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"Canada's Welfare"

SAYS the "Colonist" (Jan. 21, 1925) "Canada's future welfare lies in more work, and less talk; in less government; in constant and unremitting application of our own efforts." The "Colonist" either means what it says; or it doesn't. But if it does, the remedy rules out the majority of the Canadian population. For we presume the "Colonist" presupposes the observance of "law and order." But "law and order" is—unremitting government, implacably relentless against the "application of our own efforts." for why?

Take the unemployed of Victoria for instance. The "Colonist" dares not say publicly "they are too lazy to work," or "they are not willing to work." And if it did it would be a belated lie. Yet although willing to work they are idle and poverty stricken. Why? How are they to apply "their individual efforts?" Cultivate the land? But the land carries notice to keep off, on pain of prosecution. Go logging in the forest? But injunctions advise respect of private interests. Go into the lumber mills? But prosperity enforces "no admittance." What opportunities offer in the lesser local 2x4 outfits? Then get out. Sure—if possible. But where? Everywhere throughout the length and breadth of "our country" the whole resources of Canada, i.e., the social means of modern life, wherein the people are wholly dependent, is Capitalist property; property owned and operated entirely for the advantage and profit of the capitalist class. So that in the terms of "law and order" "individual effort" is not possible for the Canadian majority. Therefore the Canadian majority are the slaves of "law and order." That is, subject to the will of Capitalist Government. For why?

Obviously, when the "Colonist" advocates "less government" it does not mean any relaxation of government as applied to the clamorous needs of the slaves of Canada. Instead, it means a lessening of the onus of government for the benefit of the governors (the capitalist class), who alone bear its incidence. Consequently, in the terms of capital, the "intensive" application of our own businessmen "to our own affairs" means the struggle of the capitalist owners of Canada's resource, to produce commodities as cheaply, and to find markets to dispose of them as advantageously as the capitalist owners of other countries. To do this means fundamentally, cheap labor (regardless of the price of wages). Therefore, "individual effort" is the effort of capitalist interests to cheapen competition. "Less government" means the lessening of taxes and restrictions on capitalist industry,—which bears all taxes. The prosperity of Canada is identical with the prosperity of the capitalist owners of Canadian industry. And the tradition of "personal enterprise" is but camouflage to hide the exploitation of slavery from its victims. So without fear of contradiction we say that "the hard, consistent and perennial work that will put Canada on its feet "financially and economically," will also depress the people of Canada into a more intensive misery and rigor of slavery.

There is an interesting quotation from the Montreal "Gazette": "Given a reasonable tariff, protection for property and personal rights, 8 million people in a country able to support 25 million in wealth should be able to manage." Beautifully, sooner—given economic freedom—than not under the slavery of capital. That is the proposition of capitalist prop-

erty in the social means of life, for private profit. Capitalist wealth is formulated in Capital commodities. Those commodities are exchanged, and the profit embodied in them in production is then realised in exchange. But those commodities, thus exchanged, represent products for which the labor that produced them received no equivalent. That is why capitalist wealth consists essentially in bonds and title deeds. Because those deeds constitute the right to appropriate the products of labor. That is why capitalist countries measure their wealth in exports. Because it is only in exchange that the profit in the product can be obtained. Not by any "smart Alex" dealing on the open market. That is why increasing exports are increasingly necessary to capitalist prosperity. If labor received the equivalent value of its production there would be no commodities to export, because there could be no profit in the business. If labor received that equivalent there could only be production for use, unstinted in its bounty of abundance. Fundamentally, therefore, business is nothing more than traffic in stolen goods. That is why the interest of master and slave is diametrically opposed. That is why master and slave cannot prosper together. and that is why, under the terms of capitalist production, the 8 million people of Canada can not, and will not, be able to manage.

If the scribe of the "Gazette" found himself in the merciless clutches of the mineral companies of Canada he would probably reconsider his individualist self complacency. If he were chained—by the most compelling necessity of slavery to the whirring wheels of industry, he would probably long for something more than the laissez faire of bourgeois prosperity. If he were farming the baldheaded prairie under the necessary bonds of finance and machine companies, he would probably find a new use for his vote. If he were logging with the broadshouldered giants of the woods, in the competitive terms of necessity he would probably worry but little on tariff and taxes. If he were compelled to toe the line with the hefty sons alongshore, grimy in the dust of its clamorous fury and demeaned with its desultory idleness, he would probably agree with the "Colonist" in a quite other sense, that the "less government" there was, the better. And if he were—as the flotsam of slavery must ever be—flung hither and yon on the changeful tides of profiteering property, he would find that dire want and eagerness to work; willing hands and necessitous inopportunities were the commonest of associations, even in Canada, and that whoever or whatever his "anachronistic premier" might consider, it would most certainly not be him.

Nor need the scribes dream they escape those conditions because of their superior ability. We do not question their ability. It may even be superior—though it does not manifest itself. But it is no question of ability. Or of thrift or personal industry. Instead it is primarily and mostly a question of social conditioning. A conditioning wholly beyond the arbitrary provisioning of the individual. The people who man the mills, the mines, the factories, the fields, the forests, the floods, have been gathered from a class crushed world, where Capital has stripped labor of everything. Even its ancient health. The greater industry has continually made labor more superfluous. Labor has been enticed from the crimson tragedies of the exploited East to

the misinterpreted illusions of the unknown West. Finance and land companies; timber and minerals; railway and shipping companies; government and colony—the whole interwoven complex of modern production—have flooded Canada, as they have flooded all lands, undeveloped, with labor misinformed; uncultured; inexperienced in the mysteries of "business." A labor absolutely necessary for the exploitation of the natural resources which capital has, by priority appropriated to itself. Appropriated neither by thrift nor by industry, but by law and occasion. Not by single labor, or personal achievement, or foreseeing enterprise; but by power and by gift; by combination and by the growth of social increment. That is how the H. B. and the C.P.R. and the Canadian banks and industries flourished and succeeded. By appropriating the natural resources of the country to themselves, by the legalities of parliamentary procedure and exploiting their holdings through wage labor and social achievement. By the exploitation of natural resource, by means of exploited wage slaves—that is the one and only way that capitalist fortunes can be "made" and capitalist accumulations built up to become, in their turn, mighty engines of a yet more extensive exploitation.

But the expropriated immigrant today has no chance whatsoever to own, by the exercise of thrift and industry and application, mines or forests, or railroads or banks, and but little of the land and its abundance. They are only driven wage slaves, blind to their slavery. Driven because they are blind. They "prosper" only as Capital benefits by their toil. They are tax-payers only as labor is the fundament of all wealth. And they are "free" of the resource of the country, only as that resource is "free" to the operations of capitalist accumulation. The resources have all been staked off, long ago, as the private domain of powerful monopolies. And like the dead in Christ they await the resurrection of the world market, for their new glorification. We think—as vainly. And our scribe is by no means sanguine.

Says he: "If the businessmen . . . cannot run the country, they will soon . . . be replaced by others who can." Exactly. Hence to smooth the way of "businessmen" is the duty of government. That is perfectly correct. To clear away the obstacles for the success of the ruling class is the sole function of government. His remedies are significant—protection, economy, tax reduction. In the present way of things that trinity is the mene tekel on the feasting halls of capital. Capitalist progress means increasing exports. Exports mean Imperialist expansion. And Imperialism means a burden of wealth—as expressed to the capitalist, but of debt as expressed to society—which paralyses the underlying support of industry. Economy means the economy of capitalist property. That is, economy in capitalist production and distribution. Hence capitalist economy means ever growing masses of unemployment; an ever falling class standard of living; and consequently, an ever lessening effect of purchasing power. Hence protection means protection against competition abroad, and support against the proletarian revolution at home. Hence the financial clamor for lessened taxation. And its contradictory sequence—the appeal to individualist effort. That clamor shows that the taxation of capitalist economy is hard to col-

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The Evolution of Economic Structure in Soviet Russia

THE passing of election fever, and the revival of objective interest in Russia, together with the forthcoming report of the Trade Union Delegation, justify the following brief historical sketch of developments in the economic structure of Russia since 1921.

The New Economic Policy that was instituted in 1921 was introduced primarily for the benefit of the peasants. The theses in which it was enunciated by the Russian Communist Party Conference in April of that year, applied directly only to the peasants: the first substituting a fixed agricultural tax for the system of forced requisition in grain, and the second establishing the right of the peasants to the unrestricted sale of their surplus produce. Only indirectly, by the implications of that second thesis, was the right of general free trade conceded, and it is safe to say that had they fully realized the meaning of that clause, many who participated in the conference would have been still more reluctant than they were to agree to it.

