

american socialist quarterly

MARXISM AND THE MODERN WORLD

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The Influence of Marx

DAVID P. BERENBERG

ONE might measure the influence of a man by the numbers that know his name; by the number and size of the editions of his writings, by the prevalence of his picture, by the degree to which his enemies oppose and traduce him; by the degree of devotion that he calls forth among his followers. Measured by all these standards, the influence of Marx is tremendous. A better way to test a man's influence is to measure the extent to which his ideas prevail. Marx called the bourgeois economists of his time 'bookkeepers'. It is becoming more and more evident to the student of economics in the colleges and out, that the whole farrago of classical economics is empty sound, that its basic assumptions are untenable, that its explanations do not explain, that its "natural" and "indefeasible" laws are in fact only class prejudices. Increasingly they look for something sounder; they struggle against the Marxian concepts because these run counter to ancient and inherited values. In the end they succumb. If they do not succumb they fall victim of the wildest of vagaries.

The work of Marx stands. His influence spreads over greater and greater areas. It permeates all modes of thought. As one by one his prophesies come true, as the class war unfolds everywhere, as the gulf between master and slave widens with the development of the machine, as wealth becomes concentrated in fewer hands, and still fewer, as periodic over-production crises clog the wheels of industry and bring on economic disaster, as the competition for ever narrowing markets and for the sources of raw materials, precipitates the nations into endless wars, the conviction grows that here indeed was a man who could find the kernel of truth in the mass of apparently chaotic evidence.

No one today writes history, unless it be the Catholic

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apologist, or the romantic episodist, without leaning heavily on Marx. History was once the record of the irresponsible acts of God. Carlyle tried to make of it the record of the deeds of a hero. Buckle caught a glimpse of the truth when he exalted geographic factors as determinants in the life of man. Today no serious historian dreams of presenting the history of man other than as the history of man's societies. The struggle for class dominance, the perpetual slow emergence of a once subject class, the forces that tend to suppress it, the forces that tend to give it victory, these are the stuff of history. Not always is the historian ready to admit his debt to Marx. It does not matter. The influence of Marxian thought is unmistakable.

To the extent to which the Marxian analysis of the class struggle is understood and accepted by the workers, to that extent does the political power of the workers grow. Throughout the world it is growing: in Germany, Spain, England, France, Belgium, in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, in Scandinavia and South America. Everywhere in the west but in the United States. But here, too, the laws are at work. It is only a question of a short time now before the necessity of a class base for a political movement will become evident.

Among industrial nations, America only still lags behind the rest of the world in fostering the illusion of political parties that cut across the classes. That illusion dies hard here, but die it must and will. In all other countries a political party is an expression of a class; it is the party of the landlord, or of the industrialist, of the petty bourgeoisie, or of the worker. True, this alignment would have come had Marx never lived. In England the Labor Party still refuses formally to accept his theories. Yet inevitably the class basis of parties becomes a political necessity. Parties that have no class base rot and die out.

In the industrial movement of the workers the Marxian theories work out as inevitably as do the propositions of mathematics. However much the worker may abhor the class struggle; however much the individualist traditions of his

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upbringing may prejudice him against the very thought of labor organization, the necessity of social evolution will compel him to fly in the face of his inherited tradition and to join the labor union. The spontaneous uprisings in Gastonia, Elizabethtown and elsewhere, and the similar spontaneous uprisings of the Chinese workers in the new factories in the East were as necessary and as natural as the rising and the setting of the sun. Much as the worker in the unions may abhor the name of Socialism, the idea back of the name, or the revolutionary implication of labor organizations, when the inexorable working out of the social equation forces the adoption of a Socialist aim and of a revolutionary tone, even the American Federation of Labor will be swept along by the tide. To be sure Marx did not create these social tendencies. But it was he who pointed them out; it was he who taught us to see them. It is in this sense that the labor movement, that every labor movement, whether it will or not, must be Marxian.

A great leader is at once the greatest asset and the heaviest liability that a movement can possess. He gives body and direction to what might without him be mere chaotic activity. He becomes its focal point, and the movement becomes at times an extension of his personality. It becomes like him; his characteristics tend to be its characteristics. When he passes the epigones come into power. Lacking his depth of perception, his power of analysis, his capacity for translating thought into action, they become opportunists, concerned more with keeping power and with maintaining the movement as an end in itself than with the pursuit of the goal to attain which the movement was originated. Because they cannot originate thought they turn the written and spoken word of the master into a binding tradition to which they refer all things. In the name of this dogma they condemn all innovation as heresy, but as the dogma becomes traditional, little by little they learn to treat it as irrelevant. Their acts and policies are dictated by the seeming demands of the moment and the original directing work of a founder is honored with lip-service and ignored.

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This has been the experience of all movements. Primitive Christianity and the Lutheran Reformation, Humanism and the Christian Science Church, the republicanism of Mazzini and Russian communism have all witnessed the same outward apotheosis of the leader and the actual neglect of his teachings. It is more than may be expected, then, that Karl Marx should to some extent suffer the same fate in the Socialist movement. It is very easy to turn the Marxian philosophy into dogma. Marx wrote in a style so positive and vehement as to impress even those who did not understand him. Slogans and phrases that must be remembered dot his works. It is so much easier to be stirred by phrases like "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains" or "The dictatorship of the proletariat" than to understand what the phrases mean. It is very convenient to have a Bible, a Sybilline book to which to turn for the solution of the difficulty. The Socialist movement does not lack Marxian Talmudists who have a quotation for every occasion. Nor does it lack the equally natural reaction to sterile quotation mongering. Revisionism, neo-Utopianism, as exemplified in Russian communism and in the vagaries of the economic planners, the attempt to explain Marx in psycho-analytic terms, as well as crass and unphilosophic opportunism, are equally the fruit of the reaction to dogmatism. All this is the more than unfortunate, in that dogmatism and the Marxian system are inherently opposites. The dialectic approach, the establishment of a method of social analysis, the constant and repeated submission of phenomena to observation and examination, these are the essence of Marxism. Using these methods Marx did reach conclusions to which Marxists hold, not because they are his and therefore sacred, but because the evidence overwhelmingly supports them. It would be possible to rewrite the first volume of **Das Kapital** and to substitute for the statistical material that Marx gathered chiefly in England from the newspapers, court records and committee reports of his time, more startling material taken from modern New England, from Paterson, from Los Angeles, Gastonia and China. President Hoover's com-

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mittee on Recent Social Trends has furnished material which could have been used by Marx with devastating effect.

A large part of the world heard of Marx first when the Russian revolution in 1917 upset all the calculations of the warring nations. Such a hurrying and scurrying to the text books to find out who was this man whose theories seemed suddenly to take on body and life has seldom been witnessed. When the revolution went leftward, its new leaders asserted a more profound respect for Marx and his teaching than that evidenced by their predecessors. For that reason the working out of the Russian revolution has been looked upon as an experiment in the practical application of the Marxian theory. Long after the Communists themselves substituted the Leninist modifications of Marx the world outside continued to see the Soviet Government as a Marxist state.

One other thing Communists have on their consciences. They more than any other group professing to be Marxian have debased Marxism by the propagation of slogans, and of quotations. What the medieval church did with the catch-words of Christianity, that the Soviets have done with the Marxian phrases, and with the same results. The dialectics of Marx cannot be compressed into the language of the advertiser. To erect an idol and to call that idol Marx may serve the purposes of a self chosen dictatorship, but can only harm the cause of Marxism throughout the world.

The extent of this damage cannot now be estimated. It is comforting to believe that only the romantic will be won over by the Communist distortion of Marx. It is easy enough to sweep aside as unimportant the newly arisen "Marxist" writers who find in the Marxian vocabulary a sudden release from middle class necessities. We shall have to reckon with them in the end nevertheless.

In spite of new-Marxians, anti-Marxians, slogan mongers, dogmatists, et al, the influence of Marx grows. When he died 50 years ago he was little known except among some students and in the labor movement. Outside of the labor movement he was considered an obscure sectarian, a fanatic, the astigmatic leader of a forlorn hope. That has changed.

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Too many things that he has said about Capitalism have come true. It is becoming evident that his vision was the clearest and the farthest. He is a world figure to be mentioned with the greatest. Year by year he grows in stature. The time will come when all other attempts to understand society in flux will be discarded in favor of his profound analysis of that Society and of its historic fate.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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Marxism and Social Democracy

SIEGFRIED LIPSCHITZ

"It is the gentlest words that create the storm; thoughts that come as on the wings of doves govern the world."

NIETZSCHE.

NO words more completely describe the achievements of the man who died in the March fogs of London in 1883 after a life of heroic endeavor than this quotation from Nietzsche. On the fourteenth of March fifty years will have passed since Karl Marx passed from the world; he who with quiet words brought on the storm that rages all over the world to-day; he who forged the weapons for the liberation of the working class and who hurled unforgotten thunder bolts into the benighted world of a bourgeoisie governed by ignorance.

Fifty years have passed, and the very foundations of the world have changed. Capitalism, which the dying eyes of Marx saw flourishing modestly, has grown into a Frankenstein monster threatening to crush all else, which yet in every direction exhibits the symptoms of decay. Imperialism, at that time in its infancy, has taken the world into its crushing embrace and demands immeasurable sacrifice in life and in property. When Marx looked at the world the great industrial states were in process of creation; the capitalist octopus reaching over land and sea was as yet only a nightmare. What Marx saw was insignificant in comparison with the horror that which we, a generation later, live with day by day. The powerful convulsions that shook the political and industrial world are reflected in the proletarian world, tragically split in warring fragments.

In the general upheaval only the theories and the philosophy of Karl Marx have remained intact. His analyses are to-day as profound and as penetrating as in the days when he formulated them. Nothing of all that fills mankind with

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speechless horror is new; it is all intelligible to him who is familiar with the basic teachings of Marxism and who knows how to use the Marxian method.

And yet, however firm the teachings, however well-founded the methods may be, we are groping in the dark. Every day poses new problems, every decision requires a new orientation. And as for the fifty year interval that lies between our day and the day of Marx, it may be well to look to Germany which to-day is involved in the final death-struggle of a self-devouring capitalism.

In Germany, whose working class constitutes the vanguard of the international proletariat, in spite of the reaction for the moment triumphantly in the saddle, a decisive battle is being fought whose significance for the international labor movement cannot be even remotely measured. Fifty years ago the German working class was engaged in a heroic struggle against Bismarck; in those days it fought with tremendous effort to absorb the elements of Marxism. In 1883 the seed was sown in the soil of the German working-class whose fruit we to-day are reaping. In those days the foundation stones were laid for that structure which the German proletariat must to-day defend with his blood.

