American genius, as our patriots love to say.

How Europe envied us! "Americanism" became a magic word abroad. It stood for the most rational system of production, for high wages, for general prosperity, in short for a new economic order in which Capitalism and Socialism merge. Every capitalist country in the world strove to "Americanize" itself, capitalist Germany as well as Soviet Russia. "Learn how from the Americans" was the most popular slogan in Soviet Russia.

And how we pitied poor Europe. In Europe there are poor and starving people, there is in poor Europe a bitter class struggle. There is even talk of Revolution. Thank God, there are no such things in our America. We enjoy a widespread prosperity; our people are happy and content. Professor Carver thus sums up American conditions:

"Instead of concentration of wealth, we are now witnessing its diffusion . . . Instead of the laborer being in a position of dependence, he is now rapidly attaining a position of independence." And triumphantly the Pro-

1) See "A Philosophy of Production," a symposium edited by J. George Frederick, N. Y. 1930.

2) Ibid.

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fessor exclaims: "The apostles of discontent are being robbed of their thunder."

Europe may speak of revolution, but

"The only economic revolution now under way is going on in the United States. It is a revolution that is to wipe out the distinction between the laborers and capitalists, by making the laborers their own capitalists and by compelling most capitalists to become laborers of one kind or another."⁸

This sounds like ancient history now. It is hard to imagine that people really believed this stuff, but it is true. Only two or three years ago Carver was looked upon as a competitor to Marx, and there are some who believe even now that the economic machine that went wrong will soon be fixed up and that Carverism will still triumph over Marxism.

II.

How much of the theories and hopes of the New Capitalism was really embraced by American capitalists is hard to say. All evidence points to the belief that outside of a few big industrialists, the average American capitalist did not bother much with these theories. If he had to pay higher wages, he paid. This was however not "service" but profit. The theory of the New Capitalism found its disciples not among the capitalists, but among the laboring classes. The labor leaders embraced it wholeheartedly. In a sense the theories of Prof. Carver and other apologists of Capitalism became the new bible of the American Federation of Labor.

The American trade union movement has never distinguished itself by its revolutionary spirit or its militancy of action. In its pure and simple form, with its old-fashioned craft unionism, it was always the most conservative part of the American Labor movement. It has always been practical in its aims and opportunistic in its tactics. It has no special vision, and no unity of thought. Those who speak of the philosophy of the American Federation of Labor, misuse the

⁸) Thomas Nixon Carver: Present Economic Revolution in the United States. pp. 8-10.

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term philosophy. The A. F. of L. has no philosophy. It has never had one; it has always been afraid of theory. The A. F. of L. never fought Capitalism. It fought capitalists; the A. F. of L. never was, and never intended to be a working class organization. It always was an organization of workers. It conducted strikes, lockouts, boycotts, but the term class-struggle was always anathema to it. It never viewed its own struggle as a part of a greater whole. It learned nothing from the past and had no vision of the future.

Nevertheless, in spite of its lack of vision, its lack of militancy and its archaic form of organization, it has succeeded in organizing millions of workers, and to a certain extent it has wrested some concessions from the employers without being militant. It has to its credit many aggressive and spectacular fights in the interests of the workers.

Since the advent of the New Capitalism the A. F. of L. has lost the last vestige of its proletarian character. Instead of placing its hope in the power of the working class it has banked on the benevolence of the capitalists. It has practically given up the strike as a weapon. The appeal to fairness, the appeal to politicians to intervene, became its only hope. Gompers was a conservative, but with his conservatism he went to the workers; William Green and Matthew Woll go with their "ideals", not to the workers, but to the capitalists. William Green has spoken perhaps in more churches in the last five or six years than union halls; Matthew Woll is far better known as a representative of the Civic Federation, and as a "red baiter" than as a trade union leader. Labor leaders all over the country follow in the footsteps of their national leaders. To prevent strikes has become their first concern.

In the light of the philosophy of the New Capitalism these tactics seem quite logical and justified. If the aim of business is to provide opportunity for equality to everyone, if prosperity is to go on and on, and expand and diffuse its benefits among wider sections of the working class; if it is to the interests of the capitalists that wages shall be constantly raised and never lowered, there is nothing better for the A. F. of L. to do than "heartily co-operate" with the capitalists. Class

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collaboration is the logical consequence of the New Capitalism. President William Green proudly declared: "It is my opinion that the so-called 'irrepressible conflict' which some economists claim exists between the employers and employees can be terminated. Good judgment and reciprocal concessions in arriving at a settlement of industrial disputes can bring about a realization of this happy result."

Notice that Green himself does not believe that there is such an "irrepressible conflict," but as there are "some" economists who do believe in it he is willing "for argument's sake" to admit its existence, and to show that even if they are right, the conflict can be terminated by the use of "good judgment and reciprocal concessions." The A. F. of L., one must admit, has made more than enough concessions, but they were not reciprocal.

The A. F. of L. has earned the praise and the compliments of every supporter of Capitalism. It has been held up by the capitalists of Europe as a good example of what a good labor organization should be. The "higher strategy of labor" has been widely discussed and praised. "The higher strategy of labor is beginning to be appreciated and is understood perfectly clearly by multitudes of laboring men," says Prof. Carver, but "unfortunately only a few leaders who have this point of view come to the top."⁴ This was written in 1925 and even then there were more than a few leaders who had this point of view. In 1931 there seem to be none who do not share it.

What have been the practical results of the "higher strategy of labor"? The A. F. of L. has ceased to be even a moderate fighting organization. The only fight that it did take up was the struggle against Communism and Socialism, against independent political action, against every progressive thought or word in the labor movement. The workers it left to the mercies of the New Capitalist. Gradually the workers lost all interest in their unions; they lost all faith in their unions and began to look upon them as on an outside force. Some of them remained members of the unions because they had to;

4) Ibid. pp. 203-4.

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others because they did not care to resign. Most of the workers were, and still are, outside the unions. Well-organized trade unions began to decline; no efforts were made to infuse new life into them. The most important industries were not organized at all; no effort is made to organize them. The A. F. of L. is steadily drifting down hill and does not seem to notice it or to worry about it.

The back-bone of the fighting labor organization is the enthusiasm of its members; their faith in the movement; their readiness to fight and sacrifice for it. The American trade union has lost its backbone. It cannot rely on its members any longer. It must look for another force on which to rely. This leads to the rise of cliques, of union machines that care more for their position within the union than for the position of the workers within the industry.

The philosophy of the New Capitalism opened wide the doors of the unions to both the Communists, and the trade union racketeer: the one trying to convert the union into a tail of his party; the other converting it into a private business for himself, and neither trying to preserve the union for the working class.

III.

The rise of the New Capitalism found the American Socialist movement in the midst of a severe crisis. It had just emerged from a bitter inner party struggle which had greatly weakened it. Years of organization and educational work were wiped out by the world war and by the rise of Communism. It had to begin all over again. That was hard work for which much patience was needed. There were many obstacles in its way, but the greatest of them all was prosperity and the philosophy of the New Capitalism.

Socialism is a working class movement. It is based on the class struggle. It has really only one argument: under Capitalism the working class must always remain the poor and exploited wage class, creating wealth for others and nothing but poverty and suffering for itself. This deplorable condition can not be remedied otherwise than by the conscious class

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struggle of the workers. The working class has no one to rely on but itself. Only by organizing itself politically and economically, by consciously using its power as the creator of all wealth, can it after a hard and desperate struggle, which cannot be otherwise than revolutionary, change the present capitalist order into a socialist order.

The rise of the New Capitalism seemed to rob Socialism of its *raison d'être*. Capitalism seemed to be forming itself into something that was not Capitalism at all. The everlasting and ever expanding prosperity and the new social conscience of the New Capitalist were expected to do what Socialism promised to do. Class distinctions were rapidly disappearing; every worker was on the way of becoming a capitalist and this was to be accomplished, not through the class struggle, but through class collaboration. The abolition of poverty and of class distinctions had become an all-American ideal. Herbert Hoover used this reasoning as an argument for himself and his party in his campaign speeches:

"We in America to-day are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land." And this was being accomplished not by the class struggle of the workers; Capitalism itself was taking care of the problem.