Yet, in the simple formula of the right of the peasants to sell their surplus produce, was involved the complete reorganisation of Soviet Russia's economic system. Until 1921, trading was illegal, though it went on. Industry and agriculture were theoretically linked together by a centralised State system of exchange. The peasants gave over, perforce, all their surplus grain to the State, which maintained therewith the State industries. The industries also handed over all their produce to the State, which distributed it over the country to the army, the workers, and, more rarely, the peasants. Such was the theory according to which the Communists hoped to organise a progressive Communism. In practice, it led to an extremely centralised form of State control, which, in conjunction with other, more objective circumstances led to the gradual collapse of industry, and the non-production of industrial goods. The peasants, perforce, fulfilled their side of the bargain, but the industries were unable to fulfil theirs. The natural result was dissatisfaction among the peasants, leading finally to the peasants' insurrections in 1921, and the necessity for change in policy in order to meet the growing discontent.

The granting of freedom of trade to the peasants necessarily implied the giving of the same right to industry. The "Centralism" of the early years had already been superseded in some measure by decentralised control, under Provincial Councils of People's Economy, and this movement was carried much further. Industry was roughly divided into two categories: (a) those of a national significance; into this category coming most of the heavy industries, the mining and steel works; and (b) those which under the new conditions would be more dependent on the open market for the sale of their goods: e.g., textiles and other light industries producing articles of general necessity. These latter had to organise on the strictly economic basis of production for profit; and, in the first reaction from the old Centralism, the principle was applied to each factory unit without regard to the possibility of competition between one factory and another. Thus, decentralisation was carried to its illogical extreme, and forced by economic considerations, each factory or workshop began to organise itself with a view to capturing the market in its own line of goods.

It was quickly realised that this policy was leading directly to the unnecessary, and, from the Communist's point of view, positively harmful practice of cut-throat competition between one factory and another. Steps had to be taken to eliminate that possibility as far as was practicable; and the policy of trustification of industry was adopted. Trusts were organised, consisting of groups of factories and works allied by the similarity or interdependence of their productions, or, more rarely, by local considerations of contiguity. At the head of the

trust was placed an administration in whose hands was the decision of all questions of quantity or quality of production in each factory, who purchased raw material and marketed finished articles, and organised the group of factories as a unit of production for profit. In addition, the trust administration was empowered with the appointment or dismissal of the director and his assistants in each factory or workshop, although, once appointed, the director was given a free hand to organise the internal affairs of the factory as he saw fit, in conjunction with the workers.

The administration of the trust was appointed directly by the higher, responsible State organ: the provincial, Republic, or Supreme Council of People's Economy, in consultation with the Trade Unions concerned. It was appointed for a fixed period, and was held responsible only to the State department or its sub-commissions. The net profits, after sums were set aside for amortisation and depreciation, for reserve capital, industrial development, and bonuses to workers, etc., were to go to the local or State budget, according to the status of the trust.

This general form, worked out during the first years of the trustification period has undergone no radical modification, but rather has been developed and widened in its application, until now almost all units of production, whether in light or heavy industries, are organised in trusts. In few cases does any one trust cover the whole of any one industry or form of production. Where an industry is scattered over the country it is trustified according to local considerations. This has given rise in some cases to further associations of trust in syndicates for the purpose of purchasing raw materials and the sale of finished products. The syndicate is a much looser and more optional form of organisation, and has little administrative authority, as it exists primarily for the advantage of the trusts themselves, and is not at all a compulsory form of association imposed by the State.

The work of supervision and control of this great machinery of industry has necessarily given occasion for the organisation of a much more complicated State machinery to deal with it. The Council for People's Economy, the Government department directly responsible for the machinery of industrial production, has become an organisation of prime importance in the life of Russia. The problem of smooth and successful control and administration has led to a constant revision of its previously existing departments, and the formation of new ones, as well as the organisation of all kinds of congress conferences, consultations of experts, etc., to cover every ramification of industrial life. In these directions the Soviet Government is continually experimenting, and the necessity for having the most active minds in the State in the service of industry has not been altogether ignored.

Before leaving the subject of the management of productive industry, a few words must be said concerning workers' control. It must be realised at once that direct workers' control exists only over the administrations of the units of production—the factory, the mine, or the workshop. From the beginning of the first revolution in 1917 factory and workshop committees had been organised with a view to workers' control, and after the October revolution they played a most important role in the life of each factory. In most cases they became the factory administration, and it has to be admitted that the practice of unmitigated workers' administration, in conjunction with the extreme centralisation of the State industrial administration, was far from being an unqualified success. With the change in policy in 1921 and the organisation of trusts, involving the appointment of the director from above, the function of the factory committees was changed from that of

administration to that of control in their capacity of local units of the Trade Unions. As such they watch over all questions affecting the workers—wages, conditions of labour, etc.—and also through them are appointed the workers' representatives to the various factory commissions for production, organisation, etc., and the workers' representatives to the factory administration, working with the director for the general interests of the factory.

There remains also the direct method of workers' control through the influence of the Trade Unions, which have representatives on the various administrative organs of the Government, from the highest to the lowest. In all questions affecting the workers' interest the Unions have to be reckoned with, and their opinions taken into consideration. In the lower organs of industrial administration they are a very active means of preventing too exclusive a devotion to profit-making at the expense of the workers.

For the first three years of the New Economic Policy the Soviet Government concentrated on the production aspect of Russia's economic life and tended to ignore the distributive aspect. Until the economic crisis of autumn, 1923, there had been no special machinery, equivalent to the Council for People's Economy, in the sphere of organisation and control of distribution. A Commissariat for Internal Trade was in existence as a sub-commission to the Council for Labour and Defence, but its activities were severely restricted, and it had no administrative authority. But the economic crisis brought the Communists up against some nasty facts. They discovered that while industry was over eighty per cent in the hands of the Government, distribution was over eighty per cent in the hands of the private trader. As a result profits were going largely into the pockets of the latter, and had the process continued the value of State ownership of production would have been almost nil.

Measures were taken to meet the situation, among the first being the raising of the Commissariat for Internal Trade to the status of a People's Commissariat, with corresponding administrative powers in the sphere of distribution to those of the Council for People's Economy in the sphere of production. Its first step was to meet the economic crisis by a drastic control and cutting of prices. It then had to turn its attention to the development of the existing State distributive agencies—the Co-operatives, the Syndicate or Trust shops, and the State or provincial limited companies. By means of credits and preferences these are slowly recovering the ground they have lost to the private trader, but the Commissariat for Internal Trade is only at the beginning of its task of control and administration of trade within the country, and its efforts in this direction during the next few months should provide interesting material for study. The absorption of the old People's Commissariat for Production into the new Commissariat marked the disappearance of the last vestiges of the system of ration distribution that existed until 1921.

This brief survey of Russia's economic structure would not be complete without some reference to the banking system. The development of financial stability and the accumulation of financial resources in Russia during the last three years is too vast a subject to be dealt with adequately at the tail of an article. But this much at least must be said: that the various banks that have been set up in Russia have played and are playing a vitally important part in the reconstruction and development of industry. Within three years an immense State finance and credit system has been built up, and the progress from one State bank, with a capital of a few million paper roubles in 1922, to the several banks with hundreds of millions of stable value as capital.

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The Poverty of Philosophers

By J. A. McDONALD.

LAST summer, during a lull between study classes, I wrote the Clarion offering to make a trip to Vancouver to debate any member the S. P. of C. might choose on the question of the British Labor Government and the Party attitude towards it. I considered this the most fitting method of placing a controversial matter fairly and squarely before the workers of Canada and so obviate a long drawn-out discussion in the columns of the Party organ. The debate, or a summary of it, could be published in the Clarion and so reach a wider field of students.

Each member of the triumvirate answered the challenge by a direct refusal to debate. They thought it would be a most unprofitable procedure, or the wording of the resolution didn't quite suit them; or some other petty reason presented itself to avoid the issue. They had no desire to have their philosophical hides tanned on the public platform, where they would be forced to place their cards on the table, and would have no two weeks to figure out irrelevant excuses.

Not so many moons ago the S. P. of C. was itching for debates. They even advertised in the Clarion for opponents. Reforms, Workman's Compensation Acts, Single Tax or religion were all considered "profitable" material to thresh out before a working class audience. But now "the tumult and the shouting dies." Philosophical rot has corroded their once belligerent bosoms. The last issue of the Clarion (No. 933) contains an article by our old friend "C" on "Use and Capacity, in Criticism" that truly "takes the cake." The thin veneer of philosophical patience that almost covered some of his previous contributions is pierced through and he snorts and brays with asinine fury over my article on "Working Class Parties" in the previous issue.

