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EVENTS

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FIVE CENTS

## Are the Principles Taught by Jesus Christ Advantageous to the Working Class?

### Christianity a Slave's Creed

#### Debate Between Harrington and Cook.

The Empress Theatre (Vancouver) on Sunday, the 8th May, was crowded to overflowing five minutes after the doors opened at 2.30 p.m. The debate was scheduled to commence at 3 o'clock. Many hundreds of people were unable to gain entrance.

President Klinck of the University of B. C. occupied the chair, and announced Rev. A. E. Cook as speaker in the affirmative, and Comrade Harrington in the negative; Mr. Cook to speak first for 45 minutes, followed by Harrington for 45 minutes. After the collection, Cook to speak 15 minutes followed by Harrington, the debate to be closed by Cook in a closing speech of 10 minutes.

Mr. Cook opened by announcing that he intended to base his case on the four gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These comprised the doctrine of Christianity. The doctrine of Christianity was the commonwealth of God and man on earth. Its application was that in public life public leaders should be public servants; the poor should inherit the earth. Its ultimate aim was love, service and equality—not force—coercion and inequality. Each man should have the fullest expression of his personality. The Socialist keynote to him was justice, democracy, brotherhood. This was covered by the golden rule—goodwill and mutual service between man and man. The brotherhood of man was a Socialist aim. Christ was the originator of this idea. Christ was the original revolutionist. He was the forerunner of Marx and was the founder of democratic principles. The endurance of these principles had swept aside chattel slavery and feudalism and had inaugurated and sustained what was good in our present day civilization. Socialists recognized that despite the value of their own doctrines and formulas they owed it to Christ's teachings that the ideal of human brotherhood was maintained. Christ was of the common people. He moved among them. He was a carpenter by trade. His was a revolutionary doctrine. He taught the universal fatherhood of God. Deeper than economic doctrine lay morals and spiritual courage. Each man was "captain of his fate and master of his soul." In this lay his spiritual equality. This was the root principle of the cries Liberty, Equality, Fraternity; the Magna Charta, the Rights of Man. The truth would make men free. Christianity was out to turn the present competitive system up-side down. It was true that there were Christian men in the ranks of both capital and labor. They co-operated in public service. The competitive system compelled the capitalist to be dishonest. In reality there was no wealth but life. Material things were insufficient. Money, power—social position—these conditions meant nothing if there was not too, spiritual enlightenment. Man must love the highest good he knew. Mrs. Browning said "Life develops from within." Environment was not final. It was not the cure. It would not operate without the change in heart. The thief, drunkard, criminal, political grafter all existed no matter what were the conditions—moral character was the essential.

Comrade Harrington said that the debate was in his opinion somewhat narrowed by the terms laid

down, but Mr. Cook confined it within the canonical gospels. But the slavery of ancient Rome had been introduced and he claimed the right to traverse the same ground. Religion in the form of Christianity, rather than being the continuous identical concept of equality, brotherhood, justice and so forth as outlined by Mr. Cook, changed with changing conditions and conformed always in the minds of men to their surroundings, the degree of their knowledge of nature's forces—the period in which they lived. And Christianity, from the time of its inception until today, was embraced as a slave creed by the working class and used by a master class wherever possible to stifle the spirit of revolt against the property concept wherever it arose. For the purposes of the debate, and only for these purposes, he intended to assume for the time being that Christ had lived and had been crucified. The validity of this claim was actually questionable but for the present he did not intend to concern himself with that. He would take Christianity as it was at the time of its inception and examine its records. The materialist interpretation of the history of any creed or religion lay in the examination of the historical period in which it prevailed. So far as biblical records were concerned the epistles of Peter and Paul were more worthy documents and in some respects had chronological precedence over the gospels. These epistles outlined the principles of early Christianity as they were propounded in Palestine under Roman sway. To understand Christian teachings we must understand the conditions prevailing at that period. Italy was then inhabited by a civilization, so too was part of the Greek peninsula and part of Asia Minor. Outside of these areas was barbarism. The Roman Empire fell. Patrician and Plebeian strife finally ended the last vestiges of what had remained of communal society. Mr. Cook had claimed Christ as the first to lay down a doctrine of brotherhood among men. This had no foundation in fact. The brotherhood of man had been a living fact until private property in the means of life entered upon the stage of human development. Until that stage blood relationship had been a bond between man and man. It had not been an essential bond since and it was not now. Christ's advent was not until a thousand years after that stage. Rome was then torn by civil wars. Rome was a slave empire. Under Roman conquest, captives were sold as slaves, but never—as in Christian civilization—had a ship sailed from a port of the Roman Empire for the purpose of buying slaves. That infamy could not be charged against pagan Rome. The only civilization that charge could be made against was a Christian civilization. The civilization of Rome, built upon the backs of slaves, had established itself in civil wars and class struggles. It endured terrible periods in the life of its people. The shivering savages who carried us through the ice age had not endured such suffering as the people of Rome under Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Lucilla. The new gospel—Christianity—took root in Rome in a period of misery among slaves. It taught that the earth was but a stopping place; death was the door through which men passed to glorious eternal life in heaven. All the pleasures conceivable were given

to a person who "laid not up for himself treasures on earth." This was a solace in a hopeless slave society. It was accepted by the slaves. It was a comfort to the slaves. It was a slave creed—a slave religion. The doctrine was set in fruitful soil and ripened admirably. As a religion of slaves, in Rome, it was beneath the contempt of the noble. It was held by slaves and propagated by slaves. Yet in the four gospels and in the epistles of Peter and Paul, not one word was to be found in condemnation of slavery as a system of society. While it extolled charity it nowhere denounced the conditions that rendered charity necessary. The rights of master over slave were recognized by the disciples. During 300 years of religious strife, in obliterating the hold of other religions on the slave mind, Christianity earned the contempt of the Pagan philosophers as a slaves' creed, as such, a citizen of Rome could have naught to do with it. For the worker it operated to cloud his mind. It taught submission to every form of cruelty and oppression. It taught the righteousness of slave submission to a master's rule and consequently, rather than its doctrines being advantageous to the working class they were false to its interests.

Mr. Cook's next speech was taken up in elaborating his outline as above stated.

Comrade Harrington said the Biblical utterances were made disjointedly in the Jewish tongue, written in Latin, translated into Greek and re-translated into English. The revised version—so-called—presented no more the words of Christ than the version of James VI. Kipling's complaint that American English did not represent his writings was in itself illustrative in a small degree of the magnitude of error that was possible in the case of documents written so long ago and compiled under such diverse circumstances and changing periods. Mr. Cook had mentioned Wilberforce as an example of Christian concepts in practise. His practical efforts were towards the abolition of the slave trade. How fine a creature was this man who, when the bill was introduced to abolish child slavery, rather than vote for it, and without courage to vote against it, had walked out of the house. So much for spiritual regeneration. Slavery was not doomed through the spreading of Christ's teachings. It was a long time alive. It was alive today after 2,000 years of Christian doctrine and precept. From the tropical regions of the earth to the ice regions of the north, wherever you find man you will find him in his ignorant state clinging to whatever gods his superstition had erected around him. He made his own gods, the gods did not make him, and the degree of his understanding the condition around him and the forces of nature, determined what manner of gods they were. But man was forever wrestling with the elements. The development of man could be traced from one form of life. Embryology demonstrated that man's present form and shape was not eternal. Every shape assumed, demonstrated the evolution of man from a common parent form. In his growth to his present state all the comforts of civilization have come to man through his own efforts to understand the forces of nature and to harness them to his own needs. His support and enlightenment came through his

(Continued on page 3)

# Concerning Value

By H. M. Bartholomew.

## Article 6.

### The Final Futility of Final Utility.

**I**N my last article I presented the arguments adduced by the late Prof. Stanley Jevons in favor of his theory of "final utility." In that article Jevons spoke for himself. No attempt was made to distort the quotations nor to drag in side issues. 95.—Emphasis Jevons.

"The keystone of the whole Theory of Exchange and of the principal problems of Economics, lies in this proposition—The ratio of exchange of any two commodities will be the reciprocal of the ratio of the final degrees of utility of the quantities of commodity available for consumption after the exchange is completed."—"Theory of Political Economy," p. 95.—Emphasises Jevons.