Socialists have never accepted the philosophy of the New Capitalism, but it frightened them. Speaking and writing against it, they nevertheless made concession after concession to it. They toned down their revolutionary ardor, they avoided the term "class struggle"; they relegated the proletarian character of Socialism to a secondary place. Many Socialists seemed to have lost their faith in their party as well as in the working class. Socialism became for them, not the hope of the working class, but of good and intelligent people; the proletarian revolution was changed to "America's Way". Its most important function became not the conquest of the working class for Socialism but the gaining of the good graces of the liberal *intelligentzia*. It seemed as if they said: "Oh, if we could only get the liberal professors, the ministers, the priests and the rabbis—the good people in general, all would be well. To get the favor of this element we may have

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to sacrifice some of our revolutionary phrases. Well, what of it? The old Socialism is 'not abreast of our times' anyway."

"The capitalist system has . . . done a great deal during the last decade to improve the material conditions of the American workers, and shows great productive vitality," declared Paul H. Douglas at the League for Industrial Democracy conference in 1929. "Socialistic arguments based upon the theory of increasing misery are consequently in direct opposition to the facts and will make no appeal to the workers, nor can the Socialists hope to make many converts by an attempted demonstration of the inevitability of the cataclysmic downfall of Capitalism."⁵

Moreover Douglas is convinced that there is only one way in which we still can make a success of our Socialism. "It will be necessary," he says, "for Socialism to prove its way by making a success of a series of specific experiments." In other words we must turn from Marx to Robert Owen, to Fourier. From scientific Revolutionary Socialism to the old Utopianism.

When a Dr. Wolfson at the same conference complained that the Socialist Party had failed to point out to the capitalist, to the man who piles up wealth and material things, that wealth does not bring him any happiness, August Claessens took up the challenge: "I assure Dr. Wolfson," he proudly declared, "there is no necessity for addition to the socialist philosophy such as you suggested. . . . I will be more than happy to give you a bibliography . . . of socialist books which have stressed this point, and I may modestly include my own contribution."⁶

Let us hear the advice of still another comrade, McAlister Coleman: "Of this class struggle as taught by its more extreme propagandists, the worker may well remark: It's pretty but is it art? And just where does it get me? And recent experience has shown us that the only honest answer to this question is that it gets the worker more firmly in the clutches of the employer, splits his union to pieces, diminishes the sum total of production, over whose division he is supposed to be

⁵) *The Socialism of Our Times*—A symposium edited by Harry W Laidler and Norman Thomas. The Vanguard Press, N. Y., 1929, pp. 10-11.

⁶) *Ibid.* p. 161.

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struggling and leaves him in the end with notably thinned pay envelope." ⁷ Now you can see what a terrible and dangerous thing this class struggle is. It puts the worker in the clutches of his employer, it splits his union, diminishes production and reduces his wages. Ergo, down with the class struggle!

And here is a word of cheer from another Comrade to those that are afraid that our Socialism still remains old and European. "The title of the last year's L. I. D. symposium, "Prosperity", marks the change in socialist viewpoint from the pain economy to the pleasure economy, from the phraseology of the European laborer with nothing to lose but his chains to that of the American worker with his demands for a Ford and a radio."

Even European Socialists have tried to help us Americanize our Socialism. S. Ivanovich, one of those Socialists that was so frightened by Russian Bolshevism that he is afraid of any thing that may remind him of revolution, has made a study of American prosperity, and concludes that the concept of the class struggle can not be applied to America. The prophet of American Socialism is not Marx, but Carver (though he does not mention Carver by name), and Abraham Cahan, being afraid that the American workers might miss the brilliant discoveries of the Russian Socialist, hastened to popularize the theories of Ivanovich in a series of articles in the New Leader. No one was found to reply to or take issue with Cahan.

What these Socialists lacked was a fearless and systematic theoretician, one that could with one stroke make an end to Marxism. Such a theoretician they found in Henry De Man.

Here is a man who was himself a Marxist for many years, and now has not only repudiated it, but has made "The Liquidation of Marxism" his business. Of all criticism of Marx, De Man's is the most shallow and superficial, but he is hailed as the new Prophet; he "blazed a trail" for some of our leading Socialists.

Where were the Marxists? Has everybody really abandoned Marxism? Certainly not. At the L. I. D. conference, where Socialists together with non-Socialists "revised" Marx-

⁷) Ibid. p. 243.

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ism, people like Hillquit, Lee, Oneal and a few others strongly affirmed their Marxian convictions, but they were discouraged; they were not sure of themselves. They preferred, it seems watchful waiting to fighting the enemy wherever one meets him.

What were the results of this new and Americanized Socialism? We really did convince a small group of liberals that there is no danger in sometimes (not always) associating with us, but we have lost much of the prestige that we had with the working class.

The more intelligent part of the working class, that is precisely the part of the working class that we could hope to reach with our socialist message, did not classify our liberals supporters as Socialists, they rather classified us as Liberals.

We have turned all of our attention to political action and political action we have narrowed down to electioneering. The Socialist Party never accepted the philosophy of the New Capitalism, the official theory of the party remained as it was before,—Marxian. The anti-Marxists were few and were content usually to leave Marxism alone. In practice, however, Marxism became the philosophy of individual comrades. In our practical work we adapted ourselves to the philosophy of the New Capitalism. We became exceedingly practical. We limited our propaganda to practical issues, refraining wherever we could, from mentioning either the class struggle or Socialism.

Liberals praised us; we praised ourselves, but we passed out as a factor from the class struggle. We helped the trade unions as outsiders help, but we did not participate in their struggles. Members of the Socialist Party were active in the trade unions, but the Party never organized them for socialist work within the unions. It never instructed its members how to act. Instead of "boring from within" we contented ourselves simply with "helping". Of course we did criticize everything that was wrong in the unions. The New Leader was always at its post calling the attention of its readers to every false and objectionable step in the trade union movement, but that was done not by the New Leader alone. The Nation and

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the New Republic did the same. Criticism is very important and necessary, but it is not enough. Our criticism must go together with an organized fight against everything that we consider harmful to the interests of the working class.

Some of our Party members are afraid that an organized struggle within the unions for our principles and ideals will lead us into the Communist camp. These comrades, it seems, do not know the Communist aim in the unions. They want to capture the unions for their party. We want to capture the unions for the workers. The Communists want to get organizational control over the unions in order to dictate to them and to tell them how to conduct their trade union business. We want neither to control the unions organizationally, nor to annex them to our Party, nor to provide our members with well paid jobs. We want to teach the members of the trade unions the class-struggle and how it is to be applied to their everyday struggles. The tactics of the Communists cannot serve our purpose. We know very well that no educational work can be done by the use of invectives, and nothing but harm can result by provoking inner factional fights or causing splits. This can only weaken the movement. Our work in the unions is purely educational, but have we done this purely educational work? Some of us have done so as individuals. The Party as a whole has done very little. Every Socialist within the trade union movement acted not only at his own risk, but also according to his own views and convictions. This "private initiative" has often harmed the Party more than it has helped it.

The Socialist Party has never accepted the philosophy of the New Capitalism, but it was frightened by it. It tried to adapt itself to the "New Era" of prosperity and failed. We may well be thankful that it did fail. Its failure assures return to theory and tactics of Revolutionary Socialism.

IV

The Wall Street crash of October 1929 was the official registration of the death of our "everlasting" prosperity. Some of its prophets did not at first admit that this was the end.

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Capitalist economists as usual showed convincingly, that the "crisis" was only psychological, only in the minds of Socialists. But, when the number of the unemployed kept growing larger, when the sufferings of the unemployed and of their families could no longer be concealed, even President Hoover admitted that there was indeed a crisis in the home of prosperity, and that there were indeed millions of homes in which there was want and starvation, and that the soft-hearted American capitalists must raise millions at once to help the unemployed. The philosophy of the New Capitalism was suddenly forgotten. Its cardinal principles that "wages must always rise and never be lowered" gradually vanished. A veritable epidemic of wage reductions was the answer of the "progressive", the "New" American Capitalism to the crisis.

