

along the way down from the burgesses of the towns in the middle ages, not by one means but by many ways and means and by gradual accretions of power.

Pessimist, J. H. B. says I am. I deny the imputation! I am only concerned with bringing those into action, into the revolutionary educational movement, into the political labor movement, into the organized labor movement as their bent inclines them, who now sit idly by, committed to the policy of drift and the reign of accident in social chaos. Forlorn hope! Visionary, am I! Well, there are others! I have this fundamental insight into life, however, I know the huge part that fate plays in it. I know that luck has a way of favoring those who deserve it. I know that so far as we may control the future, within the limits set by fate, it is done only by establishing control in the present, by influencing events in the present, by doing things now in the light of a future objective as wisely as we can, and leaving the rest. So may we set in train a course of events along the line of material causation which may bring the objective nearer realization. Without vision we perish, but let it look out on the world and not too much inward on our desires.

In referring to my antagonism to the doctrine of violent overturn my critic says, "Comrade 'C' seems to be obsessed with the weight, power and efficiency of the capitalist regime, its industrial and economical efficiency...."

He misreads me. I never considered its efficiency in such a connection. What I have said was, in effect, that the continued livelihood of any community, local or national, rested precariously on maintaining economic relationships with the rest of the world. Based as those relationships are on a system of international credits, in the case of a civil war in any country over revolutionary issues those relationships would be snapped, exports and imports would cease automatically, the internal economy would be disrupted and famine and deprivation of all the necessities of life would work havoc among the population of the great commercial and industrial cities. Chaos and a common ruin was the prospect, rather than success for the revolution. I referred to Great Britain, whose population of forty-five million lives from hand to mouth, importing from overseas 70 per cent. of its foodstuffs. It seems to me that the irresponsibility of sheer madness or idiot folly alone would plunge such a community into civil war. The parasites could be purchased out at a cheaper price and would be only a flea bite on the national economy, so long as the means of production were set free for the community's use. It is not what a parasitic class can consume that is the burden, but their control.

What the parasites consume is but a fraction of the surplus they rob the community of, the rest is turned into more means of production either at home or abroad and entails a further aggravation of a state of things where there is a greater productive capacity than there are means for purchasing consumable goods. Thus there is not alone a direct robbery of the surplus products of labor but an indirect sabotage on the community by a deliberate limitation of the production of goods. In fact, capitalism has become a gigantic conspiracy against civilization in that respect, for the progress of civilization is marked, on its material side, by a continual increase of desires and wants and ways and means of satisfying them. "Controlled" production, tariff barriers, to destroy competitors, to beat down the standard of living of the producing masses, to "charge all the traffic will bear" are the ways to a profitable price, are the only ways to survival in the competitive life of capitalism. But, at the same time, they are ways of sabotaging the underlying peoples of the community. And yet, if capitalism is assumed as the final goal of society, world without end, they are the only solutions of its inherent contradictions. We are all caught in

the coils of the system, wage-worker, farmer, business-man, the great vested interests, the national entities, and must play the game against each other and against our social instincts and against civilization with what success we may. But if civilization is to progress, if capitalism is not the final goal, if we are to break through this impasse to a co-operative social life, to a pooling of human resources for the common good, then there must be a transference of control to the communities with what expedition is possible, consistent with the continued operation of economic processes.

First things first and next things next is the way of life. But progress has hitherto been blind and confused because "ends in view" have conflicted and these have been working at cross purposes, have been vague and confused, have been little, anti-social and mean. Progress has been slow because men have lost sight of great ends they set out for and loitered to worship ways and means; they worshipped the prophet and forgot the meaning of his message, they forgot God and became churchmen (excuse me). Means have become shortsighted "ends in themselves." The social class struggle has been turned into a trades union class struggle. Labor has not had the community point of view; it has not ranged itself with the community and become initiating and authoritative against the system of capitalism. Labor has assumed capitalism and played its own hand against its capitalist rivals for a share in the wealth turned out by industry and—the public be damned. A narrow purpose and the stronger resources on the side of the opponents. It is time Labor assumed the initiating and authoritative role in social change assigned it by history.

