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Taboos and the Social Sciences

By J. A. HOBSON

A CHIEF obstacle to the disinterested pursuit of the social sciences is the vital, not to say inflammatory, matter they contain. The fundamental institutions of society are hedged with a mysterious sanctity that forbids the scrutiny of reason.

Religion, group loyalty or patriotism, property, the family, and certain concepts of personal morality, not merely surround themselves with taboos, but emit passionate fumes to blind the sight and confuse the brain of frivolous scrutineers. The case of religion is notorious. No truly religious person will submit his deity or his worship to cold tests of the intellect. Industrious anthropologists may track each of his holy rites back to its origins in sympathetic or imitative magic. But they will not eradicate entirely the "superstitious" sentiment attaching to this magic, and to the primitive "Weltanschauung" of which it was a part. But the most conclusive testimony to the difficulty of a scientific study of religion is, not the emotional bias of the believer, but the counter-bias of the unbeliever, the odium anti theologicum, so conspicuous in professing "rationalists." They are not to blame. An escape from prevailing sanctities stamped by early association upon the tender mind can only be achieved by an emotional struggle in which the combative instinct is engaged so strongly as to leave behind a sentiment of hostility and disgust, often intensified in passionate natures by well-founded fear lest the emotional escape be incomplete. Students of comparative religion, or of the higher criticism, will be well aware of the havoc made in the application of laws of evidence to matter laden with such passionate appeal.

But even more significant is the sentiment of sanctity when its veneration and taboos are applied to the concepts of country, property, or sex. The moral and legal supports of these concepts, and of the obligations they impose on conduct, are termed appropriately "sanctions." For into each of them is carried the same sentiment of awe or mysterious veneration that is realized with fuller consciousness in religious ceremonial and beliefs.

In order to exploit more advantageously this sentiment, political practitioners cultivate with care the divinity that doth hedge a king, or, when personal government has dwindled or been displaced, the close linkage of "God and Country." The elaboration of symbolic ritual in salutation of the flag, national holy-days, patriotic hymns and processions, and the running of history into sentimental moulds of national heroism, for the education of our children, is a semi-conscious endeavor to divert to patriotic purposes the fund of superstition liberated for this work by the weakening of religious attachments. Where powerful religious feelings still survive they can be rallied round the sacred person of the King or the holy Fatherland. Where they decay, owing to the waning belief in another world, the State claims such reverent rights to its emotional inheritance as it can make good in patriotic practices.

How patriotic passion not merely perverts the conduct of public affairs from the paths of sweet reasonableness, but how it conceals, or transforms the truths about this conduct, is in abundant illustration, familiar to all serious students of history. Yet such truths constitute the raw material of political science.

Even when they are laboriously dug out of their hiding places, or restored from their defacement, the "scientific" treatment accorded them is everywhere liable to the subjective valuations of historians or scientists who cannot wholly divest their minds of personal sentiments. The best, because the most truthful, histories are those which make no attempt to conceal these necessary biases. The pretence to a strictly scientific impartiality is both false and foolish. For the human sympathy involved in the perception, interpretation and valuation of events, acts, and characters is incompatible with the impartial attitude that is claimed. This is not uncommonly admitted as precluding a reliable history of very recent affairs. But it is applicable in a more or less degree to the treatment of remote events, which cannot escape the back-stroke of a selection and valuation governed by the current ideas and feelings of today. Though the "political scientist" may distinguish his calling from that of the historian, he can hardly escape the legacy of defects in historical records which must form the staple of his "scientific" treatment.

But not only are "my country," its King, its Constitution, sacred. The fundamental institutions of its legal and social order are also sacred. Property is peculiarly sacro sanct. It is hedged with legal, intellectual, and moral sanctions which make it more dangerous and more wicked to tamper with its foundations than with those of any other institution. The genuinely religious awe attaching to the property concept could not be better illustrated than in the shiver that ran down the backbone of all good citizens the world over at the revelations of Bolshevism in Russia. It was not the cruelty and bloodshed, the forcible autoeracy, or even the collapse of industry, with its accompanying abhorrence. It was the sudden raking up from the embers of a dateless past of the horror of "the unclean thing." The other feelings of pity and resentment entered in but as accessories to this central rush of inflamed horror. Normally we do not realize the emotional meaning we attach to such a concept or institution as Property. We are not obliged to realize it, and there is an intellectual economy in not doing so. But when it is subjected to a sudden challenge, the full force of the "survival value" which it has carried down the ages, suddenly awakes in us. We feel that Property is holy, and its destroyers in Russia, or elsewhere, they and their remotest sympathizers, the professors of any doctrine, the advocates of any policy that threatens any sort of recognized property are sacrilegious monsters.

I have no desire to dispute the survival value, and, therefore, the natural necessity of this sentiment, but how are the sciences of politics and economics going to conduct their processes with cold scientific rigor on the crust of a volcano like this?

There remains, however, one matter perhaps even more intractable to scientific treatment than property, namely, sex and the social relations into which it enters. To sexual activity and selection, with resulting parenthood, is assigned the chief part in organic evolution, the individual survival being regarded primarily as a means to survival of a species. In sex mentality, conscious and uncon-

scious, psychology, therefore, finds the most potent of human urges. To sociology the family is not merely one among many social institutions; it is the nest and nursery of those restraints and provisions which are the source and condition of all larger and higher modes of group life. For though as some anthropologists hold, tribal groups may have preceded definite family life, the tender emotion, fostered in the narrow circle of the family, is a far more powerful educator of self-restraint, altruism, and co-operation, the springs of social conduct, than any of the thinner and more diffuse feeling of gregariousness. Precisely because sex and parenthood are the most potent and intractable of urges, the practices and institutions designed to their utilization and control are compelled to work by strong regulations and repressions.

Making all allowance for these diversions or transmutations of sex-passion into art, sport, religion, called sublimation of the instinct, a continual warfare is waged between the crude demands for sex-satisfaction and the interests of the social order. Especially is this the case in communities or classes, where social order is sought to be enforced by strict taboos, involving tight curbs on thought and speech as well as conduct. Nature here comes to the aid of the repressed instinct by ranging on its side curiosity and the related interest of intrigue. When strong natural promptings are present, the sense of shame and moral reprobation by which law, morals and custom have striven to enforce their taboo adds zest to temptation. This is so well recognized among intelligent persons that organized attempts are made to remove the veil of reticence which helps to shed a glamour upon sex. The error of Puritanism consists partly in misconceiving sex feeling as an enemy to society, partly in supposing that forcible modes of suppression can be effectual. It is doubtless true that there can be no better security for social order than the provision of economic and other arrangements compatible with a freer satisfaction of sex-feeling, not only in its sublimated but in its primary expression. It is, indeed, significant that a rapid and widespread interest among social students is being directed to the related problems of quantity and quality of population, and to the economic, political, racial, and moral issues involved in birth-control and eugenics.

The most striking of all testimonies, however, to the explosive and disturbing influence of sex is afforded by the resent science of psychology. I allude here not so much to the fact that schools of professional psychologists have gathered round sex as the chief centre of activity and interest in the psychical study of man. More significant for my present purpose is the enormous and quite popular reclame which this study has obtained. The fact that everywhere huge numbers of otherwise un-intellectual men and women are chattering psycho-analysis, in clubs, drawing-rooms and improvised study circles, and are dabbling in its literature and practices, furnishes a striking revelation of the difficulties of an impartial scientific treatment of any social problem into which sex enters as a factor. For it is quite evident that it is no purely "disinterested culture" that attracts most of these

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Treaties and "Boes"

In Two Parts: Part 1.

THAT "weary Willie," the acute business man, imputes stagnation to short hours of labor, high wages; and ca'canny. Yet armies of unemployed circle the market hunting a master, and commission after commission reports average wages less than ordinary standards of comfort. Funny.