Hoover and his party have only one remedy: Charity! Charity degrades; charity places the recipient in a position of dependence on the one who gives. Surely unemployment insurance is a more dignified as well as a more effective form of relief. Hoover opposes it. With few exceptions every capitalist politician is against it. But what about the Labor Movement? The American Federation of Labor is also opposed to unemployment insurance! Together with President Hoover, the A. F. of L. is against "any kind of dole", but it is for charity; against state insurance, but for state charity! For President Hoover as well as for President Green, the present crisis is only a temporary disturbance, "a trifle gone wrong" in an otherwise perfectly good machine. Moreover, the A. F. of L. sees in this crisis an opportunity for our government. Thus, Mr. Edward P. McGrady speaking before the Sub-committee of the Senate Committee on manufactures says: "Here is a great opportunity for the Federal government to renew the faith in their government". And what is the A. F. of L. itself going to do for the unemployed?

"We are going to try to assist our members as much as possible in the future, but with unemployment increasing we very much fear that we will have to call upon the public authorities to assist us in carrying this load."

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The Socialists have advanced a comprehensive and dignified program for unemployment relief. The A. F. of L. will not accept this program. In fact, it is opposed to it, because the Socialist program views the crisis as a constant companion of the capitalist system of production and distribution, while the A. F. of L. "knows" that it is nothing more than an "accident", "a trifle gone wrong" in a good machine.

The more progressive section of the capitalist ideologists seems to understand, very well, that the present crisis is more than a "trifle gone wrong". Says Walter Lippman in his "Notes on the Crisis":

"We have been and are even now under the spell of an illusion, a kind of popular superstition, of a type common enough in history. It is, in our case, a belief in the magical restoration of prosperity. Whereas up to the autumn of 1929 we had dreamed that depressions were abolished.

"This belief in the automatic restoration of prosperity has made us for the time being a nation of fatalists. We have told ourselves in a thousand public statements that if winter comes spring cannot be far behind. We have looked upon our troubles, not as problems to be solved, but as so much bad weather in which the chief thing to do was to sit in front of the barometer and wait for a change in the wind. Thus we have become more interested in prophesying the future than in preparing for it, in guessing than in governing, in statistical curves than in statesmanship, in wishing than in willing".

What is necessary above all, according to Mr. Lippman is an understanding of the fact that,

"Slowly but steadily since about the turn of the century, violently and spectacularly since 1914, the whole world has been drawn into one of the greatest readjustments among continents, nations and classes of which there is any record. It is a marvel, looking back upon it now, that we could ever have so complacently thought that a boom under such treacherous conditions was permanent. It is more marvelous that so many should still

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think so, and should still mistake for solid metal the golden bubble we managed to inflate, when for a brief moment there was a lull in the storm".

Walter Lippman's opinions on the crisis are representative of the general opinion of the most advanced group of American economists, sociologists and publicists. They begin to see the crisis as part of our economic system and realize that some drastic changes in this system must be made. What do they propose? Their newest remedy is Social Planning. Capitalist production is chaotic, without order or plan. Everyone thinks in terms of his own private interests and not about the interests of society as a whole; everyone tries to outwit every one else. "Industrial production," says a British economist, "is a lengthy process necessarily carried on ahead of demand. . . . The fluctuations, therefore which are normal characteristics of Modern Industrial activity represent the errors in anticipation and estimates of the business men who direct production to demand."

Social planning will do away with these "errors of the business men". It will bring order into capitalist chaos. But, how will it do so? Chaos and planlessness in capitalist industry is the result of free competition, and free competition is the necessary corollary of private ownership of the social means of production. The first thing any social plan would have to do is to abolish (restriction is not enough) free competition. Some kind of an economic council would have to be set up, and this council would have to have authority to regulate production, distribution and prices. Can it be done while retaining private ownership of the means of production? The idea of social planning came to our progressives as a result of their admiration of the Russian Five Year Plan. They want to imitate the Russian plan, but they ignore the fact that before inaugurating their industrial plan the Russians abolished private ownership of the means of production. Our social planners would like to have both; planned production and private ownership of the means of production. That is, they want to eat their cake and have it. This cannot be done. Either we have private ownership of the means of production

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or socially planned production. It is either the one or the other. They do not go together.

The advocates of planned production are very careful to make it clear that they do not intend to abolish private property. Professor Charles A. Beard stipulates in his plan: "that no confiscation of property is contemplated here."⁸ Professor Lewis L. Lorwin assures his readers that "we (i.e. the advocates of planned production) do not wish to join those who call for a complete break with the past and for a violent overthrow of all institutions."⁹ In short, planned production is advocated as an improvement on Capitalism.

V.

Planned production will never be established under Capitalism. All the talk about Social Planning will remain nothing but talk. No one **really** expects any practical results from this plan-propaganda. If not Social Planning what other way is there out of the present crisis? There are some, especially among the Communists, who believe that this is the "last crisis of Capitalism", its final collapse. But this is not so. Capitalism is still strong enough to overcome the present crisis. It is true that the prosperity which we have had in this country will not return again. Unemployment, due to technological causes has come to stay. It has become a permanent feature of latter-day Capitalism. Nevertheless, we certainly are not yet in for "the last and decisive struggle," neither in America nor in any European country.

What does face us in the near future is not the speedy final collapse of Capitalism, but a long and desperate class-struggle. The collapse of the illusion of everlasting and everlasting and ever-expanding prosperity will bring the class-struggle to the fore. The Socialist and Labor movement will have to readjust itself to this new phase of open and bitter struggle in which the two opposing camps will face each other. Whoever will not be able to make the readjustment will be left behind as irrelevant to the class-struggle.

⁸) Forum, July, 1931.

⁹) See article by Lewis L. Lorwin, Survey-Graphic, December, 1931.

Problems Confronting The Social Democracy

by

ALBERT LAUTERBACH

INTERNATIONAL Socialism has entered upon a period of defensive strategy. After the storm and stress of the first years following the war, after the "pause" in the progress of Socialism, as Capitalism became gradually more stable, after a recent short period of advance (1928) the Socialist movement,—except in a few countries, e.g. France, Switzerland and Belgium,—is everywhere threatened from two directions: from within by the world-wide economic crisis, and from without by the danger of political reaction in various forms.

This retreat into a defensive position, and the difficulty of defensive tactics, are fully to be grasped only if the mental processes accompanying this phase of the class struggle within the labor movement itself are understood. It would be self-deception for us to fail to recognize the momentary weakening of the faith of the masses in their organizations, of their faith in the cause of the party and of the unions, which gives the reaction its really dangerous strength. It is remarkable that precisely at the time when Capitalism is beginning to lose faith in its own mission, as it loses faith in its functioning, the revolutionary movement which aims at overthrowing Capitalism is also in ferment. In the eyes of hundreds of thousands even the marvelous growth of the Socialist movement during a few decades is made to seem an old story.

FROM CONSPIRACY TO GOVERNMENT

The Social Democracy began in the form of small circles of sectarians, which were either persecuted or disregarded. Then it affected growing masses of the workers and of the

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classes on the fringe of the proletariat, without at any time even questioning its functions as a revolutionary party; a party, that is, in opposition to all the basic social, industrial and political concepts of the time. Democratic institutions, the beginnings of social legislation usually date back in western countries to the bourgeois progressive movement; in Central Europe they were created in most cases by the rulers themselves, moved by fear of the rising labor movement. Nevertheless, the working class had little more to lose than its chains. The Socialist movement was always the embodiment of the opposition to the existing social order, and nothing else than this.

The world war altered much in the inner constitution and the outward attitude of the Socialist parties. In the course of the war the Socialist parties and the ruling powers came closer together almost everywhere. The rulers tried actively and successfully to range the Socialist parties and the unions, which in most countries had accepted the theory of "home-defense", into the economic and political apparatus of these lands. Just at the time when international class consciousness began timidly to reawaken, the official offer of co-operation was made to the German Social Democracy; it was even invited to enter into the imperial government. Socialism became eligible to govern,—and at the same time it headed for a split.

After the war, however, the Socialist parties of many countries entered on a new phase, which became most strikingly evident perhaps immediately in the period of the revolutions, but which, as will be pointed out, has reached maturity only now, in the second decade after the war. They acquired basic functions within capitalist society. Even the attainment of democracy, of civil liberty, of all the political and legal requirements of capitalist competition, coincident, to be sure, with a code of social legislation, was in Germany, in Czechoslovakia, in Austria, the work of the Social Democracy and is in the popular mind identified with it. The new social functions became the true motive for the split in the labor movement; on the part of the bourgeoisie they became the basis for the appeal to fascism.

