

their development or decay, and therefore if our position was sound in the past, it must be equally so as long as we maintain it, theoretically or practically.

Our understanding of any period depends upon our knowledge of Marxism; the correctness of our Marxism is entirely independent of any period. So far as our activities are concerned: let us review them. We have claimed that social revolutions are the results of certain conditions inherent to revolutionary periods; that these conditions are so pronounced, and regular, that they assume all the force of a scientific law. We hold that all human institutions are the result, and a proper understanding of them is to be found, in the method whereby man makes his livelihood. That with each radical change in that method, there follows a more or less rapid change in his institutions. We further hold that all class societies are constituted on force; that the elements of this force must be invested in the ruling class; that the prevailing ideas are those which best conserve the power of that class.

Looking upon society of this or any other period within capitalism proper, we see the prime factor of master class domination, in the hands of the subject class. Now this is a condition peculiar to capitalism alone. And we have been led, along with other working class parties (the Bolsheviks for instance), to assume that one of the greatest, in fact the chief factor, of modern master class safety, lay in the ignorance of our fellow slaves.

I am of opinion that today, and for many moons to come, there is not, and will not be, any sudden illumination of that ignorance in this part of the world. I am just as firmly convinced that when such illumination does come, society will display, as was ever its custom, that infinite scorn for those who laid elaborate plans for its future welfare. A matter of historical record, whether we take the revolts of ancient Rome, or modern Russia.

Let us take another point. Comrade Kavanagh says:

"The objection to clause 8 I can scarcely conceive as being seriously intended. To classify international arbitration, or the League of Nations, with colonial liberation movements, seems an attempt at ridicule."

To be sure I did not mention either arbitration or Leagues but, disarmament otherwise, it was offered in all seriousness and without further sense of the ridiculous, other than suggested by the clause itself when read in conjunction with clause 6, or say with that part of the "Manifesto of the Third International," a document which bears the signature of Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev,—"Liberation of the colonies can come only through the liberation of the working class of the oppressing nations." Or Lenin's answer to India's delegate regarding the enslaved Orient—"Communists should support national-revolutionary movements, but only when these movements are in fact revolutionary."

Observe that Comrade Kavanagh speaks of civil war, but clause 8 says specifically we must support "not in words only, but in deeds, all liberation movements in the colonies." This is very different from the basis of our comrade's argument, the validity of which I leave open; but can he or any other Marxist furnish reasons for anyone who has discarded bourgeois ideology supporting "all colonial liberation movements?" This would call for support to Quebec Nationalists and, much more to the point—the Boer secessionist movement in South Africa which, as a matter of tactics, would furnish unimpeachable testimony of political idiocy. Against such we advance the sane Marxist statement of the "Third International Manifesto"; these people "can gain independent existence only after the workers of England and France have overthrown Lloyd George and Clemenceau, and taken the power into their own hands."

As to the question of tactics, we read, "Every success of a revolting colony against an Imperialist State weakens the power of that State." Historically we find the reverse is true. To take but one example—Britain's loss of the African Colonies left her in a more powerful position than at any period in her history, and so far as dealing with revolution at home goes, the loss of all her colonies would not weaken her power. But—the same causes which

lead to that loss would no doubt leave her weak, and these same causes might give her ample means to crush a revolution at home; a fact to which Bavaria and Hungary can sorrowfully testify. Taken from any angle, "all colonial liberation movements" are, most emphatically, not a part of the task of a Marxist.

Let us return to clause 2, and my objection, wherein I said that its ultimate utility was doubtful, and that immediately we would be involved in a series of bitter struggles, which would hamper and in the end nullify our educational work. To me this is a delicate subject, so instead of amplifying that bare statement, I presumed as much on the intelligence of my readers, as upon my words, to make my point clear.

Perhaps this obscurity has caused Comrade Kavanagh to offer objections whose relevancy I am at a loss to understand. Nor can I permit these arguments to pass without comment. He says:

"If the theories we advance are scientifically correct and as such fit the facts of life, the more bitter the struggles the more will their superiority over the concepts opposed to them be demonstrated. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose, in every phase of the class struggle."

This is a mechanical progress with a vengeance; not that I object to a mechanistic theory, if properly stated, but let that go. However, if Marx has stated correctly the conditions under which society develops, certainly the struggle for municipal office or trade union control is not of prime importance.

Nor could the materialist conception of history prove its superiority over the religious conception, or any other, in this struggle, any more than a fight between say, "dragons of the prime" could demonstrate to the combatants the superiority of Darwin to Genesis. Men do not struggle in abstract terms, but in concrete reality. And the question which decides municipal elections, and trade union control, is the immediate and not the ultimate benefits, to the struggles, plus of course ever present and ever potent habits. Questions of wages and taxes are the issue.

