

say that of the ocean tides. Life goes outside the class rooms. Society is a moving concern and being such it is predicated that those antithetical forces of conflict are at work, without which there is no movement, according to Hegel and Marx. The class-rooms are where we may get superior intellectual equipment for the struggle in which we are involved, willy nilly, equipped or no. That is all. Let us cultivate a sense of proportion. More power to your arm, Mac, in the class-room work. But don't get agitated if some of your chickens take to the water. Perhaps like the Party you build better than you know, who knows? For it is this I value the Party for, nonetheless my jibe at "intellectualism," above all, I set value on its tradition of scholarly learning in science and philosophy, on man and his society. A Party of working men and women, triumphant over the difficulties accompanying their lot in life, it has been able to take great numbers of other working men and women up who were unthinkers and make them think on the social problem; it has lifted them up out of ruts of narrow, parochial interests and made them see those interests in their due proportion and in relation to the problems of the workers of the world at large, thus making them both class conscious and social conscious; it has conducted them to the gates, at least, of science and philosophy and given them new worlds for old; of all this more than its quota. That is why I hate to see the Party die as it is doing and was doing long before I took these matters up, dying of a doctrinal blight which in its essential features is recurrent and at least, as old as recorded history. Yet all that socialist cultural work among the workers must go on under some auspices in this country if they are ever to play a decisive role in affairs; but better under those of a party already possessed of the prestige behind it of a tradition of learning and scholarship. As to analogies, they are indispensable to reasoning, but they can be so suggestively used as to resemble a naive form of magic. That tail and dog bluff has worked overtime since—since the domestication of dogs. It surely should be given a rest, at least, in scientific circles.

To be sure, we have had since Comrade McDonald's side won out, our flutters of prosperity, especially in the larger centres of the west. These were just at periods, it may be worth noting, when, work being plentiful, even if real wages were low, a feeling of security and independence took hold of the workers. Then, intense struggle took place on the economic field for better economic conditions and for what was conceived to be better forms of economic organisation to carry on the struggle. Stimulated by the independent and aggressive spirit of the workers and holding membership in the unions, many of our members were aroused to interest in the practicalities of the immediate struggle. Once in with the workers, Marxian knowledge and temper was an infectious ferment and awakened a reciprocal interest in our Party. The workers found both moral and intellectual stimulus and justification for class bias in our lectures and literature brimming with the history of working class oppression and struggle, and in our theory of the economics of wage-labor which exhibited starkly the cash nexus existing between wage-worker and employer. That is to say, that their prime interest in us was of a thoroughly pragmatic character, they were interested in us because we were of "use" to them in the immediate struggle. That is a point I wish to press, because that is always the case with men in the mass. "Man does not make history out of the whole cloth but out of the materials that lie to hand," says Marx, or words to some such effect. An interest there was in the social revolution, its trumpets blaring in old Europe were echoing round the world; but with us it was an ideal far-off interest, not an immediate practical interest as applied to this continent. A secondary interest it was, except for the few intense spirits, and one at that separated, bulk-headed off from the primary interest in the immediate economic issues fought over. Not in our minds, much less in the minds of the mass of the workers was there any thought of making use of the immediate issues, and peradven-