Suppose labor worked to the limit, for long hours, at gratifying wages to the boss. What then? Business is organized solely for profit. Profits mean markets and competition for them. Even in monopoly. Market competition entails efficiency; efficiency entails power machinery; and power machinery is less labor cost, and high division of labor. High division of labor involves simplified processes by automatic machinery, driven rapidly to calculated operations. Labor is thus controlled by the machine. Hence ca'canny is eliminated—unless acting unanimously. Which is seldom. The resulting increased volume of production lessens costs, therefore the price on the world market. Thus the mass of the labor forces is increasingly superfluous, on the one hand; the mass of production increasingly augmented on the other. It is here, in augmented machine production, by displaced labor, where profit is embodied in commodities. Per unit, per day, machine production displaces hundreds of laborers, producing for the price of unit subsistence the values of their technical displacement. As value is socially necessary labor increased production at lower cost cheapens the competitive price. Consequently the market struggle of increased quantities at cheapening prices, i.e., greater machinery and less labor demands increasing masses of fixed capital (plant and material) in proportion to variable Capital (labor). This process drives large production into monopolies; small production into oblivion. It enrolls the former in combines; the latter in wagedom. By increasing fixed capital, relative to labor, variable, the mass of values, and therefore the mass profits are increased. But the unit of value declines, and the rate of profit falls. Consequently this increasing volume of production, at lessening values and prices, closes the doors of the market on itself. Because it drives the purchasing power of the social forces of production down to the values and prices of subsistence. To hold falling profits above cheapening price in the competitive market, the market must either be controlled, or progressively extended, to absorb progressive production. The latter being impossible, the former is inevitable.

The market is the salesroom, where the profit embodied in commodities is realized. But competitive capital necessitates the reinvestment of realized profits, in production, in order to produce a greater mass of commodities, for a greater market at enhanced profits. Capital is never for consumption. It is always for exploitation. To be used in consumption means bankruptcy. That is why the Capitalist system is doomed. As capitalist property is the social means of life, the process of investment and ownership demands that social means of life must first be capital means before they can be means of life. That is, they must be used as means of exploitation, by the capital class before they can be used, as a means of consumption by society. Consequently, expanding markets, by circulating the means of consumption, produce greater profits for the capitalist class, and more jobs for the workers. Hence the illusion of "prosperity" in "boom" times; and the veiled lie of identity of interest, at all times.

The regulation of the market—monopoly control—alters the method of the process, but not its principle. Monopoly control is the direct consequence of massed fixed Capital, as it, in turn, is the direct consequence of capitalist property. Massed fixed capital means an ever greater disproportion between fixed capital and variable capital, i.e., that

the means of production increase faster than the available labor forces. In brief, giant machinery displaces labor in production; generates an ever increasing power of production, and an ever lessening power of consumption. As the power of the market is the purchasing power of consumption, necessarily the displacement of labor entails the displacement of consumption. Since production is totally for profit, and profit is only realized in sales, then the stoppage of sales involves the stoppage of production. So the meaning of monopoly is the regulation of the market to effective power, i.e., its power to buy. Hence the old anarchy of individual production, by the "initiative" of "enterprise" for the largest market, is displaced by standardised processes, and measured in terms of forecasted calculations of market probabilities. But this world web of regulation restricts the circulation of means of consumption more thoroughly than before; it deepens the industrial stagnation (practically become chronic), widens the destruction of the social forces; and prevents by the very intensity of its exigencies, the necessary capitalisation of production as its nature and intention demands. Hence sales stop; profits languish for maturity and jobs vanish like "ghosts." The workers draw in their belts with grim resolve; go half time; or on doles; clamor for work; for reform. The deep paunched lords of Lombard Street wait with Christian fortitude on the absorption of the market; while their political henchman—of whatever color, red, or white or blue—juggle with conciliation and trade issues. With anything but the one vital issue, capitalist property in the social means of life—the single source and abiding cause of the whole trouble. Consequently, if business had its desire it would but the more rapidly bring industry to a standstill. If labor could do it, it would only suffer a greater degradation. Showing, in both cases, how completely "Ephraim is jointed to his idols." But the capitalist class—the fortuitous owners of the social means of life—will not allow production, because the proceeds cannot be profitably realized. Showing the profound depths of ignorance of those "respectable" bums, who claim "that labor is too lazy to work."

But there is another side to the affair. The two momentous capitalist issues of the day are Russia and Germany. The defeat of the Labor Government, and the rejection of the Russian treaty, signifies that trade and manufacture (industrial capital)—and its "lion's provider" labor—are to take second place in the new phase of capitalist development. While, in effect, the return of the Conservatives and the acceptance of Dawes—places the finance kings astride the ribs of the world. Russia was rejected on technical grounds of insecurity. Dawes is accepted on the security of German industry. In relation Russia would appear the better issue. For Russian resource is intact. While Germany is "lean as a cadger's powny." The real reason is that capital had not control in Russia. In Germany it is dominant.

The "Reparations Scheme" has virtually transformed Germany into a colony of high finance. It has given the keys of Central Europe and all potentialities that were once Germany into the hands of the money power—land, banks, railways, plant, technique, government—all complete. The measure of its triumph may be seen in the over subscription of the German loan in London and New York. For unlike Russia, security is safe with finance. But is it? The German loan, being to facilitate German "recovery" will proceed to reconstitute German industry and transport, and will apportion the process "justly." That is justly eliminate competition. Since Germany "owes" to the Allies some 130,000 billion marks "reparations," and is also earmarked for annual payments of some two b.m., it would seem that investment had found a profitable income, and Fritz, the paradise of a steady job. But appear-

ance is so deceptive—even in a world of "eternal right."

For 20 years preceding the war Germany had an adverse commodity balance. In the same period, the invisible balance rose from 1000 million marks to 1600 m.m. (gold in all cases). The adverse commodity balance increased faster than the invisible balance, with occasional deficits. A tendency which was reflected in the gradual depression of the exchange rate, in terms of London, Paris and Amsterdam. German foreign investments in 1894 were 12 billion marks. In 1913 they had risen to 20 b. m. An average annual of 400 m. m., but with a tendency to decline in the later years. In 1913, German exports aggregated 10,000 m. m. Great Britain took 1438 m. m., France 790 m. m., Russia 880 m. m., Austria 1100 m. m., U. S. A. 713 m. m. German imports aggregated 10770 m. m.—a deficit of 673. Imports of goods, raw materials and live stock showed 80% of total imports (over the period). In 1913, imports of food, 1723 m. m.; raw material 3485 m. m., part manufactured goods 9.9 m. (net), total 5307. Export of manufactured goods 4917 m. m.; deficit 390 m. m. In 1922 imports of food and raw material declined 57% and 63% respectively. The consumption of food fell by 52%, and exports fell to 4,000 m. m. +1500 m. m. "reparations." So that the standards of living—never very high—per capita consumption, 470 m.—is shown in the famine stricken straits of the nation; while the decline in the necessary raw imports is reflected in the inevitable decline of exports. (From 1919 to 1922 a deficit of 10 b. m.) and the Versailles Treaty stripped her of all invisible resource, and much domestic potentiality.

The proposition then, is: if Germany with a net deficit of 390 m. m. and a total trade deficit of 673 m. m. in 1913—a boom year in Germany—; with all her resource intact; and with the economic and financial world in organic balance—if with all this, Germany, with her exertions for expansion, could only show a net surplus for foreign investment of 600 m. m.: How, with a trade deficit of 10 b. m. with a total export trade of 6 b. (1922); with food and raw material jointly cut by over 100%; with an impoverished population; with the loss of all invisible resource; with a 25% reduction of her coal area; and with 40% of her blast furnaces gone;—how can she meet her own living requirements and in addition pay 2 b.m. per annum.

Since Germany has been deprived of all invisible resource, export is the only means. But exports entail imports. Balance or bankrupt. There is no alternative. In view of the actual Germany today, the pre-war figures as a basis could not be altered downwards, materially. Modern industry rests on coal and iron and the moloch must be satisfied. In 1913 German production of iron ore was 28½ million tons; imports 11 m. t. (approx. net). Exports of iron and machinery were alone 27% of total exports). Owing to loss of iron fields, on a pre-war basis, German imports would be increased to nearly 30 m. t., and the value, from 227 m. m. to the prices of today—practically double. So with coal. In 1913 German production was 190 m. tons. Net exports 24 m. t. In 1922, net imports were 7½ m. t. (approx.). By the loss of coal territory her imports would require to be increased to nearly 60 m. t. (total exports 1913, approx. 34.5; imports, 10.5 m. t., loss of 25% coal fields, 47 m. t. + reparation deliveries). Value increase compared with 1913, 200 m. m. to 1100 m. m. (1922). A 4/5 (80%) average of necessary imports of food and raw material on the 1913 figures would be (approx.) 8000 m. m., with an added value of 1000 m. m. on coal and iron alone—9000 m. m. In present prices 9000 would not be far short (if any) 14000 m. m. Imports to that amount, therefore, entail exports of no quantity. That is, if Germany is to continue efficiently in business. And if she has to pay 2 b. m. in

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Marx in Social Theory

A Critical Review: No. 3.