And "recent events in local history" ought to have impressed that fact indelibly on our comrade's mind. The taxpayers of Vancouver have repeatedly in the last few years refused to permit any extra funds to be expended on public schools, although every artifice of reason and cajollery has been invoked, and the schools are in a deplorable condition.

In trade union circles any one of radical views, whatever might be the respect his intelligence and honesty engenders, is looked upon as a person unfit to hold office. The radical's position, and more so the Communist's, in these bodies depends upon quite other circumstances than struggles bitter or otherwise.

Further, no one, certainly not I, said anything about leaving any position in the hands of anyone. What I object to is clause 2, the contents of which are available to all who care to read them. This clause requires that we as a Socialist Party "shall be bound to remove systematically and regularly from all responsible posts in the labor movement . . . all reformers, etc., etc." Now, our experience has been that all men are liable to change, and particularly when in office. It would be incumbent on our part, unless mankind underwent a most drastic change, to remove some of those we had bitterly struggled to elect. Just how far such a contingency would prove the superiority of our view I leave to the "Clarion" readers.

It would not matter that the individual was suited to the office he held, and that his work satisfied the majority of those who paid his wages; if in our opinion he was a backslider we should be bound to remove him.

Again, suppose the I. W. W., who have been especially invited by Zinoviev to affiliate with the Third International were to do so. Their concept of a Communist would be totally different to ours. We should then have two Third International groups struggling to systematically remove each others choice. This is by no means a fanciful picture, as "recent events in local history" can testify.

And in these "bitter struggles" rarely are princi-

ples the chief issue; very often it is purely a question of personalities, and not infrequently the result of a bar-room wrangle, or a convention, or some other "plum" as recent local, and remote universal history painfully records.

The members, then, takes sides, from reasons devious and wonderful, spite, policy, friendship, jealousy, but unless thoroughly grounded, and animated by principle, seldom upon class needs.

Am I right? Can we expect men ignorant of social science to act with any class bias, regularly? Nay; I can with propriety ask, can we expect it regularly from the faithful?

I do not for one.

Man is not, despite all his boasts, a reasoning animal; conditions sway him, and bend him, and mold him, despite his philosophies and his creeds.

Knowledge, however, and association, are steady influences and more than ought else I think, should be developed.

To that end we have devoted our energy. We may never set the world on fire, but we can seek and accept the facts, so that should the world by any chance become ignited, we may have some members of our class on hand who will strive to control it, with what success I cheerfully resign to the future.

Not an ambitious task to be sure, but one commensurate with our strength.

J. HARRINGTON.

On the question of affiliation with the Third International, we are unmistakably confronted with impossible conditions. Indeed, it would be hard to draw up any set of regulations more stringently prohibitive, more impossible to perform—in their chief specifications, even allowing for all the autonomy demanded by local circumstances. (*Note.)

What are we asked to do? To turn aside from direct educational principles, from the furthering of class knowledge of capitalist society, and directly challenge the established institutions of capitalism, powerfully entrenched in political domination. We become therefore, one of the great crowd of "Lo here, or lo there," tilting, not against the fundamental principles of society, but, in reality, against its effects, against the forces, brought into being to safeguard those very fundamentals.

We are asked to submit to repressive forces of the State; we are to engage in propaganda against "loyalty" and "patriotism," against Empire and Imperialism, i.e., against the prime necessities of capitalist society. And we are to do this, in season and out, openly and secretly, "legally" or "illegally."

We are thus brought, at one stride, within the pale of capitalist law. We lay ourselves open to its power; we become "seditious" and "treasonable"; outlaws, with no option but to submit. For, where is our support? The puny efforts of a class-conscious minority, able to do no more than protest against capitalist supremacy and tyranny.

In London, charged with just this very thing, Sylvia Pankhurst was sentenced to six months imprisonment, and the British workers not only accepted it, with stoical serenity, but later, on Armistice anniversary day—raided the office of the "Dreadnought," of which she was editor. Probably the comrades remember what happened to the youth who attempted the life of Clemenceau, and also what became of the actual slayers of Jaures, of Liebknecht and Luxemburg. And it can hardly be forgotten, that for far less provocation, Canadian authority, lately held Comrades Russell and Pritchard in duress, while over the line President Wilson recently could refuse, unchallenged, to release Eugene Debs, on Lincoln Day. And why? Simply because, in all these, and a host of similar cases, the workers did not know enough, did not sufficiently understand the workings of capitalist society. Being confused in principles they are divided in council, and hence, were powerless, either to help themselves or change the course of events.

If the workers in Britain and America, in France and Germany,—all of them in a high state of capitalist development, and organized accordingly—cannot prevent such outrages on their own representation (and at that, the S. P. of C. would hardly admit most of them as Socialists), what chance is there, in a benighted country like Canada, where the capital-

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