Let us, in this article, examine this theory of exchange-value in the light of economic facts, and of economic reasoning.

What do we know of exchange-value? We know that the distinctive property of a commodity is its exchange-value. And we also know that this exchange-value is purely relative. A commodity possesses exchange value only when it is exchanged for another commodity. Indeed its value in exchange is equated by that of the other commodity. When we exchange two bushels of wheat for two pounds of tobacco we are dealing in quantities. Indeed the exchange-value of any given commodity is a purely quantitative relation.

But utility, or general usefulness cannot be measured as a quantity. The utility of any given commodity such as wheat or tobacco, is purely a qualitative relation. How can utility, a qualitative relation, be measured? By what means can we determine, in terms of quantity, the qualitative value of a commodity? It is impossible to do so.

If, on the other hand, it is impossible to determine and measure a qualitative relation then how can that relation serve as a measure of exchange-value? And if it cannot serve as a measure of value, then it is not the basis of value.

To approach this subject from another viewpoint. Any given commodity must satisfy a need. It must possess the property of being ultimately useful in consumption. But its exchange-value is something entirely different and apart from this use-value, and is independent of it. A thing is exchange-value only to the person who has no use-value in it, and it loses its exchange-value when its use-value asserts itself. The use-value of a commodity is something inherent in its nature, in the very mode of its existence, and does not depend on the social form of its production. It remains, in fact, the same use-value, no matter how and where produced.

Says Marx:

"Whatever the social form of wealth may be, use-values always have a substance of their own, independent of that form one cannot tell by the taste of wheat whether it has been raised by a Russian serf, a French peasant or an English capitalist. . . . It is a necessary prerequisite of a commodity to be a use-value, but it is immaterial to the use-value whether it is a commodity or not. Use-value in this indifference to the nature of its economic destination, i.e., use-value as such, lies outside the sphere of investigation of political economy. . . . But it forms the material basis which directly underlies a definite economic relation which we call exchange-value."—"Critique of Political Economy," ch. 1.

Again:

"But the exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterized by a total abstraction from use-value. Then one use-value is just as good as another, provided it be present in sufficient quantity. As use-values commodities are, above all, of different quantities, but as exchange-values they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value."—"Capital," vol. 1, p. 44.

If exchange-value "presents itself as a quantitative relation" then it is economically impossible to measure that quantitative relation in terms of quality; just as it is the height of economic nonsense to state that a qualitative relation, such as utility, can be measured in terms of quantity.

In other words, the exchange-value of any given commodity cannot be determined and measured by its "utility"—whether that "utility" be "final" or "marginal."

If, on the other hand, we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities, they have only one common property left, that of being products of labor. Can labor be measured by a quantitative standard? It is just the quantity which we want, as the exchange of commodities is a quantitative relation. Social human labor can be measured quantitatively, and quantitatively only; and, by virtue of this quantitative relation can be the only measure of exchange-value.

To again cite Marx:

"We see then that that which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labor socially necessary for its production."—"Capital," vol. 1, p. 46.

Therein is the triumph of Marxian economics. It is the only system of economics which measures the quantitative relation by a quantitative standard. It is the scientific interpretation of economic facts, and the complete refutation of "qualitative utilitarianism."

But there is no need for us to go beyond Jevons himself in order to ascertain what value we need attach to his wonderful mathematics and complicated logic. Thus on page 165 we find him gravely telling us that:

"But though labor is never the cause of value, it is in a large proportion of cases the determining circumstance, and in the following way: Value depends solely on the final degree of utility. How can we vary this degree of utility? By having more or less of the commodity to consume. And how shall we get more or less of it? By spending more or less labor in obtaining a supply. . . . In order that there may be no possible mistake about this all-important (?) series of relations I will restate it in a tabular form, as follows:

Cost of production determines supply, supply determines final degree of utility, final degree of utility determines value."—"Theory of Political Economy," p. 165. Emphasis by Jevons.

Having gone to the trouble to make this profound statement Jevons indulges in many pages of mathematical formulæ to illustrate his wonderful theory. These formulæ need not alarm us, for their many pages of a fruitless hunt after  $x-y$ , tells us that:

"It may tend to give the reader confidence in the preceding theories when he finds that they lead directly to the well known law, as stated in the ordinary language of political economy, that value is proportional to the cost of production."—Ibid., p. 186.

Fearing that this bald statement will excite the sympathy of the reader in the naïvete of the writer, he invokes the rhetorical figures in Brown's grammar and the algebraic equations of higher mathematics to illustrate and qualify, until having exhausted these sources of "matico-economics" (Jevons' phrase) he is good enough to say that:

"Thus it follows that:

Value per unit of  $x$ —Cost of production per unit of  $x$ ; value of unit of  $y$ —cost of production per unit of  $y$ ; or, in other words, value is proportional to cost of production."—Ibid., p. 191-2.

This, then, is the outcome of this application of utilitarianism to economics. After 190 pages of mathematical formulæ and intricate algebraic equations we arrive at the exact position occupied by Mill. If "value is proportional to cost of production," why this elaborate edifice of "utility" and "esteem."

The fact of the matter is that Jevons, despite his ostentatious display of learning and his pedantic love of formulæ does not know what he is talking about. He sets out to upset the classical school and ends up by stating that: the classical school is "substantially true" when it states that value is determined by labor.

This professor, in his endeavor to establish "Matico-economics" as a science, succeeds in tying himself in a knot, and demonstrating the final futility of final utility. What think you of our exponent of "utility" who gravely tells us in italics, that:

"I hold labor to be essentially variable, so that its value must be determined by the value of the produce, not the value of the produce by that of labor."—Ibid., p. 166.

Is not that as beautiful and as touching a piece of nonsense as has ever been written by bourgeois economists? It is equivalent to stating that my labor embodied in a ton of wheat is worth more than my labor, embodied for an equal time, in Ford cars! And this is the economic prodigy before whose shrine the universities of the world still bow their knees!

## FROM SOVIET RUSSIA TO THE MEDICAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

March 22, 1921.

N 44,

Moscow, Petrovka, 17.

R. S. F. S. R.,

People's Commissariat of Public Health,  
Foreign Information Division.

Dr. M. I. Michailovsky, Chairman, Soviet Russia  
Russia Medical Relief Committee, New York

Dear Comrade,—On behalf of the People's Commissariat of Public Health, Dr. N. A. Semashko, and on behalf of the Foreign Information Division of the Commissariat of Public Health, I ask you to convey to the Soviet Russian Medical Relief Committee our heartiest thanks for the aid rendered Soviet Russia by the Committee during the short period of its existence.

Your aid and your activities fill us with joy, particularly because they prove that the sympathies of the broad mass of the American people are with Soviet Russia.

Of this sympathy we are also assured by Comrade Martens and Dr. Katva, who on their arrival at Moscow, gave us reports of the conditions in America, and on the activities of your Committee.

Everything shipped by you has been received, and we are glad to establish a closer and more regular contact with you.

I should like to draw your attention to the fact that Soviet Russia needs very badly medical equipment, particularly sanitary ambulances, quinine, and dietary foods, as for instance condensed milk, bouillon, etc.

With the next mail we shall send you data on the activities of the People's Commissariat of Public Health. We are very desirous of being informed by your Committee about such American sanitation methods and medical regulations as may be of interest to the sanitary organizations and the medical profession of Soviet Russia.

The Department hopes that with the establishment of closer relations with your Committee it will become possible in time to exchange scientific medical treatises and publications.

We ask you to send all mail and packages to our representative at Reval, with mark in red "Very Urgent," so that it should not be kept long at Reval.

With brotherly greetings and deepest gratitude,  
(Signed) Dr. J. KALINA  
Manager Foreign Information Division People's  
Commissariat of Public Health.

# The Forking Road

OUR bourgeois educators, who labor with such self-effacing zeal for our intellectual advancement, frequently assure us that Marxism is a vain dream; a Utopia, impossible; long since disavowed by all competent thinkers. And if reiteration were as powerful a solvent of logic as it is of proletarian interest, their arguments would be as fatal to the mind of the thinker as they are to the mind of the mass. But reiteration stands in the same relation to reality as belief does to fact—the propaganda of self-interest—and its most convincing disproof, is found in the repetition itself. For, no sooner is Marxian philosophy discredited than it reappears more vitally insistent than before; no sooner is its theory “demonstrably” errant than world fact substantiates its truth. So the class struggle visibly progresses.