The contention is advanced that I have a point of view all my own on labor parties and their reform position. Oh yes, in a past issue we had it stated that while no one in Canada thought it necessary to take up the matter that one from the U. S. unceremoniously butted in. Appears to me that since that time quite a considerable number of Canadian members and supporters have contributed their quota to the discussion and all with one exception, take substantially the same attitude as myself in opposition to the triumvirate. And I can show by reference to the Clarion of other years that each one of these had the same opinion before they suddenly spied the light in the burning bush and became sloppy.

As to the British Labor Party and its function in modern politics my last article covers the ground concisely and correctly. This is exactly what enrages "C". It exposes his petit bourgeois ideology, and leaves him the laughing stock of the movement. So he must needs accuse me of "dishonesty" and "deliberate misrepresentation."

Had I the pleasure of "C's" attendance in a class on history, both industrial and political, I think I could even at this late date inculcate into his mind a material concept of human and social development. It would serve him much better as a means of explaining society than the combination of Omar Khayam and Marx which, a la Bishop Brown, he possesses today.

"C" is by no means alone in his treatment of history. The Labour Leader, the N. Y. Nation, and many other Liberal and Social-Democratic journals take a similar attitude. They go back to the era of handicraft in the middle ages and see a working class just beginning to find itself. Like the hero in an Alger story, this class grows slowly but surely in strength and clarity of vision, gaining little by little over a lengthy period of years until a stage of maturity is reached and the world is theirs.

If I ever get time from my manifold duties I must write a series of articles for the Clarion portraying the landmarks in both social and class development from the earliest handicraft days up to modern capi-

talism. The stages of partnership, joint stock company, trust and monopoly have never yet been adequately treated by any writer and yet, without a clear understanding of such factors, the political formations cannot be intelligently followed.

Not so many years ago the boss had a function to perform in the workshop. He toiled alongside his employees. The process of capitalist development has divorced him from this position. The different grades of workers find it possible to produce, exchange, finance and distribute all forms of wealth.

Not so many years ago the boss also found it essential that he manipulate all affairs on the political field. From an almost absolute monarchy in the middle ages we find the political power transformed into the keeping of the nobility, aristocracy, and the upper strata of the bourgeoisie until the stage arrives where the workers can be safely entrusted to guard and protect their master's property in a political sense just as they have learned to do in the sphere of economics. The change from Lords Clarendon, Butte, or North to a Lloyd George is as great a departure as from the latter to a Ramsay Macdonald.

As for criticism of the Labor Party "C" wants the "right kind." Sure he does, can you blame him? That is he wants his particular brand of criticism. He wants me to take up the measures introduced in the House of Commons during the late Labor administration and show where the Snowden budget could be profitably amended by increasing the tax on limousines and curtailing the tax on tea. Or by so shaping a Workmen's Compensation Act that the poor widow would get ten bob instead of nine. Or that the department of Naval Affairs could beneficially substitute aircraft for cruisers in the defense of the "bloomin' Hempire."

Yes, this is the sort of criticism he craves for and by the same token this is the sort he is not going to get from me. Being a Marxian student I prefer to analyse the situation as it is rather than have recourse to aerial flights in the realms of imagination.

I am not going to accuse "C" of dishonesty or wilful misrepresentation in the matter, but I am going to call his attention to his statement about middle class minds controlling the revolutionary movement. I made no criticism of the Labor Party on account of its members or leaders not being garbed in dungarees. Never even inferred anything of the kind. So all this palaver about Marx, Engels, etc., is beside the question. My criticism was directed to what they said and did and not to who they were. "C" knows this very well.

Also before closing I must refer briefly to J. H. He contributes an article to the front page entitled "Of Matter of Fact." It has an improvement over "C" in the way of usurping space. But even with the quality of brevity there is more "matter" than "fact" in the article. The fact is confined to a re-admission of the political bankruptcy of the S. P. of C. This is common knowledge and requires no further verification. Here the fact stops and the matter begins.

The case of Winnipeg is again thrown on the screen. "C" did it the last time and as I didn't consider it worth while to refer to it J. H. thinks it will suffice this time. Now, first of all, I want to know where or when I ever took Winnipeg as my ideal of revolutionary action. I have never even insinuated that back there on the prairie is the Mecca I desired.

But, just for the fun of the thing, let us follow the argument. Winnipeg, we are informed, became very straight-laced in the application of Socialist principles. Eventually Winnipeg died. Now, no one could accuse Vancouver of applying such tactics during recent times. Here they bargained with labor parties, and filled a parliamentary ticket by showing in one of theirs with five of labor. After the election they even squawked because their candidate didn't get as many votes as the laborites.

What are the results? Is Vancouver flourishing in a propaganda sense while Winnipeg has died? Read J. H.'s article for the answer. What could be more illogical than the logic of our logicians?

J. H. says, I will be glad to learn of the classes and meetings as conducted in Vancouver. Surely the glad tidings overwhelm me. But when I learn further that there is not one speaker that can attract more than a handful of the faithful at Sunday meetings and, further, that there has been no new blood come into the Party for years I am forced to exclaim with Nicodemus: "How can these things be?" What does it profit a party though it possesses one of the most competent teachers on the continent, and never mentions anything about the Thuringians at propaganda meetings, if its halls are vacant and its pristine purity wasted on the winter air?

As for the mementuous question—Is Kearney Street still cobbled? Well, that one is too deep for me. There is no doubt whatever in my mind but what this question has some profound relation to Marxism else a "true philosopher" would never use it but just what the connection is I'll have to take a week to figure out.

THE EVOLUTION OF ECONOMIC STRUCTURE IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

(Continued on page 2)

tal in 1924, is an achievement testifying to the capability of the Communists in the financial sphere. The part that is being played by the banks in the development of industry is evidenced by the following figures, the nearest to hand:—The fund capital of the Trade and Commercial Bank was 15½ million gold roubles on the 1st October, 1923; within twelve months it had increased to 32 million roubles. During the same period its active balance had increased from 87 to 284 million roubles, its loan and credit operations had increased by 270 per cent., and its deposits and current accounts by 217 per cent. The Industrial Bank credits to industry during the same period rose from 162 to 400 million roubles.

It will be seen that in the three spheres of nationally organised industry, trade and finance, Russia provides a fascinating study for the economic student. Some of the most important problems arising in the mind of any seriously thinking Socialist have confronted and will continue to confront the Russians. The whole problem of State control is being worked out in day-to-day practice. The vital questions involved in the relationship of State industry to State trading, and of both to State finance, have been raised there in a practical form. The experiment is the more valuable, as their line of development of the structure is evolutionary in its fundamental approach. They are not organising their economic structure according to preconceived theory, but through and at times somewhat shortsighted policy of development through necessity. Soviet Russia has not solved all our problems for us, nor provided us with a perfect pattern to copy. But they have provided us with material to study and profit by, and it would be a pity if we were to allow the political differences between us and the Russian Communists to blind us to the positive value of the economic and financial developments of recent years in Russia.

H. C. Stevens in The Socialist Review, (London)

ECONOMIC CAUSES

OF WAR

By PETER T. LEOKIE

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VANCOUVER, B. C., MARCH 2, 1925.

STEPPING BACK A NOTCH

COMMENCING with the present issue the Clarion reverts again to the position it last held in the year 1918 and becomes a monthly. There is scarcely any need to set forth reasons for the backward step; lack of financial support has been apparent for a long time and the paper has not been running on a self-supporting basis for several years.

We are very well aware that a great many people have found the paper too hard to read—some have expressed themselves accordingly—and we know that, considered in the popular sense and in the propaganda sense—to reach the outsider with our material and our manner of setting it forth is a hard job. According to their respective viewpoints friends near and far will affirm our decline to be due to too close an adherence to old time policies or to too wide a departure from them. Actually, we are sure that there is a great difficulty in popularizing what we call our science and performing, among the philistines, the function of trail-breaker in what is to them a new field. Besides that, it seems always our lot to be consumed in discussion which is mainly of interest to the faithful, whereas the outsider can find no particular field of interest for himself.

Concerning these discussions, we had hoped the party might find itself in time, being enabled thus either to reaffirm its old time position or to take kindly to a newer one, and out of it all we gather that the substance of the discussions is still smouldering in the party mind and that, in keeping with the times, uncertainty is a strong note. This uncertainty concerns not only the present party position, but that of past years.

