

Fascists or Communists as the case might be--in its ambition to monopolize all the good jobs, is ready to exterminate the other group.

True, the interests of the workers, as the poorest class, may eventually compel them to practice solidarity against all their exploiters, while the oligarchical tendencies within each exploiting or potentially exploiting group make for continuous dissension among them. But in this respect, the various quarrelling clans of power - hungry intellectuals are no different from those of all the other exploiting classes, past or present, whether capitalists or land-holders.

Do I have to dwell upon such "inaccuracies" - to put it mildly - as the one where P.M. says that "the intellectuals have no economic functions" (p.34). It is simply amazing how anybody can say such a thing in the present phase of capitalism, when the capitalist, in most cases, has become a pure parasite, fulfilling merely the "function" of owning and consuming, while the intellectuals are in charge of all the aspects of economic and technical management, political administration and cultural leadership of the entire capitalist system!

II - FASCISM AND BOLSHEVISM

The aspirations and appetites of the intellectual "outs" can find their expression and satisfaction in various "ideologies", in "proletarian" Marxism, in the aristocratic Paretism of the Italian Fascists, or in the race gospel of the Nazis. Just as the capitalist bourgeoisie under different circumstances can embrace the Voltairian iconoclasm of the French Republic, or the medieval emperor-god worship of a militarist semi-absolutism, Japanese style.

The fascists in power are not just flunkys of the capitalists, as P.M. seems to believe in touching harmony with Trotsky ("The Social Structure of the Soviet State"). They are their major partners; they are swallowing up an ever growing share of the nation's wealth; and while in some countries they are now greatly favoring their munition magnates, their taxes and assessments are impoverishing the bourgeoisie as a whole in order to feed an enormous bureaucratic machine. That machine does not stand "above the classes" (#-see bottom of next page); it is both a "protector" of the rich and their blackmailing parasite at the same time; largely comparable to the Praetorians of the Roman Empire, who, while permitting

the property-owners to exist, actually were the masters of the country and lived at the expense of all the other classes of the population. Of, if another example is still necessary, there is the Japanese officers' caste, now in possession of Manchuria, which not only rules the country politically and robs it by taxation, as do the Fascists in Italy, but has also taken over the economic management and exploitation of most of the country's resources - not for the Japanese millionaires on the Island Empire, but for the army, that is, for itself. They are certainly not the flunkys of the Chinese-Manchu capitalists, nor of the Japanese multimillionaires whose most prominent representatives they are in the habit of "bumping off" from time to time...

Undoubtedly the fascist state bureaucracy also rules over other groups of intellectuals. But what of it? The large feudals also ruled over the smaller nobles, just as the financial sharks do over the smaller capitalists, and the higher clergy over their minor brethren. Under the oligarchical principle inherent to all systems of domination, a minority within each ruling class always gets the best morsels with the additional seasoning of the greatest display of power.

P.M. asserts that fascism "would never have come to power" if it were at all possible that the fascists could turn on the capitalists. Has he never heard of mercenaries of various sorts, Mamelukes, Praetorians, Mamelukes, Condottieri, of all times and all countries, who would become the masters of those who hired them? Do I have to remind him of the fact that there is an openly anti-capitalist wing within the Italian fascist party which recommends "the Road to Moscow"; i.e. the expropriation of the capitalists; and that in the opinion of those familiar with the situation, Mussolini, if driven to a corner, will not hesitate to turn Bolshevik, if by so doing he can save the rule of his party - the party of the most determined and energetic

(#) The Fascists of Italy have repeatedly forced the capitalists to increase wages, to shorten hours and even to take on numbers of unemployed workers. They did it at moments when they thought it necessary by some "anti-capitalist" gesture to win the allegiance of the workers, or, as in the case of the unemployed, for the purpose of reducing their fiscal expenses, preferring, as they did, to use the Treasury for the needs of the bureaucracy. If P.M. says that such a thing is "objectively not possible" and that "nothing of the sort has so far happened", he simply chooses to deny facts which in their time were generally reported in the newspapers.

section of the intelligentsia. (#)