THIS article, last one of a series given to a critical review of the Marxian conception of history, will be in the nature of a re-statement of the conception dealing particularly with that characteristic Marxian element of it, the theory of class-struggles. As I have previously shown, the Hegelian dialectical conception of an unfolding social process, evolving by inner necessity through the conflict and resolution of its emerging contradictory elements to a goal of a higher plane of being, serves as Marx's point of departure for his materialistic interpretation of history. "The contradiction," said Hegel, "is the source of all movement and life; only in so far as it contains a contradiction can anything have movement, power and effect." In Marx's hands, this Hegelian postulate of the dialectic movement of history assumes that the contradictory or antithetical elements to which the modern world of private property has given birth, are capital and the propertyless wage-working proletariat. "Private property," says Marx, "satisfied in itself is the positive side of the antithesis. The proletariat, on the other hand, is obliged as proletariat to abolish itself, and along with it private property, its conditioned antithesis, which makes it the proletariat. It is the negative side of the antithesis, the internal source of unrest, the disintegrated and disintegrating proletariat." The political manifestation of the historical phase Antithesis is, to Marx, the class struggle, which conflict is to end in abolishing its contradictory elements, private property and proletariat (the wage system) which constitute the present social order, and in the establishment of social ownership of the means of production and production for use instead of for profit. The phase of Antithesis, i.e., class-struggle, is a protracted and continuous one, "an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight" breaking out into clearly apprehended expression, as in the English working class Chartist movement, commencing so soon as the contradictions develop, even before the rising bourgeoisie have completely overcome feudalism itself. At a certain stage of historical development, however, when feudal interests are not entirely abolished and remain as obstructions to the full development of the capitalist order, the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat will be more or less in harmony as against their common enemy until the social process has worked itself free of reactionary bonds. Thus, as I shall show in another issue of the Clarion by quotations, Marx could and did, consistently with his dialectical concept of history, commend the Communist and other working class parties in Germany, in the period around 1848, for aiding the petty bourgeoisie in its political struggles with the large capitalist and semi-feudal interests who were opposing a demand for an extension of the franchise and such other demands as the liberal movement of the time agitated for. Likewise, on the grounds of the same concept of history Marx could draft a letter, which I shall also quote, for the International Working Men's Association, congratulating Lincoln on his re-election and for the success of the industrial North over the pro-slave South in the American civil war. And another quotation will show him appealing in the name of the revolution, to England in the 1850's, as a country of democratic traditions and political institutions, to oppose by armed force the aggressive policies and ambitious designs of autocratic, semi-feudal Russia. For the time and the occasion, Marx saw the interests of the revolution and the interests of bourgeois England as one, against a common enemy. The historical insight his dialectic method gave him lifted him to a lofty perspective. His eagle vision scanned the unfolding ages of the past and pierced the veil of the future. He saw a world in process. There are Marxists today, however, whose interest in the great procession is narrowed down

to a struggle between socialist parties and labor parties, chiefly. Oh, dim-eyed, degenerate sons of a noble sire! Who can not see the wood for trees!!!

The following summary, partly taken from M. Beer's "Life and Teaching of Karl Marx," is mainly of the first two sections of the Communist Manifesto and will serve to present Marx's conception of the historical background of the modern class struggle, and the part and function of revolutionary socialist parties in it and their position towards other Proletarian Parties.

"The Communist Manifesto (Kerr ed.) contains three main groups of ideas:

(1) The history of the evolution of the middle class, its character, its positive and negative achievement—modern capitalism and the rise of the proletariat. Theoretical conceptions and conclusions—the doctrine of the class struggle and the role of the proletariat.

(2) Practical application—revolutionary action by the communists.

(3) Criticism of other socialist schools. The last section does not concern our present purpose and we need only deal with the first two sections, though a quotation or two may be taken from other sections.

(1) The middle class (the bourgeoisie) developed in the bosom of feudal society, in the medieval industrial towns, with the geographical discoveries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries its sphere of activities was extended; it revolutionized the methods of industry, agriculture and communication; it broke through the medieval economic and political bonds; it overthrew feudalism, the guilds, the little self-governing regions, absolute monarchy, and established modern industry with its accelerated and concentrated production, middle-class franchise, the national State, and, at the same time, international trade. It was the middle class which first showed what human activity can accomplish. "It has achieved greater miracles than the construction of Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, or Gothic cathedrals, it has carried out great movements than the migration of the peoples or the crusades. Although it is scarcely a century since it came to be the dominating class, the middle class has created more powerful and more gigantic forces of production than all past generations put together." (Manifesto). The subjugation of natural forces, machinery, the application of chemistry to industry and to agriculture, steamships, railways, electric telegraphs, the clearing of whole continents, making the rivers navigable, the conjuring forth of whole peoples out of the ground; that is the positive achievement of the middle class. Now for the negative: It created the proletariat, immeasurable, uncontrollable, anarchic economic conditions, periodical crises—poverty and famine in consequence of over-production and a glut of wealth, over-driving and reckless exploitation of the workers, whose labour power is bought in exchange for the minimum quantity of the necessities of life. These facts show that the forces of production are more extensive and more powerful than is demanded by the conditions under which they are operative: the economic system can produce more goods than society can use under the existing laws concerning property, i.e., the distribution and the effective demand fall short of the manufacture and the supply. The material forces of production press upon the limits imposed upon them by the laws of property, which give to capital the right of distribution. All these conditions taken together, the positive as well as the negative ones, make possible and give rise to the struggles of the workers against the middle class—and so the productive agents rise in rebellion. These struggles lead to the organization of the workers in trade unions, to the awakening of class consciousness, and, as a result, to the formation of the political-labor party. "This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a polit-

ical party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten hour bill in England was carried." (Manifesto). Comrade McDonald to the contrary.

"The movements within middle-class society, as well as in feudal and ancient society, where freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild-master and journeyman, capitalist and working man stood and stand in constant antagonism to one another, prove that the whole history of mankind since the rise of private ownership is the history of class struggles and that in these class struggles, carried on now openly, now under the surface, either new forms of society and of ownership, new economic systems arise or else end in the common destruction of the two classes. The antagonistic classes are supporters of conflicting economic interests, systems of ownership and ideals of culture. The craftsman and tradesman of the towns, the burgher, fought against the feudal lord and knight for individual property, for freedom of industry and trade, for freedom to dispose of personal property and for the national State. With the triumphal progress of the middle class private property fell into fewer and fewer hands. The proletarians are without property, they have no share in the wealth of their country; on the other hand, the production of capital becomes more and more a matter of common co-operation, and capital becomes a joint product. The proletariat can, accordingly, no longer fight for individual ownership but for the socially conducted utilization of the means of production belonging to the community and of the goods produced. The middle class has therefore created in the proletariat a social class which must have as its object to do away with the middle class system of ownership and to set up the proletarian system of common ownership.

"(2) In this struggle of the working classes the Communists are therefore the pioneers of the movement. They are at once the philosophers and the self-sacrificing champions of the proletariat awakened into class consciousness. "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement." (Manifesto.) The Communists lay stress on the common interests of the whole proletariat and of the collective movement. Their aim is the organization of the proletariat into a class, the overthrow of middle-class domination, and the conquest of political power by the proletariat. They everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time. Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries." (p. 58, Manifesto). Comrade "R" to the contrary.

