

A VARIATION IN RELATIVE WAGES

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tion of the division of new values, raw materials and machinery, etc., the product of previous labor, being left out of consideration. The value of the day's product is stated both in terms of money and in quantities of commodities, i.e., in loaves of bread. In the first diagram, the price of bread is 3 loaves for one dollar, in the second, prices have fallen to 5 loaves for the dollar.

It is to be remembered that an increase of productivity does not increase values, but only the quantity of material goods. The formula of the labor theory of value is, that, the value of commodities varies, directly as the quantity of socially necessary labor involved in their production, and inversely as the productivity of the labor employed. Thus if productivity increases, value falls, if productivity decreases, values rise.

The new values produced in one day of 8 hours are assumed to be equal to: \$8.00 or 24 loaves.
The wages are equal to: \$3.00 or 9 loaves.
The profits are thus equal to: \$5.00 or 15 loaves.

It is then assumed that prices have fallen by two-thirds (an increase in productivity is implied in the fall.) Because of the fall in the price of necessities of life for the worker, his money-wages fall, but not so much as prices. Money-wages are assumed to fall by one-third. This leaves the respective positions of wage-worker and capitalist as follows:

New values produced in one day of 8 hours are equal to: \$8.00 or 40 loaves.
Wages, fallen by one-third: \$2.00 or 10 loaves.
Profits have thus risen to: \$6.00 or 30 loaves.

Profits have thus risen both in terms of money and also by the greater purchasing capacity of money. The capitalist is better off and so also is the wage-worker for, though the laborer's money wages have fallen, yet his two dollars will purchase 10 loaves of bread, whereas, formerly, his three dollars only purchased 9 loaves. Nevertheless his wages have fallen relatively to the profits of the capitalist who has increased his profit by one more dollar, in addition to which, as stated he also gets the benefit following from the fall in prices.

The paragraph closes with the following comment, showing the social consequences of the new division of Social Wealth: "The share of capital is raised in proportion to the share of labor. The division of social wealth between capital and labor has become more disproportionate. The capitalist commands a larger amount of labor with the same amount of capital. The power of the capitalist class over the laboring class is increased; the social position is depressed another degree below that of the capitalist."

The general tendency of historical development has resulted in an im-

Political Basis of Soviet Russia

(From "Christian Science Monitor,"
Dec. 9, 1919.)

MR. W. R. HUMPHRIES, who spent 11 months in Soviet Russia as a war secretary for the Y. M. C. A., has written for the Christian Science Monitor a description of the system as he has seen it. Reaching Russia just after the Bolsheviks had overthrown Mr. Kerensky, when the army with which he was to have worked was hastily demobilizing, Mr. Humphries was employed in doing American publicity work, assisting in the smuggling into Austria and Germany of 1,000,000 copies of President Wilson's 14-points speech. Later, for the American Red Cross he was in charge of Serbian refugee colonization work in Russia. He travelled 20,000 miles in northern and central Russia and in Siberia, and had business relationships with over 100 local Soviets.

He met personally Mr. Lenine, Mr. Lunacharsky, Alexandra Kolantai, Mr. Tchitcherin, Mr. Petroff and other prominent leaders. He was present at the Constituent Assembly and at the third and fourth of the all-Russian congresses of workmen's and peasants' deputies. Mr. Humphries met leaders of the opposition parties, and attended meetings of the Menshevik left and right wing Social Revolutionaries, Constitutional Democrats and anarchists in his endeavor to understand the struggle.

When the Bolshevik revolution of November, 1917, finally broke up the old bureaucratic apparatus of government, it was decided, Mr. Humphries states, that the ground would have to be completely cleared. A new form of government was accordingly devised.

The Soviet system, he says, may be considered under two heads, (1) the political structure; (2) the economic.

The Political Organization.

Each town and city in Soviet Russia is governed by a Soviet. The word Soviet simply means council. This Soviet is a delegate body, the delegates coming from all the trade and professional unions in the city, from every group doing socially useful work whether manual or otherwise. Delegates are sent not only from the machinists', the plumbers' and the carpenters' unions, but also by the medical union, the teachers', the clerical workers, and even by the mothers' association. Both married and unmarried women have representation on exactly the same terms as men; that is, as they go to work and join the appropriate union.