One thing stands out clearly. We have no desire at all to stifle discussion, but it is abundantly clear that if the discussion is not capable of reducing itself to a column in a corner somewhere it will itself choke the medium of its own expression anyway. So we call a halt, offering meanwhile a chance to anyone who has anything that needs saying to say it in the next issue and be done with it, quickly and briefly. As to regular articles from our general contributors that are not of the controversial order, we pray that they be not so long as usual, else we shall have to use the scissors—all because it is apparent that running into too many columns they remain unread excepting by a few.

Would it not be a good plan for our writers to forget—for as long a period as possible—matters polemical, ancient and modern, and set out to write informative matter concerning present world events? Up crops the party platform of course, and the question arises: "Will not various interpretations be likely to collide with the party platform?" We have an idea that they may do that, and we can see no other way out than to allow for that slightly. We shall very likely reproduce matter from other periodicals that will not precisely run to the letter of the platform. We have done it before, so it has been said.

A word to Clarion readers throughout the country: Is it not possible, in the various districts, to find more subs. than are gathered there now? Can the effort not be made to make the paper self-supporting? If we are not able to do that we shall cease publication altogether. We are thus in the hands of our readers.

PARIS COMMUNE CELEBRATION

As announced in our last issue, tickets are being sold for the annual celebration of the Paris Commune of 1871. Dancing and refreshments, as usual, will feature the evening's enjoyment, and reports are that the tickets are being disposed of rapidly. Belvedere Court, 10th Avenue, near Main Street, Vancouver, has been engaged for the event, which will take place on Thursday, March 19th. Dancing from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Tickets, ladies, 50 cents; gents, 75 cents.

Here you will meet many of your old-time friends and comrades joined together in commemoration of an eventful period in working-class history.

HERE AND NOW

Following \$1 each: Marshall Erwin, J. Marshall, A. E. Faulkner, J. Donaldson, J. Skene (per S. Earp), W. Clements, J. McKinley, H. Roberts, A. J. Bell, J. Lundstrom, H. Doseh.

Above, Clarion subs. received from 15th to 28th February, inclusive, total \$11.

CLARION MAINTENANCE FUND

Following \$1 each J. Marshall, A. R. Pearson, J. McKinley.

Above, Clarion Maintenance Fund receipts from 15th to 28th February, inclusive, total \$3.

Labor Power a Commodity

OUR previous article showed the possibility for all, of shorter working hours, greater returns for labor, and early pensions. The proofs are based upon actual figures and conditions at present existing. But the whole argument mainly depends upon the fact that what the workers sell—their labor-power—is a form of merchandise, a commodity. When, in the words of Karl Marx, it was said that, in buying their power to labor at its full value, no injury or injustice is done to the workers; the assumption was that the workers always get full value for this thing which they sell to the employing class. But matters do not always work out quite so smoothly.

The process of buying and selling anything frequently involves something of the nature of a struggle; and the faults are not always on any one side alone—"there are faults on both sides." Some sellers take unfair advantage of monopolist conditions, and other sellers may be actually dishonest, unfeeling and unprincipled; but selling, in general, is not and could not long be conducted upon such self-destructive policies. Buyers, too, there are, who assume that whatever is the price of an article which they wish to buy, that price must be lowered before they will purchase it. These people become notorious and, consequently, the prices of goods are purposely raised for their "benefit," so that the sellers may afterwards allow themselves to be apparently beaten down. In the end, this class of buyers pay more for their purchases, than if they should have originally accepted the seller's word about prices!

Similar conflicts take, and have taken place over the sale of the workers' commodity—their labor-power; with this difference, however, that the disputes assume the widest spread and most destructive proportions, frequently upon a national and even international scale. Those who remember the paralyzing effect upon our society of the 1919 Winnipeg strike, will understand what is meant.

Our previous statement shows that the energies of society are run to waste through unproductive work; that the workers' hours are lengthened in supporting, besides themselves, an employing class; that poverty and total or partial unemployment is the lot of millions of laborers; etc. All this is what must be expected so long as labor-power is, like sausages or pork-chops, a commodity sold by its possessors in the open, competitive market and despite trade union protection, to the buying, employing class.

Although, as Marx points out, there is no harm done to the worker that sells his powers under favorable conditions to some capitalist who, thereby, makes profits, there are other methods by which wealth has been gained, which were actually nothing short of outrage and absolute theft. Lands, com-

munally owned by the people, have been forcibly seized and enclosed for private ownership, and the former owners driven into emigration to this and other countries. Natural resources, railway concessions, etc., have been acquired through superior money power and by corrupt and dishonest use of the Legislature. Imperialism is impossible apart from injustices committed, by superior brute force, upon weaker nations.

Experience has shown that the workers, who own and sell labor-power, and the employers who buy labor-power to use it in connection with machinery and other means of wealth production are two classes who seem doomed to eternally dispute with each other, and so disturb the smooth working of production and the welfare of society. As the present capitalist system of society is based upon purchasing labor-power in order to extract profits from its use; conditions of poverty and high costs of living and bitter competition, make it useless to deplore or try to abolish the economic evils of today. Unemployment cannot be abolished under Capitalism, because labor-power cannot always guarantee to find a market for its sale; any more than a butcher can reasonably expect vegetarians to buy and consume his meat, to save him from going bankrupt. The capitalist system is a Commodity system; the Socialist system, its very opposite, is not.

In what is said to be the freest country in the world—England, the history of the first Agricultural Laborers Union, formed in 1833, witnesses how terribly society's peace and welfare are disturbed by the struggles arising from trying to buy and sell labor power at prices satisfactory to both classes. Although, in reality, this union was merely a Friendly Society, its members were warned by government placards that connection with it made them liable to seven years' transportation. Three days thereafter, six members were arrested and sentenced to seven years banishment abroad. Although several hundred thousand persons agitated against these sentences, three years passed before the victims and their families received a free pardon and were allowed to return to England.

Socialism aims at "Products" for use by the whole community. Competitive Capitalism, requiring profits, must gain them through Commodities—articles primarily intended for sale or exchange, in which process secondary consideration is given to life and health. But as no exchange or consumption of commodities can be effected without Money—that becomes everyone's god! In the interests of profits and money, we permit Capitalism to abuse and hold us up, and commit breaches of the peace.

Are those wise, then, who still reject Socialism, and put up with Capitalism?

PROGRESS

Marginal Utility

By F. J. McNEY

ABOUT a year ago I got the seat of my pants well paddled for expressing my opinion a little too freely on this same subject of marginal utility. It is a painful memory, and if chastisement was any use, and I had any sense at all I would leave the subject alone henceforth and forever. But I never did have any sense and I am too old to acquire any now, so here I am ready for another spanking.

Anyhow, while we are dealing with value we may as well have another look at this particular theory. In fact it is of the utmost importance that all Socialists should thoroughly understand the marginal utility theory of value. In recent times, practically every article and book that is published on the subject of economics by capitalist class economists defends this theory, and if they mention the labor theory at all it is merely to remark that it is an obsolete theory that has been discarded even by the Socialists. Of course, they admit that there are a few freaks who still believe in the labor theory, but these are just ignorant fanatics, morons who don't know any better. Such people belong in the same class as those who still believe that the earth is flat and that thirteen is an unlucky number. They don't use exactly the same words that I have used here, but I have given you the gist of it. And we let them get away with this kind of bunk because we don't consider it worth our while to analyze this marginal utility theory of value and show it up for what it is. I admit the difficulty of understanding the theory, considering the way they have it all dolled up, with its hair bobbed and its nose powdered in most of the articles and books on the subject. Consequently our aim is to get to the core of the theory, so in this article we are going to undress it, wash off the paint and powder and see what it looks like in the nude.

To save space we will omit the so-called law of diminishing utility, because it has very little to do with the marginal utility theory anyhow, it is mostly camouflage, and furthermore, it is a misnomer. The need or desire of a person for a quantity of some commodity is one thing, and the ability of the commodity to satisfy that need or desire, which constitutes its utility, is another. It is the needs and desires of people that diminish as they are satisfied, not the utility of commodities.

Now the first problem to be solved is what is value according to the marginal utility theory? Let us see, what two of the exponents of the theory have to say on this point. Professor Ely says: "To possess value, a thing must be able to satisfy wants, and it must exist in less than sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants." Professor Fairchild tells us that: "The only things that have marginal utility and so have value are those that are limited in quantity, so that there is not enough to satisfy everybody's wants. This condition is called scarcity."