The gist of Comrad R's article in last issue is that he would not support a movement of the proletarian masses which was not yet conscious of the revolutionary implications inherent in itself as a movement of the proletariat, which was not class-conscious in a supra-intellectual sense. "R's" support is for the proletariat when it has reached maturity. The proletariat, sweaty and breathless from the heat of the conflict now over, might well say to his offer, "thanks for nothing my supra-revolutionary friend, your help and support would be now a work of supererogation. We made our victory, not out of the whole cloth, as you demanded, the issues

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BETWEEN OURSELVES.

WE approach the end of another year, and once more our Party pulse-register awakens anxiety among our friends as to our state of health. Once more, we say, because fears for our wellbeing and hopes for our early demise (as the case may be) have had their innings before, and we are not unused to the difficulties of hard breathing.

At this time, however, our party friends are notably concerned as much over our seemingly heretical and allegedly death-bed utterances as over the decline of our once organized usefulness in this vale of tears, and, to avow the truth, it would appear to be as creditable as wonderful that after these many years we should still be able to extend intellectual hospitality to new ideas, or new interpretations of old ideas, even though these are conceived and set forth by folk of our own party kin for whose capacities we have high regard.

We have reference, of course, to the family quarrels on doctrine that have been an outstanding feature of these pages for some time, particularly over the past year. In what passes for our wisdom we had held that they were bound to come, and we are not so certain that they are bound to go, or that immediately.

We are very well aware hopes have been expressed that soon the philosophical battle shall end so that we may then endeavor to abandon critical examination of each other's point of view, thereupon flag the man in the street and crave a word with him. Which hope expressed simply asks compromise among ourselves on doctrine and a yielding to the insistent claims of the atmosphere of every day practice. It is very likely a poor philosophical argument to put on and quite likely nobody will altogether commend its pattern, but this much appears certain—if it fits it will be worn.

Likewise, while our writers, readers and party members have been re-casting (or re-affirming) their opinions, the query has been abroad: What is the party point of view? Here it would appear to be conceived that a party point of view can exist outside the membership of the party in question—which obviously is not so. Whereby we reach the stage wherein the established party point of view, being so seriously challenged as to set the party into discussion, becomes disputable as much through inconsistency among those in support as through strength of challenge. It appears also as if a party point of view may be conceived of as of consistent application over such a period of years as we have covered as an organisation, and also that the general principles which we hold to be identified with our work as a party should be, and should always have been unmistakable, wholly recognisable and, among ourselves, forever agreed upon in full content. And that appears reasonable, if it would only work out so; but it doesn't. It would be logical to suppose a party was fully agreed on the principle first binding its adherents together, and upon the application of that principle, else its members had not come together at all, but it is probably true to say that the binding principle in the first instance is only very generally understood and that idealism is an

attractive feature. The principles are worked out later and are lived over in time and experience. Thus we find that while we have been encouraging education among our fellows, and inviting their examination of our text-books, we have been at the same time rounding out our own education—to which we see no end. Here it is worthy of remark that whereas party controversy has ranged itself around our presentation in these columns of philosophical and political matter, charging against the trend of these a marked change from the accepted past, our controversies have not yielded recognition of any new departures, in that sense, in matter that has been presented in economics.

If further evidence were required as to differences of outlook more or less identified with our general principles, in columns other than these we find furnished by one of our party members an interpretation of recent happenings in Russia which, we venture to say, would be hard put to find any support at all among us. We have reference here to Com. Lestor's article in that connection recently published in the O. B. U. Bulletin (Winnipeg), and although we are loathe to be very critical of the efforts in any direction of anyone who has to endure the hardship of socialist propaganda on the Canadian prairie, particularly under S. P. of C. conditions, we nevertheless disclaim Lestor's expressed opinions in the article in question. It by no means follows, of course, that the matter or method of criticism maliciously launched against him in certain quarters is viewed by us as commendable. Imitation, it is said, is the sincerest form of flattery. Poor imitation is often a form of idolatry. His critics would steal from Lestor his coveted failings and turn these to their own use! This is a digression.

With so much variety of opinion among ourselves there would appear, therefore, to be good ground for our holding that the party position is in the melting-pot. Our several writers' opinions, all put together with those of the party members, comprise what point of view we have, and in this we include in proprietorship those whom circumstances of one sort or another have removed from actual personal contact with us but who are, through past association, still actively of our kind.

It scarcely needs asserting that whatever attitude we have taken in the years gone by has been suitable to the circumstances, insofar as these affected its survival. At least that is so insofar as we have been able to exist at all and to put forth effort, effort which has certainly been felt even though we really never have been at any time more than a corporal's guard as a political body. A view of our position now prompts the question as to how far party acceptance in whatever degree by the people at large is to be considered as influencing party policy, and how much that has to do with our present controversies. It is apparent that the degree of that acceptance may influence party policy, because it may become so negligible as to mean rejection, or insufficient to encourage the possibility of organised usefulness. Or do tactical considerations, apply wherein it is conceived that complete isolation has the sole merit of bringing to prominence "The Straight Issue" point of view (using "R's" phrase;—please note we by no means mean to foist this interpretation on to him), a point of view always threatened with being swamped if given into the majority custody of the practical brethren? If the masses even momentarily reject an adopted point of view, and if it is the case that the mass is never wrong, as Harrington asserts and with which opinion we agree, in what respect does that—by negatively affecting membership of the party, its financial support, its organized existence—in what respect does that affect the survival and possible usefulness of the theoretical structure of the party?

We gather that due to the attitude we adopted here in B. C. in the last Provincial election period the impression has gone abroad that we have been wilfully flirting with the labor parties, with an eye to amalgamation. Consequent upon that impression there has apparently been looked for a frank statement, an intimate revelation of the tremendous secrets of this alleged philandering. Whereas our

trouble actually was to show enough strength to be able to do some good work in the election and yet to hold ourselves free from actual alliances with other bodies, a position we were able to take through the good will of the other bodies, coupled with the high regard they held as much for the qualities of our candidates as for us as a party. We were not then and we are not now committed to the policies of any other party, yet circumstances have given rise to the "attitude," somewhat a change from the past, to be sure, yet not wholly unpleasant. The same circumstances, in the same way, will compel us to maintain that "attitude" this winter by holding joint meetings with the F. L. P. Neither they nor ourselves appear able to hold continuous meetings alone. This is perhaps reprehensible, but it is a fact.

Here it is worth noting that while "C" continues to press for recognition by us of labor parties in the political field, official recognition of their status as working class bodies has been forced from us. We are not so sure that we did not recognise them as such long ago, the while we denounced them for not functioning properly as working class bodies. Nor is that privilege now denied us.

Looking forward to the year to come the path ahead seems not very smooth for us. We have never been given to boasting of our party strength; we certainly have no cause to now. Our membership is low and likewise our finances. Our critics hold that the Clarion contains matter indigestible to the philistine, and with that we agree. And to that we would add, it was ever thus. But meanwhile the process seems to be to clear our own heads first and attend to the philistine after. There is sense enough in the intention, if the methods employed will do it. One thing we can never do, and that is to superintend an intellectual closed shop. We don't know a heretic.

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CLARION MAINTENANCE FUND.

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Note: In our last acknowledgment we set down among C.M.F. receipts Wm. Clarkson as \$7.75. This should have been Wm. Churchill \$5; Wm. Clarkson \$2.75.

Erratum: An article in last issue entitled "Fashions" should have been credited to J. H. Moore.

Marx and Labor Parties

By J. A. McDONALD

WHEN the Socialist Party of America decided to join the Lafollette parade they tried to justify their attitude by quoting Marx. The official organ of the Party—"The New Leader"—found in the Communist Manifesto the material considered essential for this purpose. Under the heading "Proletarians and Communists" Marx and Engels stated that "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."

What could be clearer than this? reasoned the S. P. as to the position of Marx on the matter? He advises us to be a section of a working-class party and, in the Lafollette movement, have we not just such a party as Marx describes? As this mode of reasoning has been adopted by the Socialist Party of Canada as well since the recent compromise with the Canadian Labor Party it is surely worth while to investigate the respective claims.

The Communist Manifesto was written in the year 1847. It was, to begin with, the theoretical and practical programme of a small secret organization known as "The Communist League." This Party was composed of a handful of refugees, or exiles, from different countries, who met in London, and decided to play a conspicuous part in shaping the working-class movement of that time.