It appears that Marx has again been vanquished. According to late economists (late is a good adjective) Marxism is fatalist in philosophy, and being so is impotent in the face of social forces, that its powers are dissipated by inaction, and that therefore Marxian doctrinaires are thrown back upon constitutional methods, and reforms to achieve social regeneration. It would appear further that instead of capitalist concentration, a la Marx, there is actually an increase in the numbers of the capitalist class. Apparently there is an unsuspected affinity between the modern “chevalier d'industrie” and the opium eater.

Marxism in brief is the progress of society, through the development in the technique of wealth production. As such, it is linked on to the larger process of cosmic evolution. Indeed it is but a little cycle within the universal law. Casting aside from “fatalist” the implication of a tenet, and regarding it as a principle, the Marxian theory of social development is no more, or no less fatalistic, than any other evolutionary process. Every organism, every co-ordination, undergoes a sequence of changes determined by the circumstances of environment, by the laws of individual being, and by the necessities of reactions of life condition. This individual cycle of events and its whole train of cumulative effects takes place according to the nature and conditions of the initial starting point.

This point of departure of society is necessarily the means whereby its social requirements are satisfied. Its habits and customs, laws and regulations, institutions and ideas, are the necessary product of its system of wealth production. They are the manifests of social interest, the expression of life-condition, and as such must blend in and with the source of their sustenance. And because the forces and tendencies, derived from the prime foundation of society, are unalterable by any reforms within its own corporate body, so the powers and privileges (of class) which are its resultants, are impregnable within the venue of constitutionalism.

Constitutional methods, i.e., the legal formulæ of slave control, cannot by their very nature afford a weapon for the emancipation of slaves. To expect the miraculous, is to expect the beneficiaries of power to annihilate themselves. If property is an “eternal right,” how comes it that all of society do not own property? If all of society owned property in the means of life, how could that be capital? If the “right to live” is the heritage of man, why is the means to perpetuate that right denied him? If not denied him, how account for world distress? If “freedom” is our inalienable possession, why does degradation face us if we exercise it? If “social justice” is not a figment of the imagination, why does social misery exist? Not only on so vast a scale, but at all? Were government the idealism which the “loose criticism of wooden thinking” supposes it to be, why is the long series of reforms enacted in all countries so profitless? the long years of “agitation” and “uplift” so fruitless? the “justice” so long delayed? Why? Why because, and entirely because, the function of government is the subjection of peoples to the exploitation of the property owning class, and the suppression of all data of fact,

from which alone reason can be effective. And constitutional devices is the machine which transmutes the will of the master into the “law” of the land.

But, although the forces and tendencies flowing from a particular social foundation are unalterable within the scope of their evolutionary cycle, the application of those forces is susceptible of human direction, in the same way that physical forces, although in constitution beyond the will of man, can yet be commanded to his service. It is this application, through social interest, social sentiment, and social tradition, which makes the will, of the class appear as the wish of the people. Class society rose to dominion as the expression of social interest. When its disruptive influences, i.e., its inherent class antagonisms, produced from its own progressive development—threaten its supremacy, it appeals to the traditions of a bye-gone age to maintain its existence. Its authority and power, therefore, can crumble away only with the same rapidity in which its rapacious process of expropriation proceeds. It is only when its productive forces are fully developed, when its task of socializing the machinery of production is complete, and when as a consequence of that it prevents the satisfaction of the social interests it once conserved, that those same social forces now expressing the imperative necessities of a fundamentally different society, sweep the obsolete obstruction away with all its paraphernalia of legal procedure, and inaugurate the social forms necessary for the growth of the new interests. This evolution is not governed by the “will” of man: it is not even his desire. It is the “will” of continually augmenting necessity.

Nevertheless, although this process is not of the mind of man, the mind of man is one of the factors in its progress. Man's ideation is the product of man's life condition; condition stimulates thought; thought modifies condition, and according as this conception of social processes is greater or less, in that proportion is his influence on social direction.

But this does not mean individual man, or individual ideas. Politically, man is not an individual, but an amalgam of social law and circumstances. No man, or no group of men, can completely dominate society. Each mind, each group, each condition adds its quota of influence, and the combined totality of influences, with their manifold modifications and correlations, set their inevitable impress on the individual. So it comes that individual concepts are social products. So the sum of individual mind and individual interest takes on the color of the social ethic; individual volition, dominated by social volition, the status of the man, bounded by the status of the mass, and the nature and character of the community itself, the aggregate of its understanding of social evolution.

This is the real parting of the ways. The problem is not to regenerate society by regenerating the man. On the contrary, the regeneration of man involves the prior regeneration of society. And this regeneration is revolution. Revolution of the idea of property in the means of life. The fundamental of wealth production alike determines the complex of social relationships and the complex of individual being. It is the necessities of social life which constitute the necessities of social man. It is the fact, not the philosophy that is the driving power and to that fact alone can man respond.

Historic materialism is not an energy of progress, but an explanation of social change, and in that explanation its powers are not expended in vain. It is the only philosophy that in the presence of the social forces can explain the phantasmagoria of social phenomena in terms of causation. Any philosophy which oversteps reality in its analysis of social events assumes a vitalism of some nature and by that assumption demonstrates its inherent impotence, and when the certain development of the social forces reaches its climax of change, that philosophy will vanish like morning mist.

If capitalist concentration were not going on; if the numbers of the capitalist class were increasing there must be an increase of capital accumulation. But increased accumulation implies a concurrent ex-

pansion of the labor forces, and a greater body of wealth equality. But the exact opposite is the fact. Industries are closing down; production is on the ebb; unemployment is widespread; there is a greater disparity of wealth; a greater mass of dependents; a more gigantic volume of misery. These things have but one interpretation—the expropriation of the capitalist class by the economic processes of capitalist production. The alternatives are not, therefore, constitutional methods, or despair; the alternatives are social destruction, or Socialist society.

R.

## ARE THE PRINCIPLES TAUGHT BY JESUS CHRIST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE WORKING CLASS?

(Continued from page 1)

effort to meet the circumstances of living conditions throughout the ages, his effort to survive, and not in any one particular from any God or gods. His knowledge of the forces of nature and natural phenomena was such today that the appearance of a comet, the eclipse of the sun or moon, carried with it no terrors for him. Indeed he could foretell such occurrences, to the day, to the minute. The age of superstition was past for modern man. And therefore the stronghold of religious concepts was broken down. Man's ignorance of social forces in past ages had given him his gods and religious concepts; his present day enlightenment and understanding enabled him to cast them aside. Illustrative of this he closed with a quotation from Swinburn.

Mr. Cook had now ten minutes' time in which to conclude the debate. He talked mostly of the love of Christ. He took the opportunity now, however, to say that Harrington's scientific learning was not up-to-date. The germ-cell, protoplasm, was not the ultimate particle. Science had now discovered the electron, and he claimed adherence to evolutionary doctrine as well as Harrington and, as in this statement, he said he went beyond him.

Harrington, of course, had now no chance to adjust Mr. Cook's foolish misrepresentations, in this connection. Harrington's references to embryology constituted a simple statement of science that each man at the beginning of his existence was a simple cell,—protoplasm, upon which all organic life is built. Mr. Cook's eagerness to proclaim himself an evolutionist took him into another branch of science—chemistry, wherein, according to him, the electron now takes the place of the protoplasmic cell. This is not only the confusion of sciences but the confusion of terms used in each branch of science. In short, it is just plain nonsense.

## CARRYING OUT ANGLO-RUSSIAN TREATY.

Moscow, April 14th.—The Council of Commissaries has authorized the Commissariat for the Interior:

1—To take immediate steps for the sending home from Russia of all British citizens who wish to go and to issue the necessary orders to the officials concerned.

2—To prepare regulations with the Commissariats concerned for the special privileges of the officials agents of the British government who will come to Russia under Article 5 of the treaty; at the same time to prepare regulations relating to their dealings with the Soviet authorities in accordance with Article 5 and to take steps that these regulations should be generally observed.