If a large part of the intellectuals in various countries, instead of turning socialist or communist, joins the fascist ranks, it does so largely for the same reason for which many workers likewise don the black or brown shirt. No doubt, the influence of reactionary ideology plays a certain part in the process. But it is largely their impatience, their desire for a short cut to power, that is responsible for the success of the new gospel. Many of the fascist intellectuals would join the Communist movement, if they saw that it had any chances, or at least intentions of winning immediately. For by now it has become obvious to most observers that the leading Communists of the non-fascist countries have ceased to be revolutionaries at all; that ever since 1923 they have become ordinary Russian patriots abroad, actually opposed to any revolutionary steps that might disturb the international status quo in which the U.S.S.R. has been interested for many years. Like the socialists of pre-war times the Communists - meaning of course the official leadership - have become a party of anti-capitalist protest and not of anti-capitalist revolt.

Over and over again P.M. repeats the Stalinist thesis that Fascism is just the expression of the needs of monopoly capital "in order to maintain the capitalist system at all." A glance at what actually happened - and why it happened - in Italy and Germany, the two main fascist countries, would show that it simply is not so. It was not the necessity of saving the capitalist system - either from the proletarian menace or from its internal weakness - that brought about fascism in Italy. The first menace had been taken care of by the socialists themselves, when the jitters experienced by the bourgeoisie during the near-revolution of 1920 induced the capitalists to enter that alliance with Mussolini's bands which they later regretted when it was too late. For whatever the fascists gave them by cowing the workers, they took from the capitalists by their various direct or indirect exactions for the maintenance of the government machine. Italian capitalism and its profits would have survived without Mussolini as well.

Nor does Germany serve as a confirmation of the official communist thesis which P.M. so readily accepts. This is not the place for repeating all the circum-

(#) There is no longer any secret about Mussolini's original intention of becoming Italy's Lenin, and that he chose his other road to power only because the breach between him and his former comrades could no longer be bridged.

stances which hoisted Hitler into power. Only dogmatic blindness, judging according to set formulas, could assert that the Weimar Republic, or a combination of Weimarism with Bruening's or Schleicher's semi-constitutionalism, would not have just as well done the job of saving German capitalism.

In either case - and this likewise includes a number of smaller states of the more or less undeveloped Balkan or Latin-American type - it was not the existence of capitalism that was at stake. In many of the countries with fascist, military-fascist or near-fascist dictatorships there is practically no modern capitalism at all, and even no big landed property either; practically all the exploitation being done in what one could call the old Chinese method described by Wittfogel: taxation of the small property holders for the sake of a parasitic bureaucratic and military apparatus. It is for the possession of the soft jobs in the civil service and in the officers' caste that struggles are waged there between the various groups of "outs" and "ins". In the industrially more developed countries fascist tendencies are the result of the cooperation between specific groups of capitalists who see in fascism a greater guarantee for the increase of their profits, and certain ruined and therefore adventurous sections of the new middle classes. In these countries the existence of capitalism itself is not affected, whether these machinations are successful or not.

The Stalinists' insistence upon the thesis about fascism-and-monopoly-capitalism is obvious enough. For years they have been repeating that the Trotskyists are the "advance-guard of counter-revolutionary intervention" (no joking); until two years ago they have made hundreds of thousands of innocents believe that the Socialists are "social-fascists", or, as Stalin put it "twin-brothers of fascism." So this was just another "gag" in their inexhaustible arsenal of abuse that is always calculated to hide the real issues. Heinz Neumann, a leading German Communist who, after the catastrophe of 1933, for awhile engaged in independent thinking, finally began to mutter something about the dictatorship of the "Lumpenproletariat": he actually meant the declassé intellectuals and semi-intellectuals. He was severely called down and punished by his masters in Moscow; for if the German semi-intellectual "down-and-outers" were able to seize power and to hold it as major partners of the German capitalists, then some people might become suspicious that it was a similar group of declassé intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who seized all the power in Russia and has been holding it until now

under the guise of a "proletarian dictatorship".

P.M. docilely accepts the Bolshevik thesis as to fascist identity with finance capital. And as if to make up for this suspicious harmony of opinions, he supplements it with another theory according to which the house built by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin is nothing but a form of capitalism, subject to the same laws of motion as any other capitalist system. He consistently speaks of "State Capitalism", a term that many writers, including the undersigned as well, have loosely applied to the Russian system.