Here we have the marginal utility theory of value in a nutshell, let us analyze it. In the first place we must assume that a "thing" means a commodity, it can't mean anything else in the sense in which it is used here. And we admit that it "must be able to satisfy wants" to possess value. But that its utility is not supposed to determine its value, is proved by a statement of Professor Fairchild to the effect that: "Air, the most useful thing in the world, therefore has no value." This absence of value in air is supposed to be due to its abundance. Now if the most useful thing in the world has no value, in spite of its utility, just because it is abundant, then we may discard utility altogether as a factor in determining value. Scarcity alone, then, must be value according to the marginal utility theory. Well we will examine this scarcity pro-

position and see how it works out. Let us suppose that one pound of coffee and one pound of butter are equal in value, that is, the one will exchange for the other even. We are assuming, of course, that both butter and coffee are scarce. Well suppose that both these commodities diminish in quantity in the same ratio. No matter how scarce they get, one pound of coffee must still be equal in value to one pound of butter. Now suppose that they both begin to increase in quantity in the same ratio, and keep on increasing until both commodities exist in sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants. Do you think that under such circumstances it would be impossible to trade a pound of butter for a pound of coffee? So long as the relative quantity of the two commodities remains the same it does not matter how abundant they both become, a pound of the one will still be equal to a pound of the other in exchange value. Now if we consider all commodities in the same way it is obvious that they must all possess value no matter how abundant they may be. And it is useless to argue that the production of commodities is deliberately curtailed for the purpose of keeping them scarce. Even if it were true, which it is not, it would benefit nobody. Because if all commodities were scarce, their sum total value would be less than if they were all abundant in the same proportions, but their relative, or exchange value, would remain the same.

Consequently, it is evident that scarcity is not value, and it is not necessary for a commodity to be scarce to possess value. Scarcity and abundance are merely relative conditions, when the demand for a certain commodity is greater than the supply the commodity is scarce, when the supply of a commodity is greater than the demand, it is abundant! All this bunk about utility, scarcity, abundance and so forth is merely quibbling, to camouflage the fact that value is something else altogether.

Again, when they are caught on the scarcity gag they tell us that by scarcity they mean "difficulty of attainment," or, "the effort necessary to acquire" the things we need. Now, if we consider the proposition in a general way, what is the "difficulty of attainment" or "the effort necessary to acquire" the means of life? We know that the resources of the earth are practically useless in their natural condition, and the only way they can be made useful is by the application of labor for the purpose of transforming them into things more in harmony with our needs. Before any person can have the necessities and luxuries of life they must be produced, and the only way they can be produced is by labor. The "difficulty of attainment" or "the effort necessary to acquire" those things, in the last analysis, therefore, is labor and nothing else, and consequently the labor necessary to produce them is their value. It is useless to try to dodge this fact by quibbling over the proportions in which different commodities exchange. The fact is so obvious that any person with half an eye ought to be able to see it, and a blind man could feel it with his stick. And if some people have everything they want without doing their share of the labor it merely means that others must labor for them.

The time has come when this question of value must be settled once and for all. It may have been a mystery once, but it is that no longer. I have pointed out before that the marginal utility theory never was anything but an excuse for refusing to admit that labor is value, and I am still convinced that I am correct in this conclusion.

ALBERTA NOTES.

Calgary.

Business meeting of Local Calgary, R. P. of C. is held every second Tuesday at 8 p.m.
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Address: 134a, 9th Ave. West, Calgary, Alberta.
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Geographical Footnotes

"Rivers unite," the geographers tell us. But, in a capitalist world, economic interests diverge, and so it comes about that rivers may become a potent source of discord.

The Nile makes Egypt and the Sudan one—geographically. Both depend for their very existence on the waters of the great river. International politics apart, the whole Nile Valley is one economic unit. But an entirely artificial frontier—a line on a map—divides the Lower from the Upper Valley. The Lower is the "independent" nation-state of Egypt; the Upper is the Sudan, a "possession" of the British Empire.

In the world of commerce, both Upper and Lower Valleys stand primarily for one thing—cotton. Cotton-growing was begun in Egypt a century ago. Modern engineering developments made possible the construction of larger and larger dams and irrigation systems, and so brought under cultivation greater and greater areas of land. More recently the same process has been at work in the Sudan. The great dam at Makwar, on the Blue Nile is to "enable 100,000 acres to be put under cotton in a few years' time, with unlimited scope for extension." The Gezira, the area in the angle formed by the White Nile and the Blue before their junction at Khartoum, is the great centre of this development. And the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd., is a concern with powerful friends in high places in Great Britain.

Egypt (i.e., the Egyptian capitalist cotton-growers) needs Nile water. The Sudan (i.e., the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd.) needs Nile water. And the Syndicate, being upstream, can cut off and reserve for its own use the Egyptian supply. That is the geographical fact which the British Government promptly took advantage of when the murder of Sir Lee Stack last November gave it its opportunity. Egyptian "independence" has to be kept within strictly limited bounds.

Nearly a year ago the Liberal and peace-loving Manchester Guardian was pointing out that the Power which held Khartoum (i.e., the Sudan) could always use as an "argument," if the Egyptians went too far, its control of the Nile waters. And sure enough, the ultimatum despatched by the Tory Government after the Sirdar's death took care to negate Egypt's right to consultation concerning the development of the Sudan's irrigation system, previously controlled by the Egyptian Ministry of Public Works; and asserted the right of the Sudan (i.e., of the Syndicate) to use as much Nile water as it wanted, without regard to the needs of Egyptian capitalists or Egyptian peasants downstream. (Note how Liberal and Tory Imperialists think alike on these matters!) The shares of the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd., rose sharply during the few days following the ultimatum.

The incident affords an interesting illustration of the advantages of "strategic position" in the great Imperialist game. Egypt, whatever her geographical advantages at an early stage of human history, is in a singularly unfortunate position today. Not only do her people live next door to a key position on one of the great world-routes—Britain's road to the East; but they must depend on a river whose head-waters are out of their control. Regarded as a chess-board, the map suggests that the British ruling class is well up to the moves of the game.—J. F. Horrabin, The Plebs (London).

MANIFESTO

of the
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The Position of Trotsky

Current History (N. Y.)

WITHIN a space of twelve months Russia's two leaders, with whose names the Bolshevik revolution has become synonymous, have left the arena. Lenin died early in 1924 only to be reborn again as the god of Bolshevism. Trotsky, in the last weeks of the year just past, was hissed into obscurity by the charge that he had become the very "Antichrist" of Communism.

For dramatic interest the dethronement of Leon Trotsky by his Bolshevik confreres has not many parallels in history. In a burst of disapproval of Trotsky's "heresies" and his divergence from the accepted tenets and, more especially, policies of the Communist Party, his "brother gods" on the Bolshevik Olympus, the Kremlin, have decided upon the War Minister's pillory and exile, upon his absolute political death—if this becomes necessary. Stripped of his power and of his honors, his health broken, his nearest friends uttering no word in his defense, the builder of Russia's Red Army and its commander-in-chief during the years of revolution, counter-revolution and civil war is today, in effect, if not in name, a prisoner either in the milder climate of the Crimea, to which his doctors ordered him early in December, or still in the Kremlin, which, according to persistent rumor, Trotsky is unwilling to leave.

The wheel upon which Trotsky's career, and possibly his very life, is being broken is his latest book, "1917," a two-volume history of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, named after the year in which it took place. Trotsky is as brilliant a writer as he is a revolutionist. In fact it is his language, written and spoken, that is among his most decisive revolutionary weapons. In "1917," and more especially in its sixty-two page preface entitled "Lessons of October," Trotsky attempts a critical analysis of the revolution. It is what Trotsky the writer says about Trotsky the revolutionist, and still more what he says about the other actors in the revolution, some of them his antagonists, that has caused the War Minister's associates to chain him to the rock of pitiless publicity and to tear his reputation to tatters.

Without waiting for time to set the various events in the revolution in their proper perspective, Trotsky plunges heedlessly into a "reevaluation of values." He proceeds to regroup and reclassify parties and individuals. He gives additional credit to some of the figures in the revolution and detracts from others. He takes the measure of his contemporaries and he takes his own measure. He paints their portraits and his own. It is here, Trotsky's enemies declare, that he has laid bare the weak spot in his armor—his vanity. The most unforgivable charge against Trotsky by his associates is that he measured himself, his role as an actor in the revolution, with the utmost liberality, while his measure of others is said to be grudging and ungenerous.