The League had its inception in a revolutionary atmosphere. Great social changes were presaged prior to the stormy, war-mad year of 1848. As Labriola states, "The League everywhere carried an odor of revolution, both because the thing was in the air and because its instinct and method of procedure tended that way; and as long as the revolution was bursting forth effectively, it provided itself, thanks to the new doctrine of the Manifesto, with an instrument of orientation which was at the same time a weapon for combat."

The social perspective of that period was vastly different from what it is today. There was no possibility of an organized Communist Party entering the political field in opposition to the capitalist system and class. They had to make use of the material at hand. The only possible means of procedure lay in becoming the vanguard of the workers parties in all countries and so explaining "the line of march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."

To understand what Marx meant by the term—working-class party—we can see his description in the same section of the Manifesto—"The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat." Could the New Leader or the Western Clarion associate the parties led by Lafollette and MacDonald with such a program?

A short time later in his address to the Central Authority of the League in 1850 Marx after paying his respects to the bourgeois democrats who were led by the Lafollettes and MacDonalds of that day says, "The democratic demands can never satisfy the party of the proletariat. While the democratic petty bourgeoisie would like to bring the revolution to a close as soon as their demands are more or less compiled with, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, to keep it going until all the ruling and possessing classes are deprived of powers, the governmental machinery occupied by the proletariat, and the organization of the working classes of all lands is so far advanced that all rivalry and competition among themselves has ceased; until the important forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. With us it is not a matter of reforming private property but of abolishing it; not of hushing up the class an-

tagonism, but of abolishing the classes, not of ameliorating the existing society, but of establishing a new one."

Surely these quotations from the pen of Marx himself will suffice to make clear what he had in mind when he spoke of the Communists not being opposed to other working class parties, and having no interests apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. But what would Marx do in the midst of present conditions?

In the first preface to the Manifesto written by the two authors in 1872, and again in the fourth preface by Engels alone in 1888 we are told that the programme had become antiquated in some of its details despite the fact that the general principles are as correct today as ever. The details referred to include the revolutionary demands, the criticism of literature, and the remarks on the then existing political parties. These had all changed to such an extent that any reference to them now would have to be worded altogether different.

But making use of the lessons so well driven home by Marx and Engels in the Manifesto and elsewhere what must be our attitude in respect to the political parties of today? I scarcely consider it essential to review the make-up of the Independent-Progressive conglomeration led by Lafollette, as I am of the opinion that even the Socialist renegades of the S. P. of C. would not contend that this a party of the working class.

But, on the question of the British Labor Party we have abundant evidence scattered through the pages of the Clarion to the effect that our erst-while comrades consider it a clear expression of independent working class aims and interests.

Just how such a conclusion can be arrived at I am at a loss to know. One would, indeed, require an imagination as fertile as the valley of the Nile in order to picture the British Labor Party as an independent working class force in British politics which views the interests of the masses to be separate from, and opposite to those of the ruling class; and that sees in its representation in the House of Commons the means of changing "Capitalist property in the means of wealth production into socially controlled economic forces."

Ever since its inception the Labor Party has proved itself to be a prop of capitalism. Even in the period of opposition its leaders were always ready to align themselves with the bourgeoisie for the purpose of lowering the age of children leaving school so that the mills and factories could secure ample cheap labor to maintain capitalist supremacy.

Again when the Plimsol mark had to be raised on British ships so as to carry heavier cargoes and, consequently, endanger the lives of sailors, the labor leaders were at the beck and call of their masters to make good the change. When government troops were called out to quell disturbances in different departments of industry the same leaders were found voting against their own amendment censuring the government for its action.

If the attitude of the party in opposition is not sufficient to demonstrate the interests they represent then the attitude in office is even plainer still. Imagine a workers' government voting thirteen millions of dollars to increase his Majesty's air forces, and laying down five new cruisers and two destroyers for the purpose of enabling British workers to massacre the workers of other lands in order to preserve British Imperialism.

But, we are told, the support of the Labor Party comes from the workers of Britain. Granted. So does the great majority of the seven millions of votes received by the Baldwin Government, and the four millions recorded on behalf of Liberalism come from the ranks of the working class. In their ignorance of their class position the workers flock to every standard but their own. This ignorance must

be dispersed in Britain, Canada, and elsewhere before any drastic change can be effected in Social affairs.

This is precisely our function as Marxians and revolutionists. We must maintain and extend an educational programme that will assist to brush the cobwebs from the brain of labor, and make possible the day when the capitalist system of society is replaced by a social form in harmony with the needs of the world's workers. To accomplish this we require a revolutionary programme and a revolutionary party. Nothing less.

AVAST YE CRITICS.

OF course I mean "C.'s" critics. Your efforts are hopeless; you will never out-write "C." It can't be done; he is invincible in that respect. In spite of hell and high water "C" will have the last word. He reminds me of the story about the Irish cook who was having a row with her mistress. Says the lady: "Nora, you always insist on having the last word." Says Nora: "Sure and how the devil do I know when you are going to stop?" It is a cinch that if the critics don't stop the argument will go on forever, or at least until the disputants have left this vale of tears and woe.

"C" tells us that he stands "all, all alone," and I might add like "brave Horatious,"

"But constant still in mind:

Thrice thirty thousand foes before,

And the broad flood behind."

And even Horatious eventually took to the water, but I don't think there is one chance in a million that "C" will ever do so. Consequently I would suggest that his critics stop fighting with him and write on other subjects that are more instructive, and let "C" "have at it" his own way.

This will, no doubt, furnish "C" with a text for about three pages in the "Clarion," dealing with my shortcomings, fallacies, and mistakes, but I know they exist anyhow, so it does not matter and, furthermore, I don't mind being a martyr in a just and holy cause like this.

F. J. McNEY.

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Correspondence

RE THOSE TABLETS.

Editor Clarion:

It is hell to be misunderstood—laments "C"—as he lays the birch on to the posteriors of the groundlings and slant-heads, the obscurantists, romanticists and fanatics who turn up their contemptuous snouts at the pearls of wisdom which "C" has cast before them. But such is ever the reward of the dispenser of wisdom in all ages: "the dunces are all in confederacy against him."

But "C" has worse dunces to contend against; there are magic-mongers of socialist revelation, like the writer, exercising capitalism by spells and incantations, formulas and recipes culled from the medieval chap-book of Karl Marx.

What a versatile personality is "C". Now we see him as the cool intellectual philosopher; again as an experienced practitioner in the shyster lawyer's art of scoring "points"—by imputation. That is to say—that those particular doctrines of the socialist Buddha with which he disagrees, he ascribes the authorship of such to his opponents in the present controversy.

A perusal of "Our Holy Family" would lead the reader to believe that one F. C. was the author of the 32 chap. of Capital—the carver of the tablets of socialist revelation. Why not impute to me the theory of increasing misery—the doctrine of "violent overthrow" contained in the Communist Manifesto and all the rest of the antiquated ideological remains in Marxism—and by the vicarious sacrifice of a "disciple" expiate on the high altar of modern science the sins of that archaic scientist Marx. Do I believe in the divine revelations of the prophet Marx? Do I believe in the second coming of Christ? "Yes, he does," answers "C". Because, forsooth, I set down the central thesis of the Father of the Church over against a socialist Luther, I am immediately convicted by "C" as the author of that wish-we-could-forget-it 32nd Chap. of Capital. Not only am I indecently exposed to the reformist multitude as a practitioner of necromancy, disguised as a monk of the primitive church, I also stand accused as an insidious proponent of mysticism among the revolutionary proletariat. Give up the game, "C" of falling straw-men, and boldly state that Marx as a prophet was, in vaudeville parlance, a "flop." All this marching and counter-marching before the Rubicon, with sallies against the barbarians on the flanks gives the spectators the impression that a great historic event is in the making. Too much fustian! The transit has already been effected and the present controversy is of the nature of senatorial investigation—ex post facto.

Why, not be consistent with "your philosophy of it," "C"?