Now to be theoretically exact, it is not admissible to apply the old terminology to the new Russian reality. An economic system whose means of production are socialized, or "bureaucratized" which is the same, no longer falls under the category of capitalism. It is "capitalism" only inasmuch as "capitalism" is accepted as identical with "exploitation". But the two terms are not identical. Capitalism, of course, necessarily involves exploitation; but there were forms of exploitation which could not be called capitalistic. (#)

According to the best Marxist authorities which P.M. certainly recognizes, capitalism no longer exists where there is only one owner; and the Russian State, that is, the bureaucracy, is only one sole firm, so to speak. At the end of his book Das Akkumulations-und Zusammenbruchs-Gesetz, the well-known Marxist Professor Henryk Grossmann analyzes the idea whether capitalism could eventually assume the form of a "General-Kartell", i.e., of a One-Big-Trust system. He denies this possibility and declares that, once matters have gotten to that point, capitalism will not exist any longer and its place will have been taken "either by a plain system of domination (Grossmann uses the expression "offenes Herrschaftsverhältnis" which it is difficult to translate literally - M.W.) as in the Middle Ages (which may mean only the relation of the feudal lord to his serfs) or a socialist commonwealth (sozialistische Gemeinwirtschaft)".

As a good old Socialist, with sympathies for the U.S. S.R., Grossmann was reluctant to dwell in greater de-

(#) The immense majority of readers still identifies the concept of socialism with the absence of exploitation - an assumption which is altogether wrong. It was precisely for the purpose of indicating the exploiting essence of Soviet Russia's economic system that in my previous writings I used the term of State Capitalism. But the term "unequalitarian socialism" would be more appropriate.

tail upon this alternative. He apparently felt that he was on dangerous ground for, as far as the present writer knows from personal conversation with him, the professor refuses to commit himself as to the character of the Russian social system and calls it vaguely a "proletarian state". Had he disregarded these personal sympathies, he would have had to state that what followed upon the elimination of private capitalism in Russia was a combination of both "socialism" and "Herrschaftsverhältnis".

For, paradoxical as it may sound to some readers, exploitation is just as much possible under socialism as under any other previous social system. If one were to indulge in prophesying one could make a guess that the coming form of human exploitation, as foreshadowed by Russia's system of government ownership and inequality of incomes, will simply be called socialism, and that in the ears of the underdog this word will assume the same connotation of master-and-slave relationship as feudalism and capitalism.

Theoretically speaking, the essence of socialism has always been merely government ownership of the means of production, even if that substance is sometimes presented more attractively as an "association of free and equal producers," a term that is as vague as so many other traditional socialist slogans. In other words, socialism means primarily a change in the form of production, or in the ownership of the means of production. The question of distribution has always been considered as a secondary matter, after the first and most important task of socialization had been carried out. Practically all socialist theorists take it for granted that immediately after the socialist revolution, during "the first phase of communism", to use an expression of Marx, there would be no equality of incomes. (#) It is only under "the higher phase of communism", after God knows how many generations or centuries, that the principle of "from

(#) There are a number of passages in Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program dealing with the distribution during "the first phase of communism". These passages have been generally interpreted by all writers to the effect that during the period in question there would be inequality of compensation. Among these writers are included such independent and dissimilar thinkers as Georges Sorel, in his "Decomposition du Marxisme" and Sidney Hook in his "Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx", neither of whom could be accused of being an apologist of the Stalin system whose official Marx-scholars use the same passages for justifying the inequalities of the Russian regime.

each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" would be applied. (It is hard to assume that a genius of the sharp intelligence of a Marx should not have seen thru the haziness, not to say deceitfulness, of this formula. For who is to determine a man's "needs"? None other apparently than the bureaucrats, the same men who in present-day Russia determine that a high class manager "needs" or, let us say, "deserves", several thousand rubles a month, while for an ordinary laborer or other plain worker, one hundred or one hundred fifty a month is sufficient.)