To-day this same labor movement is once more engaged in a bitter struggle against a reaction that is a hundred, a thousand times more dangerous than that of Bismarck. Mortal fear, fear of the coming day, has driven the German bourgeoisie of all shades of opinion together and has forged of them a united reactionary front which, with the courage born of despair, is storming the defenses of the workers. German reaction knows only too well what the point at issue is to-day, fifty years after the death of Marx. For that reason, and for that reason alone it has created the pretorian guards of a Hitler, whose slogan and battle-cry is the "struggle against Marxism."

'The Struggle against Marxism'. What does that mean? To answer this question means to look with unprejudiced eye into the past and to take inventory of the fifty years that lie between. It is fourteen years ago that the Social Democracy

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stepped into the political arena in Germany, assumed governmental responsibility and began to model the face of the new Germany. Fourteen years in which, out of the ruins, a new Germany was to be built, a new form of state permeated with the social spirit had to be created. The creation of the republican mould was accomplished by an outwardly great rise of the German working class and of its organizations, but was marked inwardly by the signs of far-reaching dissension, which forced the observer who could look beyond the questions of the day to gloomy forebodings about the dark days to come.

Quite properly the Social Democracy has stated, in the election appeal that has been suppressed by the Hitler government, that its so-called 'Crime of November' consisted in the creation of the Republic, in the granting of equal rights to all citizens, to women as well as to men, in the improving of the social insurance, in the establishment of unemployment insurance and in securing wage rates against pressure on the part of employers. It did more than that: it gave to civil service employees the right to organize; it protected the tenant against the landlord, it proclaimed the eight-hour day, created workers' theatres, set up workers' dwellings and led the state purposefully along the road of the commonweal. These are the acts of fourteen years that are branded as 'crimes' by the reaction, the acts against which a new German Nationalism, filled with the lust for blood,—in reality the old German Nationalism of the lost monarchist splendor,—has taken the field.

But—so say our critics on the left,—what has all this in common with Karl Marx, who spoke only of a new proletarian state, and not of a continuance of capitalism covered over with proletarian symbols. Do not the communist loud speakers sneer year in and year out, that the Social Democracy, which even under the impact of Hitler's brutal blows can command the votes of nine million people, has become the executioner of the working class. Do they not assert loudly that the Social Democracy was yesterday allied with the petty bourgeoisie, to-day with the great capitalists, and that to-

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morrow it will form a pact with Fascism; that it is the armed guard of the bourgeois state? Do they not shout that it does not dare to lead the masses into battle, that it is plague ridden with counter-revolution and parliamentarism, and that it has no longer anything to do with Marxism?

To set down these questions is in itself to brand them as nonsense. But for the sake of the memory of Karl Marx and for the sake of the movement at whose cradle he stood and whose peril we see with our own eyes to-day, I shall answer them. It cannot be the purpose of this paper to go deeply into the history of the Social Democracy, scarred as it is with persistent and violent differences of opinion, and to indicate in scholarly fashion where in one place the shoe pinches, where in another perhaps there is a loose end, and where in the third place there has perhaps been a sin of omission.

Really to grasp Marxism and its tasks implies going deeply into the laws of human society and to seek there logically necessary and inescapable conclusions. For fifty years the socialist theoreticians fought about Marxian interpretation and gave to many a critic the opportunity to assert mockingly that the Marxian system sought to force the independent stirrings of the human mind into too rigid a mould. The opponents of our class in our days have known how to make ready use of this slogan, and to take the field backed by gangs of fascist ruffians against the 'plague of materialism'.

Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the enormous influence of Karl Marx on his German disciples has at times been stifling. The painful anxiety to remain 'orthodox' has doubtless thwarted the independent efforts of many. But do not our own times give us a picture of an opposite nature: the desperate effort of some to be rid of the Marxian method of thinking at all cost, and to prove beyond a doubt that they alone are sitting at the well-spring of all social revelations. Marx and Engels themselves repeatedly declined to take the responsibility for the discoveries of any Marxist, and gave to each the necessary right to his own conclusions, naturally always on condition that the class-struggle theory be strictly preserved.

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What is this Marxism when we look at Germany to-day? Where is the line that runs between Social Democracy and the childish literalness of the communists? If the question is so framed the answer must first of all be that one can speak of a really complete Marxian structure only with reference to economics. Everything else is interpretation, elucidation based upon the circumstances, the necessities of the day. The materialist dialectic concept of history is at best a method of investigation through the implications of which the heirs of Marx and the Marxian armies must find their way. Because of it endless perspectives are opened up, but nothing more. Everything else is trial and error. The slow acquisition of knowledge, blind groping.

If these words are generally valid, how much more true are they with reference to the problems of the German Socialists? What Marx could and did give them is general direction, the theory which is the reflection of the social reality of our days. What was once theory has been established more and more profoundly, more and more triumphantly as the thought and the conscious will of the working class yearning for liberation. What gives this struggle for liberation its background is not partial success and not revolutionary situations deliberately created, but inescapable historical evolutionary tendencies, which serve as the inevitable grave-diggers of bourgeois society. What in 1933 is a practical necessity was by no means necessary in 1918. Apart from external similarities, the economic and social conditions in Germany in 1918 were quite different from those which prevail today. Therefore the criterion must today be different.

Radical phrase-makers speak weightily of the necessity of keeping the end goal firmly in mind and of steering the proletarian movement steadily toward it. True and irrefutable! But that means, too, that one must know the channel and its dangers, its rapids and its treacherous cliffs. To evade obstacles is often impossible, and sometimes for the sake of clarification of class lines not even desirable. In mockery the social democracy is reproached with the disease of bourgeois practical politics, and with petty bourgeois reform and it is

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said that it loses sight of the forest because of the trees.

But more serious than the often exaggerated insistence on immediate results is the pitfall of revolutionary Utopianism, which is devoid of all understanding of time and circumstance and which in uncritical enthusiasm hopes to forestall the processes of evolution. That is the situation in which the left criticasters find themselves and which more than anything else has endangered all that has been attained. It is correct to aim steadily at the end goal and to look beyond the immediate successes of the day. But to lose the sense for daily reality and to follow wild revolutionary dreams is more than any movement can stand even were it built on rock.

The communist critics scream "Down with the reformists! Long live the revolution!" What innocent children they are, —if we can still call them children and pardon them, who have on their consciences so many sins against the proletariat. It is Karl Marx to whom we owe a true understanding of the intimate relationship between reform and revolution, and therefore also a correct evaluation of these historic processes. Reform and revolution are not two different methods of the class struggle sharply to be distinguished from one another; they are two phases of social development which are in close organic connection and which come into play under different conditions.

Reforms bring about changes in the relative powers of social forces. Reforms have created the present high tension in Germany and have called the united reaction into the field for a war of events. Reforms, when they have achieved a certain height, become a flood tide which breaks down the old dams. Reform introduces the period of revolution, which calls for action adapted to the prevailing circumstances and to the battle ground. In the highest sense the labor movement is a reform movement which creates the necessary conditions for the creation, the maintenance and the application of revolutionary forces. It is the only reforming power within bourgeois society which directs its driving force at certain times in social evolution into revolutionary waters.

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Not simply the cry for the overthrow of the bourgeois order, but the seemingly insignificant daily work is important. which in persistent conflict with capitalist economy and its state forms raises the exploited masses and makes them the path breakers toward a better world. Social revolution, decisive as the action may be which it may demand at a given moment, is not a process arising out of thin air, but one that receives its impulse from the conflicting capitalist society, from the social struggle that goes on at all times. Marx with his penetrating understanding recognized, that in the daily struggle of the proletariat the present and the future of the working class unite into an indissoluble historic unity. In it theory and practice join hands for effective effort. The German Socialist movement of our time, faced with enormous problems and with weighty decisions must be evaluated in its light.

Let us look once more at the German bourgeoisie and at the prevailing reaction, under whatever banners it may march. With tooth and nail it clings to the past and tries by force to turn back the hand of time. Forsaking even the minimum of the traditional bourgeois principles, it clings to the old and comfortable phrase "After us the deluge," and acts accordingly. The Social Democracy on the other hand, weakened and obstructed as it is by tragic internecine warfare, pursues a policy based on sound principle, inspired by the highest ideals, and yet governed at the same time by a very sound sense of reality.

What is the weakness of the German proletariat, and of the entire international labor movement? Its failings do not come from the bourgeoisie, not from opposing classes, but from within. Marx himself suffered bitterly from half-measures and weaknesses in the first attempts to unite the proletariat, and often enough he gave expression to his dissatisfaction. His great organizational creations, the Communist League and the International Workingman's Association, disintegrated because of internal conflict. Upon the news of his death the French labor paper *Proletaire*, in violent complaint against the orthodox Marxist cried out in indignation "Marx was no god. Like Owen, like Saint Simon, like Proudhon,

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he also is today out of date". It would not be worth while to recall these words, which have been as completely forgotten as their author, a certain Paul Brousse, but everywhere in Germany, England, America, and elsewhere his spiritual heirs live, and as Franz Mehring says, "If Paul Brousse has been forgotten, the Paul Brousses have not been".

The German working class in this historic hour of trial and testing looks upon the vast social battle field and takes inventory. Many sins and errors must be made good, many breaches must be filled in, with many debtors there must be a reckoning. But nothing is so tragic and so irrevocable that it could not be healed if the German proletariat were united in a broad class front and armed for a common cause. Proletarian unity, of which one hears so much in all countries, means more than ever, is more than ever necessary for the Germans. The Socialist United Front,—that is the demand of the hour, that is the slogan of the day which the memory of Karl Marx demands.

However successful the reaction may be for the moment, however much their fascist hangmen may triumph, we shall know how to reckon with them. What Frederick Engels wrote on the day after Marx's death to Sorge, is valid for them and for us. "Humanity has been made shorter by a head, and to be sure by the most important head that in these days it had. The movement of the proletariat goes on its way, but its focal point is gone . . . Local figures and petty talents, and even charlatans have a free hand. Final victory remains certain, but detours, temporary and local confusion—already so inevitable—will now become more common. Well, we must fight our way through. What else are we here for? And there is no reason for losing courage."

Living Marxism

HAIM KANTOROVITCH

I.

WE have all heard, more than once, that Karl Marx is the father of Socialism. Some say it with anger. "If not for that Jew, we would not have this nuisance called Socialism." Others say it with pride: See how great our Karl Marx is, he "created" Socialism. Both are wrong, whether the socialist movement be a blessing or a curse, it is not due to Karl Marx, or to any other man. Great mass-movements are, it is true, always connected with the names of great leaders, but they are not due to them. They grow like weeds in the field. No one knows their origin. No one planted them, no one wanted them. They grew because they had to. Causes, unknown to them and independent of them, brought them to life. The leader will come later. His job will be that of the gardener. He will cultivate this wild growth; he will give it form and expression. If the time is ripe and conditions are favorable, he may even somewhat change its direction. That is all. No leader, no matter how great, can do more; no leader, no matter how great, can create something out of nothing.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were of course no exceptions. There would have been no Marxism had they not found all the materials for their structure ready at hand. Marx and Engels found ready at hand a Socialist movement, even if small and insignificant; socialist theories and ideas even if hazy and unclear; and what is of more importance, a working class that had already begun to become conscious of its interests and its power, a class oppressed and in a rebellious mood. The workers in Germany were ready for Lassalle. The workers in England already had had their experience in

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the Chartist movement. Everywhere labor unions and workers' political and educational organizations were springing up; Socialist and Communist organizations were in existence everywhere. Great strikes, often bloody, became a daily occurrence. Revolution was in the air; 1848 was not far away.