Veblen affirms: that the Theories of Marx must be considered as a whole. Skelton asserts: Marxism is a closely jointed creed. If there is anything revolutionary about the Marxian doctrines, it is in its social and political aspects. The economics of Marx belong to the classical school. Thousands have read the Communist Manifesto—the Civil War in France—the Eighteenth Brumaire—as against the tens who have read the first nine chapters of Capital. Yet it was in the field of political prognostication that Marx assumed the mantle of an inspired prophet, much to the discomfort of his latter day disciples, who may have scientific aptitudes. Marx's propensity to indulge in Hegelian teleology and depict the immanent laws which governed the inevitable development of capitalist society to a self-realizing goal, i. e., socialism, sorely besets the present day rationalizers of Marxism with modern science.

According to "C," the process outlined by Marx in the "Historical Tendencies of Capitalist Accumulation," is in violent contradiction to Darwinian norms of evolution. The whole chapter needs to be re-cast, avers "C," as "it is a cosmology as old as the hills," though the "little cherub sitting up aloft" may be concealed within the garb of the materialist conception of history.

Of course, F. C. is the exponent—how easy it is to pass the buck—of a cosmology which reeks of mysticism, astrology, divination; the auguries of Egyptian priests; the omens of the soothsayer. It is food for infantile minds, half-wits, morons, millennial dawns, and the lunatic fringe of revolutionary romanticists who loudly twang the class-war harp, thereby proving themselves idiots.

I agree with "C's" interpretation of the tablets of socialist revelation, that they are the blab-bunk-bokum! But alas, the "tablets" are inseparable from Marxism! No Marxism without Marx! Nothing can be and not be at the same time in the same respect! If consistency is the bane of little minds then "the millions who can never be wrong" are the repositories of broad-gauge political intellects. A little observation and reflection is sufficient proof of this assertion. Nevertheless, the "revolutionary bokum" of Marx which has "its actual hold on the minds of great masses of men, is very strong, and that it does not a little to embitter their thoughts" (vide Prof. Joseph). Science, it is said, has discounted the revolutionary myth and relegated it to the sphere of mysticism. But the blame thing won't stay put.

Says Prof. Schaffle: "Scientific criticism can only prove that the enduring realization of Socialism is impossible—it

cannot disprove the possibility of a successful attempt being made to start an experiment in it through some violent upheaval of the proletariat." That the political prognostications of Marx have not materialised goes without saying; that they have been absolutely discredited is another matter.

Should the British Labor Party through parliamentary means accomplish any substantial social re-adjustments then the arguments of the high priests of democracy will be given a new validity. As it is now, the Clynes, Thomases, et al. are assuming the role of policing the proletariat in the interests of normalcy. Their slogan is another version of the gospel-millers', "the poor ye have always with you." It may be quite scientific, if not inspirational, to the underdogs in "the land of skilful and pauper institutions."

"Boy," said old Blatchford, "run up to the forepeak and nail the Jolly Roger to the mast." F. C.

MARX IN SOCIAL THEORY

(Continued from page 3)

came to us not of our will; it was our fates pressed us into battle, ill-equipped as we were; look at our defeats, history is full of them, and would take no denial." When the Manifesto was drafted, by democratic parties were then understood working class political movements such as English Chartism, whose most revolutionary demand was a universal manhood suffrage. Says the Manifesto on pp. 56-7: "Section II. has made clear the relations of the Communists to the existing working class parties, such as the Chartists in England and the Agrarian Reformers in America. The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of the movement. In France the Communists ally themselves with Social Democrats, (*) against the conservative and radical bourgeoisie, reserving, however, the right to take up a critical position in regard to phrases and illusions traditionally handed down from the great Revolution." "(And) they never cease, for a single instant, to instill into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat." "Whatever 'R' or the rest of those who support the anti-labor position of the S. P. of C. may make of the intentions of Marx and Engels when they wrote that into the Manifesto, it means this to me, quoting myself from an article I wrote some months ago in which I held "that recognition of Labor parties does not hinge on the matter of their reformist character, but on whether they are representative of an independent movement of the working class in politics."

In another article, while in charitable mood, I suggested my Marxist critics were rusty on Marx's theory of history and offered in this series to refresh them on it. Now, however, I suggest that they never understood the materialistic dialectic of Marx, the point of departure for all of his theorizing. Let them think on this: Writing of his programme as editor of the Franco-German Year Books, Marx is remarking to the effect that it is not true, as the French and English Utopians have thought, that the treatment of political questions is beneath the dignity of socialists. Rather is it work of this kind which leads into party conflict and away from abstract theory. And, he goes on to say: "We do not then proclaim to the world in doctrinaire fashion any new principle: 'This is the truth, bow down before it!' We do not say: 'Refrain from strife, it is foolishness!' We only make clear to men for what they are really struggling, and to the consciousness of this they must come whether they will or not." That, says M. Beer in comment, is conceived in a thoroughly dialectical vein. The thinker propounds no fresh problems, brings forward no abstract dogmas, but awakens an understanding for the growth of the future out of the past, inspiring the political and social warriors with the consciousness of their own action.

"Just as our opinion of an individual is not based * A footnote in the Manifesto says: "The party then represented in parliament by Ledru-Rollin, in literature by Louis Blanc, in the daily press by the 'Reformers' The name of Social Democracy signified, with its three inventors, a section of the Democratic or Republican party more or less tinged with Socialism."

on what he thinks of himself," says Marx, "so we are not able to judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness" ("the legal, political, religious, esthetic, or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out") "must rather be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the conditions (institutional) of production." (Preface to the "Critique.")

To Marx, the materialist Hegelian, every form of society was fated by other powers than man's will. By force of economic evolution, the warrior chief in the wandering of the nations during the decay and fall of the Roman Empire, the itinerant trader and the journeyman craftsman of the same era, each, his form of society in its preordained sequence already lay in the womb of time. But Marx mitigated the fatalism in the concept, for his view was that while we could not affect the general trend of history, man could shorten and lessen the birth pangs of every social order by adding to that class-consciousness which is born of habituation, knowledge of and about things that is got by conscious observation and reflection. The lesson of history is, however, that men, taken individually or collectively, mainly learn by habituation rather than by reflection.

A few words more to "R" in respect of his belief that Marx hoped the 1848 revolutionary stirrings in Europe were the expression of the proletarian revolution, and upon which "R" does some unnecessary moralizing upon his speculations in last issue, as to whether Marx was too optimistic or, whether there had been a loss of intelligence among later generations of the working class. "R" is wrong in his belief. The Manifesto itself furnishes a flat contradiction to him. Yet he reasons upon it with such assurance and air of knowledge on the matter against me. Marx 'knew' that the 1848 revolutionary insurrections were the revolution of the liberal bourgeoisie, and refers to them as such, and moreover, threw his energies into the struggle with that consciousness and in accordance with his understanding of the dialectic of history. His view was that the issues must first be fought out with traditional feudalism before the way would be clear for the proletarian-bourgeois class struggle to reach maturity, with the maturing and final exhausting of the possibilities, in 1848 still latent, of the bourgeois order of society. Among other matters in our argument: If pacific English Chartism collapsed, the armed uprisings around the same period on the continent were also abortive. But the liberal bourgeois movement won out—later, be it noted, mainly by constitutional and other non-violent means. And the European working class have gained since—in economic well-being, in intellectual culture, in political and social status, gained a class heritage of culture as the spring-board for further advances. "Away with culture," I hear "R" say. I say, would he expect to find a modern flying machine in Neolithic pastoralism. Culture begets culture, but it takes the culture, material and immaterial, of a state of the industrial arts known as the machine technology to beget such an offspring. So working class advance has been made largely by virtue that the liberal bourgeois movement first cleared the ways of history and feudal concepts and institutional obstacles. Such is the dialectic way of history—according to Marx-Hegel. C.