P.M. uses the old liturgical phrase of the "contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations" for his wishful contention that "capitalism...in all its manifestations must go under." Well, if he means that the private capitalist system is doomed, I have no quarrel with his statement; but the "state capitalism" Russian model which he includes among these manifestations, is no "capitalism" such as envisaged by Marxist criticism. It is a system of planned economy to which the Marxist concepts are not applicable; and its disappearance, or more correctly, its evolution towards a more equalitarian (and libertarian) form of socialism will be subject to altogether different laws, as to which there are no indications in the writings of the Teacher.

Another example of P.M.'s "wishful thinking" is his contention that a system, such as exists in Russia, would be impossible "in industrial countries". Aside from the fact that present day Russia is already a highly industrialized country, it would lead too far afield to follow his entire argumentation. Suffice it to quote his conclusion which establishes the fallacy of his reasoning. He says that "in highly developed capitalist countries...any revolution is of necessity a workers' revolution (because) ...state capitalism.. likewise is incapable of improving their situation" (my emphasis - M.N.)

The very opposite is true. Even that one per cent of planned economy, or state capitalism, or paternalism, if you wish, which was instituted by the New Dealers, has undoubtedly improved the situation of large sections of the working class and won the sympathies of the masses for President Roosevelt. Only sectarianism can assert that if some unforeseen event should give the power to a combination of, let us say, left-wing New Dealers, Socialists and pink Communists, they would not open the closed plants and so increase the country's productivity as to have enough for raising substantially the general standard of living of the

masses. No doubt they would maintain a sharp division between the wages paid to the worker and the salaries of the managers and directors; but the sudden improvement of the lower levels would certainly add to the stability of the new "state capitalist" system.

That system will not last forever, of course. It will certainly be modified by further struggles of the workers intent upon obtaining a larger share in the distribution of the national income. But to say that the establishment of such a system is altogether "impossible" in the western countries, or that it could be only a passing adventure, is about as wise as the predictions about the impending fall of the Soviet regime which he have heard for the last eighteen years.

III - "COUNCILS" AND SOVIETS

There is a certain very definite purpose behind all this frantic and contradictory pleading. It is not merely the desire to defend the purity and the correctness of the Marxian scheme of things with its two-dimensional pattern of "capitalist" and "proletarian", that knew of no intellectuals as the possible inheritors of capitalist exploitation, and whose non-descript "petty-bourgeoisie" was bound to become a part of the "proletariat."

P.M. is the representative of a new revolutionary current that is out to regenerate Marxism after its defilement at the hands of the Socialists and the Communists. That new current - its followers call themselves "Council Communists" - also hopes to win over the masses still under the sway of the Teacher's unworthy disciples. It sees in the Workers' Councils the instrument for destroying the capitalist system and for establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Now, the Council Communists realize that a criticism of the intelligentsia as the ruling class of the coming period of a socialized form of economy, is directed not only against the Socialists and the Communists, but against their own ambitions for power as well.

They will, of course, violently contest this considering that they do not constitute a party; that they include practically no intellectuals, and that their conception of the proletarian revolution is not that of the Bolshevik party dictatorship but the truly Marxist idea of a real dictatorship of the working masses.

Well, we have heard these things before. The modern French post-War syndicalists - those who remained revolutionists and have joined neither the S.P. nor the C.P. - have now adopted the slogan of "All power to the Trade Unions", as opposed to Communist party dictatorship. Those who can add two and two together have repeatedly pointed out to them that at bottom this was only another form of bolshevism; for, considering the intellectual level of the great majority of the working masses, "All power to the Trade Unions" could mean only "All Power to the Trade Union Bureaucrats"; in other words, the dictatorship of the educated upstart ex-workers at the head of the trade unions, such as the Hendersons, the Jouhaux, the Wm. Greens, the Legiens or Tomskeys, all of whom in time became first class politicians and even cabinet members, differing in nothing from the "regular" intellectuals. A social system whose economic and political center were to be the French General Federation of Labor, would be in everything, except the terminology, identical with that established by the declassé intellectuals and ex-workers of the Russian Communist Party. The same criticism has likewise been applied to the Spanish anarchists of the present day, who are gradually, tho still shamefacedly, coming around to the idea of a revolutionary government by their own organization.