## DEALING WITH LIES.

Moscow, April 8th.—“Westnik” writes:—The anti Soviet press everywhere is attempting to prevent business relations with Russia in spreading lies and forged documents. The alleged instructions of the Third International for the commercial delegates of Soviet Russia are malicious inventions and forgeries. No instructions of any kind have been given the commercial representatives of Russia by the Third International. Instructions of the nature of the contents of these forgeries have been issued by no one to any Soviet delegate. The whole document is generally an ordinary forgery whose aim is to injure Russians commercial relations.

—“Rosta Wien.”

## Western Clarion

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VANCOUVER, B. C., MAY 16, 1921

### A CURE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

**T**HE unemployed problem has been tackled by many organizations in these recent months and the call goes forth for practical effort in its solution. Socialists are quite used to being termed impractical folk in a practical world full of present day problems. So therefore, being aware that in these parts, to say nothing of the rest of the world, men, women and children are in many cases hungry and in need of the usual bare necessities of life that wage slaves are used to when employed, when we see what is supposed to be a document of practical import calling for co-operation to cure present unemployment, we are quite interested. The document in question is a circular letter issued, presumably, to working class organizations in B. C. by the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council (A. F. of L.) The letter says that up to April 15th the City of Vancouver had spent \$280,000 for relief due to unemployment, while approximately 4,500 were registered as unemployed at the offices of the Employment Service of Canada on April 23rd. Many of the men registered are ex-service men, and some 800 are handicap cases.

All of which, as statistical matter relative to registered unemployed men, is no doubt quite true. But now we look for the opinions of the practical men; and here they are.

"Our opinion is that the time has arrived when the citizens must draw the line more closely between our own nationals, and the aliens from other countries, and particularly those from Asiatic countries with a lower standard of living, by replacing these men by returned men and citizens generally, with special regard for those who are suffering from handicaps incurred in the war.

"Many of the basic industries of this Province are exploiting the natural resources of the country, and are manned almost entirely by Orientals, and a large number are employed in household work, gardening, janitor work, and in the hotel and restaurant business. In the last named there are 638 Chinese and 75 Japanese employed in the city of Vancouver alone, being 50 per cent. of the total employes."

Just think of a labor organization composed of men whose business in life is to make profit for a boss talking like that! It sounds quite important when you read it aloud: "... must draw the line more closely between our own nationals and the aliens from other countries," "Basic industries ... manned almost entirely by Orientals."

We recollect being at a meeting of the unemployed not so very long ago when a resolution was introduced proposing to take away the job from the Oriental now employed, and let it out to white men. The resolution was contemptuously thrown out by the unemployed men themselves. Starving men have a brotherly feeling, and we know that an empty Oriental stomach is just as painful for its owner as a white man's stomach is to him when his belt is loose. And if the question of "rights" is introduced, the Oriental engaged in wage-labor has quite as much "right" to have a full stomach as a white wage-laborer. In fact, the white man's "right,"

stated in monetary terms, in recent months amounted to sixty-five cents a day, and surely not even the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council will in this respect deny the Oriental equal "rights," and welcome.

Just think of an organization of wage-laborers whose eternal enemy is the employer of labor, issuing this:

"If the present unemployment is to be cured and a repetition of last winters condition in this city prevented, we feel that all public organizations will have to get together and begin a drive for the employment of the citizens of this country in preference to all others, and it is for this programme that we request your co-operation and support.

"We will be obliged if you will give this question your attention and advise us if we can rely on your assistance in extending the slogan of the B. C. Manufacturers' Association "Made in B. C." to "MADE IN B. C. BY CITIZENS OF CANADA."

Now, we have never heard that it is the essential attribute of any commodity that the labor embodied in it must be "citizen" labor. They knew about that in Aristotle's day. To the master and owner of slaves and commodities the slaves' labor must be productive and for the commodities there must be a market, not a need, mark you. "Citizens!" What self-respecting capitalist booming "Made in B. C. Products" cares whether they are made by citizens or not? "Our own nationals!" Give them a job in household work, gardening, janitor work, sawing wood,—anything. Just because they're citizens! Who wants to be a citizen anyway? And maybe, if the Orientals are shipped back to the land whence they came they'll flood "our" country with cheap goods! From which it follows that the best way to protect "our" country and our wage standard is to keep the Orientals employed here. These considerations take us into the realms of imperial council. And from what we have learned of the effect of imperial council on some folk, they have lost their hair and gained nothing but scholarships in arithmetic—counting the cash—in the abstract.

Sure! We'll give one more industry an advertisement as made in B. C. The cure for unemployment, propounded by the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council—citizenship. Bosh! The heads of these wisecracks appear to be about as empty as the stomachs of the hungry. "Our" industries, "our" country, "our" natural resources! Maybe by next winter our friends will begin to see that when there's a job to let the employer worries but little whether the man's a "citizen" or not who occupies it. So far as we are concerned we will never try to oust anybody from a job, not even our friend the Oriental.

If we undertook to be jealous of anybody's job we would cast our eye on the boss. He owns everything in sight. His favorite word is property. Maybe, if the council will take time to look into the question they will see that as wageworkers their interests lie with those Orientals and against that boss.

### WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

In spite of the fact that Russia had been completely isolated for a period of two years, and in spite of the fact that the blockade cut off our specialists from contact with the technical science of the West, Soviet Russia made enormous progress in the field of wireless telegraphy.

Previous to the October Revolution, the wireless apparatus was under the supervision of the Ministry of War, and was employed exclusively for war purposes. Following the October Revolution a special decree of the Council of Peoples' Commissaries was issued providing for the transfer of all radio stations excluding portable ones into the hands of the Peoples' Commissariat of Postal and Telegraph Service. The latter augmented the number of these stations and introduced considerable improvements in their technique.

Beginning with that period, the application of wireless telegraphy was put on a basis utterly unknown in former times. Taking cognisance of the

supreme importance of the political education of the wide masses of peasants and workmen, the Peoples' Commissariat of Postal and Telegraph Service made it its business to install a widely spread system of radio stations embracing vast areas of the country. For this purpose all the radio equipments that were transferred to the Commissariat of Postal and Telegraph Service were made use of. Wireless operators were sent out to all the provincial towns and the work of installation was carried on at full speed under the direct supervision and guidance of the central authorities and the sympathetic co-operation of the Wireless Operators' Union. The larger towns were provided with radio stations first, then came the smaller towns, and towards the middle of the second year of this work of construction we find radio stations installed even in the villages.

Proceeding at this pace, the Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Service has reached the following results:

All through the territory of Soviet Russia we have today 250 receiving radio stations and in addition 47 stations belonging to the War Department, but put at the disposal of the Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Service. This makes a wireless system of about 300 units which is the most powerful information agency on the Continent. The number of transmitting radio stations excluding those on steamers equals 47, which puts us first on the list of European countries in this connection.

All the powerful transmitting radio stations which we inherited from the Kerenski Government have been repaired and put into an excellent state. With the assistance of the Central Committee of the Transport Workers' Union, a staff of operators is now being trained to man the newly built radio stations.

Thus radio telegraphic tentacles are now reaching out from the centre to the most distant and remote corners of the Republic. The untrammelled wireless telegraphy afforded the possibility of maintaining close communication between the cities and provinces surrounded by the enemy, where the encouraging messages coming from the centre and carried through the air waves all over the vast area of Russia, was spread through the local press and the posters of the Russian Telegraph Agency imbuing confidence, enthusiasm and strength into the hearts of the fighters.

During the civil war a wireless telegraphy thus reconstructed did excellent service. It enabled us to keep in constant touch not only with Tashkent, Uralsk, Baku and the Ukraine, but also with Soviet Hungary and with Germany, and afforded the opportunity of intercepting wireless messages from the hostile camps of Paris, England, Italy and Constantinople.

Wireless telegraphy thus reconstructed on a new basis and brought home to the wide masses of peasants and workmen became a powerful agency for propaganda and agitation in the hands of the Soviet Government. The installation of wireless stations and the development of wireless communication would proceed even at a greater speed if it were not for the necessity of diverting the most skilled workers and most of the equipment for the needs of the war, and were it not for the fact that the production of wireless equipment does not keep pace with the work of installation.