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But this change in the function of the Socialist movement was by no means restricted to the countries where democracy is young. Even in Great Britain, France, Belgium and Scandinavia the Socialist parties during the decade after the war became at times the strongest in their respective countries, achieved in various forms, through coalitions, minority governments, or the tacit support of bourgeois cabinets, decisive functions within capitalist society. In the course of years it came to seem as if, even though always against vigorous opposition, it would be possible to deprive the representatives of capitalism piecemeal of their social functions, and to win the masses to the great cause of Socialism through the practical demonstration of ability to handle the details of government. The magnificent electoral victories of 1928 and 1929 in Germany and Great Britain made the Socialist parties the leading powers in the two greatest countries in Europe.

THE RELAPSE

Two years have sufficed completely to alter the picture. In Germany, in Great Britain, but also in several smaller countries the Socialist parties are engaged in a serious defensive struggle. Not merely their control of power in the narrow sense is involved, but (and this especially interests us in this connection) their basic ideas as well. In Germany the admittedly bourgeois parties have been in the minority since September 1930, and have since then, with the exception of the Center, melted away like snow in the spring sun. In England after the just completed destruction of the two party system by the Labor Party, the three party system has now also begun to crumble. The basic ideas of bourgeois society are being revolutionized at a breakneck pace; but the revolution in most parts of capitalist Europe not only does not redound to the advantage of the Socialist movement, but in several outstanding cases it even seriously undermines its political and theoretical foundations.

To a large extent these phenomena may be referred back to the general laws that govern all post-revolutionary periods; for even the rapid rise of Socialism in England is a political

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revolution. We have here the unavoidable relapse after every revolution, which undermines even the achievements of the first years after the war. But to account for these phenomena exclusively on the ground of the general laws of revolutionary movements would be to be blind to their depth and their importance.

In the eyes of the masses the Social Democracy has become responsible, or at the very least, partly responsible for a whole series of events and of phenomena within the capitalist society. And it should be noted not by any means responsible merely to the extent to which it has assumed active functions within the existing society. If in a coalition government of twelve ministers, four are Social Democrats, the Social Democracy is not held responsible by the great masses for only 33⅓% of all that occurs under this government, but usually for 95%. In greater measure this holds good for a Socialist minority government, since even in countries with an established democracy the great masses seldom possess the political schooling, and surely not the psychological disposition, accurately to measure the niceties of political power.

The wounds of four years of destructive warfare are by no means closed; in capitalist society they perhaps will never be healed. The burden of war debts, the policy of petty state protectionism in a period of world-wide industrial involvement, the acuteness of class contrast in the old capitalist portions of the world impose on every government, every parliamentary majority, insoluble problems, and at the same time great responsibility. The inevitable coincidence of the assumption of important social functions by the Socialist parties and the increasing difficulty attending their activities constitutes the chief problem of present-day Socialism.

THE TWO FRONTS

Even where the Social Democracy is externally burdened with no governmental responsibility it bears to-day a great share of the responsibility for decisive arrangements and events within capitalist society, which is reflected not only internally in its tactics, but also in the consciousness of the great masses

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within and outside of the party. The very code of social legislation, which is indissolubly bound up with the rise of the political movement of the workers, is a positive achievement for the socialist workers within capitalist society. All movements for peace and international understanding can be traced back to the influence of the Socialist parties. In countries where democracy is new, increasingly in the old democratic terrain as well, democracy depends in the first place on the will and on the political powers of the working class. It is this class which seeks to ensure for itself this advantageous battle-ground for its socialist aims, while the bourgeoisie, with the strengthening of the workers' movement everywhere, becomes an uncertain champion for democracy.

The proletariat in all of Western, Northern and Central Europe has not, therefore, for a long time been in a position where it has nothing to lose; it has, to be sure, still a world to gain, but the rights already achieved are broad enough at the moment to influence the tactics of the Socialist parties far more than the ultimate Socialist aim. Even in pre-war years the labor movement did not enjoy an unobstructed rise; even then periods of stormy progress alternated with periods of stagnation, even of recession. But in those times the chief question at issue was the maintenance of the organization itself; to protect it from the assault of reaction. To-day, however, we are concerned with the protection and the preservation of independent state functions, not immediately connected with the organization. The preservation of quite definite, even of the most progressive, component parts of existing society, becomes at times the decisive factor in determining socialist political tactics, and at such moments is given precedence over the growth of the Socialist movement itself; it may even retard the growth of the movement. In the parliamentary machinery itself, the "balance of class-power", the mutual paralysis of groups almost equal in strength, often for years robs parliaments of their power to act, and gives Social Democrats the impression that all that is attained is insipid and meaningless compromise. If the stale-mate in parliament fosters fascist leanings in the bourgeoisie, under certain circum-

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stances it increases in the working class discontent with the adherence of its party to parliamentary methods, which are easily made to seem out-of-date, not to say conservative. The bureaucratization of the party machinery, which goes on even in anti-parliamentary parties, has most strongly affected the Socialist parties; it is at once the cause and the effect of the disciplined organization of these parties, which is a natural consequence of their class nature. The growth of the organization and its complexity likewise tends to strengthen the tendency to bureaucracy, and at same time tends to give the party, in consequence of the increasingly difficult task of supervising its structure and its activities, a tinge of conservatism, of the mechanical. That is the reason for the unprecedented success of all slogans concerning the "petrefaction" of the party. Even in the ranks of the politically schooled workers, who can properly evaluate such a slogan, the growth of bureaucracy has the effect of making them see within the Social Democracy a "conservative" tendency. The manifold activities, the difficulties inherent in supervising a modern party machine, may easily bring about an exaggeration of parliamentary tactics at the expense of party tactics. This may give to the Socialist parliamentary group and to parliamentarism in general, the appearance of conservatism. The tactical decisions of the Leipzig Congress of the party, however the individual may feel as to their justification,—were in form (in granting complete freedom of action to Socialist Reichstag members) perhaps bound to strengthen this impression.

Not less dangerous in its effect is the control of the machinery of the State by representatives of the Social Democracy, which in certain critical moments can be of inestimable value in the preservation of democracy and of social rights. In the long run however this imposes on the Social Democracy not only responsibility for state functions which necessarily arise out of the structure of capitalism, but very easily also, in the eyes of the masses, responsibility for the conduct and the effect of the capitalist social structure itself. For does not the inner, inevitable functioning of the machinery of the State

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in certain situations come in conflict with the ideas and the actions of the workers? Is it psychologically, and in practice, possible to make the differences between a socialist government and a predominantly bourgeois parliament clear to the masses in every doubtful parliamentary decision, in every case where a question of vital importance is muddled? Are not Socialist parties, in such cases, in danger of keeping the machinery of the state in their hands and so appearing "conservative" in the eyes of the masses, even when in fact they are not. Do they not risk a loss of internal strength?

THE SPLIT

There has been much reference (perhaps as yet too little) to the immediate political consequences of the disruption of the labor movement into Social Democrats and Communists, and perhaps intermediate groups, and to the internecine warfare that has enormously reduced the influence of the whole labor movement; much reference to the effect of the split on countless people who would gladly join a united Socialist Party. The criminal tactics of the Communist International which makes the chasm deeper with its alternation of unscrupulous attacks and clumsy "united front" manoeuvres have often been pilloried. But we have not seen clearly enough, perhaps, how the split inevitably condemns not only the Communists, but in large measure the socialist parties, as well, to one-sidedness. It is in the nature of political polemics to return every blow with increased force, to exaggerate every word in a partisan sense, in order that the peculiar quality, the special significance of one's own position may stand out more clearly. In the defensive struggle against the Communists the Socialist parties easily run the risk of exaggerating the points of difference; perhaps of giving to the slogans "democracy" and "republic", which sever them from the Communists, so much weight that because of them their points of departure, "the class struggle" and "Socialism" are neglected. Among the masses of the politically unschooled, the impression may be created that the Social Democracy has set for itself merely the goal

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of preserving "democracy" and "the republic"; its social revolutionary aims disappear from the general consciousness. A glance at the Russia of the Five-Year Plan (often idealized in the minds of the masses) may increase this impression, especially when Social-Democratic papers and speakers in a biased manner easily misunderstood, turn preponderantly or even exclusively against Soviet Russia, as has often unfortunately happened especially in Germany. On the other hand, the same or even a worse type of one-sidedness on the part of the Communists, which often manifests itself in infantile pleasure in destructiveness or in roguery, frequently forces the Social Democracy into a defensive position which easily lends itself to interpretation by the politically unschooled portions of the masses as a conservative defense of all that is.