And how about the "Councils"? In the April, 1936 issue of the Council Correspondence there was an article about the Workers' Councils which certainly is revealing. "In the process of revolution" - the author says on page 27 - the old State power will be destroyed, and the organs that take its place, the workers' councils, for the time being, will certainly have important political functions still to repress the remnants of capitalist power. Their political function of governing, however, will be gradually turned into nothing but the economic function of managing the collective process of production of goods for the needs of society".

Were the Russian Soviets - and "Soviet" means nothing else but "Council" - not holding out the same promise of "withering away" of the State? Who, pray, will carry out these "important political functions to repress the remnants of capitalist power"? The masses? Or will it not be rather a special, well-armed body of truly proletarian Cheka-men, under the guidance of well-educated ex-workers, the most ardent militants of the "Council" idea? Where is the guarantee that these men, once entrusted with "important political functions to repress the remnants of capitalist power" will not repress the workers as well, by deceiving and

disarming them gradually, the way it was done by the just as ardent and honest Bolsheviki Soviet militants? And will the sum total of all these ardent and honest council militants not constitute a party, whether they adopt that name or not? And will that party not be interested in establishing a privileged bureaucracy living on the fat of the land just as was done by the Russian bureaucracy? Do the Council Communists mean to say that their pure Marxist principles will prevent them from doing so? Do they actually believe that any class or group that has become a privileged stratum - and a victorious group, by seizing the government machine, usually develops into a privileged class - will abide by its pre-victory "principles" which were opposed to exploitation?

P.M.'s reply is very simple. "The means of production" he says "in the hands of the producer - by which the technically necessary centralism is not precluded but rendered imperative - that is communism." No - that is not "communism"; that is just sheer phrasemongering. The "necessary centralism" actually does away with "the means of production in the hands of the producers", i.e., of the factory councils, if I correctly get P.M.'s meaning. That "necessary centralism" is nothing but our good old Bolsheviki state bureaucracy which under P.M.'s "real" proletarian dictatorship will simply be disguised under another name. Moreover, are not the "factory councils" themselves - composed as they are of the most energetic and the most intelligent and educated individuals - merely the basic embryonal unit of the new "proletarian" aristocracy that invariably rises above the masses, a process that is as old and as melancholy as the history of all human mass struggles since the beginning of time?

In an effort to show how, according to the conception of the Council Communists, the whole social fabric is practically in the hands of the workers themselves, P.M. writes that the "enterprise is the starting point of their (the workers') insurrection, the basis of their dictatorship and efforts at social reorganization". And what about the millions of the unemployed - sometimes one-third of the population - who will have to be taken care of? Before they get "the means of production in their hands" and can "start" anything at their "enterprise", it is the State, that is the bureaucracy, that will have to tackle the problem of reorganizing the industries, of opening the idle factories and of distributing work to the unemployed. And will the State bureaucracy, once it had acquired such an enormous power, voluntarily give up the source of that power?

There is a very suspicious passage on page 33 of P.M. article. He says there quite correctly that "without economic equality there is no communist society". (I take it that under "economic equality" he means plainly equal pay for a day's (#) work whether it be dishwashing or teaching astronomy). Then he adds: "This equality must not only be actually possible; it must also be capable of driving forward the productive forces of society, and until that time communism is quite out of the question."

What does this mean? Does P.M. intend to say that if in a highly industrial country like Germany, England or the United States the workers were to rise at present, seize the industries and install "their own" dictatorship in the form of Workers' Councils, the question might arise that equality of incomes would not be quite practicable immediately? Not that I believe that such full equality could be established immediately "on the morrow after the revolution" as the usual phrase goes. But if that complete economic equality of incomes cannot be established immediately, what will be the difference, except in personnel, between the "real" dictatorship of the proletariat, as advocated by the Council Communists, and the system of exploitation now established by the Russian Communists?

There is another suspicious sentence on the very same page. P.M. says that "with the setting aside of the class relations (P.M. apparently means the abolition of classes, M.N.) there vanish also the sharp distinctions in the evaluation of the various labor functions." If these words have any significance, then they can mean only one thing: that there will be different income levels, but that these differences will not be very "sharp". Now, who is to determine what is or what is not a "sharp distinction?" It will be apparently the Central Office of the Workers' Councils or whatever other name the Government will assume. And will that Government, that is, the politico-technical office-holders, not be interested in establishing the same distinctions that would be introduced by any other privileged body?

