

Want and Plenty

IN order that the working class may understand Society as we find it today, is founded on the class necessary for them to acquire a general knowledge of the interrelations and contradictions that are inherent in the conditions upon which this system is based.

Society as we find it today, is founded on the class ownership of the means of wealth production in the hands of a small unproductive minority. The great majority—the working class—own nothing excepting their energy, or labor-power. Between these two classes, the producers and non-producers, a continuous struggle goes on over the divisions of the product of labor. This inevitably results in the non-producing, i.e., the master class, securing an ever-increasing share of the world's wealth, while the share that finds its way to the producers is, accordingly, ever diminishing, relatively to their successful operations, as producers, of the machinery of wealth production.

To explain this condition of affairs—this everlasting gap between the two classes, producers and non-producers, we must examine that method of wealth production prevailing some centuries ago, and make a comparison with that of today. About the seventeenth century, the production of food, clothing and shelter, and the needful things of life generally, was not the highly complex process known to and experienced by us in mill, mine, factory or workshop, or on the farm today. Then, a large and important part of the work was done either right in the worker's home, or the product was completely made in small shops. The organized armies of disciplined industrial workers operating steam and electrical machinery, each group of workers interlocking with and being dependent upon each other in the process were then unknown. Attended by man, the machinery of wealth production was then driven by power obtained directly from nature, through waterwheels, windmills, or by simple horse power. The worker's laboring time was then taken up in the greater part in providing for his own immediate needs, leaving a very small proportion of the working day as a producer for his master's use.

Today the workers operate a colossal mass of machinery in the process of production, which, while it lightens the burden of social labor, widens the gap between the classes and renders the process of production ever more apparent as primarily a process of exploitation. The problem in production is no longer handicapped by the limitations of primitive processes. Today the problem is to dispose of the products. And while there is the ability to produce a superabundance of food-stuffs and the general essentials of life on the one hand, the system of private ownership demands that the disposal take place on a profit basis. Consequently we see wealth in abundance around us, and at the same time human want and distress.

The workers are studying the problem for themselves nowadays. They do not require to have it stated to them that they can produce enough. Their only problem is to acquire ownership over it once it is produced.

F. A. E.

Class Conflict Within Society

PROFESSOR JENKS in his book, "A Short History of Politics," gives the following definition, "A society is a certain group or mass of people bound together by a certain common principle or object."

This definition might be good enough for professors or college students, but it is just a little too tainted with professorial ambiguity for a thinking class conscious proletarian to accept.

Human beings are not the only ones possessing a society. Many animals and birds are bound together by a "certain common object" into societies, and, furthermore, they have "certain principles" which have arisen from the "common object," and which are rigidly observed.

In speaking of human society, we usually mean

the political form of that society, and in dealing with it from this aspect we divide it from the purely animal one which has been forced upon man and several species of beast alike in their struggle for existence. Jenks says: "By politics, we mean the business of government," so that if we deal with political society, we see that there must be classes within that society or there would be no need for a governing and a governed class—a subjective mass and a subjecting group.

Since the advent of Marx and Engels and their discovery of the historic formula as embodied in the "Communist Manifesto," published in 1848, we proletarians who have given study to their works look upon society from a far different viewpoint than do our worthy professors. We become very critical, and just as a chemist analyses matter by separating it into its different elements in order to understand the law of their combination and action, one upon the other, so does the Marxist subject society to the same scientific scrutiny.

After studying the past history of mankind, we find that it has been anything but a happy family "bound by a certain common principle or object." This statement might perhaps have fitted a description of primitive communism, but since the dissolution of that form of organization we find that there have been embodied several groups within societies, bound together by a common object or material interest, which sooner or later led them into conflict with other groups within that same society with a view to gaining political control in order that these material interests could be safeguarded.

These internal and external struggles have been going on continually in the process of man's development, eliminating first this and then that group, first one nation and then another, until we have at last reached a stage in the institutions of mankind, known as capitalistic society.

"The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms, it possesses, however, this distinctive feature; it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: bourgeoisie and proletariat."

In other words, exploiters and exploited are rapidly reaching a stage where an open conflict for supremacy is sure to take place.

J. CONLAN.

Industrial Unrest

AT no time in the world's history has industrial unrest assumed such large proportions as is prevalent today. Although the problem of production has been solved and human wants can be produced in greater quantities than ever before, we witness greater poverty in the world than was ever known.

Experience is rapidly compelling the workers to enquire into the cause of these sad conditions. Slowly but surely an ever-increasing number of the wealth producers are being forced to acknowledge the fact that their status under the present system is that of a mere piece of merchandise and that the wages they receive are governed by the same economic laws that determine the value of all other commodities.

The cause of unrest amongst those who produce is not due to agitation, or agitators, but to the capitalist industrial system. It is impossible to conceal this truth that the ruling capitalist class, who control all avenues of wealth production and distribution, represent an oligarchy more despotic and powerful than did any Kaiser or Czar. True liberty and freedom cannot exist under a system wherein a few own and control all these instruments that man must have access to in order to live.

Capitalism has developed within society castes; it is no longer possible for a child of the working class to become anything but a member of the economic dependent mass. The force of competition has now brought into being a few who have it within their power to determine the lives of the

many. Owing to the fact that all wealth producing agencies are now in the hands of monopolists, these owning and non-producing few can live a life of ease and luxury, and like the drones fatten upon those who toil. This system has nothing further to offer those who produce but an existence of uncertainty, of poverty, misery and slavery. This competitive system can no longer guarantee unto the slaves its means of sustenance.

In spite of all the improvements and inventions which have made labor so productive, the social status of the wage-earner remains that of a slave. Instead of these up-to-date appliances lightening labor's burden they have only intensified the struggle. It is now possible to create a greater quantity of commodities with fewer hands and with less effort. The result is that women are replacing men, and an ever fiercer competition reigns amongst the workers for the fewer remaining jobs.

Even at the best of times, prosperous so-called, there exists capital's reserve army, the unemployed, who at all times are a menace to those who have a loan on a job insofar as they act as a bulwark against the workers who are allowed the privilege of working, from raising their standard of living.

Wages, the price paid to the worker at all times, fluctuate around the cost of subsistence. Under this system, society presents the aspect of a battle in progress, the producing and non-owning class on one side and the non-producing but owning class on the other. Between these contending forces a conflict rages, the principles to be decided being capitalist supremacy and slavery versus socialism, co-operation and freedom. To that side which exercises the greatest amount of intelligent organizing abilities belongs the victory, for the rank and file of such an army will be least mauled by its own forces.

The class war we are now engaged in will not abate until the causes are removed. No man can be true to his class interests and remain neutral. Material conditions will eventually compel every worker to class conscious action. To talk of an identity of interest between capital and labor is as foolish as to say there is a brotherly bond of friendship existing between a vampire and its victim. The interests of the two classes are so diametrically opposed that peace under capitalism is an impossibility. Material conditions will eventually compel the working class to action; they alone can bring the struggle to an end; it is your duty at this hour to play your part in the class war.

If only the working class would consider over these facts they would be better equipped for the struggle; knowledge of your class position in society is necessary to all those who desire to acquire their emancipation from slavery. Class conscious knowledge alone will prevent you from falling a victim to bourgeois parties who refuse to acknowledge the existence of the Class Struggle.

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