The number of delegates from each union to the city Soviet is proportionate to its membership. The idea of continuous representation is recognized. Unions have the right to re-

provement of the standard of living of both the working class and the capitalist class over that of these respective classes of former times, but the ratio of improvement between the classes has been enormously in favor of the capitalist class. As owners of the means of production and distribution of society, the latter class are the chief beneficiaries resulting from the development of ages.

call or instruct their delegates at any time. It is impossible for a delegate long to act contrary to the wishes of those who elected him.

Organization of a City Soviet.

Obviously a council or Soviet on which is at least one delegate from every occupational group in the city is likely to be a large body. The number as far as Mr. Humphries observed, seemed to run from 50 in the smaller towns up to about 1200 in the case of Petrograd and Moscow. The whole body meets monthly or oftener. Subcommittees, usually of three, are appointed on housing, public safety, food distribution, public health, the people's education, social welfare, the people's courts, and so on. For a while there were also extraordinary commissions to combat counter-revolution. The chairmen of all these commissions or collegiums form the central executive committee of the city soviet. In making appointments to these collegiums the city soviet is not obliged to appoint from within its own ranks.

In the large cities there are district or ward soviets built up from the shop committees and house-block committees of the ward. They have executive but no legislative powers. They carry out the orders of the city central soviet and play a large part in the housing and food-distribution systems. Rents, by the way, are payable through the housing committees into the city soviet treasury. Money is thus available for the building of more houses, for education, public services, extension of industries, and so forth. These rents more than take the place of taxes.

Village Soviets.

The innumerable village soviets, made up of farmers, of course, send delegates to regional or provincial soviets, and thence to the all-Russian congresses of workmen's and peasants' deputies.

The peasants of Russia so far have had less representation in the all-Russian congresses than have the city workers, the latter having representatives at the rate of one per 5000, whereas the peasants had only one for every 25,000. This roughly equalizes the number of city and country workers in the congresses, since the peasants outnumber the city population probably five to one. The city workers explain this discrimination on two grounds: (1) that the revolution was made chiefly by the city workers, and (2) that the city workers have given the right of self-determination to the peasants in the matter that most concerns the peasant, the land question, giving it to them on their own terms. In turn they claim for themselves the right of self-determination in the matter of the socialization of industries, which more vitally affects the city workers. After the old industrial system shall have been destroyed and the establishments nationalized, then they will be willing to end this transition-time dictatorship, and allow the peasants to have the predominating voice in the national congresses to which their number entitles them.

All-Russian Congresses of Soviets

Periodically there are held great congresses of delegates from all the city and provincial soviets. According to the constitution they must be convened twice a year. Actually there have been six such congresses during these first two eventful years of the Soviet regime, so many have been the crises to be met. At several sessions of the third and the fourth all-Russian congresses, there were between 1000 and 1200 delegates from city and provincial soviets all over the country. Some came to Moscow instructed by their locals how to vote on the major questions to come before the congress but most seemed free to act on the basis of facts that might later come to light. The congresses are in session usually for from six to fifteen days.

On the last day before adjourning they appoint a central executive committee of 200 to be the repository of all power for the ensuing six months, receiving its mandate from the congress that elected it, reporting its acts to the next congress, and then resigning. Many of them are re-elected on the next central executive committee.

Under this system changes of government personnel can be made at frequent intervals, yet there is opportunity for continuity. Satisfactory representatives may remain in office indefinitely, though always removable.

The Proportional Representation System is used by the all-Russian congresses in appointing the central executive committee. Each political party within the congress—Communist, Menshevik, Social-Revolutionary, and so on—is entitled to appoint its exact proportion.

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee, representative of the soviets, remains in the national capital of Moscow and meets almost daily. It has legislative as well as executive powers, except on the broad questions of policy which are passed upon by the congresses. This body, the central executive committee of 200, appoints and controls the 18 commissariats or committees the chairmen of which form the Council of People's Commissars or Cabinet.

The Council of People's Commissars appoints its own president, which so far has been Nikolai Lenine. There is no president of the republic. Mr. Lenine is only president of the Cabinet and may be recalled by the Cabinet any day, just as the Cabinet or any member of it may be recalled at any time by the all-Russian central executive committee.

Some of the 18 commissariats are: foreign affairs (Mr. Tchitcherin, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs); war (Leon Trotsky); people's education (Lunacharsky and Maxim Gorky); posts and telegraphs; ways and communications; social welfare (Alexandra Kolantai); finance; the people's justice.

Decrees passed by these commissariats must be approved by the Council of People's Commissars and by the all-Russian central executive committee, before they are promulgated.