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The Rise and Decline of Neo-Communism

By HAIM KANTOROVITCH

From "The Modern Quarterly"
(Continued from last issue)

THE hopes for a speedy world revolution did not materialize. The workers were dissatisfied, and they demanded certain things—above all, work—but it seems that they were not ready for the revolution. What should the revolutionary army do meanwhile? It was necessary to do something, so the order was given out from the general headquarters, "Start the revolution by all means, call out a revolution artificially, get the workers to rise in arms, even if you have to fool them a little; it is, after all, for their own good." There were great strikes and much underlying labor unrest in Italy, so the Italian party was ordered to start the revolution, but before starting the revolution it had to expel all the reformists and see that none of them held a position in a union or cooperative society. Serrati, in the name of the great majority of the party, replied:

We, living in Italy, knowing well the conditions of our country, know that to start a revolution now would be madness, and as to expelling the reformists, it would cause a split in our ranks and weaken us just at the moment when we need all the strength we can get. We cannot take away the jobs from all the non-communists because they don't agree with us on certain principles. They may be bad socialists, but they are good specialists, able and experienced men, and to put inexperienced communists in their places would ruin our co-operation, and in the unions we have not the power to do it, even if we should wish to.

The Italian party, notwithstanding Serrati's admonition, was split, the majority expelled, its strength broken.

The German Communist party knew its duties. They knew that their business was to make a revolution; besides, they were steadily reminded of it by the communist international. But the great majority of the German workers did not want such a revolution. The communists then proceeded to compel the workers, to provoke them to it. The result was the tragic and infamous March "putch." That the German workers were not ready for the revolution is now admitted by the communists themselves. Zinoviev has this to say about both uprisings in Germany:

In the year 1918-19 only a minority of the German workers followed Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. On the opposite pole, again only a minority of the German workers followed the bloodhound Noske. The main mass, the center of the German working class, vacillated. This kernel—the general mass of the working class—sought peaceful means. That "middle" mass, which in the final instance decided the course of the struggle, at that time wanted no civil war, it feared the revolution, it reckoned that in a legal way—through the trade unions, through universal suffrage, through the German socialist party—it would slowly but surely improve its condition and secure a piece of bread and work.

The Spartacists, the vanguard of the workers, were still very weak numerically in the year 1919. In the years 1918-19 the Spartacists were held in very high esteem by the workers. Many workers silently recognized the courage and great devotion of the Spartacist minority to the cause of the working class, for they intercepted with their breast the cruelest blows of the counter-revolution, and they defended unflinchingly the interests of the entire working class. But even though the Spartacists enjoyed the esteem which they deserved, nevertheless they were not followed. The kernel of the working class regarded the daring Spartacist people not without sympathy. Yet when it came to action they supported the social democrats.

In March of the year 1921 the Spartacist vanguard of the working class threw itself anew into the struggle. The Communist vanguard itself attempted to replace by means of itself the greater mass of the working class, that greater mass which at that time was under the almost unrestricted influence of the German social democracy, by whom it

was lulled to sleep with counter-revolutionary, sweet and senseless lullabies and hopes. And once more considerable sections of the German workers regarded not without sympathy the daring revolutionaries who time and again carried the blows of the counter-revolution. But once more these heroes remained without support from the greater mass of the workers. The vanguard, which rose up too early, was defeated.—(Worker, December 8, 1923. "The German Working Classes, the German Communists and the German Social Democrats.")

Of course, it was very wrong of the German workers to follow the social democrats, but what could be done? The communists should have waited until the workers would have been communistically educated, but impatience is the chief characteristic of neo-communism. They started their March Revolution, a putch, as advocated by Bakounine. The national chairman of the party, Paul Levi, had protested. He had written a brochure to show that dishonest and anti-socialist means were being used to deceive the workers. Clara Zetkin, Hoffman and others protested; later they resigned from the central committee. The third congress of the Communists pronounced the March uprising a crime, but Paul Levi was expelled, and many others went with him, and the communist tactics remained the same.

In the article that I mentioned before, Zinoviev says:

The lesson was not in vain. With the help of the Third World Congress of the Communist International, the German communist party was able to correctly gauge the mistakes of the past. The question of uprising, of the immediate struggle for power, was pushed aside in the year 1921, and without moment's hesitation a new task was set—the winning over of a majority of the workers.

They have learned their lesson, it is true, but too late. Since March, 1921, the communist movement in Germany, as well as everywhere else, has been discredited. The workers view it with distrust and look upon the organization very much as upon a band of adventurers. But one thing they have succeeded in, and that is in breaking every party in Europe.

On the eve of the third congress of the communist International (June, 1921) a new spirit began to manifest itself within the communist movement. Lenin had published his "infantile sickness, left communism," in which he bitterly criticized his followers for believing and trying to practice what he himself was preaching or endorsing. But more frank than Lenin was the chief propagandist of Communism, Karl Radek. In an article entitled "Glossen Zur Congress der Communist International," published in the German Communist magazine "Die Internationale" (September, 1921), he says:

The belief in a speedy world revolution was very widespread in our movement. . . . The second congress did not do anything to correct this false view because the red army was then victorious over Poland, and it had aroused false hopes.

What were these hopes? Radek related that even Bucharin believed in the great role that the red army would play in the world revolution. One of the delegates told Radek very clearly:

It is evident that as a result of our victory over Poland, we also shall succeed in breaking through in Germany and elsewhere and make the revolution.

So you see, the revolution was to be forced on the workers of the European countries by the red army. This was so original and so revolutionary that Bakounine himself did not dare to dream of it. But experience showed something quite different. In his "Report on the Economic World C. 21,"

Trotsky summed up these experiences in the following words:

We learned this through our own erroneous acts . . . that we are not so immediately near our final goal—the conquest of power all over the world, and the world revolution. In 1919 we said to ourselves, it is a question of months, and now we say—it is perhaps a question of years. (Bulletin of the Third Congress of the Communist International, June 27, 1921, No. 2.)

What was to be done? The tactics of the Communist International, as expressed in the theses and resolutions of the second congress, were good for "war time only," but now that the realization had come that "perhaps it was a question of years" until the world revolution could arrive, what was the communist army to do in the meanwhile? Evidently it would not do now to try and create more splits, to isolate itself from the entire working class, and ignoring the latter's struggles for his immediate demands, go on shouting, "Make the social revolution." The third congress, therefore, adopted the so-called "new tactics," the tactics of the "united front."

The united front is a thorough departure from what was known as communism. Instead of anathematizing everybody that did not agree with them and always looking for points of disagreements, the communists were told to try and find some way to again unify proletarian forces, create a united front with the same people whom they before had declared as "lackeys of the bourgeois," as the real enemies of the proletariat, etc. Moreover, the necessity for a united front was declared to be the result of a new conviction of the communist leaders, the conviction that they needed a majority of the working class in their favor in order to accomplish their aim. The Bakounist ideas that largely determined the character of the communist movement were discarded, and a return to the old social democrat viewpoint effected. There were, of course, delegates at the third congress who understood perfectly well that the united front meant the abandonment of the chief principles of communism. Thus Delegate Tetracini, of Italy (to quote only one), said:

It should not be said in the theses that we need a majority of the workers for communism, because this will be a weapon in the hands of the reformists against us, because they, the reformists, always argued that we must have a majority of the proletariat before the revolutionary fight can successfully begin.

Tetracini was right. This was always the social-democratic view, against which the communists put up their Bakounist view of a "revolution by a minority."

More important still, is the new view on the reform activities of the workers that the third congress adopted. Until the third congress every reform activity was declared to be detrimental to the class struggle, and any one who was willing to fight for reforms within the capitalist society was an "agent of the capitalist class," but the third congress now declared: "It is the duty of the communist parties to endeavor by means of their influence in the trade unions, by increased pressure on other parties connected with the working masses, to bring about the struggle for the achievement of the immediate needs of the proletariat . . . every objection to the establishment of such partial demands, every accusation of reformism in connection with the partial struggles, is an outcome of the same incapacity to grasp the live issues of revolutionary action which manifested itself in the opposition of some communist-groups to participa-

(Continued on page 8)

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF NEO-COMMUNISM (Continued from page 7)

tion in trade union activities and parliamentary action." (Theses and resolution, third congress of the Communist International, New York, 1921, pp. 52-55.) Every social democrat, of course, will agree with this paragraph; he will only claim that it was copied from the social democratic platforms and resolutions, and especially from their polemical literature against the communist romanticism. That the communists repudiated this view only one year before is plainly shown in Zinoviev's letter to the I. W. W., where he states that:

The question of whether or not Communists participate in elections is of secondary importance; some Communist organisations do, others do not, but those who do act on the political field do so only for propaganda. (Quoted by Postgate Bolshevik Theory, p. 234.)