The present abnormal conditions when the workman holding the hammer in one hand must grasp the rifle with the other, are of course, unfavorable for constructive work. But the Council of Labor and Defence nevertheless issued a decree providing for the extension of the wireless stations. The Peoples' Commissariat for Ways and Communications was ordered to institute a number of powerful transmitting and receiving wireless stations in the centre and in the provinces. Of this number one station is already in the process of construction. The station will rival the most powerful wireless stations in the world. The Transatlantic wireless station built in the vicinity of Moscow will have the capacity of sending out waves all over the globe. It possesses an alternator of a new type of very high frequency—twenty thousand original motions a second—apart from its wide possibilities as an agency of information it will also produce extensive reforms in the matter of measuring longitude for pur-

(Continued on page 8.)

# Materialist Conception of History

## FOR BEGINNERS

### LESSON 13.

**T**HROUGH the influx of gold from America (and king Henry VIII debasing the currency) the value of the shilling fell to sixpence, and wages could not keep pace with commodity prices. This reduced wages so low that the work day was lengthened. The workers were cheated out of their wages and degraded to the lowest depths of poverty. The dissolution of the monasteries enriched the nobles. The merchants who bought the confiscated lands, deprived laborers of charity relief, which the monasteries gave them in bad times or occasional misfortunes.

The number of persons who, owing to the decay of feudalism, were torn from their moorings and left to drift about in a world utterly unprepared to absorb them in employment, augmented vagabondage. The vagrants had never before been so numerous. A portion became the suckers of Kings and Princes, and became the germ of a standing army. A large proportion became beggars and robbers, living by plunder and murder. There were hundreds of executions for vagrancy, as if men could work or pay and none of them to be found.

The rapid growth of the woollen trade plunged the serfs into abject poverty through the evictions off the land. Sheep raising needed few laborers and much land, therefore landlords fenced in the commons and evicted the peasants and tenants, and rent-racked any cultivator that remained. The peasants were down and out, not having even the common lands to graze their cow. The portion who did not rob and plunder, sought domicile in the rising towns. The towns became flooded with labor seeking employment which was not to be found. The suppression of the craft guilds had the effect of depriving the town laborer of his organization. Therefore we had the first indication of the modern proletariat.

This condition brought on the rebellion of 1549 (which defeated the Royal troops), led by Ket, a tanner of Norwich. Rogers in "Work and Wages," says: "It is said that the Norfolk Rebellion was due to the discontent about enclosures in that county, and that similar disaffection was manifest elsewhere. It is probable that other and stronger motives were at work; but the statement that the peasantry were stirred to sedition by these practices is sufficient evidence of the fact that the practice was general." This rebellion was put down by Lord Warwick with the aid of German troops.

Certain results of the increased commercial activity began to appear. One of these was the rapid growth of cities and the rise of what has been called the third estate. In medieval language the first estate was the clergy, and the second the baronage. Now appeared the mercantile and manufacturing class, and from its numbers and its wealth it had the power to make its demands listened to and enforced. One of the first things which this new class demanded, was security, both for the protection of property and a safer and better means of communication. This led to the landed class improving roads from one place to another and charging toll for same. They did not realize that by doing this they were aiding the destruction of economic conditions which sustained the feudal system and its power. Another most important result of the increase of commerce was the large amount of money which it necessarily brought into use. This was very destructive for feudalism, because it cut from under that system the whole economic foundation. The regime of barter was no longer necessary. The owner of land could now obtain an income from land in the form of money, and could purchase services he needed with greater advantage than when he rented his land directly for service. This increase of money also affected the feudal system as decisively on its political side. The State was no longer dependent on the formation of its army or any other public service. The government introduced regular taxation and made themselves independent of feudal services. These economic changes had a great

effect upon the serf class. The growth of towns offered him a place to escape to from his serfdom, and the scarcity of labor tended to increase wages, but the golden age faded away with the influx of gold after the discovery of America.

In Queen Mary's reign the Roman Catholic religion was restored and mass was reintroduced into the church. The Pope's representative with a silver cross on the front of the barge sailed up the Thames, granting absolution in the Pope's name to the Lords and Commons, who knelt to receive it. There was no opposition, but when Pope Paul VI. demanded that every acre of the church property previously confiscated be given back, it was too much for the land barons who knew where their heaven lay. Therefore the dividing of the church lands in Henry VIII's time had put an effectual stop to the Pope regaining any real hold on England. Scotland also gradually adopted Protestantism. The nobles also zealous of the wealth and power of the church, encouraged the new religion. They also benefitted by the dividing of the church lands, which they also confiscated. Queen Mary of Scotland, appealed to Catholic France for help, she being a Catholic. The Protestants appealed to Queen Elizabeth, who refused to help the rebels, until a French army (her enemy) landing in Scotland became a certainty. She sent a fleet to the Firth of Forth with 8,000 men, which resulted in the Treaty of Edinburgh, 1560, the French to leave Scotland.

The nobility, enriched by the spoils of the church and their increased wealth through the wool trade, suspended the payment of members, which gave them the monopoly of political power. Although trade in England was prosperous, the distress amongst the workers was so great that the Mayor and churchwardens were compelled to raise funds for relief. This was the introduction of poor law relief in 1562. The guardians of Edward attempted, in a savage statute passed in the first year of his reign, to restrain pauperism and vagabondage by reducing landless and destitute poor to slavery, by branding them and making them work in chains. The Act only endured two years. The poor law proper was not enacted until the period following upon the industrial revolution, which we will deal with in a future lesson.

Around 1576, 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, discovered the Hudson Bay and took possession of Newfoundland. Raleigh, Hawkins and Drake undertook voyages of discovery. Hawkins was the first to carry slaves from Africa to America, trading them for rum. Hawkins received royal recognition of his gallant exploits in this trade and received from the good Queen Elizabeth a ship called "Jesus" to encourage him in his Christian enterprise. Drake was the first Englishman to sail around the world, the son of a Devonshire clergyman who went to Spanish America and sacked the gold ships of Spain, which caused the Spanish war. Drake sailed again in 1585 with 25 vessels to Spanish America and returned laden with plunder. Spain prepared for war to hold on to her commercial supremacy. The Portuguese in Africa and India, and the Spanish in America, after their discoveries immediately took possession of these countries, developed on ocean commerce. The Portuguese established their factories along the coasts of India and in the East Indian Islands. The fabulous riches of Mexico and Peru attracted the Spaniards, and the Armada fleet of Spain was defeated in the English Channel in July 1588, a battle over the plunder of America, which Drake had stolen from Spanish ships. This success for England established the independence of the Dutch, who were the next commercial rival of England.

The years following the Spanish defeat were years of triumph for England. Her chief articles of export to the continent were, wool, cloth, lead and tin. Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to the East India Company the year after the Armada. There were charters granted to a Russian Company in

1554, and a Turkish Company in 1551. This was due to heavy costs and risks in remote foreign trade. This was the origin of corporate organizations of capital, to finance and fit ships with arms against pirates. To encourage this trade each company was incorporated to have the sole right to trade in certain regions. The difference between them and corporate companies today is, the former was an organization of persons carrying on individual trade, joined for convenience in carrying their wares. The latter is essentially an organization of capital in which it is indifferent as to who are its members, the members indifferent as to what trade it is engaged in so long as the corporation pays dividends.

The first companies chartered had four features not to be found in the companies of today.

1st—They paid the expense of the trading post;  
2nd—They carried on individual trade  
3rd—They were not responsible for the debts of the company, like a partner.

4th—They could not sell rights like a shareholder. Out of these grew Joint Stock Companies when capitalism had greatly developed. The Flemish towns suffered severely with the Spanish invasions and the persecution of the notorious Alva. This caused the Flemings to emigrate to England, and gave a great impulse to England's commercial supremacy, because the English wool could be manufactured at home into cloth. Therefore in Elizabeth's reign England advanced politically and commercially from the position of a second to a first rate power.