This was the environment in which Marxism was born. The material was at hand, but unorganized, uncultivated, a wild growth that was awaiting its gardener.

What was the Socialism that Marx found?

Engels labeled them "Utopians" and this name stuck to them. It is often used with a sneer. To call one Utopian is, in our time, an insult. When the bourgeoisie press labels Socialism a Utopia, it is meant as a slight to it. But what is a Utopia? An ideal not yet realized. Everything that is has sometimes been a Utopia. "As a matter of fact, it is our Utopias that make the world tolerable to us," remarks Lewis Mumford very rightly. "The cities and mansions that people dream of are those in which they finally live."¹ If Utopia is as Mr. Mumford says it has become, "another name for the unreal and impossible", the so-called Utopian Socialists were not Utopians at all. They were realists in their way and their dream was the dream of Socialism, a dream that is now becoming a reality before our own eyes.

Marx and Engels had a very high opinion of their Utopian forerunners. They freely and willingly acknowledged their debt to them, but accept their Socialism they could not.

Utopian Socialism was as unscientific as it was unrealistic. Excellent critics of society as they were, the Utopians had not the slightest knowledge of its inner mechanism; materialists though they were, they approached society, its laws and evolution from a purely idealistic and metaphysical point of view. What was wrong with the world according to the Utopians was that human reason till now had failed to find the true principles upon which society should be organized. Ignorance of "true reason and justice" was at the root of all evil. "All the nations of the world," complains Robert Owen,²

¹) The Story of Utopias, by Lewis Mumford, p. 11.

²) The Life of Robert Owen, by himself, p. 106, N. Y. 1920.

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"... are to-day governed by force, fraud, falsehood and fear, emanating from ignorance of governors and governed." This view of Owen is common to all Utopian Socialists of his time, as well as to all Utopians of our own time. All that is necessary for the reorganization of society is the "true principle". In our time it is the "blue print" the "right plan" that could appeal to all "reasonable and good people". Once this true principle is found, the rest will take care of itself. The Socialists and social reformers of our day who call conferences to work out the "blue print" for Socialism are really continuing the work of the Utopians.

Summing up the ideas of Utopian Socialism Engels says, "If pure reason and justice have not hitherto ruled the world, this has been (in the conception of the Utopians) the case only because men have not rightly understood them. What was wanted was the individual man of genius who has now arisen and who understands the truth."³ Once this "individual man of genius" is here everything will be all right; he will show us our errors and the way to eternal happiness. The question, why this individual man of genius has been so late in arriving does not bother the Utopian. Social changes are, for him, in no way connected with time and space. That the man of genius has not arisen, is for the Utopian not an inevitable event, explains Engels, "It is a mere happy accident. He might just as well have been born five hundred years earlier and might then have spared humanity five hundred years of error, strife and suffering."

Socialism is for the Utopian in no way bound with space and time. It may be established at any time, at any place. It does not depend on the stage of development of society, but only on the "happy accident" of the rise of a great leader. Utopianism is said to be a stage in the evolution of the history of Socialism which we have long since passed. But when one hears that all that China needs to establish Socialism is a Lenin, one is not so sure whether Utopianism is really a thing of the past.

³) Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, p. 53.

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Not only of time and space was Utopian Socialism independent, but also of social life. Socialism was for the Utopians an eternal truth that had nothing to do with either the problems or the struggles of their time. Society was divided, of course, into economic classes. There were bitter class struggles in their time. There is, of course, no doubt that these class struggles were the real, if unconscious, motives behind their search for the "true principle" on which to rebuild society. It was the plight and poverty of the masses that stirred them. Nevertheless it never occurred to them to base their Socialism on the struggles of the masses for a better life. Utopian Socialism was for the workers but not of the workers. Their appeal was not made to any class in particular but to all classes, to humanity. Socialism was to be built up by good people who could understand the "true principle". The rich and powerful are best fitted for this task. Most of the Utopians were afraid of the workers and their struggles. Saint Simon threatened the French capitalists that if they did not accept his plans the workers would get them. "Robert Owen was evidently of the opinion," says M. Beer ⁴ "that it would do no good to society to reveal to the workmen the mysteries of wealth making and the principle of Communism before they had made a successful attempt to reorientate their character, to extinguish their violent class-warfare against the rich." He knew of the "class-warfare" of the workers against the rich, but this class-warfare had to be "extinguished" before the workers could be available for his socialist principles. There was no place for the workers as workers in the Utopian socialist movement. All the working class had to do was to wait until good people would create socialism for it.

The working class did not wait even at the time when Utopian Socialism was at the height of its popularity. A labor movement was developing. The class-struggle had begun to take on more and more conscious forms. Trade unions sprang up everywhere. They knew nothing about Utopian Socialism, and the Utopians thought little of them. In his controversy

⁴) History of British Socialism, Vol. 1, p. 173.

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with Proudhon, Marx showed the necessity and the historical significance of the trade unions "which in spite of all the apprehensions and warnings of Utopians and economists, the workers have gone on establishing and perfecting in order to be able to withstand the domination of capital." ⁵

II.

The Utopians did not notice, and if they noticed, saw no connection between this rising labor movement and their own socialist ideals. For Marx this movement was the basis and guarantee of his socialism. The triumph of socialism is the triumph of labor in its class-struggle against all other classes of society. Proletarian Socialism is born with Marxism.

For the task of creating proletarian Socialism, Marx and Engels were both well prepared. They had gone through the Hegelian school where they had learned to abhor all eternal and ultimate truths upon which Utopian Socialism rested. From Hegel they learned that "truth . . . was no longer . . . a collection of ready dogmatic statements which once discovered must only be thoroughly learned, truth lay now in the process of knowledge itself." ⁶ The Hegelian Dialectic which Marx and Engels made their own precluded all possibility of Utopianism. "From this point of view the history of mankind no longer appeared as a wild whirl of senseless deeds of violence, all equally condemnable at the judgment seat of mature philosophical reason and which are best forgotten as quickly as possible, but as the process of evolution of man himself." ⁷

But not only from Hegel did the founders of modern socialism learn to distrust all such fine words as eternal reason, true justice, ultimate truths. History itself disproved them. A study of history revealed to Marx and Engels the fact that behind all these high sounding words were hidden material, economic interests of some class in society. The ideological forerunners of the French Revolution believed that they fought for abstract principles of truth, reason, equality, etc. But, what were the actual results of this fight?

⁵) M. Beer, *Life and Teachings of Karl Marx*, p. 64.

⁶) Engels, *Feuerbach*, etc., p. 41.

⁷) Engels, *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, p. 85.

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"We know to-day," Engels says, "that this kingdom of reason was nothing more than the idealized kingdom of the bourgeoisie; that their eternal right found its realization in bourgeois justice; that this equality reduced itself to bourgeois equality before the law; that bourgeois property was proclaimed as one of the essential rights of man; and that the government of reason, the Contract Social of Rousseau came into being and only could come as a democratic bourgeois republic. The great thinkers of the eighteenth century could, no more than their predecessors, go beyond the limits imposed upon them by their epoch."⁸

The criticism of capitalism is doubtless a necessary thing. There was no lack of it in Utopian Socialist literature, but this is not enough; drawing pictures of the future society may be good propaganda, but propaganda is only of value where it arises out of and can appeal to some real interest of some social class. The drawing of blue prints for revolutions may be a fine passtime for those that have nothing else to do, but these are not the things that make or unmake social orders. "Great historical movements," says Marx, "had been always determined by mass-interests, and only in so far as they represented these interests could the idea prevail in these movements. Otherwise the ideas might indeed stir up enthusiasm but they could not achieve any results." To put socialism on a realistic basis it was necessary not to invent new ideas but to find out whether there are objective forces in society leading to it, making it necessary and possible, and whether there are in society people in whose interest it is to fight for it. In one of his earliest works Marx, discussing the possibilities of a German revolution, declared that the revolution is possible only "in the formation of a class in radical chains which finds itself in bourgeois society but is not of it."⁹ This is not yet the Marxian theory of the class struggle, but it already shows the direction in which Marx's thought moved. Revolutions are not made by people who become enthusiastic over ideas. On the contrary only those people become enthu-

⁸) Ibid, p. 49-50.

⁹) Selected essays, by Karl Marx, p. 37.

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siastic about revolutionary ideas who are compelled by their material interests to make revolutions. Revolutions, social changes are not accidents, and can not be made at will. Social evolution follows its own laws. Of course man makes his own history, but he makes it under given social and economic conditions, with "tools" afforded to him by the whole former development of society, within the limits of social possibility. Marx, of course, never denied the power of ideas in society as some critics contend, but Marx knew that ideas do not fall ready made from heaven, that ideas and ideals are themselves deeply rooted in the material conditions of life, that they appear and disappear with the appearance or disappearance of material conditions and material interests which they reflect. "The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adopted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping."¹⁰ The material interests which are behind human behavior, as well as human thinking, are rooted in the modes of production and exchange. "In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production."¹¹ It is in the development and change of the modes of production that the key to the history of ideas can be found. The Utopian Socialists did not understand it, but they were themselves no "happy accidents" but results of the development of changes in the social mode of production. They reflected the economic situation of their time. That their socialist ideas and theories were so primitive and crude was simply due to the crude state of development of the capitalism of their time.

10) Engels: *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, p. 95.

11) Karl Marx, Preface to "*A Contribution to Political Economy*."

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III.

At the outset of his career Marx declared, "We do not proclaim to the world in a doctrinaire fashion any new principle: 'this is the truth, bow down before it.' We do not say: refrain from strife, it is foolishness! we only make clear to men for what they are really fighting, and to the consciousness of it they must come whether they will or not." Contrary to all former Socialism, Marx and Engels did not go after new and better blue prints. They set the task for themselves to "interpret the struggles and aspirations of the age."¹²

And what were the most outstanding facts in social life that called for interpretation? It was the class-struggle. Armed with the materialist dialectical method, Marx and Engels perceived that the class-struggles of their time are not accidental, nor are they temporary or passing. The class-struggle theory became the most fundamental principle in Marxism, because in the antagonism of the classes, in their fight for their class-interests, Marx and Engels saw the driving force behind all social change. Changes in mode of production which are "in the last analysis" the causes for all other changes, manifest themselves in the forms of class-interests, class ideals and aspirations. "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class-struggles." This declaration of the Communist Manifesto is fundamental in the Marxian view not only of the past but also of the future. Marx did not discover the class-struggle, others had done so before him. Marx was not even the first to detect the power of the class-struggle in history, but he discovered the role of the proletariat in the class-struggle, the class that was somehow overlooked by those who did see and understand the class-struggle.¹³ In the class-struggle that is going on independent of our ideas of it, Marx and Engels saw the "inevitability" of Socialism. The class-

¹²) M. Beer, *Life and Teachings of Karl Marx*, p. 46-48.