And Bucharin plainly said at the Second Congress that:

The Antiparlamentarism of the I. W. W., which instinctively hates opportunistic parliamentarism and distrusts it, is more sympathetic.

The Comintern even declared officially that:

The Parliament can by no means be the arena for struggles for reforms for communists—for the amelioration of the conditions of the working class.

This is why the Comintern, while refusing to enroll such men as Kautsky, Bauer, Hillquit, MacDonald and others, made every effort to get within its ranks all the various anarchistic and anarcho-syndicalist elements. But the third congress, at last, repudiated its former tactics, expelled the anarchistic K. A. P. D. and rebuked its more ardent followers for their "Revolutionary Romanticism." Karl Radek interpreted the new tactics in the following words:

It is clear that in 1918-1919 we fought with other methods. Then we strove with all our means for splits, we placed the dictatorship of the proletariat in the foreground, while now, without changing our general demands, we place concrete transitory demands in the foreground. The communist parties have now the task of beginning the struggle for the conquest of the majority of the proletariat. This struggle can obviously not consist in repeating, parrot-like, the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Our duty is to take part in all struggles of the proletariat, to explain, step by step, the meaning of each struggle, according to the worker's own experience; to extend the battle front more and more; to increase speed toward the final goal.

That this is the correct standpoint of social democracy will be admitted by every one who is but superficially acquainted with the social democratic view on reforms and partial struggles. The third congress has really abandoned their neo-communism and returned to social democratic tactics—but they lack the courage to acknowledge it.

The new tactics were of too "sharp a turn" for the communist movement. Most of the national sections revolted; in some parties splits occurred. The Comintern, therefore, hastened to give a new definition of the new tactics. "We want a united front with all the other factions of the labor movement, so that we can break them up from within."

Evidently none of the non-communist parties could agree to such a united front. A united front is only conceivable when all the parties to it have good intentions, but it is absolutely impossible when the party that asks for a united front simultaneously declares that its aim is to unite in order to move quickly and destroy its partners. Thus the Comintern defeated its own aim. The new tactics of the united front have not only failed of their purpose, but they have also failed to strengthen the communist movement. From the reports of the fourth congress of the Communist International, we learn that every party in the Communist International is torn by internal strife, that the masses who followed the communists are drifting from their pivot. Moreover, the iron discipline of the Communist International did not succeed in holding the national sections within the bonds of "true revolutionary com-

munist." On the one hand there have developed left wings in all parties, who more and more tend to become anarchistic, and on the other hand, most of the communist parties are communist in name only, but reformists and opportunists in practice.

The situation in the International Communist movement from the third to the fourth congress is described by Zinoviev in the following manner:

It is comparatively easy to adopt a resolution; but it is a much harder task when it comes to practical work; even the attempt to carry out an international membership week failed because our parties are still heterogenous, because our parties are in many cases not yet communistic. During the past year we have attempted several international campaigns. Among these the campaign for the united front was of special importance, and it must be frankly stated that this campaign did not proceed without much hindrance. (Fourth report of Congress of the Communist International, English Translation, pp. 15-16.)

The situations in different parties are not more cheerful. "The French party had failed to apply the tactics of the Communist International." "There are in France today 'three tendencies and two minor tendencies' that fight each other. The Italian communist party (that is, what is left of the Italian party) 'has often acted against the policy of the executive in the Italian question.'" In Czecho-Slovakia the opportunist majority expelled the revolutionary minority. In Norway the communist party is only communist in name. (*) It is high time," says Zinoviev, "to take action in Norway so that the demands of the Communist International may be complied with." The executive of the Communist International had also "certain differences of opinion with the Polish party" on the agrarian question and the question of nationalities. "The Balkan Federation is functioning poorly." "In England . . . we are growing very slowly; in no other country, perhaps, does the communist movement make such slow progress." "In America we have . . . a communist party with violent factional strife. Therefore, America is one of our most difficult problems." "In Hungary . . . the situation is pitiful." (See Zinoviev's Report to Fourth Congress. In Abridged Report (English) pp. 16-19-20, 22-23-25-26.) In general it can be said that the fourth congress showed that the "new tactic" was not effective in arresting the decline of the communist movement; on the contrary, it added theoretical confusion to the mood of despair that had set in on the movement. On account of its overvaluation in the revolutionary possibilities of the movement, the new tactic created instead of isolated revolutionary sects, isolated opportunist sects, trying desperately, but without success, to unite with the same "traitors and counter-revolutionists" whom they condemned only two years before.

* The Norwegian party has been split since then.
(The End.)

TREATIES AND "BOES"

(Continued from page 2)
reparations, in addition, total exports would have to be 16000 m. m. On the basis of 1913 exports, reckoning only a nominal half, Britain would take 2100 m.m. (in 1921 she took £20m.) France 1185 m. m., Russia 1320; Austria 1650 m. m., U. S. 1060 m. m. Most of these nations would "yiew with alarm" any such tendency even, toward such a capacity.

We can take the measure of the sagacity that claims, "Germany has the goods," "that she can pay if she likes," "that she is too lazy to work," etc. If Germany could work, the only visible movement in countries outside would be the transport of corpses—for German glue, maybe. Germany "won't work," for the same reason that the individual "won't work." Because the means of life in the hands and control of financial capital prevent the circulation of consumption until, and unless, they are first available for profit.

But, if "reparations" are so fanciful, why the loan? Where do the profits come in? If Germany is to deliver 2 m. t. reparation coal per month to France, that just equals 1913 exports (net). If Germany is to come to pre-war efficiency she must im-

port nearly 60 m. t. To do this, in addition to the loss of purchasing power, by reparation deliveries, involves exports far in excess of 1913 volume. Such a market would be good for business. Such a volume would raise the mass of profits enormously, but it would also depress the rate of profit to fractions, and the standard of life to meagrest need. In 1911 Carnegie reckoned an immigrant at \$2500, i.e., his labor produced values to that amount. Assuming \$8600 as an average wage, surplus production was four times the necessary. Technology must have maintained the rates at least. What the actual rate of exploitation may be, I know not. But that the ratio is high is undoubted. Percentages of 10, 20, 30 and over, are not uncommon. The 3 and 5 percentages shown are but flicker of the "dust" on the "water." The market price of shares at twice and three times par tell the same tale. The miner's election (1924) manifesto gives the capitalisation of the mines at £130 m. (approx.), and from 1914 to '23 inclusive profits and royalties of £259 m. Imperial tobacco, from '19 to '24 shows profits of £24 m. General and Keen, (coal and iron) '18 to '24 £4 m. Brunner, Mond, £6 m. (same time). Bleachess (textiles) £3½ m. J. P. Coats, £12¼ m. Courtald's (silk) £10 m. nearly. Lever (soap) £6¼ m. All '19 to '24. Showing that the organic composition of capital is high, and with it the rate of exploitation. Showing also that the very things that Germany is required to excel in, coal and iron, chemicals and (textiles probably), are also highly organic. Consequently, if the individual in the production of necessities produces magnitudes that make life a weary struggle with penury in like terms the production of interest on bonds demands a magnitude of commerce in the completion of international fixed capital, whose gathering will be frescoed with wool. R.

(To be continued)

TABOOS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

(Continued from page 1)

devotees, but the lure of sex itself, masquerading as a scientific interest. This is as evident in the denunciation of what for convenience may be called Freudism as in its acceptance. Everywhere, up on both sides, the note of passion is discernible under the coolest parades of discussion. The assailants of the study exhibit (in trying to conceal it) the same sex-sensitiveness as the devotees themselves.

When, therefore, we reflect that none of these studies can exclude this inflammable material from its treatment, and that, for any comprehensive sociology, sex urges and activities and the institutions they help to mould and sustain, are of prime importance, we are driven to smile at the naivete of a social science boasting reason as its sole arbiter. It is not merely that instinctive emotions and valuations prevail in the social arts, but that they deflect the balance of reason in the social sciences.—(Socialist Review.)

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