P.M. apparently felt that the educational rift - which is a class rift - separating intellectual and manual workers, would militate against the establishment of complete economic equality right after the inauguration of the "proletarian dictatorship". So he

(#) Taking it for granted that in harmful occupations such as working in mines, sewers, etc., the day will be shorter than in other industries or professions.

disposes of this difficulty by simply declaring that there are no "sharp distinctions", in fact, that there are practically no distinctions at all. He actually has the temerity to say that "the mass of the workers have become skilled workers"; (#) And that "the demands placed on that element of the population performing intellectual functions are no higher than those placed on the mass of the workers." Assertions which are on par with the old demagogical flatteries of Kautsky, Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht about the intellectual superiority of the workers over the bourgeoisie. The material kernel behind these flatteries being merely the perfectly justified conviction of the socialist leaders that they were just as able to run the country as their political opponents from the capitalist camp. In the same way P.M. identifies an infinitesimal minority of labor aristocrats - the potential intellectuals and future bosses - with the "working class" at large. It is the old, old story of the leaders demanding power not for themselves but for the masses which are so educated, so skilled, so intelligent that they will be able to run the government and the industries all by themselves.

Having thus somewhat vaguely indicated that there may be some distinctions in income levels even after the establishment of the "proletarian dictatorship", P.M. feels impelled to allay somewhat the misgivings as to the truly equalitarian character of his revolution. "If communism", he says, "is bound up with the presence of equality, then it is also beyond doubt that this equality will be actualized, for the social forces of production are impelling to communism and this impulsion is the historically determining factor". In other words, don't worry; some day the "social forces of production" will convince the Council Communists - or should I say Workers' Councils? - in charge of the new system, that the time has come to establish real equality of incomes. The "social forces of production" will work psychological miracles; the ex-workers in charge of the economic and political administration will forget their "present human egoism"; their egoism will apparently "find satisfaction in work in common" (p.32), and the bureaucratic wolf will voluntarily accept the same share of the national wealth as the proletarian sheep. We have read such stories once in the millennial visions

(#) It would be a waste of time to engage in the refutation of such an assertion, for the operations of the great majority of modern industrial workers can be learned in a few days or weeks; and if this is "skilled work", then a peanut peddler is a businessman and an ambulant scissors-grinder a manufacturer.

of the Hebrew prophets, and also in some of the utopian dreams of Charles Fourier. But this time they are being served with a sauce of "scientific socialism"....

Do I have to discuss the statement (p.34) that "there remains for the workers nothing but to take charge themselves of the social organization"? Where are the workers who are able to "take charge of the social organization"? Even if all workers were "class-conscious" they could not tackle the job because ninety-nine out of a hundred understand absolutely nothing of the complicated business of running a highly involved social system of the machine age.

No, it is obviously not the "workers" whom P.M. means by this sentence; it is, I repeat, that infinitesimal minority of workers, such as P.M. and his friends, who have acquired a certain amount of education and who have become intellectuals in fact - even if they are still compelled to work at the bench. As soon as the rising of the workers shakes the foundations of capitalism, these "workers" will naturally leave their benches and do what every organized revolutionary leadership is bound to do: establish their own dictatorship as was done by the Bolsheviks, and like them, enjoy the advantages of their victory.

Do I have to insist upon the obvious Marxian truth that the thoughts and the intentions of this new revolutionary leadership will not be determined by logical or theoretical considerations, but by the role they will play in the "social production process" - after they will have arrived at the top of the social system and become a new privileged group jointly with the other intellectual workers who will be under their orders?

P.M. is altogether amazing when he says that "the necessarily spontaneous character of the insurrections....restricts the participation in them of the intellectuals not yet proletarianized." Not yet proletarianized! As if the trouble were merely with the bourgeois intellectuals, and not with the tragical antagonism between the interests of the underdog and its leadership as such. In fact, it is not the bourgeois intellectuals, but those who are "proletarianized", the declasses, the down-and-outers, those who are often poorer than the workers themselves, who as a rule become the leaders of the workers, and who, so far, have always betrayed them. (It is understood that this refers to the groups as such without any reflections upon the personal sincerity of particular individuals.)