¹³) When Max Nomad enlightens the readers of "Scribners" (March 1933) that Marx was "original" in his theory of the class-struggle, the readers, and probably Nomad himself may think that he made a very great discovery, whereas this discovery can be found in any book on Marxism, as well as in the writings of Marx himself. But Nomad does not of course know what Marx did contribute to the class-struggle theory. The entire article is merely a shallow repetition of what Marx's enemies used to say about him.

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struggle has reached a point where it becomes more and more an open war between the classes that are determined to uphold the existing social and economic order, and the class, that is being driven by its class-interests to fight for its destruction. The class-struggle has now reached a stage in its development when it is nearing its end. Class society has reached an impasse. It can not go on much longer. It must end in the abolition of all classes; it is bent towards a classless society.

The realization of Socialism is not dependent on true ideas, or on reliable blue prints. It will come as the result of the class-struggle of the workers. Every step in the class-struggle is a step in the direction of Socialism. Every strike for wages or shorter hours, every fight for labor laws or social reforms, are simultaneously fights for Socialism. Revolutionary romantics may not like it; they may call it opportunism, reformism and what not, but if so, Marx and Engels were the fathers of opportunism and reformism, just as much as of scientific socialism. The social revolution is for Marx not an act that is accomplished once for all, but a process of class-struggles. The social revolution, Marx and Engels realized, cannot come as a result of a conspiracy of some revolutionary minority, but as the result of the long drawn out fight of the working class for power. This fight for power is not and can not be the fight of a sect. It is the fight of classes not of sects. It is the open democratic, political struggle of the working class. The Communist Manifesto therefore declares, "The Communists are not a special party in contradistinction to other labor parties. They have no interests apart from the interests of the whole proletariat; they set up no principles according to which they wish to mould the proletarian movement." This is often misinterpreted. These words in the Communist Manifesto do not mean that the Communists (i.e. Socialists) are not to come to the labor movement with principles and theories of their own. On the contrary Marx and Engels always emphasized the necessity on the part of Socialists to bring their principles and theories

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to the existing and fighting labor movement, to interpret for the labor movement their own struggles and aspirations, to bring to their consciousness the realization of "what they are really fighting for". To make the workers that participate in the class-struggle, even when they don't realize it, class-conscious, is the most important task for the Socialist. The warning in the Communist Manifesto that "the Communists are not a special party in contradistinction to other labor parties" was a warning against the sectarian mood of most Socialists of their time, which tended to make Socialism a party not only in no way connected with the living and fighting labor movement, but also against this movement. It is a warning against all those who would rather have a set of Socialist Saints, than be "contaminated" by the impious and practical labor movement. To make an end to sectarianism in the Socialist movement, to connect Socialism with the broad, living labor movement, to place it on a broad, legal, political and democratic mass basis was the special contribution of Marxism to socialist tactics, and this remains until to-day as the living soul of living Marxism.

It is one of the peculiarities of the revolution that just when a people wants to take a great step forward it always allows itself to be governed by illusions of the past and delivers all the power and the influence which it has so dearly bought into the hands of men who pass, or seem to pass as the bearers of the popular movement of an earlier time.

1854. Article by Karl Marx for the New York Tribune.

Marxism and Trade Unionism

MARK STARR

A LIVING MARXISM will not be disturbed in the slightest by the fact that on this subject of trade unionism Marx wrote little compared to his detailed analysis of other phases of economic life. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life, says the Bible somewhere and in all the references made by Marx as well as in his own actions and in the implication of the Marxian emphasis upon the economic basis of all institutions, we have more than enough pointers for our present action.

When actively influencing the First International, Marx never allowed his scorn for the antiquated ideas of the leaders of the British "model unions" to oppose their affiliation. Some of our "modern Marxians" would do well to note the much quoted conversation of Marx with Hamann, treasurer of the General German Metal Workers' Union:

"The trade unions are the schools of socialism. . . . All political parties . . . without exception . . . arouse in the workers but a passing enthusiasm; the trade unions, however, grip the laboring masses for good . . . They only are capable of realizing a true labor party and offering a bulwark of resistance to capitalism."

If the reader pessimistically thinks that the American trade unions have as yet gripped but a few of the laboring masses, he should remember that the full tale is not yet told. A further modification, in my opinion, could be made of the metaphor of the trade unions being merely a "school"; for whatever one may think of the tactics of De Leon, his idea of organization by industry rather than by craft to win immediate demands and simultaneously to build up administrative machinery for a real workers' industrial democracy, will remain a valuable contribution. The unions, in short, are not left behind upon graduation but become agencies for workers'

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control of industry. Marx in the Communist Manifesto written in 1847 saw clearly the significance of the workers' "combinations". "The real fruit of the battle lies not in the immediate result but in the ever expanding union of the workers." De Leon gave more precision to the "expanding union" ideal.

In contrast to this attitude, John Middleton Murray—who has just "got" Marxism as if it were a new religion and who immediately expects to speak with authority upon any subject which catches his notice—cannot even find a proletariat in Britain because workers there have got savings in co-operative stores. So, Mr. Murray would have a revolutionary Socialist party "incapable of essential compromise with the working class..." Mr. Murray envisages the possibility of the trade unions giving enthusiastic approval to the Fascist corporate state, while "it is as likely that there will be a genuinely revolutionary majority in the disinherited and life-frustrated middle class within a reasonable period as in the trade unions." (These quotations are from Mr. Murray's article in the *World Tomorrow* and as a champion of the split away from the Labor Party of the British I.L.P., his newly acquired "Marxism" has been given prominence in the I.L.P. organ, the *New Leader*, London.)

Between the poles of opinion that the unions are the main agencies of the class struggle and that they are possibly dangerous because of their "embourgeoisment" (to use the phrase which the later revisionist De Man coined) there are wide ranges of varying ideas. In the past the Socialist Party has on occasions hedged by claiming that it was a political party and as such had no industrial policy and did not take sides in struggles over union policies. Anyone who has had the slightest experience of party life and trade union work in any industrial center knows that such a division is impossible. If my Socialism cannot be linked to my behavior in my trade union branch there is something vitally wrong with it. That does not mean that I adopt an attitude of superiority and look upon the union as a mere sectarian sounding board for proclaiming the ultimate cure of the workers' troubles. Nor that

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the union may be regarded as a tool of a party. (As the **Communist Manifesto** puts it: "They do not set up any sectarian principle of their own to shape and mould the proletarian movement.") Nor, on the other hand, that I am blind to the faults and limitations of the unions in structure and outlook.

There can be little doubt, in my opinion, that the struggle against the Communists has driven the so-called Socialist needle trade unions of New York City (who, as much as any, were once the progressive elements in the A. F. of L.) farther to the right than they should have gone. Indeed it drove them into the arms of the most reactionary and dangerous elements in the Federation.

Again experience in the anthracite coal region has also induced undue caution in regard to activity by the Socialists in the trade unions. Critics and opponents of the administration have used the party organization to gain office, only to repeat the mistakes and enforce the machine rule of their attacked predecessors and thus discredit the party and disgust its members.

There seems to be a fatal connection between the opposition to the would-be non-political I.W.W. and its failure to "grip the laboring masses for good" with the fact that Marxians have not fought effectively against the racketeering cancer which has done the American trade unions such harm. After all, racketeering is the inevitable development when trade unions become job trusts. If the trade unions do not accept the ideals of Socialism and "the expanding union", they will be contaminated with capitalist ideals. If it is good for a group of skilled artisans and craftsmen to exploit a monopoly regardless of any considerations for their fellow workers, skilled and unskilled, then it will naturally follow that a Cummertford, a Brandle, a Kaplan will inevitably build up an individual monopoly and run the union local for himself.

A leftward swing in the A. F. of L. is indicated at the present time by its changing attitude on unemployment insurance and President Green's declaration to the Senate Committee concerning the demand for the 30 hour week. Further changes are in the air apparently, for the "N. Y. Times" of

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February 16, reports that Matthew Woll has declared that the Federation is "seriously considering the abandonment of its traditional policy of opposing governmental regulation of wages and hours of labor because of the failure of capital to deal with these questions voluntarily in a manner required by the exigencies of the situation."

But those of us who are trade unionists await something more than "serious consideration" and shall have more confidence in a change of attitude when Mr. Woll and some of his colleagues cease their association with every silly attempt at red baiting and with the professional patriots of the National Civic Federation. Furthermore, a militant nation-wide campaign is necessary to secure unemployment insurance of the right kind. And in the light of the National Strike of 1926 in Britain, no leader should threaten a general strike, as Green does about the 30-hour week, unless he can and will implement it. Were there not fine sounding resolutions in convention about organizing the auto industry and southern textiles?

There seems to be much evidence that the "model union" period is passing with the prosperity of the United States. The "new unionism" enrolling the unskilled workers demands the active support of all those Marxists who want to erect a real monument to him who first formulated the historic role of the organized workers.

The skilled worker of any intelligence can be helped to see that in the long run he can save himself only by uniting with the less skilled worker. Marx, viewing the effect of chattel slavery in the United States, wrote: "Labor cannot be emancipated in the white skin where in the black it is branded." What applies to color applies also to craftsman and laborer.

Selig Perlman in 1928 wrote: "A Theory of the Labor Movement" to justify the A. F. of L. in having a philosophy of not having a philosophy. His brilliant sophistries were directed to prove that the intellectual and the trade unionist would travel different ways and that the trade unions would inevitably reject the domination of the revolutionary intellectual and his ideals and be concerned only with extra cents

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in the pay envelope, with reduced working-hours and other immediate reforms. His chapter on British Labor has been abundantly refuted by the fact that in the crisis the stick-in-the-mud trade union leaders were true to the workers and did not fall for the stuff about saving the £ and the "nation", while the non-Marxian, the intellectuals, MacDonald and Snowden, put a fictitious national "community" first and betrayed their class.

No one will deny that there is a danger of the Socialist losing sight of ultimate ends and becoming engrossed in the immediate demands of wages and hours. But unless the Socialist or revolutionary using some other label can relate his ultimate aim with immediate demands and participate in the everyday struggles of the organized workers and of the unemployed leagues, his whole revolutionary creed remains sterile. The oldtime argument over revolution versus reform was in large part a fictitious issue. There have been reformist revolutions and revolutionary reforms. Quantitative accumulation of reforms will produce a qualitative change in the demands of the workers. The fight for the Factory Acts in Britain, as Marx noticed, provided the first rallying ground for the British workers. (See Sec. 7, Ch. X, Capital, Vol. I). And those factory regulations even then were favored by far-sighted employers.