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

All this is emphasized by the economic crisis of unprecedented extent and intensity which has come over the world in the past two years. Distorted by the grotesque failure of the industrial order, the problems of Socialism are seen on one hand in the light of the struggle for a higher form of social organization, on the other in the light of the vital interest of the working class in surviving the present crisis.

From the beginning industrial crises have, on one hand, shaken the masses where they were still indifferent, on the other they have fostered discouragement and despair. They have blamed the fighting power of the labor organizations. But the most recent world crisis has given more patent expression than ever to this polarity, in different degrees in different countries. In districts with a weak labor movement—U. S. A., Italy, Hungary—it has set the masses in motion and has brought the effects of Capitalism to their attention. In countries where the labor movement is already strong, and has a significant social position, it has burdened the Socialist movement itself directly or indirectly, at least in the eyes of the masses, with partial responsibility for the failure of the industrial machinery. Even political education over a period of

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many years, has in not a few cases simply not sufficed to teach a despairing man out of work to realize the limits of the actual power in the control of the movement. In his opinion a party that has had so great an increase of power ought in some way be able to help him and industry as a whole.

Here the two basic tasks of the labor movement may easily conflict; the securing of an endurable life for the worker now and the striving toward a basic overturn of Capitalism. The sight of the almost invariable inability of bourgeois governments to carry out a halfway sensible industrial policy, even from the capitalist standpoint, on occasions impels Socialist parties to take the reins in their hands for the purpose of better combatting the crisis. The typical case of this is England, where the really pathetic failure of the conservatives in fighting unemployment furnished the reason for the existence of a Labor Government,—to be sure with very limited power. It was an English delegate who formulated the resulting problem in classic form, in the question whether a Socialist government could and should repair the disordered industrial machinery of Capitalism better than the capitalists themselves. A Socialist Party is here in a serious dilemma; it must either allow matters to take their course and so expose itself to the reproach of inactivity, or it must take a hand in the workings of capitalist industry, and be involved in its contradictions. If anything can be learned from the events of recent years it is this: that a Socialist Party can and must take upon itself responsibility for quite clear and definite measures in industrial management, and **only** for measures of this type, without surrendering blindly to the anarchy of capitalist economy, however well "planned".

Either course may make the Social Democracy seem to be conservative. This danger is greatly enhanced by the tendency to find compensation in the romance and the mysticism of revolution for the deadening mechanization of life. At bottom the common basis of all "anti-Marxist"-tendencies, of all tendencies directed against Social Democracy, from the Nazis themselves to the official phrases of the Communists, is the effort to put upon the Social Democracy responsibility

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for all attempts to combat the economic crisis through the use of existing political machinery, and to impose upon the upholders of the **political** order, responsibility for the whole of the **social** order.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OR DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS?

And we must not deceive ourselves. Many Socialist parties have only themselves to blame if they are burdened with undeserved responsibility. Many a Socialist Party for years has focussed its attention chiefly on the present and even on the past; it was prone to forget that a Socialist Party has also, and chiefly, to do with the future. If for years you identify yourself with the existing State, if you describe it in all its details as your very own work, you must not be surprised if the great masses actually hold you responsible for all that occurs in this State: For the deeds of violence committed by the State against the workers; for industrial crises; for unemployment; for the pressure of taxes. Holds you responsible, too, when the party no longer controls the chief places in the State machine, for the party itself has again and again accepted the State.

The change in the party's mode of expression can, to be sure, be traced back in part to structural changes within the Socialist parties since the war. In many of them thousands of members of the border classes, of the petty bourgeoisie, of the intellectuals and the small peasants, are clustered about a proletarian nucleus which because of its size still predominates. The Communists deliberately misstate the situation when they advance as a reason for a lasting split and as the chief distinction between themselves and us, the structure of the party. But there is no doubt that consideration for these middle class elements has more than once induced Socialist parties in their propaganda to make criticism of the existing social order secondary to positive achievement within the existing political order.

Where Socialist parties are themselves responsible for governmental power many a feature in their conduct of for-

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eign policy works in the same direction. The complete failure of the bourgeois governments to solve the problems of disarmament, the tariff, and of national minorities, has been among the reasons why Socialist parties have taken the reins into their hands, or why they have held on to power. The hope that they will be able to solve difficult problems of foreign policy sometimes keeps Socialist governments at the helm when internal political affairs have robbed them of all influence in their own countries (e.g. the evacuation of the Rhineland in Germany; India and disarmament in England). They allow themselves to be made responsible, for the sake of controlling foreign policy, for the most hopeless situations in capitalist industry, of the labor market, of governmental affairs. The wave of "National Socialism" in Germany is not retarded by the evacuation of the Rhine, nor is the return of the conservatives to power prevented in England by the Hague reparations conferences and the London Naval Pact.

Socialists sometimes inadvertently appear to be nationalists when a government controlled by Socialists represents the interests of a country, even though, perhaps, with the express purpose of so combatting the interests of a fascist country. At a time when it is hard for most people to retain their full power of political judgment,—and it is likely that we will live in such times for a long period,—many will feel as if full acceptance of the whole social system of our times is bound up with nationalism.

OTHER THAN THE OTHERS

And let us not deceive ourselves in this: The power of attraction, I am tempted to say, the reason for the existence of the Socialist movement, has rested, and rests, on its ability to say of itself: We are no party like so many others; no, we are something quite apart; we are the salt of the earth; we are the party of the future, we are other than the others. Nothing could be more short-sighted than to confuse this with the mere desire for advertisement, or with partisan pride. The age of the rise of the Socialist movement is the

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age of the rapidly disappearing faith in Capitalism. From the moment in which a Socialist party in tactics and teachings degrades itself to the level of an ordinary party, it can count only on being tossed about in the turmoil of political conflict like any other party, sometimes perhaps to form a government after an electoral victory, but with no hope of ever becoming the organ of a new social order. The prospect of participation in State power may suffice as a tactical method for a few years; but the vision that can carry along the masses and youth in particular for all time, which is worthy of the historic function that the Socialist Party ascribes to itself, is alone the complete control and reconstruction of society.

Nothing indicates more clearly the common feeling that we are in a period of transition between two ages, and the need for a vision of a new society, than the unprecedented success of National Socialism in Germany. In an industrial country with a highly concentrated Capitalism, with sharply defined class contrasts, the radicalization of the masses in a moment of unexampled industrial depression ought, by all the laws of common sense, have benefited in the first instance the Communists. In fact, the growth of the Communists is only a fraction of the increase in the strength of the "National Socialists". To the millions of the politically unschooled, in particular to new voters and to a large section of the youth, even the Communists, who have come to the fore in our political life since the war, seem to be surpassed, antequated. But the National Socialists, who for seven years kept under close cover, and who then suddenly, richly endowed with money by the key industries, began a propaganda distinguished by its vitality and by its irresponsibility and unscrupulousness, have succeeded in awakening among the politically uneducated, and in part uneducable, middle classes the feeling that here was a new movement that would revolutionize society. The National Socialists know very well why they talk so much about revolution and why they carry red banners in their parades.

Surely we all know that the soap-bubble of these vapid platitudes will soon burst; that the objective historic function

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of the National Socialists will have been to revolutionize the middle classes, especially the remnants of the pre-capitalist classes; to release them from political vassalage to Capitalism. Let us not deceive ourselves about the dangers involved in this detour in the process of revolutionizing the mass mind. It must give us pause when people say, of that Social Democracy whose rise in barely forty or fifty years, has only recently been the object of admiration, that it is **already** forty or fifty years old; that therefore it is already of an age in which the first symptoms of arterio-sclerosis are evident; that it can never go much beyond that which it has already achieved and maintained.