This is declared to have happened especially in Trotsky's estimate of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the two claimants for the "mantle of Lenin." Zinoviev was Lenin's lifelong disciple, both in Russia and in exile. Lenin lavished upon him the affection one might upon a younger brother, persistently pushing him to the front as a leader. Kamenev, who is Trotsky's brother-in-law, was in close personal relations with Lenin before the revolution and he lived and fought side by side with him during the "October Days." Subsequently the two were closely associated in the Kremlin, Kamenev holding the important post of Chairman of the Moscow Soviet of Workmen and Peasants. In his preface to "1917" Trotsky concentrates his criticism upon Zinoviev and Kamenev as upon no other two revolutionary leaders—and in the most damaging manner. A few weeks before the Bolshevik coup d'état of Oct. 25 (Nov. 7, new style), the two, Zinoviev and Kamenev, had made a "mistake," which has since become famous. They had opposed the idea of a coup d'état. Lenin was for it. Trotsky and the other members of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party were

for it, Zinoviev and Kamenev alone were against such a step. Trotsky's presentation of this matter in his book, it is charged, is such as to belittle the revolutionary judgment and statesmanship as well as the personal courage of two of the men who now play most important parts in ruling Soviet Russia.

Thirty-five thousand copies of "1917" had left the Government Printing Office, and it was fast becoming the most widely read book of the day, when the Communist Party took notice of it and in a public statement, which appeared in Pravda on Nov. 2, 1924, officially repudiated it as a polemic rather than a work of information. The youth of Russia and Communists the world over were warned against taking Trotsky's "Lessons of October" at their face value. They were told to disregard both Trotsky's "facts" and his "conclusions." The one and the other were branded as equally "incorrect" and equally "subversive of the interests of Bolshevism." The book as a whole was declared to be a "crooked mirror" and a "caricature," violently opposed to the spirit of "true Leninism." Trotsky was charged with a premeditated effort at substituting his own ideas, or "Trotskyism," in place of the ideas of Lenin, or "Leninism," and of belittling the role of the Communist Party in the revolution. While apparently not officially suppressed, the circulation of "1917," both at home and abroad, has ceased. The repudiation published in Pravda read in part as follows:

It is a poor service that Trotsky accomplishes with this book. It is not the sort of book that will attract people to Bolshevism. It is, on the contrary, apt to make converts the other way. It is a one-sided book and at times monstrously untrue. Comrade Trotsky may rest assured that the party will know how to appraise his efforts in this book. What the party wants is work and not new discussions. What the Party wants is whole-hearted Bolshevik unity.

Trotsky's resurrection of the Zinoviev-Kamenev "mistake" is referred to with smoldering resentment:

These mistakes are known to the whole party. In his "History of the Russian Communist Party" and in his earlier appearance Comrade Zinoviev has spoken of the matter not once, but many times. He has spoken of it also before the Communist International. Comrade Lenin also discussed the matter. He never connected the mistakes before the October revolution with the activities of the comrades Giring and after the revolution. Lenin himself appointed Kamenev and Zinoviev to important posts immediately after the revolution and repeatedly indicated that he did not look upon their mistakes in October as anything other than a difference of opinion, which he did not justify but at the same time did not hold against them.

The fierce passions which have been set loose by the publication of Trotsky's "1917" can be understood and accounted for only in the light of Russian history during the last twenty years, the birth and growth of the Bolshevik or Communist Party and of Trotsky's relation to it, first as an amused opponent, later as an active and brilliant member, and lastly as a crusader for the party's reorganization along more democratic and flexible lines.

The control of the Communist Party in Russia rests with a committee of seven, known as the Political Bureau, of which Trotsky is a member, the others being Stalin, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Tomskey and Rykov. Bykov is busy with his affairs as Premier of Russia, Bukharin edits Pravda and Tomskey is a labor leader, so that Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev are the real spokesmen of the party. They, too, are what might be termed charter members of the Bolshevik or Communist Party, which was founded in 1903 by Lenin and a group of followers. Trotsky, who is opposed to them in theory and general outlook, was not a member of the Lenin party, or group, as it was at the time. He was in disagreement with a number of its principles, notably the stress which Lenin laid on the peasants as a factor in the coming revolution in Russia. Trotsky, more of a city man, directed his revolutionary plans

and propaganda chiefly among the factory workers. The war, however, lifted the Russian peasant to a plane of revolutionary importance equal to that of the urban proletariat in Russia. Trotsky, being a realist, saw this, and in the Summer of 1917 buried his differences with Lenin, which had been deep and bitter, leading Lenin to call Trotsky the hardest of names. But from now on the two worked side by side, Trotsky becoming Lenin's right-hand man.

With the progress of Bolshevism in Russia from a war basis to that of peace, the Communist Party leadership experienced a theoretic cleavage with regard to its future methods and management. Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev thought it essential for the growth and wellbeing of the Bolshevik movement that a spirit of what has been termed hierarchy be maintained, a spirit of "Communist orthodoxy," of unquestioned compliance by the newer men in the party with decisions of the "old guard." They became the "hundred percenters" of Communism, making membership in the Communist Party prior to 1917 a sort of revolutionary patent of nobility and a passport to positions of trust in the party and notably in the Government of Russia. Trotsky represented a more democratic view. He pleaded for greater flexibility and democracy in the management of party affairs. The cleavage between the "young" and the "old" generations in the party, the War Minister urged, must be minimized. The experience of the veterans of the revolution, he said, could not be too highly valued, but the enthusiasm and strength of youth should be wedded to this revolutionary experience. Young men should be given positions of responsibility in the party. They should be given a voice in all deliberations. They should help frame policies and not merely accept such policies after they had been laid down for the rank and file by the few men at the top.

The climax of this controversy was reached during November and December, 1923, when Trotsky, in a series of articles entitled "The New Course," called for action on the question by the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party, which was to be held in January. The War Minister fired his last broadside in this controversy on Dec. 29, 1923. In an article in Pravda of that date he pictured the growing bureaucracy and officialism within the Communist Party as undermining its very foundations. "There are dangerous signs of officialism in our party," he wrote: "Our war bureaucracy was of childlike proportions compared with the bureaucracy that has grown up during the years of peace. Due to the stubbornness of the controlling organization at the head, our party has become a two-story affair. On the upper floor the few make the decisions for the party. On the lower floor the rank and file of the membership is handed down the decisions made." Trotsky's call received a wide response, not alone from the rank and file, but also from a considerable number of party leaders. At the thirteenth congress of the Communist Party in January, 1924, the issues raised in "The New Course" precipitated one of the bitterest debates the party had ever known. The clamor for the revision of party policies was clearly gaining in volume.

Lenin's sudden death put an end to every other demand except one—the demand for unity—which the party needed most. Trotsky, who was at the time in the Caucasus recuperating from a lingering illness, acquiesced in a temporary cessation of the controversy. When the War Minister months later returned to Moscow he found that the issue had not only been shelved but that the whole discussion had been suppressed by the Zinoviev-Stalin-Kamenev factions in the party. The adherents of democracy within the party either had been made to change their views or else they found themselves removed from positions where they could influence party policies and decisions. It is the reopening of this party controversy over democratization, Trotsky's

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opponents assert, that the War Minister had in view in writing "1917." His treatment in the book of the Zinoviev-Kamenev "mistake" just before the Bolshevik coup d'etat of 1917 and the "lessons" Trotsky draws from this "mistake," his critics charge, are not history, but propaganda. The War Minister, they declared, was aiming to bring about a party split either because of mistaken ideology or from motives of sheer egotism and revenge. The version in the introduction to "1917" of the now famous Zinoviev-Kamenev mistake is as follows:

On Oct. 10 (Oct. 23, New Style), 1917—that is, two weeks before the Bolshevik revolution took place—the Central Committee of the Communist Party held its regular session at Petrograd. Present at the session were Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov and Lomov. The matter under discussion was the setting in motion of an immediate armed uprising against the Kerensky Government. There was considerable debate about details, and especially about the military divisions and garrisons likely to answer the call of the Bolshevik leaders. Lenin finally took the floor and framed the resolution for this armed uprising. A vote was taken. The resolution was carried by 10 votes to 2. The two who voted against the immediate armed uprising were Zinoviev and Kamenev. This, however, was not yet the whole "mistake" of the two. That was to come the following day. The next day, Oct. 11, not content with voting against Lenin's proposed armed uprising, Zinoviev and Kamenev stated their objections to such a course in a letter which they sent out to the principal Bolshevik organizations in Petrograd, hoping to counteract the decision for an immediate armed uprising as adopted by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party. Trotsky spreads this Zinoviev-Kamenev letter over a number of pages, quoting single phrases or sentences from it and interspersing these quotations with his own interpretations and comments. The more salient parts of the letter inveighing against the proposed armed uprising, as given in "1917," are the following:

We are deeply convinced that to declare a state of open war against the Government at this time is to throw into the balance not only the fate of our party but also the fate of the Russian and International revolution.