There were troublous times in Ireland. England not being able to force her rule on Ireland from 1602, she adopted a policy of bribing the chiefs of the tribes with heavy bribes, granting them the lands of the suppressed abbey in return for a promise of loyalty. The English law courts, ignoring the customs by which the land belonged to the tribe at large regarded the chiefs as sole proprietors. During the reign of James I., large numbers of Scotch and English settlers had lands given to them in Leinster and Ulster, on condition that they preserve order. These are known as the Leinster and Ulster plantations; by them two-thirds of the land of North Ireland passed into the hands of strangers. Although this change brought some prosperity, the unjust method of carrying it out raised a bitter spirit which lasts to this day. We will see at a future date the real economic causes of the Irish question.

This is the King James of the Bible translation fame, who persecuted the Puritans who crossed in the May flower and founded the New England States in America. This religious body did not allow their religious scruples to interfere with their swindling business methods in transactions with the Indians in the country of their adoption. The statement made by the Rev. Roland D. Sawyer of America is true: "No religious institution that the world has ever seen, has had a religion strong enough to control its conduct, when its economic security was in anyway threatened. If slavery means dollars and cents in the pockets of the ruling interest, then slavery is a divine institution."

In Charles I.'s reign, who was practically an absolute monarch, dissolving parliament whenever he pleased, ignoring the Magna Charta and jailing men for refusing to lend money, the Commons brought in a Bill of Rights against illegal fines, taxations and imprisonments agreed to by the Lords. The king struggled hard against it, but being pressed for money he was obliged to give in and it became law in 1628. The capitalist class was growing stronger, and when Charles carried on for eleven years without a parliament they chopped his head off. The break up of the feudal manors and the decay of guild production owing to its inability to supply the wider market now developed, came to be the idea of the nation as a trading unit. The local market with its narrow outlook in which the town was everything, made way for the national market. Nationalism had its beginning, and the realm was

Continued on page 6)

# The S. P. of C. and the Third International

Editor's Note.—The following article by Comrade C. Stephenson, which we have had on hand more than a month, is too lengthy to conform to the ruling of the D. E. C., which confines this discussion to one page each issue. This issue, therefore, contains the first part of the article. The second part will be included in next issue.

**I**N adding my contribution to the discussion on affiliation with the Third International, I shall confine myself to a survey of the social situation in Canada, which situation, as I see it, furnishes the main grounds of my opposition to affiliation.

I am impelled to a sober and, as far as space will allow, a detailed consideration of the factors in the Canadian situation, first, because Marxian science imposes that obligation, and, secondly, because so far, I think, a detailed consideration of those factors has not been presented in the discussion. It is always in order to point out that the method of modern science, which is the essence of Marxism, is to go to facts, things, objective conditions outside the mind, for knowledge; and it was just an adherence to this method that constituted the revolt of the Marxian school of Scientific Socialism against the subjective, schematic idealism of the Utopian Socialists, and for the repudiation, by Marx and his co-workers, of Bakunin and such other "actionists" and their emotional following.

In reading the terms of affiliation I get the impression, both by their general tone and by specific passages, that the formulatores had in mind social situations where a state of civil war exists or where it is immediately imminent between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Also I get an impression of the Executive Committee as a General Staff marshalling revolutionary forces in the field of action. However that may be, I count it folly and to the disadvantage of the movement for an E. C., while sitting so far away from the scenes of political activity in all parts of the world, to lay down set regulations to cover widely varying social situations. I will not go further into that matter, but will proceed to consider whether a war-like or near war-like state of things exists within the Canadian situation.

As a forecast of the lines of my discussion I shall put, what seems to me, the following pertinent questions:—

First: How is the population of Canada, as a whole, disposed towards the economic programme of Communism, i.e., to the abolition of private ownership of land, natural resources, mills, mines, factories, means of transportation and distribution, etc., and to the setting up in its place, the common ownership of those material means of production and distribution; and also, how is the population disposed towards the political programme of Communism, i.e., the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" for enforcing the economic programme?

Second: How are specific sections of the population disposed toward those programmes and what is their standing to each other in point of numbers and material and spiritual resources?

Third: What percentage of the population at present accept the Communist position?

Fourth: What are the tendencies in the situation in Canada in respect of the revolutionary communist programme?

These questions, of course, can be answered only approximately, and in the end, according to each individual's personal judgment. This article does not pretend to cover the whole field opened up by them. Mainly, besides stating my own views, it is an attempt to call attention to certain factors, the consideration of which may assist readers to a decision.

It will, I think, be known to most readers that Socialism has made its greatest progress among what is termed the industrial or machine proletariat and least progress among the small farming peasantry, and the business callings. Outward from the machine proletariat through intermediate occupational groups, at each remove from the influence of the machine technology the members of the groups are found less and less susceptible to Socialist ideas, and to come more and more under the domination of business principles of profit-seeking by means of competitive advantages gained through the buy-

ing and selling of property, until is reached at the farthest remove the peasant and the business groups who are notoriously reactionary to the point of antagonism.

An extended account of how these groups come to be predisposed for or against Socialist ideas is beyond the scope of this article, but for my purpose, something must be said upon it. Suffice it to say then, that such various predispositions are only in small degree the result of reasoned conviction such as comes from a consideration of economic interest, but are largely, unconsciously acquired habits of mind. Such habits of mind, or mental prepossessions, result from the disciplinary effect of habits of life enforced, in part, by the general method of production, and in part by a particular occupation. To illustrate, in technologically backward communities, production is carried on, on an individual scale. The farmer owns his own tools, implements and stock, and often buildings and land, and only occasionally does he need the help of other men. He is an individual producer owning the products of his labor, which he trades or sells on the market. Habits of life formed in accordance with individual production, ownership of property and the manipulation of it for purposes of personal gain induce habits of thought which make up that complex of ideas and standards of judgment known as the individualistic point of view. The peasantry moreover, are not generally forced, by industrial crises into a critical attitude towards the present economic organization of society, as are the industrial proletariat, having some reserves against hard times, in products raised for home consumption. Also, in such technologically backward communities the play of natural forces are not fully understood; there are gaps in the productive process so far as matter-of-fact knowledge is concerned and guess-work fills the gap, and often with the supernatural. The peasantry as is well known, are the most religious as well as the most

## MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY (Continued from page 5)

set above the town. This condition encouraged the growth of the absolute monarchy which was in close touch with the trading interests against the feudal lords, until it became a hindrance and resulted in the execution of Charles I., after six years of strife and civil war from 1642 to 1648, ending with Cromwell as head of the Commonwealth. On the side of the king were the nobles, the clergy and country gentlemen; their opponents were the tradesmen and shopkeepers of the towns. De Gibbin says that the Cromwell wars were commercial, and supported both by the religious views of the Puritans and the desires of the merchants.

In 1651 Parliament passed the Navigation Act prohibiting foreign goods to be brought into the country unless on English ships. This struck a blow at the Dutch trade, as they were the chief carriers from foreign countries. Trade was transferred to English ships. This caused the war with the Dutch, when the Dutch admiral tied the broom to his mast because he swept England off the sea; but two years later the Dutch were defeated. Cromwell demanded trade with the Spanish colonies and religious freedom for English settlers in such colonies. His demands were refused as he well knew they would be, whereupon he seized Jamaica, 1655, and succeeded in giving England a foothold in the West Indies. Not content with this victory, with the consent of the mercantile class England declared war on Holland, the result of which I have just pointed out. In one of the Dutch wars England won New York from them. One writer has said that "from 1650 to 1674 the Dutch were our natural enemies and the furious fighting in the Channel was really a struggle for the carrying trade and dominion in the East." The Dutch were the boldest navigators and the most skillful manufacturers in Europe. They were eager advocates of civil liberty and embraced

ideologically unprogressive group in any community.

Modern industry, on the other hand, is industry on a large-scale plan, in which large numbers of workers co-operate together in production. Their labors are sub-divided, so that a worker does not appear as an individual producer, but as an inter-related, inter-dependent unit among other like workers in the productive process. This discipline of work-day life induces a habit of mind more disposed than the peasants to thinking in social terms. Also, the technological processes of modern machine production are mechanical processes. Each process is but natural forces guided to work to a predetermined end in a continuity of known material cause and effect. The machine proletariat are, mentally, largely creatures of this matter-of-fact work-day life in which there are no mysteries. So that they are notoriously materialistic in thought and irreligious, not actively hostile to religion, but indifferent as though not understanding its belief in supernatural forces. But the chief unconventionalism of the industrial proletariat arises from the fact that they are without property, either in the means of wealth production or the products of their labor, in a society whose dominant and pervading institutional fact is the principle of ownership. And naturally, the sacredness of this principle appeals with less force to the propertyless than to any other group in the community. In this last respect, it is most significant that of all the various occupational groups, there is a more widening difference in the habits of life of the business class and the industrial proletariat, especially those in the strictly mechanical occupations, and this carries with it a widening difference in the habits of thought and the habitual grounds and methods of reasoning resorted to by each class, resulting in a growing incapacity to understand each other's point of view.