Having thus left the door open for the "proletarianized" intellectuals, P.M. says on page 35 that "the present-day working class is quite in a position, without and if necessary, against the intellectuals, to make their revolution and to build up the new society." In other words, he wants a revolutionary movement headed by self-taught workers or ex-workers like himself, with the "proletarian" intellectuals playing a subordinate role. All the previous experience with the self-taught workers who make up the trade union bureaucracy of the whole world, and constitute a substantial part - if not the majority - of Russia's new bourgeoisie or nobility, has left him unimpressed.

With a simplicity that is touching he declares that "the whole problem of the intellectuals is one of subordinate importance." And that "any difficulties which may be occasioned by the intellectuals (after the revolution) may be dealt with in the framework of the proletarian dictatorship." In other words, if the Marxist college-boys of the C.P. will interfere with the Marxist ex-workers of the C.C., our real proletarian G.P.U. will show them what's what.

IV. THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

My critic repeatedly mentioned the name of my friend and teacher Wacław Machajski, thus making it appear as though my opinions were in every respect identical with those of the author of the Intellectual Worker. Now, as P.M.'s presentation of some of our views was not quite beyond reproach, I am quoting a few passages from my book Rebels and Renegades which in condensed form give the gist of Machajski's opinions:

"In Machajski's conception, the socialist theories of the nineteenth century expressed the interests of the intellectual workers - not those of the working class, in which he placed the manual workers only. The mental workers, he argued, were a rising privileged class, fighting for a place in the sun against the old privileged classes, the landed owners and capitalists. Higher education was their specific "capital" - the source of their actual or potential higher incomes. Political democracy (or a revolutionary dictatorship, according to circumstances) was the first, and State Capitalism (used here for the reasons explained in the third footnote of Chapter II of this article) the next, step to their domination. To achieve these objects they needed the support of the manual workers. The confidence of the latter they won by helping them

in their early struggles for better wages and by dangling before them the socialist ideal of equality. That socialist Beyond was meant only as propaganda, as a sort of proletarian religion - not as an object of struggle for the living generation. The socialism which the radical intelligentsia really aspired to was nothing but State Capitalism (#); a system of government ownership, under which private capitalists would have yielded place to office-holders, managers, engineers; the coming form of exploitation in which the intellectual workers receiving higher salaries than these paid for manual labor, would constitute the new and only ruling class, absorbing into their ranks the former capitalists and the self-taught ex-workers.

"As a champion of the manual workers, particularly the unskilled and the unemployed, he advocated revolutionary mass struggle for higher wages and government provision for the unemployed, as the only issues of actual interest to the working class. The leadership of that struggle he visualized in the hands of an international secret organization of revolutionists. Engaged exclusively in unifying, and in extending the scope of, the spontaneous uprisings of the manual workers and of the unemployed, this organization "would dictate the law to the governments", using the weapon of "world-wide strikes". In other words, it would force the privileged classes and their governments to provide either work or support for the unemployed and to grant sweeping increases in the wages of the manual workers. Elimination of private capitalist profits, automatic transition to State Capitalism, and finally equalization of the incomes of the manual workers with those of the new rulers would be the progressive steps of the revolutionary mass struggle. Equality of income would secure to all an equal opportunity for higher education and thus would do away with all class divisions. The function of government having ceased to be the privilege of an educated minority, the State as an instrument of oppression and exploitation would disappear. Marx considered that exploitation ceased with the disappearance of the private capitalists. In Machajski's opinion the Marxian scheme of eliminating capitalists but maintaining higher rewards for mental than for manual labor would 'substitute for the capitalists a class of hereditary soft-handed intellectuals who would perpetuate the slavery of the manual workers and of their offspring'".

(#) The words State Capitalism were used here for the reasons explained in the third footnote of Chapter II of this article.