Through the army, through the workers' organizations, we are holding a revolver against the temple of the bourgeoisie.

The chances of our party at the elections to the Constitutional Assembly are excellent. . . . The influence of Bolshevism is growing. . . . With the employment of correct tactics we shall be able to receive one-third and possibly more seats in the Constitutional Assembly.

The Soviets, having penetrated into life, will not permit themselves to be destroyed. . . . Only upon the Soviets will the Constitutional Assembly be able to base its revolutionary work. . . . A Constitutional Assembly and the Soviets—such is the combined form of government of institutions to which we are advancing.

Only the majority of the workers of Russia and a considerable part of the soldiers are for us. The rest (of the population of the country) is in question. For instance, we are all convinced that if the elections to the Constitutional Assembly take place the majority of the peasants will vote for the Socialist-Revolutionists.

The great mass of soldiers supports us, not upon the slogan of war, but upon the slogan of peace. . . . If we, having taken over the reins of government, are compelled by sheer force of world events to enter upon a revolutionary war, the mass of soldiers will abandon us. There will remain with us, of course, the best parts of the younger army elements, but the mass of soldiers will go from us. . . .

Every one who is not merely intent on talking about an armed uprising must weigh carefully the risk of such a step. And exactly here we consider it our duty to state that at the present moment nothing could be more harmful than to understate the strength of our adversary and to overstate our own strength. Petrograd will decide, and in Petrograd our adversaries are numerous: 5,000 junkers, excellently armed, well organized, knowing how to fight and anxious to fight in view of the situation in which their class is placed; then there are the General Staff, the Cossacks; there is an important part of the garrison, an equally important part of the artillery which encircles Petrograd, and then our opponents, with the aid of the Central Executive Committee, will almost surely try to bring the army from the front.

Other equally powerful passages in the famous Zinoviev-Kamenev letter, breathing most irreconcilable opposition to Lenin's insistence of "Now or

never" and to his insistence for an immediate armed insurrection against the Kerensky Government, are cited by Trotsky:

It would be a deep, historic untruth to put the question of the assumption of the power by the proletariat in a manner of "Now or never." No! The party of the proletariat will grow; its program will become more and more clear to the masses. . . . There is only one way in which the party can defeat its own progress, and that is if the party, in the present circumstances, takes the initiative in entering upon an offensive campaign. . . . Against this ruinous policy we lift our voice in warning.

The most decisive question is this: Are the workers and the soldiers of the capital (Petrograd) in a frame of mind to see their only salvation in street uprisings? Are they eager for such street encounters? No, they are not in any such frame of mind. . . . The existence among the poverty-stricken masses in the capital of such a frame of mind, one eager for such street encounters, would have been a guarantee that the initiative once taken by these masses would also draw to itself the larger and more important organization of workmen, such as the railroad workers and post and telegraph employees, upon whom the influence of our party is very light. But, since such a frame of mind is not to be found among factory workers and in the barracks, it would indeed be nothing but self-deception to make such calculations.

In entering upon his long dissertation on the Zinoviev-Kamenev "mistake" of opposing an armed uprising two weeks before this uprising successfully overthrew the Kerensky regime and won the revolution for Bolshevism, Trotsky disclaims all desire to utilize their attitude in the past as a weapon against these leaders. Yet this is precisely what he does, both directly and by implication. He states and restates the fact that at the critical moment in the history of the proletarian revolution in Russia, their judgment failed them, not their sincerity, not their devotion, but their ability to gauge a political trend. At the supreme moment of the revolution, Trotsky declares, Zinoviev and Kamenev underestimated the strength of the revolution to such an extent that they denied the existence of a revolutionary sentiment among the masses, and at the same time they over-estimated the strength of opposition out of all proportion. Here are Trotsky's own words:

Imagine what would have happened if the opponents of an armed insurrection had had the upper hand in the party in the Central Executive Committee. The revolution would at the very outset have been condemned to failure. Lenin might have appealed from the decision of the Executive Committee to the rank and file of the party, as he was at one time ready to do. And no doubt he would have been successful in his appeal. But not every party would under similar circumstances give the same sort of an answer to its Lenin. . . . It is not difficult to imagine how history would have been written if in the Central Committee the side which was disinclined to fight had won. Official historians would of course present matters in such a light as would make it clear that an armed uprising in October, 1917, would have been sheer madness. They would have given the reader erudite statistical charts enumerating all sorts of junkers, Cossacks, army corps coming from the front. Not having been tested in the fire of attack, the supposed strength of the enemy would have appeared much greater than it was in reality. Such is the lesson which every revolutionist must engrave on his conscience.

From this point on, Trotsky, his opponents assert, departs completely from the high road of history, which he has been following more or less irregularly, and enters irrevocably on the by-path of polemics. By skillful grouping and regrouping of revolutionary events in Russia and in Europe, it is pointed out, Trotsky builds up an atmosphere of suspicion and questioning toward Zinoviev in particular. Trotsky indicates that the "mistake" made in 1917 of underestimating the latent revolutionary forces in the country and of opposing Lenin's demand for an immediate military uprising has again and again been repeated by Zinoviev, who is the head of the Third, or Communist, International as well as one of triumvirate that directs the Communist party in Russia. As the head of the Third International it is Zinoviev's business to gauge revolutionary signs in countries other than Russia. Trotsky holds Zinoviev responsible for the failure of the Communist uprising in Germany and Bulgaria in 1923 because he underestimated the revolutionary trend in Russia in 1917.

(To be continued in next issue.)

Correspondence

SUGGESTIONS

Editor, Western Clarion:

I am notifying you of change of address as above and enclosing one dollar for Maintenance Fund. The discussion in the Clarion is interesting and I am in accord with "C". As a labor college you are a success and have turned out some of the best men in the English speaking countries. I think I understand the Marxian position and have studied the problem from both viewpoints, but I can't sit on the fence and watch the ship sink while I still have to live on it and say, "O Hell, I should worry, it don't belong to me." We have been watching and waiting for the collapse of Capitalism since ever I knew anything of the movement, but the fact is that Capitalist ideology is more strongly entrenched in the minds of the workers than since I ever knew the movement, so why segregate ourselves in a 2x4 room and talk Party dogma and allow all the fakery to control the developing working class labor parties and trade unions. Socialism to me is inevitable as the positive outcome of Capitalism, but unless we who understand Capitalism take part in the developing labor parties what can we expect them to be but bourgeois parties? Why sit on the fence and let them make all kinds of mistakes? Because once the workers have been fooled, betrayed and led into strikes in which they were beaten before they started they become so that they look on all as fakery.

I have been a reader of the Clarion for about 12 years and when in the West a Party member and like many more of the proletariat, I can not express myself in the language that some of the Party members do but I have taken part in the every day struggle and know what is in the slave's mind. Today we have a period of reaction. Tomorrow we may see the movement taking revolutionary action but it must have understanding so I agree with the article in the last issue signed H. J. B. H. Turn the Party into a Labor College and develop men and women fitted to take the leadership in the movement as it is and give it the understanding and we will get Socialism. These are the opinion of an honest plug.

Yours fraternally,

A. R. Pearson.

N. Y., Feby., 11 1925.

THE VALUE CONCEPT.

San Quentin, Calif.

Feb. 24 1925.

Editor, Western-Clarion:—

I've been interested in McNey's recent articles because they approach the recondite mysteries of Marx in a language closer to that of common sense and experience than I can recall having found elsewhere. So here are a few questions and contentions that I would like him to deal with in as much the same manner—or more so—as possible.

First, is Value a property of a commodity? If so, is it a physical property? And if it is a property, but not physical, must it not therefore be a "meta-physical property"—and as such be ruled out of scientific consideration? It appears to me that Marx's concept of value is purely metaphysical. He seeks a "common property" of all commodities and concludes it can only be "that of being products of labor"; and further, since "coats and linen" result from different kinds of labor, the "common property" must be an abstract sort of labor that is never performed in reality, i.e., "Socially necessary labor." (Elsewhere it seems Marx considers this socially necessary labor as merely labor of the average efficiency. Vol. I, p. 379). As further evidence of the metaphysical nature of this concept of value, it requires a "phenomenal form" and finds it in something else, in "exchange value." So what is value but the "ding an sich" of commodity per se?