C. S.

(Continued in next issue)

the Reformation. They became an independent nation in 1684 after a severe struggle with Spain, during which they had increased in wealth and made extensive acquisitions in the East Indies, and had the most powerful navy in Europe until England won her place in the sun.

We come down now to the Revolution in England, 1688, which we will deal with in our next lesson. This was the culmination of the conflict between the King and the bourgeoisie which broke out in the civil war 1642 to 1649.

PETER T. LECKIE.

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# The Agrarian Question

Thesis Adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International, Moscow, August, 1920

1.—No one but the city industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can save the laboring masses in the country from the pressure of capital and landlordism, from dissolution and from imperialist wars, inevitable as long as the capitalist regime endures. There is no salvation for the peasants except to join the Communist proletariat, to support with heart and soul its revolutionary struggle to throw off the yoke of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand the industrial workers will be unable to carry out their universal historic mission, and to liberate humanity from the bondage of capital and war, if they shut themselves within their separate crafts, their narrow trade interests, and restrict themselves self-sufficiently to a desire for the improvements of their sometimes tolerable bourgeois conditions of life. That is what happens in most advanced countries possessing a "labor aristocracy," which forms the basis of the would-be Parties of the Second International, who are in fact the worst enemies of Socialism, traitors to it, bourgeois jingoes, agents of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement. The proletariat becomes a truly revolutionary class, truly Socialist in its actions, only by acting as the vanguard of all those who work and are being exploited, only as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the oppressors; and this cannot be achieved without carrying the class struggle into the agricultural districts, without making the laboring masses of the country all gather around the Communist Party of the town proletariat, without the peasants being educated by the town proletariat.

2.—The laboring and exploited masses in the country, which the town proletariat must lead on to the fight, or at least win over to its side, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following groups:—

In the first place the agricultural proletariat, the hired laborers (by the year, by the day, by the job) making their living by wage labor in capitalist agricultural or industrial establishments. The independent organization of this class, separated from the other groups of the country population (in a political, military, trade, co-operative, educational sense), and an energetic propaganda among it, in order to win it over to the side of the Soviet Power and of the dictatorship of the proletariat—such is the fundamental task of the Communist Parties in all countries.

In the second place the semi-proletariat or small peasants, those who make their living partly by working for wages in agricultural and industrial capitalist establishments, partly by toiling on their own or a rented piece of land yielding but a part of the necessary food produce for their families. This class of the rural population is rather numerous in all capitalist countries, but its existence and its peculiar position is hushed up by the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the yellow "Socialists" affiliated to the Second International. Some of these people intentionally cheat the workers, but others follow blindly the average views of the "peasantry." Such a method of bourgeois deceit of the workers is used more particularly in Germany and France, and to a lesser extent in America and other countries. Provided that the work of the Communist Party is well organized, this group is sure to side with the Communists, the conditions of life of these half-proletarians being very hard; the advantage the Soviet Power and the dictatorship of the proletariat would bring them being enormous and immediate. In some countries there is no clear-cut distinction between these two groups; it is therefore permissible under certain circumstances not to form them into separate organizations.

In the third place the little proprietors, the small farmers who possess by right of ownership, or rent small portions of land which satisfy the needs of their family and of their farming without requiring any additional wage labor. This part of the population as a class gains everything by the victory of the proletariat, which brings with it: (a) liberation from

the payment of rent or of a part of the crops (for instance, the "metayers" in France, the same arrangements in Italy, etc. to the owners of large estates; (b) Abolition of all mortgages; (c) Abolition of many forms of pressure and of dependence on the owners of large estates (forests and their use, etc.); (d) Immediate help from the proletarian state for farm work (permitting use by peasants of the agricultural implements and partly the buildings on the big capitalist estates expropriated by the proletariat, immediate transformation by the proletarian state power of all rural co-operatives and agricultural companies, which under the capitalist rule were chiefly supporting the wealthy and the middle peasantry, into institutions primarily for support of the poor peasantry; that is to say, the proletarians, semi-proletarians, small farmers, etc.)

At the same time the Communist Party should be thoroughly aware that during the transitional period leading from capitalism to Communism, i.e., during the dictatorship of the proletariat, at least some partial hesitations are inevitable in this class, in favor of unrestricted free trade and free use of the rights of private property. For this class, being a seller of commodities (although on a small scale), is necessarily demoralized by profit-hunting and habits of proprietorship. And yet, provided there is a consistent proletarian policy, and the victorious proletarian deals relentlessly with the owners of the large estates and the landed peasants, the hesitations of the class in question will not be inconsiderable, and cannot change the fact that on the whole this class will side with the proletarian revolution.

3. All these three groups taken together constitute the majority of the agrarian population in all capitalist countries. This guarantees in full the success of the proletarian revolution, not only in the towns, but in the country as well. The opposite view is very widely spread, but it persists only because of a systematic deceit on the part of bourgeois scientists and statisticians. They hush up by every means any mention of the deep chasm which divides the rural classes we have indicated, from the exploiting landowners and capitalists, and the half-proletarians and small peasants on the one hand, from the landed peasants on the other. This arises from the incapacity and the failure of the heroes affiliated to the yellow Second International and the "labor aristocracy," demoralized by imperialist privileges, to do genuine propaganda work on behalf of the proletarian revolution, or to conduct organizing work among the poor in the country. All the attention of the opportunists was given and is being given now to the arrangement of theoretical and practical agreements with the bourgeoisie, including the landed and the middle peasantry, which we have described, and not to the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois government and the bourgeois class by the proletariat. Finally, this view persists because of the force of inveterate prejudice already possessing strong roots (and connected with all bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices), and the incapacity to grasp a simple truth fully proved by the Marxian theory and confirmed by the practice of the proletarian revolution in Russia. This truth consists in the fact that the peasant population of the three classes we have mentioned above, being extremely oppressed, scattered and doomed to live in half-civilized conditions in all countries, even in the most advanced, is economically, socially, and morally interested in the victory of Socialism; but that it will finally support the revolutionary proletariat only after the proletariat has taken the political power, after it has done away with the owners of the large estates and the capitalists, after the oppressed masses are able to see in practice that they have an organized leader and helper sufficiently powerful and firm to support, to guide, and to show the right way.

The "middle peasantry," in the economic sense, consists of small landowners who possess, according to the right of ownership or rent, portions of land, which, although small, nevertheless may (1) yield usually under capitalist rule not only a scanty provision for the family and the needs of the farming, but also the possibility to accumulate a certain surplus, which, at least in the best years, could be trans-

formed into capital; and (2) need to employ (for instance in a family of two or three members) wage-labor. As a concrete example of the middle peasantry in an advanced capitalist country we may take in Germany, according to the registration of 1917, a group tilling farms of from five to ten acres, of which farms the number employing hired agricultural laborers makes up about a third of the whole number in the group. (These are the exact figures: number of farms from 5—10 acres 552,798 (out of 5,736,082); they possess in all sorts of hired workers, 478,794—the number of workers with their families (Familienangehoerige) being 2,013,633. In Austria, according to the census of 1910, there were 383,351 farms in this group; 126,136 of them employing hired labor; 146,044 hired workers, 1,215,969 workers with their families. The total number of farms in Austria amounts to 2,856,349). In France, the country of a greater development of intensive culture, for instance of the vineyards, requiring special treatment and care, the corresponding group employs wage labor probably in a somewhat larger proportion.

(Continued in next issue)

## DIVIDING THE SPOILS

### BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE THIEVES KITCHEN.

#### Magnate Cut Magnate.

What do our rulers spend sleepless nights (if any) over? Are they troubled about the homeless victims of the devastation in France? Or the invalid children and the starving old people in Vienna? Or the mess they are making of all Europe? On arrival in this country for the London Conference, almost the first words of the French Premier to Lloyd George were: "We must punish Hugo Stinnes."