To unite with the workers where they are in their economic losing sight of ultimate ends and becoming engrossed in avoidable guerilla fights"—to the larger end of a complete change in the social system and to help create in the workers' mind a confidence in their own power and in their "ever expanding union" by actual achievements—that seems to be the only line which a realistic revolutionary can take. One working-class movement is worth a thousand programs for the workers. Although those theoretical programs may show a greater clarity and a deeper understanding of ultimate ends, their bearers may well remain a relatively powerless sect. We in the American Labor Movement have already too many general staffs who issue brilliant and clever communiques and instructions to a non-existent army.

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To the writer, at least, it looks as if the increasing militancy of certain sections of the organized workers, the phenomenal spread of organization among the unemployed and the profoundly significant revolt of the farmers indicate that the hangover of "prosperity" has worn off and that labor organization is going to spread out into new and wide fields. If the crisis deepens this tripple alliance will be the mainstay against an attempt at Fascist dictatorship. It will be the cadre for any real revolutionary movement of the working-class. If the crisis abates on account of the recuperative powers and the elasticity of the capitalist rulers of America, the lesson of organization learned in the days of unemployment may well lead to the "new unionism" period. And we should do well to remember what Engels wrote about the Social Democratic Federation in this connection when similar developments were possible in Britain:

"The S. D. F. here shares with your German American Socialists the distinction of being the only parties to accomplish the bringing down of the Marxian theory of development to a rigid orthodoxy. According to them, the working-man is not to attain to this complete development through a process set in operation by his own class feeling, but he has to swallow it down immediately as an article of faith, and without development. Therefore, both remain only sects and come, as Hegel says, from nothing, through nothing, to nothing."

(Letter from Engels to Sorge, May 12, 1894.
Quoted from the *Socialist Review*, (London),
Vol. I, No. 1, March, 1908).

The great drawback to the early and outstanding Marxian in Britain, H. M. Hyndman, who was the dominating figure in the Social-Democratic Federation as De Leon once was in the American Socialist Labor Party, was his superior attitude to the trade union and cooperative movements. When Tom Mann and others protested against hostile criticism of the unions, Hyndman was forthright in his attack upon the unions whose leaders, he maintained, were "the most stodgy-brained,

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dull-witted and slow-going time servers in the country." (Tom Mann's *Memoirs*.)

In that British situation there were, as in the United States now, numerous liberals and intellectuals who wanted to help Labor but on their own terms. The Fabians, who wanted to capture Whitehall wearing gumboots and permeating the orthodox groups before the latter were aware of the process, were not the founders of a Labor Party based on the trade unions. Engels had something to say about these people too:

"The Fabians here in London are a band of ambitious folk who have sufficient understanding to comprehend the inevitableness of the social revolution, but who cannot trust this gigantic work to the rough proletarian alone, and therefore have the kindness to place themselves at the head of it.

"Dread of the revolution is their fundamental principle . . .

"This Socialism of theirs is presented as an extreme but inevitable consequence of middle-class Liberalism, and hence their tactics are to fight the Liberals, not as decided opponents, but to drive them on to socialistic consequences . . . to trick them, to permeate Liberalism with Socialism . . .

"They (the Fabians) have supplied, amidst all kinds of trash, good propaganda writings—in fact, the best that the English have accomplished in this direction. But when they come to their specific tactics—to gloss over the class struggle—all is rotten. Hence their hatred for Marx and all of us—on account of the class struggle."

(Letter from Engels to Sorge, Jan. 18, 1893.)

In the light of hindsight we can see how disastrous was the "glossing over" of the class struggle, a recognition of which would have saved British Labor many painful experiences as it built up its mass Labor Party. All this is pertinent here because undoubtedly the upsurge of organization

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mentioned above will bring nearer the emergence of a mass political Labor organization. The unskilled workers and the unemployed have no or little economic power. Perforce they will use their political power to get protection for wages and hours and to win social services by forming their own political groups which will introduce reality into the present sham fight of Democrats and Republicans. In any federation of unions joining together to secure representation, the Socialists should have a recognized place as an educational agency, pioneering and propagating new ideas. The first program of such a party may consist of modest reforms and contain no declaration of public ownership and of class struggle. As long as the reforms listed are in the right direction, the Marxian who anticipates the tendencies of modern capitalism can well bide his time for agreement with his whole aim. Not that his attitude will be one of waiting but of active education by word and deed to prove his sincerity. In every way he will try to secure fewer unions and more unity; will remodel unions on industrial lines wherever that is possible; strive for militant clean unions. In the matter of dual unions there will be different judgments in different situations. Having talked with the members of the Illinois Progressive Miners' Association and having studied the situation there, my judgment on the future of the P.M.A., for example, differs greatly from that of Comrade Oneal as expressed in the last issue of the A.S.Q. However, I think that the move to set up a dual trade union federation was ill-advised and likely to injure the support given to the P.M.A. On disputed questions of this sort, it will not always be possible to secure unanimity of action but that does not mean that we should not extend considerably our influence in our unions. At the start of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the one outstanding example of a successful dual union, there must have been many Socialist members of that union and also of A. F. of L. unions who viewed the step with considerable misgiving.

It is generally agreed that the attitude of Lassalle in Germany prevailed in the Social Democratic Party and determined its attitude of superiority to the economic organiza-

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tions of the workers there. In Britain the unions were not the children of the political party, but the Socialists initiated the move to unite the unions to form their own political party. But the Socialist propagandist bodies participating in that federated group in the main were not clear in their recognition of the class struggle. Like some American Socialists, MacDonald rejected the Marxian theories as a basis of action. MacDonald has gone, but MacDonaldism and its "biological Socialism" have still to be completely eliminated. Marx insisted in his preface to *Capital* that "One nation can and should learn from another." Certainly in the light of what has happened to trade unionism and Socialism elsewhere, we in America by championing the "new unionism" should be able to "shorten and lessen the birth pangs" of the new social order. Thus the process anticipated in **Value, Price and Profit** will come to fruition. From waging "unavoidable guerilla fights" and being "centers of resistance" to capitalist encroachment, the unions will be "a lever for the final emancipation of the working-class—that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wage system."

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On the United Front

OTTO BAUER

(EDITORIAL NOTE: *At the last convention of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, Otto Bauer, delivered an address on "Fascism, Democracy and Socialism". The following is an extract from his speech dealing with the united front. Otto Bauer represents a point of view on Russia not shared by all Socialists. His position in the Austrian Social Democratic Party and in the Labour and Socialist International, however, makes his opinions important.*)

NSOFAR as the united front of the proletariat can be realized at all, it has been realized in the Austrian Social Democratic Party. Of course, there are workers to the left of us in the Communist ranks, as well as workers to the right, in the bourgeois parties. But it has never happened, and never will, that a party should be identical with an entire class. As far as identity between class and party may be attained, it has been attained in the Austrian Party. When we speak of the united front, we mean, however, the united front on an international scale. How can we attain it? United front manoeuvres are not the way that leads to this goal. All communist machinations are nothing but attempts to divert workers from the Social Democratic movements into parties of their own. This does not unite the proletariat; it makes the cleavage wider.

I also do not believe that the united front may be attained through negotiations between socialist and communist parties on a national scale, that is, in each country separately. It is my firm conviction that there is only one way to a real proletarian united front, on an international scale; that is by direct negotiations between the Labor and Socialist International and the Communist International. Only between International and International. Only between Zurich and Moscow can a real united front be established.

On the United Front

But we must ask ourselves, is the time ripe for such negotiations? And are there any chances of success in such an undertaking?

Anyone who has read the report on the debates and the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International which met lately; anyone who remembers the proclamation of the Comintern during the last national elections in Germany "Throw your main forces against Social Democracy"; anyone who has read the fifty-five theses which the Russian Communist Party published on the eve of the fifteenth celebration of the Soviet Republic, fifty-three of which are devoted to international questions, especially the betrayal of the workers by Social Democracy, which must be destroyed first of all, cannot believe that the time is ripe for such negotiations.

I am convinced that the time for such successful negotiations will come, because a union of proletarian forces is a historical necessity. I can imagine when and how such a thing will occur. In Germany, the one country besides Russia, in which there is a large Communist Party, it has been impossible up to the present time to come to an agreement, because one of the two proletarian parties participated in the government while the other was in opposition. But, that already belongs to the past. Under the regime of reaction both of the working class parties find themselves in the opposition. And no matter how much they will hate each other, they will have to fight for the same thing. That is how history itself corrects historical errors.

I know there are still other possibilities. Happily, the position of the Soviet-Union in foreign affairs in the last few months has improved. The war peril which existed a few months ago has disappeared. But, we must nevertheless not delude ourselves. The entire capitalist world looks upon the Soviet-Union as a foreign element and will utilize the proper moment in which to attack the Soviet-Union. And, I am convinced that the historical moment for the creation of the united front of the proletariat on an international basis will occur when the Soviet government is unable to refuse to parti-

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cipate in an alliance with the proletariat of the world; the world proletariat will without hesitation, do its duty and enter such an alliance for the defense of the Soviet-Union.

I consider it an illusion, that one should think that the united front on an international scale can be created today. I do not, however, think that nothing can be done today in order to prepare the foundations. Do not think that I am, or have been, for an uncritical attitude, for an uncritical worship of everything that takes place in the Soviet-Union. I reserve the right to view the occurrences in Russia through the eyes of a characteristically critical historian. But, just as we do not wish to deny or to belittle that which divides us from Bolsheviks, just so must we understand that every forcible effort to overthrow the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia will lead to a bloody reaction, not only in Russia. And in the second place: When, thanks to the efforts of the Russian proletariat, the Soviet government will succeed in creating for the Russian proletariat a state of welfare and freedom—then will the effectiveness of the Socialist ideal develop such a power of attraction throughout the world that the capitalist system will go to smash.

That does not mean that the proletariat everywhere will copy the Russian method. These methods which have a basis in the history and structure of Russia, cannot willy-nilly be copied in other countries. We do not have to take an uncritical attitude towards Bolshevism and towards everything that happens in Russia.

We have constantly worked for the creation of a basis for a united front, and I would like to hope that on the Communist side also, there will be those who will just as honestly undertake to prepare, psychologically, the basis for a united front.

I am convinced that we are now at the end of one epoch in the history of the labor movement, and at the beginning of a new one. I do not like the usual distinctions that the Communists make, and even some of our own comrades, between reformism and revolutionary socialism. I believe that the class-struggle for the least of reforms, as well as the

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struggle for the destruction of capitalism, are simply two aspects of the same labor movement. They are not opposites. It is true, however, that at the time of the upward rise of the economic curve, the struggle for the small daily demands of the workers come to the forefront; on the contrary, at a time of economic depression, when there is no possibility of gaining any positive success, the struggle for the entire destruction of capitalism must take first place.

"At a certain stage in their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relation within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production, these turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."

From Preface to "*Critique of Political Economy*" KARL MARX.

"Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all the advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers and discipline, united, organized by the very process of capitalist production itself.

"The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production which has sprung up and flourished along with it and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

Capital, Vol. I. KARL MARX.

The Essence of Fascism

A MARXIAN INTERPRETATION

VINCENZO VACIRCA

The exalting of Hitler to the German chancellorship has focused anew the attention of the world on the social phenomenon known under the name of Fascism. The former little Austrian corporal is trying to tread in the foot-steps of the former little Italian school teacher, just as the latter attempted to make himself a replica of the third Napoleon. A study of the policies, methods and system of government of the man of December the second, of Mussolini and Hitler, would show a striking similarity in these three historical movements—and in all probability the two contemporary ones will end, as their French predecessor, in the only possible way open to an oligarchic or a personal dictatorship: war.

Twenty-three centuries ago, the founder of Political Science wrote: "The tyrant, who in order to hold his power, supresses every superiority, does away with good men, forbids education and light, controls every movement of the citizens and, keeping them under a perpetual servitude, wants them to grow accustomed to baseness and cowardice, has his spies everywhere to listen to what is said in the meetings, and spreads dissension and calumny among the citizens and impoverishes them, is obliged to make war in order to keep his subjects occupied and impose on them permanent need of a chief."

From the time of Aristotle the psychology of the tyrant has not changed. And Hippias had nothing to learn from Hitler or Mussolini. But if the personal character and the external forms of a modern tyrant do not differ much from the most ancient ones, there are some social factors which are new and typical of the economic structure of our contemporary society. The analysis of these factors will help us to understand Fascism, in its double manifestations: as an ac-

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complished fact in those countries where it has celebrated its triumphs, and as a menacing tendency in those countries where democratic forms of government still hold sway.

* * * *

What is Fascism? A wave of supernationalism sweeping those countries which came out of the great war defeated, humiliated, enslaved and, what is more important, pauperized—as in the case of Germany? A reaction to the “excesses” of a briefly triumphant Bolshevism—as in Hungary? A revolt of the middle class, crushed in the struggle between proletarians and capitalists and succeeding for the first time in history in establishing an autonomous dominant power—as has been said of Italy? Or—according to the communist interpretation—a pure dictatorship of capitalism which attempts to solve its unsolvable crisis by discarding all democratic pretenses and intrenches itself beyond the machinery of the State used openly as a mere class instrument for the oppression of the proletariat and the brutal defense of its own interests and privileges? Or—as alleged psychologists and easy philosophers of history presume—a collective madness by which a free people surrenders its long-fought-for and hardly acquired liberties into the hands of a “man of destiny” to whom they assign the magic role of their savior in time of hardships and insurmountable difficulties?

None of these hypotheses is entirely valid, although in some of them there is a grain of truth.

The causes which brought on Fascism are several. Some of them are of general character and in a way permanent; some transitorial and local. Historically, Fascism is a phase of the old struggle started on the European continent the day the Parisian people demolished the Bastille, and continued with varying fortunes for 144 years.

A mystic would call it a struggle between light and darkness, liberty and reaction. An historical materialist would see in it a product of continually changing conditions begotten by the development of the capitalist society and of which wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions are simply episodic effects.

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Fascism is not, therefore, a new social event, but simply a new name for an old thing. War, with a revival of the spirit of violence and cruelty, has been not a real cause of Fascism but an occasion which gave a peculiar color to that movement. The secret alliance between Italy, Hungary and Germany, is a replica of the Holy Alliance that bound Austria, Prussia and Russia 118 years ago after the Napoleonic hurricane died down.

The later was an open league of victorious and dominant States for the enslavement of Europe and its sterilization from the epidemic spread of the ideas born with the French Revolution. The former is a conspiracy of privileged classes, of weak and partly defeated states which try to find a compensation for their weakness and poverty now by intensifying the exploitation of their subjected masses and later in a new war that would destroy the richer capitalism of the lately victorious nations. At the bottom of Fascism, therefore, we find a twofold conflict: one within the national frontiers, between wage-earners and property classes; and one over the national boundaries between different groups of international capitalists.

The first form of the conflict has been **temporarily** solved by the reduction to a condition of slavery of the workers of those countries where Fascism won its day. The second part has no possible solution, even if it will lead fatally to a war. In fact, a war could give one of these two results: either fascist-capitalism will emerge victorious—and that will provoke a revolution among defeated nations, which may spread in the ranks of the victorious; or—as is almost certain—the victory will be with the democratic nations and in this event all the fascist regimes will be overthrown and the suppressed masses will conquer their lost liberty and something more. (It is inconceivable, for instance, that the German and Italian workers, once master again of their destiny, will limit themselves to the conquest of political freedom, instead of making a **social revolution**.)

Another aspect of Fascism is the large participation of the middle classes. The 12 millions who voted for Hitler can-

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not be called capitalist and cannot be disposed of easily as unconscious and ignorant masses.

It is true that in Italy and still more in Germany, Fascism started as a middle class movement. It is true that it introduced itself (especially in Italy) with a quasi-socialist program. But a political movement, so rich in demagogic elements, can not be judged by its program and promises. Those are the necessary catch-words to attract the most easily deceivable of all classes: the petty bourgeoisie, which never, in any country and in any period of history has been capable of taking and keeping power alone. This poor middle-class finds in Fascism an illusion of power and a promise of well-being, and follows it about blindly without even noticing that it becomes a tool in the hands of high finance and big industry in their game for the defeat of the workers. When the game is won, the middle-class pay the cost together with the workers, and sometimes more than they. Then comes disillusion but usually it is too late to regret and amend the error. In Italy this has already happened. The middle-class, ruined by the economic policy of Fascism, is spiritually in revolt against the monster that it helped so efficiently to snatch power. But spiritual revolt is of little use against men armed with guns and ready to use them pitilessly.

An important factor is the particular political moment and its psychological effect over a large part of the nation. In Italy, it was the abuses of general strikes in 1919—1920 and the revolutionary fever which exhausted itself without ever crystalizing in a concrete act, which engendered a mad fear in the property-classes and a sense of deluded expectancy and irritation in the middle classes, which contributed powerfully to create the political atmosphere that made possible the Mussolinian adventure. In Germany, the injustices of the treaty of Versailles, the humiliation of the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine by colonial troops, and the occupation of the Ruhr four years after the end of the war helped not a little the Nazi movement which announced itself, among other things, as an avenger of the national honor.

Another element, the most faithful of all, typical of the

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old European society, which is always ready to rally to any reactionary movement and therefore has been a strong supporter of Fascism, is the military caste—a social group which is above any economic class and forms a world by itself. The military look instinctively with dismay at any democratic progress and especially at the march of the proletariat toward power. They know that labor and democracy are the natural enemy not only of war but of professional militarism. They like Fascism for its authoritarian spirit and for the prestige it gives to their caste. The military hierarchy is among the diversified forces that supported Fascism from the start, the only one which did not suffer any disillusionment. They got increased pay—while wages and salaries were enormously cut—and are extolled and flattered by the dictator as the flower and the columns of society.

As regards the big industrialists and rich landlords, even they are not well satisfied with the turn of affairs in Italy. (In an article Vol., 1, No. 4, 1932, in the A.S.Q., I gave reasons for this.) The Fascist regime, initiated as a class dictatorship has, as it was fated to do—degenerated into an oligarchy and, worse, into a personal tyranny. Mussolini has been quick in changing his position of hired gunman at the service of the Confederation of Industry, into that of boss. The onetime most powerful man in Italian industry, Commander Gualino, the Italian Henry Ford, a few years ago was deported without trial to one of the famous or infamous islands where many Socialists, Communists and Liberals are suffering. His crime: a show of independence in the face of Mussolini's power.

Fascism in Italy now takes towards capitalism the position of certain gangsters, hired by some American manufacturers for strike-breaking purposes, of whom they cannot rid themselves and who blackmail them without mercy. So, after all, Fascism has been no solution for the evils with which Italian capitalism was afflicted—and will not be for its German confrère.

In conclusion, we can say of Fascism: It is a reactionary movement camouflaged with socialistic coloration; formed principally and initially by elements of the middle class, but

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vigorously supported by capitalists, the military caste and all privileged groups; colored by political and sentimental contingencies. It begins when in control of the government, as a class dictatorship supported by a large part of the population, although not by a majority; it transforms itself rapidly into a restricted oligarchy and then into a personal tyranny which may rule against the will and interests of all classes.

* * * *

What has been said above belies the theory according to which Fascism is the last stand of capitalism, a kind of heroic remedy adopted when any other means prove to be inefficient to prevent its downfall.

The most natural political form of capitalism is liberalism. That does not mean that the capitalists are fond of liberal institutions and really love democratic regimes. Capitalists as individuals may have very reactionary inclinations, but the economic system to whose fortunes they are bound requires a regime of political democracy as the unavoidable conditions for its prosperous development. It is one of the many contradictions of the system. Capitalism in order to expand itself and increase its potentiality, needs freedom of enterprise, of commerce, of individual initiative. It needs the right to move goods, men, labor freely, internally and internationally. It needs a base of security guaranteed by law. It must know in advance the amount of taxes to be paid and must have control in the expenditure of the money collected by the government through taxation. All that is a negation of personal despotic government. The '*L'état c'est moi*' of Louis XIV is inconsistent with a modern industrial organization. **No vote, no tax**—was the first battle-cry of capitalism in its cradle. The representative régime, with its constitutions and charters and bills of rights, was the natural outcome of that cry. It is not chance that England, the mother of modern capitalism is also the mother of constitutionalism and parliamentary institutions. Of course, the bourgeoisie, in its struggle for freedom against the feudal caste and royalty, had in mind its particular freedom, that is, conquest of power

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for the protection of its own interests. But there are principles which have such universality of value, that once established they penetrate deeper than could have been foreseen by those who proclaimed them. The principle of representative government and personal rights, fostered by the pioneers of modern capitalists, became the aspiration of the working class which, in a century of struggle, succeeded in enlarging the base of democracy to include the proletarians. The first legislative bodies of America and Europe, elected nominally by the **people** were at their beginning the true representation of those who possessed enough to pay direct tax. Universal suffrage is a relatively recent thing.

Once the machine of democratic government was set in motion it was almost impossible to stop it or to slow it, or, worse, to turn backward. Representative government, if it is not to be a mockery, presupposes public control, that is freedom of the press, of speech, of public meeting and organization. You cannot attack one of these freedoms without endangering the whole fabric. *Tout se tient*—all is linked—say the French.

Fascism, destroying public liberties and personal rights, under the false pretense of exalting the State, the new divinity to which all individual aspiration must be sacrificed, attacks the very roots of the political system under which in every country capitalism had an opportunity to develop.

Thus we can understand why these countries—e. g. England, France, Belgium, Holland, and the Scandinavian nations—where capitalism is vigorously developed and possesses a longer experience and a broader political wisdom, have almost no trace of Fascism and stick to democracy, although Socialism is so strong that it can be considered more than a menace.