HOW SHALL WE AVOID FALSE APPEARANCES?

It is not enough to brush aside all these considerations with the assertion that these are only the problems of the transition. That they are transition problems is true. The tendency to distort values, of which we have spoken, has been treated here expressly as the result of an age in which the Socialist movement has not by any means reached its goal, but in which it has something definite to lose. Such problems of the transition do not become less difficult because they are temporary. They may on occasion become dangerous. If they are wrongly attacked, or if they are neglected, we run the risk of retarding the movement by decades. It is in itself a fine thing that a demand for wholly new solutions of social problems should be growing strong within the working class. The question is how we can utilize the deep desire for a new social order, which is inherent even in pseudo-revolutionary phrases, for the social democratic movement. Even more than in the outworn **opera bouffe** revolutionary methods of the Communists, there is misguided longing for a basically new social order in the rebellious masses of the party bourgeoisie that follow the National Socialists, in the new plans for a dictatorship of Mosley's "New Party", hitherto unheard of in England, and even perhaps in the grotesque "Imperial Free Trade" of Lord Rothermere.

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Can we make Socialists of all these people who are discontented with the social order of the day, and who are now beginning uncertainly to grope for something better? Perhaps, if they can be shown as clearly as possible who really is the forerunner of the new society. Never before, perhaps, since the beginnings of the Socialist movement, has it been so necessary as to-day to make the end goal of Socialism the central point of our agitation. Nothing could be more shortsighted than to distinguish between the other anti-capitalist movements and Social Democracy by relegating the socialist aim for the future into the background, and by pointing with pride to the prizes already won (in themselves surely worth while) and still to be defended. More than ever it is true now that the best defense is an attack. If the masses are shown a clear social goal, they will not be tempted to try the quack methods of social charlatans.

And is it not an inseparable part of the socialist goal that we emphasize the fact that Socialism is in the first instance a movement of the working class? Every thinking Socialist knows very well that the labor movement in its present phase cannot do without its allies in the border classes, that it would be monstrous to reject those strata of the petty bourgeoisie, of the *intelligentzia*, of the poor peasants which are rapidly becoming proletarianized. But perhaps these strata can be won most quickly if we let them have a reckoning with Capitalism, if we show them that they have indeed nothing to lose, and that the transition to a Socialist order constitutes for them at the very least the lesser of two evils. With such an approach we will gain perhaps less numerous but more reliable adherents from the border classes, and we will avoid the appearance of being a party like any other which is all things to all men.

Are all the political parties fully aware of the deep need that to-day exists among the masses for a vision of a new society even in every-day tactical details? The masses want to find in every move in the petty warfare of parliamentary tactics something to catch their fancy. If at times a Socialist Party has had to take responsibility for unpopular, even ad-

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mittedly capitalistic measures, because in return it has received an improvement in some social law or other (which perhaps never has even become known to the public) this is evidence of a great sense of responsibility, and even of heroism. We must understand, however, that at a time when all concepts are unstable, when all minds and emotions are in ferment, such a sacrifice will often have the the opposite effect of weakening the party's influence among those who stand to gain by the sacrifice, if the price is such as to seem to be a sacrifice of the revolutionary hopes of the masses. This understanding may sometimes be a bitter pill, but in times like ours it is a simple fact. Shall concentration on social legislation, the undoubted first duty of a Socialist Party, in a period of unprecedented industrial crisis, be pursued even to the point where principle is sacrificed? Perhaps the success of the National Socialists would never have been so great if they had not in their unscrupulousness, well understood that the masses are to-day ready to give a share even of the wretched pittance that capitalism has left them for the sake of a social idea. The Five Year Plan of the Russians is evidence of the same thing. In a world of twenty million unemployed the workers say to themselves: We cannot bear these horrors forever.

Therefore even in times critical for democracy we may sometimes be confronted with the false alternative, a choice between support of a normal reactionary rule and the endurance of a fascist rule. In some circumstances the lasting support or toleration of a moderate reactionary government can compromise the Social Democracy in the eyes of the masses so much, can give it so much appearance of conservatism, that the power of fascism is permanently strengthened. The difference is only this, that in the end the unavoidable struggle must be carried through with weakened forces. We must be prepared to use all the other means available to the Socialist mass movement in addition to parliamentary means,—without irresponsible advocacy of violence,—and to show ourselves and others that we are not a party like all others, but a social mass movement. The masses must become aware that

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here is a party that does not have to conceal its aims, because these aims are set for it by the laws of social evolution.

We must be aware that the transition between two social orders, that the extraordinary times demand extraordinary insight; that to-day it hardly is sufficient merely to expose the mock-revolutionary phraseology of others, but that it is inevitable that we put forward truly revolutionary ideas in competition with false ideas of social revolution. The Social Democratic movement has learned a truth that is like a guide post in the wilderness: Speak up and tell the truth.

This article, somewhat condensed in translation, has been selected as an outstanding article in the foreign Socialist journals because it represents some important tendencies in the Austrian and German Socialist movement. In many respects the Editors are in sympathy with it, in some instances they are not in agreement.

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An Article by	<i>Morris Hillquit</i>
The Position of the "Militants"	<i>Theodore Shapiro</i>
The Situation of British Labor	<i>Mark Starr</i>
State of Social Legislation in the United States	<i>I. M. Rubinow</i>
The Social Philosophy of Karl Marx Marx as a Hegelian	<i>Haim Kantorovitch</i>
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Editorials

WE NOTE with especial pleasure that Amicus Most and Murray Baron have undertaken to help build the Socialist Party organization in the South. The South has hitherto presented enormous difficulties to the Socialist organizer. The Negro Question, the immaturity of the Southern labor organizations, the unreadiness of a proletariat not until now seriously and directly affected by the industrial revolution, the remnants of sectionalism and hatred left by the Civil War have been among the factors that have rendered the South remote, inaccessible and in part impervious to the Socialist appeal. It is true that here and there in Florida, Mississippi, in Virginia a considerable Socialist voting strength has been from time to time developed. Always there was reason to suspect that the component elements of this vote would not, on analysis, prove to be either proletarian or Socialist. The weakness of the Republican party in the South gave rise to the fear that the apparent and sporadic Socialist strength was a crystalization of protest against a one-party dictatorship.

The industrial warfare that for several years has focussed the eyes of the world on the South puts a different complexion on the matter. Industrialism in the South is advancing and in its wake come the usual problems—child-labor, the bitter exploitation of women, intolerable hours, mean wages, impossible working conditions. There is an industrial proletariat in the South now that is ripe for the Socialist appeal.

To say this is not by any means to underestimate the difficulty of the task that Comrades Most and Baron have undertaken. The Southern workers are not all of them sympathetic. The Socialist pioneers may count with certainty on opposition, tacit and overt, from all the forces of reaction. For their courage, their foresight, their energy we congratulate them.

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WHAT these two are doing in the South others ought to do in strategic points here and there throughout the country. There are hundreds of factory towns where a few capable and devoted workers could build up effective Socialist Party branches in short order. There is no work so essential to the growth of the Socialist idea in America as this building from the bottom up.

If young comrades in twos and threes—it is always best for pioneers to work in small groups—were to get out into the field under Party auspices many things would follow. The movement would lose—(and who would mourn this loss?)—a measure of that defeatism that has marked it in recent years. There would be a new growth in numbers, in strength, in confidence and enthusiasm. The young organizers themselves would learn much; much that is now theory to them would be tested in the harsh laboratory of experience. They would learn the realities of the class struggle, not from books and not alone from a too-limited personal experience, but as it infringes on the lives of proletarians in other circumstances. Who doubts that the pioneers and the movement would gain in depth and understanding.

It should not prove a hard task to choose localities that might prove fertile territory. There are hundreds of factory towns in New York State, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and in the New England States. There are dozens of places in Indiana, Ohio and Illinois that could benefit by the presence of vigorous Socialist Party organizers.

This is not an invitation for a general exodus of the unprepared and the merely adventurous. Organizing campaigns of this sort need competent workers and a certain amount of spade work. There must be contact with Socialist Party headquarters, municipal, state and national. There must be a starting-point and a definite objective. The men and women chosen to do this work must have more than a wish to do well; they must know something of the terrain they are to invade, something of the manners of the people they are trying to influence. Even if the organizers are not to be paid, there must be a little money for the inevitable expenses.