Observe, if you please, how reparations are decided upon!

Here is the real story of the London Conference, where Dr. Simons "failed."

Here is the real reason why there is about to be a fresh march for loot into Germany.

**M.** FRANCIS DELAISI never fails to be interesting. In the Paris "Progres Civique" he describes the battle of the industrial captains which preceded and formed the reality behind the shows of the London Conference.

It is a comedy of the conflict of Stinnes and Loucheur, with a third party coming in at the end to rejoice.

M. Loucheur was, says M. Delaisi, a successful contractor who made continually increasing coups during the war, until finally he was carrying out with his "Societe Generale d' Entreprises," the most varying and important works. Like Stinnes he was interested in the Press—the "Petit Journal" and "Paris Midi." In Parliament he passed from office to office—Senator, Chairman of Committee, Minister of Munitions, Minister for Reconstruction, and finally Minister for the Liberated districts, in which capacity he came to the London Conference. Delaisi describes the first plans of Stinnes and Loucheur for joint working in the devastated districts of Northern France, German material and labor being used only so far as to avoid annoyance to French industry, and—the main thing—French ores from Lorraine being exchanged for German coal and coke.

Meanwhile, a supposed sympathiser with their plans, M. Charles Laurent, president of the Union of Metallurgic and Mining Industries, and of the Committee for the restoration of industrial activity in the devastated districts, went to Berlin as French Ambassador.

But it was no part of Britain's aims to drive German industry out of the world market merely for France's benefit. The Versailles Treaty had very satisfactorily left the good coking coal within the German frontiers when France was given the iron of Lorraine. At all costs this situation must be preserved, and that meant that at all costs Franco-German understanding must be prevented.

So Lord d'Abernon came on the scene. Like Stinnes and Loucheur the British Ambassador at Berlin is not a diplomat by profession. A prosperous career in the Near East led in the end to his appointment as British representative on the Turkish debt control, and subsequently a director of the Ot-

(Continued on page 8)

## DIVIDING THE SPOILS

(Continued from page 7)

to man Bank. No one is better acquainted with German financial methods, and with the economic situation in Central Europe. He knew that the key to the industrial recovery of the Danube States was the economic restoration of Austria. A year ago a combination of British banks was formed for this purpose. But already Creusot had obtained control of the Skoda Works in Bohemia, and French financiers were negotiating for control of the Hungarian railways, etc. The moment French finance appeared to be working towards collaboration with the Germans, the British group considered it all-important to approach the Loucheur group.

So the battle began. The British Consortium offered the Loucheur group participation in their ventures, to detach the group from Stinnes. Loucheur then submitted to the Paris Conference a report in the financial restoration of Austria—by private enterprise. A company was to be formed with an initial capital of 200 millions of francs, English, Italian, and American undertakings sharing equally in the capital issue. It meant the very profitable financial control of a highly equipped industrial country. It was also a shrewd blow at Stinnes.

Stinnes, seeing his Franco-German project in ruins sought ores and markets elsewhere. He proceeded to Austria, and the news soon came that he had bought 250,000 shares in the great Styrian iron mining company, the "Alpine Montangesellschaft," and also two metallurgical factories, at Graz and Trieste.

He undertook to deliver 1,200 tons of Ruhr coke a day to the Styrian company.

This was a revolting spectacle to British capitalism. German industry now had in Styria a substitute for the iron taken away from it in Lorraine. Stinnes must be punished!

After this it was useless for the Germans to make any proposals at the London Conference. In the end Dr. Simons actually accepted the French (Seydoux) proposal, and even that served nothing. An excuse must be found, and was found, for "sanctions." On March 10 the Rhenish coal ports of Dusseldorf, Duisburg, and Ruhrort were seized, and control thus obtained of the coal and coke destined for Stinnes and his Styrian concerns. On March 11 M. Loucheur discussed with the Austrian Ministers his plans for the restoration of Austria, including the supply of 200,000 tons of coal monthly, and on March 12 Austria accepted Allied control of her finances. There ended the possibility of German participation in concessions or public works in Austria.

But what about Reparations? What about the restoration of the devastated areas in France, for which M. Loucheur is the responsible Minister? Finance comes before poor people's houses, and Finance decreed that it should be Austria this time, and that the North of France must wait. Not, you observe that it matters two pins to Finance if old Austrian ladies starve a little less or French workers pig it a little more.—(The Labor Leader).

## WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY IN SOVIET RUSSIA

(Continued from page 4)

poses of navigation and surveying. There is no doubt that the colossal power of the station will compel the radio stations of other countries to adapt themselves to it. It will also provide extensive material and possibilities for the study not only of wireless telegraphy but also of atmospheric and magnetic phenomena, thus becoming an object of examination not only for Russia but also for foreign scientists.

All the work of calculation and construction connected with the alternator has been accomplished by the Wireless Laboratory of Nizhgorod. The inventor of the apparatus is a member of the Laboratory Council, engineer Wolokdin.

This wireless laboratory was opened at the end of 1918, and for this brief period of time it succeeded in making considerable contributions of great scientific value. It is engaged in the preparation of a new type of intensification which has hitherto been imported from France. By order of the Council of Defence the laboratory started upon the preparation of a number of radio-telephonic stations through the application of positive rally. A model of this has been worked out by engineer M. A. Bonsh-Bruovitch, one of the specialists working in the

laboratory.

Moscow has already a radio-telephonic station of this type, which can carry the human voice over a distance of 4500 versts. This is confirmed by the messages arriving from the Chita station to the effect that they can hear Moscow. The same is true of Irkutsk, Tashkent and Semipalatinsk. The author of these lines assisted by the Ministry of Postal and Telegraph service carried on experiments in Berlin to establish the possibility of carrying the human voice from that city and Moscow. The main wireless station of Geithoff was placed at our disposal for that purpose. The investigation work was carried on in the presence of Count Arko, one of the most prominent scientists and inventors in the sphere of wireless telegraphy, Dr. Ruhkopf, the chief of the experimental station of the "Telefunken Co." Gruzniczka, Dr. of physical science, who had arrived from London by invitation of Com. Krassin, and the engineers and technicians of the above receiving station. At the appointed hour we heard Moscow saying "Hello," and the conversation that followed was so distinct that I could recognize the voices of the persons speaking from Moscow. The impression produced was overwhelming. One of those present addressed himself to me saying: "How was it possible to achieve such wonderful progress in a country, where, as our newspapers inform us, everything is in a state of destruction and anarchy? Whom are we to believe after that?" I advised him to believe the facts.

The German Ministry of Postal and Telegraph Service being greatly interested in the experiment ordered its laboratory expert, engineer Vrazka, to verify it. As a result of this it was established that the audibility is sufficient for carrying on regular telephonic communication between Berlin and Moscow. Even reducing the power to one half there is the possibility of carrying the human voice over the distance between Berlin and Moscow. This leads to the conclusion that the conversation from Moscow was heard by all the most important radio stations in Europe, which was actually confirmed by messages received a few days after that from European wireless stations.

Thus the experiment in wireless telephony has proved a complete success, and all this is the result of the scientific labors of the Soviet experts during the two years of their complete isolation from their colleagues in the West.

The radio telephonic station in Moscow is completely the work of the Soviet Government. It has been installed and equipped by our own means beginning with the simplest screw and ending with the most complicated apparatus.

Apart from this our specialists introduced a number of very valuable improvements in the technique of the wireless communication, and a number of new problems have been worked out by the radio laboratory at Nizhgorod upon which I cannot dwell now.

We can confidently state now that in the matter of wireless telegraphy we have become altogether independent of foreign capital; we can ourselves produce all the necessary apparatus which will not be inferior in any way to those produced abroad, while some of our apparatus even excel the European make. In the field of wireless telegraphy, we can say that not only have we made a good start, but we have achieved in a comparatively short time such real progress as enables us to affirm that the productive genius of Soviet Russia has been aroused, and already provided evidence of its ability to successfully rival the capitalist West.

—"Rosta Wein," April 12th, 1921.

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