Instead, it was in countries—like Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, Poland—where modern industry is taking its first uncertain steps that Fascism exploded in all its fury. There is Germany, true, which seems to be an exception. But, besides the spiritual contagion—which must be taken into account in examining social phenomena—and the peculiar con-

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ditions brought to Germany by the lost war—the German experience is not yet concluded, and it is my humble opinion that, in spite of all the external and formal similarities, the Nazi movement differs fundamentally from the Italian Fascism. It embodies so many diversified elements that it will be very difficult to keep them united for very long, and it will meet such resistance, (natural in a highly industrialized country, but almost impossible in an agricultural one) that all hopes for the cause of liberty in Germany are not yet lost.

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Volumes of Trotsky's History
of the Russian Revolution**
David P. Berenberg

The Working Class and Present World Problems

W. SCHEVENELS

*The emancipation of the working-class
can be accomplished only by the
workers themselves.*

KARL MARX.

THE tremendous revolution in minds, policy and economic relations since the War has not merely altered the whole face of the world and especially that of Europe, but has also made a complete change in the tasks of the Labor Movement.

Thanks to the restoration of unity in the European trade union movement, the latter was immediately after the War in a position to defend the interests of the working class from the first moment, and to do so unitedly and efficiently.

The duties of the International Trade Union Movement before the War consisted in maintaining relations between the national trade union organizations, in developing these by means of an exchange of information concerning wages and working conditions, and in providing mutual financial assistance in the event of big wage struggles; since the War, however, its sphere of action has been greatly widened.

During the first years after the War it was compelled to deal with questions which it had hitherto regarded as purely political. Purely trade union activities were to some extent relegated to the background in view of such important questions of world policy as the reconstruction of the devastated areas, the debts, peace and disarmament and the League of Nations, and great questions of social policy like the reconstruction of Europe, socialization, the depreciation of currencies and other financial problems; among these social ques-

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tions being also that of permanent official co-operation with the International Labor Office.

The capacity for united action due to its organization has enabled the International Federation of Trade Unions from the very outset to play an influential part, to the advantage of the working class, in the solution of the most urgent problems.

The machinery of organization of the International Federation of Trade Unions has been forced to adjust itself to this rapid growth of its responsibilities.

This comprehensive activity has not prevented the I. F. T. U. from successfully extending its propaganda to the most remote corners of the globe, so that the "free" trade unions have made their moral influence felt to no small degree in all countries of the world.

Although we cannot claim that in the fifteen years since the War the International Federation of Trade Unions has been able to put into effect its demands and views in the sphere of world economics and social policy, yet we may say with truth that at critical moments it has been able to intervene with some success.

Nor must we forget that the I. F. T. U. is federative in form, so that its policy must be limited to laying down guiding principles and recommending measures inspired by the general interests of the Labor Movement; it has always had to take into account the fact that specific national interests cannot be set aside arbitrarily, and that the independence of the affiliated organizations must be allowed ample play.

There is furthermore another circumstance which must not be left out of account. The International Trade Union Movement cannot have greater power and influence than is given to it by the national organizations. The working class has behind it a period of political and economic crises, which have not seldom imperilled its interests and its position. But never have conditions been so critical as now. Capitalism has throughout the 15 years since the War proved unable to re-establish on firm foundations a social system which has received

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so many shattering blows from war and revolution and from economic and financial mismanagement.

We are to-day standing on the brink of irremediable chaos, which presents the wildest paradoxes. Side by side with the enormously high level of technical possibilities of creating goods and wealth, there is the practical reality of unparalleled moral and material destitution. 30 million persons are seeking work in vain; 100 million persons hardly know where to turn for their next meal.

Nor is the political face of the world more hopeful. The helplessness and folly of the capitalist rulers is even more conspicuous in politics than in economics.

No one will dare to affirm that peace is now on firmer foundations than it was before 1913. If the present economic and political tension continues, there is a very real danger of irreparable calamity, as indeed we see from the earnestness with which statesmen are at last seeking to find solutions for some of the more pressing problems. It is no mere coincidence that efforts are being made simultaneously in Geneva and London to settle the peace and disarmament questions and the question of debts, and to establish order in finances, rates of exchange and the economic system generally.

But it is questionable whether these responsible rulers will show unshakeable determination to reach some general solution acceptable to all.

But the peoples can force them to do this if they themselves are only strong enough and determined enough. The organized workers constitute that part of the working class which knows what it wants, and they it is who must start such action and carry it through to the desired goal in the face of all resistance.

There is no lack of possible solutions. The governments and their experts and the international authorities of the Labor Movement have studied plenty of formulas and plans and worked out plenty of solutions which would be immediately applicable.

We must once more repeat what we have already de-

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clared in Geneva: "There has been enough of study! Now it is time to act without more delay!"

The chief duty of the workers' organizations, when once the governments have been brought to the point of action, is to place ourselves resolutely at the head of this necessary action. The time is short; decisions must be taken before long which will determine the future lot of the working people and that of the enslaved world.

It is no time now for scepticism or fatalism! A movement like ours must move forward to victory with confidence and optimism, in the belief that the world of to-morrow will be what we make it!

AGATHOCLES

Agathocles was silent, and the stones
On which the council sat were hard and cold.
He felt alone. Alone and very old.
There was a hint of numbness in his bones.
Men said to hear him, hear his lovely tones,
Was worth a trip to Naxos. And they told
Their sons about him. Now some young unknowns,
Men of the newer mold, were speaking. He
Sat there and listened, and his silence grew;
Head bending forward, still and eagerly
He waited for a breath of something new.
Something he had not said, and had not heard,
Some new bold vision, some prophetic word.

A something more than music; something grand,
Something to move the too complacent town,
This was his secret wish. A little frown
Lay on his brow; he hid it with his hand.
How many years it had been his to stand
On yonder stone. A prophet? No, a clown
Burning within to tear their madness down
Who in their greed would tear apart the land.
Swift were the words that then came from his lips.
How many shafts he'd sent into their hearts!
And they? They sat and listened to his quips
Too dull to fear his faintly poisoned darts.
He had not moved them. He was silent now,
Time for the younger men to take the plough.

Agathocles was silent. Nothing came.
Only the words of cold and banished years,
His own young phrases and his own old sneers.
The young, young men! They called upon his name.
They stirred the greying embers, but no flame
Rose up to greet them. He was lost in fears.
The words were ended. No, they were not seers,
No more than he. His head was low in shame.
And he was silent. Silence is a room
To which they come whose words have fallen dead.
For those whose dreams have failed it is a tomb
Where memory can hide her drooping head.
Young men,—old fools,—old words and foolish wars,—
He knew no hope for his beloved shores.

D. P. B.

Editorials

MARXIAN EDUCATION AND THE PARTY

THE history of American Socialism has not yet been written. The historian to be will be especially puzzled by that strange phenomenon of American Socialism—Marxism. In Europe anti-Marxian Socialist groups and parties have always existed alongside of Marxian parties. In Europe, Marxism always had to wage a fight for existence against the onslaughts of its enemies both from within and without the movement. Not so in America. Marxism has been accepted unconditionally by the American Socialist movement. Nowhere has Socialism been so closely identified with Marxism. Revisionism, even of the Bernstein type, left the American movement cold. It found no advocates and evoked no response here; Marxian orthodoxy was the rule!

American socialist literature is entirely Marxian. From the soap-box orator, to the popular socialist pamphlet, down to the most serious socialist study—all have been couched in Marxian language. It may have been, and certainly very often was bad, misunderstood Marxism, but these are the defects of popular literature always and everywhere.

On the other hand, the historian will be struck by the absolute poverty of American Marxism, by the absolute absence of any original American contribution to Marxism. America offers a very fertile soil for Marxism. American history due to its finality, to its open beginning and frank economic character; American literature in which class ideology is so openly expressed that even bourgeois critics **had to notice it**; the open brutal class character of American political theory and life,—what a fertile soil for the American Marxist! Still this fertile soil remains as yet virgin soil, untouched by the Marxian plough. American Marxist literature consists of two books and one pamphlet.

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Why this poverty?

Marxism has been accepted by American Socialists not as a scientific method to be applied, but as a dogma, by some to be believed in, by others to be followed out, but by none to be applied. A. M. Simons made the pioneer effort of viewing American history from a Marxian standpoint. James O'Neal's "Workers in American History" is another such pioneering effort. And this is the beginning and the end of our "native" Marxist literature.

America is said to be practical. Americans do not bother about theories. Ideas and ideals, theories and hypotheses are estimated at their cash value. Whenever the poverty of American Marxism is mentioned, the answer is ready at hand, "we live in America, you know; Americans do not bother about such things!" The cash value of Socialism is as yet not very great. From a purely practical standpoint, Socialism is bad business. A vote for Socialism is as yet a vote wasted. The liberals who preach Sovietism and vote for Tammany candidates are certainly more practical than the "practical" Socialist. Deep down in their unconsciousness these practical Socialists have beliefs based on a theory that what seems very practical to the liberal is not practical at all, and what seems very impractical, visionary to the opponent of Socialism is very practical. These comrades who are "all for facts" and against theories, really have theories of their own. When they say theory is useless, they really mean theories other than their own. Accepting Henry De Man instead of Karl Marx is simply changing one theory for another.

The truth must be faced. Our party has never made a **real** effort to educate its members in Socialist theory, and the result for the party has been disastrous. The thousands of members who left the party at the time of the split in 1919 knew little more about Socialism than when they had joined. It was not hard for them to leave the party, to desert the Socialist cause, because Socialism had not become flesh of their flesh, nor blood of their blood. Socialism for them had not become an organic part of their mentality, an outlook on

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life; Socialism for them was a "practical political movement" which had suddenly become very "impractical". This could not have happened to people educated in socialist theory, to people trained to think as Socialists, to measure and to appraise all social phenomena as Socialists.

Our party has paid dearly for its neglect of socialist theory. But worse yet it seems not to have learned from its tragic experience. Even the efforts made by local branches and committees are frustrated by lack of a unified plan, lack of literature and responsible, competent teachers. Most of the socialist classics are out of print, and the latter-day developments in socialist theory are practically unknown in America.

The ideological confusion that reigns in our party at present, the ideological confusion that flared up so ridiculously and at the same time so tragically at the last party convention should serve as a warning to the responsible leaders of our party. This ideological confusion is bound to grow and to work havoc in the party, if it will not be checked by a real Socialist educational policy.

Theoretical opportunism was never more dangerous to our party than it is now. A mastery of the fundamental Marxian principles on the part of our members; the development of a Marxian **habit of thought** is the only guarantee for the unification and further normal growth of the party. This would on the other hand certainly result in the working up of the dormant creative powers in our party; the demand would create a supply.