ture, by however slight a bias, giving them a turn, as means to a social end beyond the immediate present. That is, the concept was not in our philosophy of social change that a cumulation of such slight biases, to be possibly got then out of those struggles and out of those to come in the future, might be in operation a cumulative train of cause and effect in the direction of a co-operative life. I here speak of biases of a technical kind in the nature of social controls over economic enterprise and upward lifts in the customary standards of living and status of the workers. What could have been done in that direction I do not know, perhaps nothing. The point is that it was not in the thought of the S. P. of C. to do anything in that direction. Instead, for us, except for the desirability of class bias, which the struggles were useful in fostering, and the possible values of the organizations for revolutionary purposes, we had pinned our faith in social collapse, the bulk-head separating the immediate issues in our minds from any relation or connection with the ideal socialist future. Moreover, as to the political aspect of this question, whatever of a practical political character might have been forced into any of the issues, we were not the ones to do it, by reason of that same faith. We contested elections or our members sat in the legislature for purely educational purposes—"Reforms do not reform, nor palliatives palliate," so said to the electors. We had Comrade McDonald's ideal. Such issues as became political issues became so at the initiative of the ruling class, selected as favorable for their own purposes of defeating the working class movement. When the aftermath came, when the period of deflation came and the long depression, which is still with us, and with it working class defeat and cessation of struggle, we had nothing to offer the workers except the fatalistic doctrine of misery and social collapse. Consequently we were incapable of shifting the venue of the struggle from the now unfavorable economic field to the field of practical politics, or of advising the workers to that effect, or of allowing other working class parties to do so. There, on that field, we were anti-reform and declared enemies of labor reform parties. As Comrade McDonald says, our policy was to "leave reforms to the ruling class." Our last member in a legislative assembly in Canada was Armstrong of Winnipeg. Straight-laced in the Party policy, the Winnipeg local laid upon George the obligation to wait upon them for instructions for his every act in the house. One result was that on one occasion his abstention from voting saved the government from falling before an adverse vote. Next election Armstrong was defeated. How is the S. P. of C. local in Winnipeg doing now? Flourishing, as Comrade McDonald must expect by his reasoning, like the green bay tree? No; dead as a door nail! Karl Kautsky used to be thought a good reasoner on the class-struggle. For the benefit of my critics, I take from one of his essays, this: "The essential character of a revolutionary period is when reforms proceed from the acts of a new class." We may honor those who stick to a principle even unto death, yet we must always retain the liberty of questioning the wisdom of the principle.

Similarly, while every revolt of an oppressed class is morally justified, yet we may question its wisdom. That is good Marxism. To temper with generosity our criticism of working class mistakes and failures, that is to be in the tradition of Marx, the Marx who advised against the disastrous attempt to establish the Paris Commune of 1871, yet who, in his "Civil War in France," combined with his criticism of it, a denunciation of its enemies prolonged through the whole work at white heat while paying a splendid tribute to the idealism, courage, and energy of the Communards. Comrade McDonald's remarks in last issue on the O.B.U., and its prominent personalities are outside that tradition. I am myself prone to fall from grace in that respect and I hope I get my medicine in such a case. But on this occasion I am physician. Scornfully he charges those members of the S. P. of C., who helped to organize the O.B.U. with "rushing" to its sheltering wing, with seeing "in that organization the

harbinger of all progress," with seeing that "new intellectual avenues were being opened up and they, the favored of nature, with their keen scintillating thinking equipment were called upon to be the pioneers of a new era." The workers, says he, "anticipated its (the O.B.U.) ultimate failure. They saw greater results in the political educational movement." Fade Edison! Take out a patent on that one Mac, its a peach! And the elegant pet names he selects for his comrades, listen: "The wise brannigans eventually dropped their plaything and returned to the status quo." Whatever that is. "But where," he asks, bursting with derision, "where is the O.B.U. today?" Perhaps, dear Mac, it is with yesterday's ten thousand years, though some will deny it, along with Marx and Engels and the First International, busted this long, long time ago. Poor Marx! Sure, there were lots of "knowing" people in his day who predicted the death of the child of Marx's revolutionary heart and brain. He was fated to be the author of its death himself. But the first International is honoured far beyond Marxian circles. There have been lots of that kind of knowledge since, which is easy got because it is post mortem, that knows (!)—as it knows (!) about the O. B. U.—that the First International was foredoomed to failure. No doubt Comrade McDonald honors the earlier enterprise and its promoters, but why scorn the other? However it be with him, for myself I am sure of this, that the same qualities that get a generous treatment for the First International also demand it for the O.B.U. What are those qualities, as I see them? I will name two. Both enterprises (good word) were examples of a searching and a striving for working class unity through organizational means; and both were symptomatic of working class revolt. The sentiment, as I sensed it, in favor of the O.B.U. in Canada was strong even among the unorganized and the organized who were never in its ranks. It took a trade depression, a combination of the State, the press, the vested interests, both capitalistic and A. F. of L. to bring the workers to the state of "reason" on the O.B.U. which Comrade MacDonald opines they reached voluntarily.

There have been men whom we know of as champions of lost causes. They have turned disgraceful, panic stricken routs into dignified and honourable defeats, so that it could be said all was lost but honor. In the humour in which he writes of the O. B. U., Comrade McDonald would deny the lost causes of the working class of his day even that poor boon. And yet I am sure that without a fund of generosity he would not be in the working class movement. Let thy light so shine Mac! And all of us keep the tradition! C.

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