But by civilized ways. The advanced modern communities, technologically, are great enterprises which must be considered in a responsible manner as going concerns. "Business as usual during alterations." History denies the universality of violence in social change and abundantly supports the possibility of other ways and means. (I am not considering here, violence of the scope of mere police affairs). The science on the modern social situation is with me: the millions expect reform by civil ways, hope for it and abhor the thought of violence. And any social philosophy, or political party, or economic organization in which the doctrine of violent overturn finds harbourage will meet with closed ears from the broad masses of the communities, will become sectarian, sterile, an excuse for Fascism and a danger to the working class movement in general. True enough, violence may come. One way to bring it is to expect it and do nothing to prevent its coming. Another way is to hope for it and to work for it. But as I see its consequences, we should all be involved in a common ruin,—therefore I am against the doctrine of violence. Moreover, I desire open ears and minds to our philosophy of a new order of life.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOOTNOTES TO CURRENT HISTORY.

The plans of French Imperialism are maturing and bearing fruit. What Fabians and Liberals have called merely French "folly" and "economic ignorance" is now seen to have been a deliberate policy devised in the interests of French capitalism. Under the cloak of the League of Nations and an "impartial" commission the gradual Francification of the Saar coalfield has been effected. The valuable Ruhr coalfield has been occupied by French troops and French engineers, and a careful policy of "eviction" of German inhabitants has been carried out. Under pressure of military occupation the German industrialists have come to an agreement with the French for a joint exploitation of the Ruhr resources. Now by clever political intrigue a separate Rhineland Republic has been proclaimed under French inspiration and control. As for the rest of Germany, the Reich is breaking up. Bavaria is Fascist. Thuringia and Saxony have a Workers' Government, which, thanks to the treachery of the Social-Democrats (including the "Marxist" Dr. Hilferding), is being crushed by the machine-guns of the Reichswehr. The Government in Berlin is a puppet in the hands of the very industrialists, captained by Stinnes, who have made a covenant with the French in the Ruhr.

What is the significance of all this? It is that French capitalism has secured both economic and political hegemony over Europe. Under the Peace Treaty, France secured the Lorraine iron area and the Saar coalfield. Before the war she had only about a sixth of the coal production of Germany, a third of the pig-iron production, and a quarter of the steel production. Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and Upper Silesia together produced a third of the German pre-war coal production, and Lorraine alone produced seventy-five per cent of Germany's iron ore.

Further, France secured "political independence" for her puppet States, Poland and the Little Entente; and French capital in league with French diplomacy proceeded to fasten a band of French control down the centre of Europe from Dantzic to the Black Sea. Then, by the clever manipulation of the results of plebiscite most of the valuable Silesian coal area was deducted from Germany and brought under Poland.

Now, although seventy-five per cent of Germany's pre-war iron ore production was in Lorraine, Lorraine had produced an insignificant amount of coal (about 1.5 per cent.), and only twenty-five per cent. of the blast furnaces. Lorraine needs both coke from the Ruhr and the Ruhr blast furnaces to smelt its ore. Hence the latest move of French capitalism: the subjugation of the richest industrial area of Europe to the Comité des Forges and the Paris banking syndicates, with the German industrialists co-operating as junior partners!

On top of this comes the news that a special arrangement has been made for the exploitation of the valuable Galician oil resources. Special privileges are to be given to companies operating with French capital, and a new oil syndicate has been formed in Paris. So, with the oil of Galicia and Rumania at her command, France will no longer be dependent on the Royal Dutch-Shell or on Standard Oil for her oil supplies. The French Empire is as great a menace to British capitalism as the German Empire ever was—that is the "great thought" with which the fifth anniversary of Armistice Day provides us!

Whereas the French Empire is fast becoming an economic unity and has the advantage of geographical proximity, the British Empire is not as yet a unit economically, and is geographically separated. Hence, the counter-move of British capitalism is the development of Empire Trade, the Imperial Conference, Protection plus Imperial Preference. Meanwhile unemployment grows, the standard of life of the workers falls, and international Fascism, the tool of international heavy industry, unblushingly throws aside democratic form to crush the workers by force.

M. H. DOBB. c

—In "The Plebs" (London).

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

EVERY SUNDAY

THEATRE ROYAL

SUNDAY DECEMBER 30th.

Speaker: C. STEPHENSON.

All meetings at 8 p.m.
Questions. Discussion.