SURVEY

AS we go to press with this, the Marx issue of the American Socialist Quarterly, great events follow one another with bewildering speed. In America the stress of economic maladjustment has reached a climax. Whether we are face to face with catastrophe, or whether there is in capitalism sufficient vitality for survival and recovery we shall soon know. In the meantime it becomes clear that individualism is dead, and that capitalism, if it is to survive at all, can

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do so only by developing a capacity for new orientation, greater than it has ever evidenced.

The banking debacle was brought on, not by the hysteria of hoarding that developed after the bank moratorium in Michigan. Hoarding and the withdrawal of gold and currency were at most a final straw; the last vote of no-confidence in a sick credit structure. What brought that structure itself to the verge of ruin was the disease that was, and is, eating at the core of capitalist civilization. Loan after loan issued by the banks to industrial and commercial enterprises has failed to pay interest; in many cases the capital advanced has proved uncollectible. Mortgage after mortgage on farm lands has been foreclosed, until the banks were swamped with momentarily unprofitable holdings and were themselves land-poor. In the meantime cash resources fell to a point where the legitimate needs of business were in danger. The disclosures of thievery and betrayal made before the Senate Committee investigating the conduct of the banking business did not help to restore confidence.

Now there will be a resort to scrip—to fiat money. Now that the horse has been stolen, the stable will be locked—if it is not too late. If the words of President Roosevelt in his inaugural address, and in his statements relating to the banking holiday, are more than rhetoric, there will now be an attempt to regulate banking. To be effective this can mean only one thing—nationalized banking, with private banking rigidly eliminated. Will this come to pass? Are the private banking interests still powerful enough to obstruct this measure and to perpetuate a banking regime that makes them the ultimate beneficiaries of all our labors? If they can perpetuate their hold over the financial system,—and we have yet to see evidence to the contrary,—a complete debacle is hardly to be averted.

The situation is not without its humor. What price thrift now? What price industry, and abstinence and all the virtues that one group of bourgeois moralists holds up to us (while a more vociferous section chants the delights of the immediate

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enjoyment of life?). What of "rugged individualism" when its proceeds can be made to vanish as if they had never been?

While the banking situation calls for drastic and collective action, it is not alone among the problems that a sick capitalism faces. Day by day the farm situation worsens. The planting season is at hand. Where is the farmer to get cash or credit to see him through to a harvest time? Who is to assure him that his crop will have value sufficient to pay interest on his loan, to say nothing of the principal?

The farmer is in no acquiescent mood. Far more than the city worker he has shown a belligerency that augurs ill for capitalism. Recently foreclosure sales have netted the mortgages very little. Land and equipment have been bought in at auction for a pittance—and a quit-claim exacted at times at the point of a gun. The farmer feels that his position is little different than in 1776, and he feels justified in fighting to preserve his home.

What can capitalism do for him? Can industry subsidize agriculture? Will it if it can? If it does, what form will the subsidy take? Can the process of subsidization be continued indefinitely? Will there not be an intervening demand for nationalization of agriculture?

This is indeed *terra incognita*! The farmer is himself the most backward of individualists. He is setting in motion forces which he does not understand. He thinks only in terms of his momentary needs, of his living and his land. Yet his medieval industry cannot survive in the modern industrial world without being profoundly affected. Affected how? And how far?

There are now more than 12,000,000 unemployed. What is to be done for them? President Roosevelt was quite right when he said that the time had passed for exhortation and tearful entreaties. What has he to offer, or rather what can "enlightened capitalism" do now that it is in the saddle? The president spoke of direct employment of some of the unemployed workers by the government, presumably on such undertakings as the Mississippi reclamation project that he

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bruited several weeks before his accession to office. How many men can such a measure employ? 200,000? 500,000? Can the employment of even a million, with all the attendant spread of benefits of such a project be of any immediate value in the situation? Will it be more than a drop in the bucket? Will impoverished industry and agriculture be able to stand the drain in taxation that such a measure would entail? There can be no doubt that the money for such projects exists. Putting the matter differently, there can be no question but that the means of subsistence, not merely for the 12,000,000 unemployed, but for the whole nation exist. They do exist, but they are held in chancery. What mode of taxation, or what other method has the present government in mind that the funds in escrow may be made available to relieve the sufferings of the masses? Does he propose to float a new "Liberty Loan", and compel the holders of hoarded wealth to buy them as the workers were forced to buy them during the war?

Either President Roosevelt's words were rhetoric, or he proposes to embark on a program of social legislation that will be a sharp departure from all the traditions of American government. He promised, or shall we say threatened, to override the constitution which he had but a few moments before sworn to protect and to defend. We know how heavily constitutional limitations have weighed in the past on all efforts to obtain just labor legislation. Just how far will "enlightened capitalism" allow President Roosevelt to transgress constitutional limitations if he should attempt to do so, not in behalf of the ruling minority, but in behalf of the masses? Will he be permitted, for example, to regulate prices? to establish minimum wage laws? to set up social insurances? to do the many things implied in his inaugural address? Perhaps he has the courage and the vision. Perhaps he believes that an enlightened public opinion will enable him to defy the masters of society. That remains to be seen. As Socialists, and as survivors of the Wilsonian millenium, we may be permitted to doubt.

In the present crisis the newspapers editorially make a

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great to-do about the good humor with which the public has so far met an unusual situation. It is true that there is something exhilarating about any crisis. There is adventure in the air. Routine has been interrupted and the momentary inconvenience seems of less weight than the holiday air of novelty. Let us not be deceived. Novelty wears off quickly. A prolonged suspension of banking activities will give rise to more than momentary inconvenience. The very life of the capitalist system is involved.

As America labors under unprecedented stress, Germany moves one step nearer to disaster. Hitler is more firmly entrenched in power as a result of the parliamentary elections of March 5th. The Socialist strength in parliament has been maintained. The strength of the Communists has been only slightly weakened. Hitler will, it now seems certain, attempt to rule without parliament. As dictator he will attempt to wipe out all opposition. He has plenty of precedent in Mussolini, in Horthy, in DeRivera and in Stalin. The success of his dictatorship will depend solely upon his ability to provide the masses with work, bread and peace. It is a foregone conclusion that he cannot accomplish this. If he does not his following among the petty bourgeois, among the farmers, and among the nationalist workers will evaporate. The century-old education of the workers in socialist theory will bear fruit. Hitler is the last gamble of German capitalism. No matter how violent his repressive measures, no matter how desperately he may strive to stamp out the seeds of Socialism on German soil, he must fail.

While in the western world capitalism is gasping for breath, in the east the newer and younger capitalism of Japan seeks to find a breathing space by expanding into the as yet unexploited areas of Manchuria. A flood of hypocritical protest comes from the western countries. England conveniently forgets her none too savory imperialist adventures in Africa, in India, and in the Near East. France does not care to have her history in Indio-China, in Cambodia, and in Africa dragged into the light of day. Even America has its shameful

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record in the Carribbean to look back upon. In spite of hypocrisy, and in spite of the absence of any shadow of right, it is more than likely that Japan will engulf Manchuria. To what end? The imperialist adventures of the western world have not served to stave off the saturation of the world with capital and with surplus production. The colonization of Manchuria by Japan, and the stimulation of industrial development in China that will follow as a matter of course will only serve to bring nearer the day of world saturation. Here too as in so many other circumstances besetting the world the Marxian laws are working out.

Whither are we drifting? No longer do our Neros fiddle while their Rome is burning, but of what avail is their solemnity, their belated realization of the gravity of their situation—and ours? Capitalism has failed. It is moribund. It has no leaders. Its boats are empty. It has brought us to the edge of chaos. It has no program. It has no future.

More urgently than ever Marx's battle cry rings out: Workers of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to gain. Only the organized power of those who labor can rebuild industry, bring back peace and plenty. Workers of the world,—yours is the future. How long before you understand that truth? How long before you realize your strength?

These are difficult days. Help the A. S. Q. and the Socialist movement. Send for bundle orders at special rates for branch meetings.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF MARX

- 1818 Karl Marx born, May 5th.
- 1824 Conversion of the family to Protestantism.
- 1835 Studies in Bonn.
- 1836 Betrothal.
Studies in Berlin.
- 1836 Death of Marx's father.
- 1841 Takes his doctors degree.
- 1842 Joins the editorial staff of the "Rheinische Zeitung".
- 1843 Leaves the editorial staff of the "Rheinische Zeitung".
Marriage.
Paris.
- 1844 "Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher". (German-French Year-books.)
Gets into touch with Engels.
Die Heilige Familie. (The Holy Family).
- 1845 Brussels.
Die deutsche Ideologie. (The German Ideology).
- 1847 Joins the Communist League.
Misère de la philosophie. (The Poverty of Philosophy).
- 1848 Communist Manifesto.
Paris.
"Neue Rheinische Zeitung".
- 1849 Trial of the Communists in Cologne.
Suppression of the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung".
Paris.
London.
- 1850 "Neue Rheinische Revue".
- 1850 Leaves the Communist League.
- 1852 Contributes to the "New York Tribune".
Der achzehnte Brumaire. (The Eighteenth Brumaire).
Enthüllungen über den Kölner Kommunistenprocess. (Disclosures concerning the trial of the Communists in Cologne.)
- 1859 Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. (Critique of Political Economy.)
- 1860 Herr Vogt.
- 1861 Journey to Berlin.
- 1864 Foundation of the International Workingmen's Association.
- 1867 Journey to Hamburg.
Das Kapital, Vol. I. (Capital, Vol. I).
- 1868 Beginning of the struggle with Bakunin.
- 1872 Expulsion of Bakunin from the International.
- 1873 Pamphlet against Bakunin.
- 1881 Death of Frau Marx.
- 1883 Karl Marx dies, March 14th.
- 1885 Das Kapital, Vol. II. (Capital, Vol. II).
- 1894 Das Kapital, Vol. III. (Capital, Vol. III).
- 1895 Death of Engels.
- 1902 Aus dem Literarischen Nachlass von Marx, Engels und Lassalle.
(From the literary legacy of Marx, Engels and Lassalle),
edited by Franz Mehring.
- 1904 Theorien über den Mehrwert. (Theory of Surplus Value),
edited by Karl Kautsky.

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Class Struggle in France
The Holy Family
Eastern Question
Two Addresses to the Workingmen's Association
Gotha Program
Value, Price and Profit
Wage, Labor and Capital

Friedrich Engels

Conditions of the Working Class in England 1844
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Ernst Untermann, Marxian Economics
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W. H. Ghent, Mass and Class
Julian Borchardt, People's Marx
Gabriel Deville, People's Marx
G. V. Portus, Marx and Modern Thought
H. W. B. Joseph, Labor Theory of Value
John S. Clarke, Marxism and History
Max Eastman, Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution
Morris Hillquit, From Marx to Lenin
W. H. Emmet, Marxian Economic Handbook & Glossary
Algernon Lee, Essentials of Marx
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I. M. Rubinow, Was Marx Wrong?
Sherman H. M. Chang, The Marxian Theory of the State
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