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The broadcasting of propaganda by word or mouth, by means of literature and election campaigns does bring results of a sort. But the time is here when more than casual converts are needed. Very definite methods for organizing the Socialist movement are wanted. There is no substitute for personal work of the sort we are suggesting.

NO movement can afford to neglect the youth. No movement can afford to turn a cold shoulder to the claims to recognition that the young and rising generation may make. The price of indifference to youth is stagnation and death.

The Socialist Party has offended in this particular. It has made the young men and women who have come into the party full of enthusiasm and vigor feel that their very enthusiasm and vigor make them subjects for jaundiced suspicion. Too often these youngsters have been met with a gloomy "I told you so. We have tried this or that—it doesn't work." Too often the naive and clumsy desire of the newcomer to make himself useful has been misunderstood to be the ambitious move of the determined climber to power. The results of so short-sighted a policy are clearly evident. On the one hand a do-nothing conservatism, a meaningless repetition of things-that-have-been-done-before, a tread-mill performance of routine duties; and on the other a chaotic spirit of revolt among the impatient young who then fall easily victim to undigested theories, and who then do lend strength and volume to whatever ambitious seeker for power cares to organize them.

Both the evils of a senile inactivity, and of the formless revolt of the young against inactivity can be averted. Make room for the youngsters. Put them to work. Folding literature and addressing envelopes are useful, but the enthusiasm of youth is not fed by routine work.

If we fear to entrust the policies and the future of the movement to the untrained young, there is an answer: Train the young. Teach them what Socialism is. Let them learn by experience what can and what cannot be done in a given situ-

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ation. Then let them go out on the street and into the shops to spread propaganda and to organize. Let them write for the party press. Let them teach in the party schools. Give them a voice in the party councils. Granted they will make mistakes. Granted that they will even make the mistakes that have been made before. Only so can they learn.

This is not a plea that the old abdicate and surrender the party to youth. Experience and poise are invaluable. Even well-trained youth may be too impetuous. But it is well to remember that the future of the movement lies with youth. Without them there will be no movement in the future.

| F Germany falls into the hands of Hitler, or if it goes Communist in the impending presidential elections or through a coup d'etat, the gentlemen who are to-day insisting on their pound of flesh in the form of reparations payments will have only themselves to blame. That fact will not keep them from deploring what they are sure to term the "incapacity for self-government exhibited by the Germans in a crisis."

The present truculent mood of the Nazis, and the drift of the young workers into the ranks of the Communists, arise in the first instance out of the resentment of the German youth against a situation not of their own creation. Hitler knows very well how to capitalize this resentment and how to magnify it until it becomes a recrudescence of national and belligerent feeling. The young workers, indignant as they are that they must be made to pay for the sins of their fathers, drift easily into an intransigence which is deplorable, but humanly very understandable.

No man can foresee what will happen in Europe should the Nazis or the Communists really gain control. There may be another invasion of the Ruhr; whether such an invasion will this time be met with an active and desperate rather than a passive resistance no one can tell. The latter alternative, in view of the declared belligerence of the Right and the Left, seems the more likely.

In this crisis it is short-sighted and academic to insist on the legal obligation of the Germans to pay their debts. To be

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sure, politicians everywhere are faced with great financial problems; there is not one country involved that will not have difficulty in balancing its budget. To be sure, also, the failure of Germany to pay will add that much to the burden of the treasuries of the great powers. Nor is there any doubt that Germany could pay if she were to give up a large part of her social services, and if she were further to depress wages that have already been crushed down to inhuman levels. But to insist that she do these things is penny-wise and pound foolish. Is it really too much to expect even of the intransigents in France and at home that they realize that there is a situation where it is wiser to forego the money?

THE economic depression has not yet reached its nadir. Not yet is there any sign of that upward turn that has been predicted, with decreasing optimism, ever since the blow struck us. To us the dominant phenomenon, aside from the striking inability of Capitalism to foresee and to provide against its most characteristic disease, is the pallid acquiescence of the workers throughout the country. Two years and more of the most wretched conditions have passed. The worker has been compelled to subsist first on his savings, then on the contributions of his friends and relatives, and latterly on the charity of individuals and the State. And against all this there has been no outcry, no outburst of indignation, nothing but supine acceptance of the evil as inevitable and an almost servile gratitude for the doles given him.

For this the worker is not wholly to blame. He has, it is true, allowed himself to be seduced in the years of prosperity, by the lures of the New Capitalism, and he has forgotten, if in this country he ever knew, the realities of his social and political enslavement. The onus of the blame both for his ignorance before the crisis, and for his paralysis now, must rest on his self-appointed leaders. It must be placed on that labor movement that sees its duties only in terms of cents per hour and hours per week; on that movement that flirts with the exploiter through the National Civic Federation, and that allows the potential political and economic strength of

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the worker to go to waste; on that movement that has itself been impotent in the face of technological employment, that has been unable to combat the slogan "too old to work at forty", that has permitted Child Labor to flourish in the South, that has failed to organize three quarters of the workers in industry, and that has failed utterly to win the agrarian workers to an understanding of their community of interest with the workers in industry.

It is the privilege of editors, self-bestowed, to be sure, to point out great needs. There is need in the Socialist movement for a new propaganda literature; new not in theory and in tendency, but in force and vitality. Some of the old battlecries of the revolution,—the **Communist Manifesto**, Kautsky's **The Class Struggle**, Liebknecht's **No Compromise**,—still appeal with all their old persuasiveness and power. But even these suffer from the fate that comes to all books that outlive the times that have produced them; they require glossaries, explanations, footnotes, introductions, so that the events and the men they refer to may live again for the modern reader. This sort of attention can be expected of the student, even the superficial student of Socialism. It cannot be asked of the newcomer to the movement, and of the man who is still to be reached. For them we need new pamphlets, new books, new leaflets.

Some of the old pamphlets can be re-written. For the most part, it seems best to create material entirely new, with facts and figures, examples and illustrations drawn from the modern American scene. There is no need, however, of watering down the content of our pamphlet literature to the vanishing point in the mistaken impression that so we are making it intelligible to the worker. A forceful, vital, colorful literature that can attract the American worker is easily conceivable. Such a literature need make no concessions at all to the cheapening lures of ballyhoo. It need not be one whit less thorough in its application of the Socialist theories than are "**The Communist Manifesto**" or "**Socialism—Utopian and Scientific**".

Where are the writers of this literature?

Book Reviews

The Literary Mind by Max Eastman

Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1931, \$2.50

That literature, like every other human activity, is deeply affected by the social environment in which it is produced is a commonplace. When therefore Max Eastman, in his new critical work, "*The Literary Mind*", asserts that the age of science must of necessity deeply affect literary form and content he states a profound, if somewhat obvious truth. When, however, he goes on to assert that as science (which he defines as precise knowledge) advances it steadily encroaches on the domain of literature, and that in so doing it robs literature of its old reason for existence and reduces it to the level of mere self-expression, or even of mere entertainment, Mr. Eastman has gone a bit astray.

While we must sympathize with Mr. Eastman when he pillories the snobbery of the gentleman scholar who has taken refuge in the new humanism, we cannot forget that there has always been a difference in function between the form of literature that has always devoted itself to the transfer of information and that other form that can be called prophetic, or poetic, or merely emotional. The difference was known to the Greeks, who never dreamed of confusing the functions of the little texts of Aristotle and the tension-creating and tension-releasing drama of Sophocles and Euripides. Nor is it true that merely because we have more scientific knowledge this ancient distinction has disappeared or will disappear. We no longer react as did the Greeks to the Greek drama, and the poetry of Shelley leaves many cold. To say this is not equivalent to saying that there is no poetry and no drama to-day that gives us the spiritual catharsis that our predecessors found in the old works. There have been those who were deeply moved by *Strange Interlude* and by *Mourning Becomes Electra*. The Spoon River Anthology in all its bleakness stirred millions.