The statement is sometimes made: "Price is a quantity of money; value a quantity of labor." If so, then value is real enough. It can be measured in dynes and poundals if you want; in duration as Marx does; or in duration with a co-efficient for bodily wear and tear, as the worker does in comparing jobs. However the thing measured would have to be a real thing, and not an abstract kind of labor that is performed in the fifth or sixth dimension.

Now for exchange-value, "the phenomenal form of value." If it is truly phenomenal it must be apparent to our senses, a part of reality. It is the actual ratio at which commodities exchange at a given time and place? Or is it a different ratio—the ratio of the amounts of actual labor, or labor actually needed, of different kinds, requisite for the production of the two commodities exchanging? Or yet again a different ratio—the ratio of the amounts of this abstract, non-existent "Socially necessary labor"? If it is the first case, it is a mere statement of an observation, and an explanation of nothing. If it is the 2nd or 3rd, by the value theories they respectively imply, the ratios would invariably be 1 to 1, and therefore neither explain anything nor supply the data upon which an explanation might be built (as in the 1st case). And in the 3rd (which seems to me to be Marx's case) we are dealing with abstractions and not with phenomena, anyway. And by what quirk in the notion of causation are we to credit

a real effect, as the exchange of goods, to a non-existent cause, as abstract labor?

The phenomena are exchanging goods. The problem is "at what ratio?" I think this can be best explained, as anything else in economics, by completely boycotting the wholly unnecessary metaphysical concept of value. But we will get no immutable law. In handicraft production—if the cost of equipment is either negligible or equal for all trades; if the producers own and sell the product themselves; if either workers can shift from one trade to another, or youths be offered no hindrance in taking up any trade that becomes especially desirable—(then) it is obvious that in such an era goods would exchange so that a man got as good a living out of making one thing as he would out of another. That is, they would tend to exchange approximately according to the hours required for their production; not because of philosophy, but because humans want to live as well as they know how. There was an era that approached these conditions; and it gave birth not only to capitalism, but to the labor theory of value. This theory was not a theory, but the common sense of that day, well rooted in common experience. It was taken for granted as an immutable law by Smith and Ricardo. It was next clothed in a metaphysical mantle by Herr Marx, Ph.D. Meanwhile the social order changed. The producers no longer owned the equipment and product. Instead they worked for those who did own. They did so because the improved equipment was too costly for them to own, too efficient for them to compete with it. The peasantry was forced from the land to swell the herd of those who had no alternative but to work for such terms as they could get. And it is obvious that without organization, without a class culture, these terms would be work until completely exhausted, and receive only enough to go on living, producing and breeding. The goods that these folk produced as a class over and above what they consumed, constituted the tribute that went to the owners as a class. (Note this is not an abstraction like the total amount of surplus value, but a physical heap of goods) Now the sole concern of these owners was to get hold of that tribute. If they could get more by the same investment in one industry than in another, there that investment went. Since this tribute was realized in the money the capitalists wanted only by the exchange of goods, it is obvious that the goods must have tended to exchange so that all capitals obtained equal annual rates of profit. (The rate of profit is the amount of tribute, as realized in cash, multiplied by 100 and divided by the capital invested). Since the periods of turnover and the proportions invested in wage-slaves who can be robbed and in machines, etc., which can't be robbed, vary with different industries, it is clear (as Marx voluminously points out) that these goods cannot exchange under capitalist production in the manner they did in pre-capitalist production, and yield similar rates of profit to their owners. The labor theory of value fits only that pre-capitalist epoch from which it arose. Marx attempts to make it fit by simply cutting the Gordian knot.

The facts of rent, monopoly, finance make the above paragraph exceedingly elementary; but it remains a true skeleton. Certain of the owners are better able to get their finger into the tribute-pie, thereby altering the average rate of profit for competitive capital. Some day I'll ship along a more complete explanation of this process in which I've rigidly boycotted the notion of value—not merely the labor theory, but any theory of value.

I think I've shown that the concept of value is both metaphysical and unnecessary. That's what I set out to do. So get your kumshaw.
San Quentin, Feb. 24 1935. F. W. THOMPSON 38579

"CANADA'S WELFARE."

(Continued from page 1)

lect. That sequence shows the gathering intensity of the class struggle. And together they indicate the closing phase of capital. For as individual initiative is impossible under Imperialist capital, so Imperialist capital cannot escape the normal burdens of its own creations. Capital taxation cannot be reduced without imperiling capitalist supremacy; so, conversely, capitalist supremacy cannot be maintained without devastating capitalist economy. To pay back the accrued burdens of its normal development is to destroy the means by which it has triumphed, and cut off the means of its progress, through which alone it can continue to exist. Therefore as the incidence of taxation must grow with the growth of capital whose necessity it is, and the growth of capital makes the collection of the tax more difficult, and yet more imperative; livelihood more precarious and life more intolerable, so the inevitable reckoning cannot be long delayed.

"Canada's Welfare" does not consist in protection, economy and tax reduction. Nor in free trade, P. R. or "equal opportunity." The problem of the

people of Canada is precisely the same as the problem of people everywhere—the abolition of capital property in the means of life, by which they are all commonly enslaved. The capitalist class of Canada is not a unit by itself. It is allied to, associated with and largely composed of the capitalist class of the world. And as the capitalist class is an international interest of exploitation, so the abolition of that exploitation is also an international interest for the subjected people. Just as the prosperity of the "Canadian capitalist" is interlocked with the prosperity of world capital, so the welfare of the Canadian people is interwoven with the welfare of the world's people. Neither can live to themselves alone; neither can escape the interassociations of the world market. And neither can build the temple of the living man, on the death-dewed sands of exploitation.

Hence the hope of Canada is the hope of the world; and that hope is frustrated by the lies that encircle the world. And the fruition of that hope is to be found, not in a new heart and a new nature, but in the rendition of the social means of life to society, which cannot exist without them. Capital holds those means of life as private possession. That possession has value only in exploitation. Exploitation is profitable only to the owning class. And that can be realized only in exports to the world market. If that market cannot be obtained—obtained not in the niggard restrictions of monopolist "protection," but in the expansive volume of continuous progress,—then commodities cannot be sold; there is no profit in production; industry stagnates, closes down; and unemployment, gaunt and rampart overshadows society with all its fierce concomitants of slavery.

Obviously then, capitalist property is the sole cause of our economic degradation and misery. Obviously the "welfare of Canada" lies in the utter destitution of that ownership. That is the task that lies nearest the hand of the people; the one task of moment; the only problem they have. But they themselves must solve it—solve it out of their experience of our Capitalist Tartarus. And in themselves rely. Press and pulpit, government and

school, in greater or less degree are owned and controlled by Capital. To advocate and advance the cause of Capital is their business. Therefore their standards and judgments and activities are opposite and antagonistic to the social standards of man. The continuation of the capitalist system, and apologies for its inescapable abuses are their prime objective. But the total abolition of that system is the single need of society. In that abolition lies the welfare and happiness, not alone of Canada, but of the whole world of man. In that abolition nestles the sweetness of life and the grandeur of freedom. In that abolition is the fountain of genius and inspiration. In the joy of its freedom man will devise for society; and society shall create for man. And in the freedom of its joy, which is the foundation of all creations, man "shall stand upon the earth as upon a footstool, and shall laugh, and reach out their hands amidst the stars." R.

PLATFORM

Socialist Party of Canada

We, the Socialist Party of Canada affirm our allegiance to, and support of the principles and programme of the revolutionary working class.

Labor, applied to natural resources, produces all wealth. The present economic system is based upon capitalist ownership of the means of production, consequently, all the products of labor belong to the capitalist class. The capitalist is, therefore, master; the worker a slave.

So long as the capitalist class remains in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the State will be used to protect and defend its property rights in the means of wealth production and its control of the product of labor.

The capitalist system gives to the capitalist an ever-swelling stream of profits, and to the worker, an ever-increasing measure of misery and degradation.

The interest of the working class lies in setting itself free from capitalist exploitation by the abolition of the wage system, under which this exploitation, at the point of production, is cloaked. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production into socially controlled economic forces.

The irrepressible conflict of interest between the capitalist and the worker necessarily expresses itself as a struggle for political supremacy. This is the Class Struggle.

Therefore we call upon all workers to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of Canada, with the object of conquering the political powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic programme of the working class, as follows:

- 1-The transformation, as rapidly as possible, of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railroads, etc.) into collective means of production.
2-The organization and management of industry by the working class.
3-The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use instead of production for profit.

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