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I do not share Mr. Eastman's faith that through the new psychologies we shall soon be able to reduce the old mysteries of the emotions to cold formula and so rob literature of even this field. I do not find that men enjoy food less because they know its chemical composition. Even if it does become possible to analyze and to plot the emotions, certain combinations of word and rhythm will still give certain people an emotional reaction while they will leave others cold. Nor is this, as Mr. Eastman suggests, the mere snobbery of the cultured gentleman who covets the honorific distinction of being able to understand what most people do not. We are dealing here simply with the commonest of phenomena, the variability of human flesh.

Nor is Mr. Eastman particularly happy in his treatment of the unintelligibles,—i.e. of Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Hart Crane et al. He portrays them as men and women attempting to escape from science into pure poetry. He particularly accuses them of that snobbery that Veblen has described. The unintelligibles (the word is Mr. Eastman's and we should be grateful to him for it) are as legitimately products of the scientific age as are Wasserman, O'Neill, Upton Sinclair and Eddie Guest. They are the reflection of its incoherence, of its confusion of sound and form. I am not referring at all to their conscious efforts. The day's confusion has proved too much for them. Where they do not deliberately perpetrate frauds the unintelligibles,—far from escaping into pure poetry,—give us unintentional portraits of the inadequacy of their own minds to cope with the speed and intricacy of modern life. They are incapable of "grasping this sorry scheme of things entire". They are not creating the literature of the future; they are very definitely giving us a picture of one phase of the present.

It is probably true that no one man can know all that there is to be known to-day. It does not follow that therefore no man is able to synthesize the times into one great work. All the reports of the sociologists, even the marvellous study of *Middletown* by Helen and Robert Lynd, will not convey to us the realization of social conditions as they are

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that the casual reader will find in Wasserman's *World's Illusion*. No dozen books on the conflicting philosophical theories of our time are so graphically informative as the *Magic Mountain*, *Pelle*, *Ditte*, *Arrowsmith*, *Babbitt*, *The Peasants*, *Jean Christophe*, the great works of Hamsun and of Rolvag, these and others furnish sufficient evidence that Mr. Eastman has been a little hasty in relegating literature in the age of science to the magnificent role of court jester to science, or the equally unimportant part of the humble handmaiden to science.

D. P. B.

Parlor Revolutionary Interpretation of Marxism

Towards the Understanding of Marx. By Sidney Hook

Reprinted from the Symposium, July 1931.

Dr. Sidney Hook has certain opinions of his own on Marxism. That is of course his own affair. We may either agree or disagree with him; that is our affair. But Dr. Hook is not content with expressing his own opinions, he challenges the right of others to do the same. Scornfully he refers to Kautsky, Hilferding and others (i.e. Plekhanov, Mehring and every Marxist who had the misfortune to live and write before Dr. Hook published his pamphlet) as "self-styled orthodox". He asks for their credentials. When it comes to credentials however the reader may naively ask: And what are your credentials, doctor? Even the Communists, in whose interests Dr. Hook "reinterprets" Marxism will tell him, that when it comes to credentials, those of the "self-styled orthodox" are far better than Dr. Hook's. They, at least, had the merit of taking up Marxism, defending it, fighting for it, when it was dangerous to do so; when no one could be a Marxist and at the same time a lecturer on philosophy in a capitalist university.

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Dr. Hook goes the way of all philosophical revisionists of Marxism. First of all he tries to establish the "fact" that there is a diversity of views between Marx and Engels. "Certainly", he says, "there is no justification for the easy assumption made by the self-styled orthodox that there is a complete identity in the doctrine and standpoints of Marx and Engels".

Dr. Hook is wrong. The "self-styled orthodox" not only made an easy assumption, they have conclusively proved it. To reopen this old question would simply mean repeating what has already been said time and time again. It would mean repeating what has been said with much more knowledge and proof than Dr. Hook seems to possess on this question by Kautsky, Plekhanov, Mehring, Riazanov, Deborin and many others. That would at present be a thankless task; nor is it necessary.

To establish a diversity in the "doctrine and standpoint" of Marx and Engels, is an old revisionist trick. The purely philosophical basis of Marxism is especially worked out and explained in the work of Engels. There would remain very little of Marxist philosophy if "Anti-Duhring", "Feuerbach" and the "Dialectics of Nature", (which Dr. Hook never mentions), were to disappear. It is therefore clear that the first thing for a philosophical revisionist to do is to get rid of Engels. Then the field is clear to put as many pages of Dewey into Marx as a good instrumentalist feels inclined.

Dr. Hook has written an essay on Marxian philosophy; it is not philosophy in which he is really interested, but tactics. He does not like Social Democracy; he does not like its tactics. Social Democracy is not revolutionary enough; his leanings are towards Communism. This again is his own affair. He may have any opinion on socialist tactics that he chooses, but this does not justify the "careful philosopher" in perverting views of Social Democratic theoreticians on Marxism. Of course, if Dr. Hook could show that the "Orthodox Marxists" interpret Marxism as fatalism, that Marxian Socialism becomes for them an "Astronomical Socialism", it would help him greatly to make a case against

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Social-Democracy. This however is the weakest part in Dr. Hook's pamphlet. The only direct quotation the author brings forward, consists of a few sentences from Kautsky's "Der Weg zur Macht". In this important work Dr. Hook finds the following sentences: "The Socialist Party is a revolutionary party, but not a revolution-making party. We know that our goal can be attained only through evolution. We also know that it is just as little in our power to create this revolution as it is in the power of our opponents to prevent it. It is no part of our work to instigate a revolution or to prepare the way for it".

This quotation is brought in in a footnote, as an additional proof. It really makes the impression that Kautsky is a fatalist and quietist. In reality this quotation proves only how dangerous sentences out of context may become. Kautsky has always fought against the fatalistic interpretation of Marxism, especially so in his "Der Weg zur Macht". He was always activist, and more so than ever in this book. To quote these isolated sentences not in connection with the whole argument, is most unfair. I might remind Dr. Hook that this is precisely the book that is recognized as "really revolutionary" by Lenin and his disciples.

Instead of the passage Dr. Hook quotes, one could for instance quote the following: "More and more it becomes evident that the only possible revolution is a proletarian revolution". Or the following: "It is the mission of the socialist movement to bring all these various activities of the proletariat against the exploitation into one conscious and unified movement that will find its climax in the great final battle for the conquest of political power". Or this one: "Class antagonisms are antagonisms of volition". Does that sound like fatalism, Dr. Hook? And quietism?

Dr. Hook may have intended to write an essay "Towards the Understanding of Marxism", but what he has actually written is a special kind of left-wing interpretation of Marxism, couched in instrumentalist terms, with which neither the rights, nor the lefts, will agree. It is a typical

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product of Parlor Revolutionism, and as such it has little value for the practical, living and fighting Marxist movement.

H. K.

Socialist Fundamentals

By David P. Berenberg

Rand School Press, 1932. Boards 50c. Cloth \$1.00.

The Rand School of Social Science has certainly rendered a great service to the Socialist movement, in publishing David P. Berenberg's "Socialist Fundamentals".

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Comrade Berenberg's book is especially written for those who do not as yet know much about Socialist theory, for beginners. To write for beginners on such complicated matters as the theory of value and surplus value, the theory of the class-struggle, society and social change, is a difficult task. There is always the danger of over simplifying, of dissolving science into pure propaganda.

Comrade Berenberg has successfully overcome these hardships and avoided these dangers. The subject is presented systematically in lucid and popular language; easy enough and popular enough for the average worker, but the author does not sacrifice any scientific principle in his task of making it popular.

The book is a valuable addition to our Socialist propaganda literature, and has the great merit of placing the propaganda on the fundamental principles of Marxism, thus preparing the reader for further study.

H. K.

"The harm of compromise does not consist in the danger of a formal selling out or side-tracking of party principles. That has probably never been intended by any one in our party. The danger and the root of the evil does not lie there. It lies in giving up, keeping in the background or forgetting the **class struggle basis for this is the source of the whole modern labor movement.**

"Pity for poverty, enthusiasm for equality and freedom, recognition of social injustice and a desire to remove it, is not Socialism. Condemnation of wealth and respect for poverty, such as we find in Christianity and other religions is not Socialism. The communism of early times, as it was before the existence of private property and as it has at all times and among all peoples been the elusive dream of some enthusiasts, is not Socialism. The forcible equalization advocated by the followers of Baboeuf, the so-called equalitarians is not Socialism.

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