Now, much as I agree with many of Machajski's ideas I think he is not consistent when he holds that his international secret organization of professional revolutionists, acting, so to speak, as the energizers of the spontaneous mass revolts, would actually usher in that classless millenium in which all exploitation would be eliminated once for all. Supposing that a revolutionary situation were actually to place his organization in the forefront of the class struggle, enabling it to bring any existing government to its knees and to force it into making sweeping economic concessions to the masses - what would then prevent that organization from seizing power? What would prevent it from consolidating its rule in the same manner as was done by the Bolsheviks, and from perpetuating the same economic inequalities which are now so apparent in Soviet Russia? Its original equalitarian principles? But principles are like promises. They hold good before the seizure of power, and are always disregarded after they have served their purpose.

In other words, the objection which I am rising against Machajski's conception of the "final" revolution is the same that holds with regard to any other revolutionary school, whether its followers call themselves Bolsheviks, anarchists, syndicalists or Council Communists. If they really adopt revolutionary measures for the overthrow of the existing system they can do nothing else but what was done by the Bolsheviks: seize power, organize a revolutionary government even though they may give it another name, defend it against the reactionaries at first, and then consolidate it against the masses as well in the interest of a better paid new aristocracy of office-holders, technicians, and other members of the educated layers of society.

P.M. concludes that my position practically amounts to the old, old popular dictum "Thus it had been, thus it is, and thus it will remain"; in other words, that - as the saying has it - I consign the poor to statistics and to eternal slavery. My critic's indignation at my "skepticism" would be more convincing if in his mind the idea of working class emancipation were not identical with his own group's accession to power.

As a matter of fact, my "skepticism" is the very opposite of submission to fate. On the contrary, it implies permanent revolt against any status quo: capitalist exploitation of today, as well as socialist inequality of tomorrow. It is directed both against the property-owning oppressors of today and the job-holding

"liberators" of tomorrow; against the middle class of yesterday which used the workers in its struggle against feudal tyranny; and against the new middle class of today which uses them against the capitalist bourgeoisie; against the college-trained apologists of the coming form of slavery, and against their competitors from the ranks of the self-educated ex-workers.

The basic tenets of my "skepticism" could be summarized as follows:

1. The composition of the labor movements involves an inevitable partnership of mass and leadership; a partnership which, though to a certain extent beneficial to the masses, invariably results in a tragic conflict between the interests of the elite and those of the following.

2. These leading elites, being more educated than the masses, are essentially aristocratic in character, no matter whether they profess to be democratic, anarchist, socialist-communist, syndicalist or fascist.

3. Like all aristocratic groups, these elites are inevitably Machiavellian or amoral in their policies; keeping up their own "morale" with all sorts of philosophical justifications (rationalizations) and resorting constantly to a conscious or unconscious deception of the masses. All their considerations recede behind the one central purpose of obtaining and maintaining all power and its resulting benefits for their specific revolutionary or counter-revolutionary group.

4. Sooner or later all of these movements evolve certain religious features, the analogy with the material growth and spiritual decay of many of the great religions being particularly striking.

5. Just as in its struggles of a century ago, the bourgeoisie aroused the masses against the remnants of feudalism and in the process unwittingly contributed to an improvement of the position of the workers of the industrial era, the malcontent intellectuals, by organizing the workers against the capitalists are likewise indirectly contributing to a further elevation of the social status of the downtrodden.

6. There is an ever recurring competition for power between the various groups of the educated malcontents in charge of these mass movements. That competition for power, with the help, and at the expense of the uneducated masses engaged in physical work, is at the same time a guaranty against stagnation and the per-

petuation of the status quo.

7. After the elimination of the capitalist owners, there follows inevitably a period of internecine contests between various groups of intellectuals and educated ex-workers for predominance within the government machine - the Trotsky-Stalin complex - caused by the oligarchical tendencies prevailing within each ruling class. The urge to win forces the rebellious rivals to appeal to the dissatisfaction of the manual workers and to assist them in obtaining a larger share of the national income. This process is accompanied by the rise of the most educated and the most intelligent elements among the manual workers themselves, joining either of the contending groups or making their own bid for power.

8. These three- or four-cornered struggles for power, joined in occasionally by disinterested idealists championing the cause of the underdog, constitute the elements of the permanent revolution which will unceasingly work for the continuous rise in the material and educational standard of the working masses - even though aristocratic tendencies making for oligarchical rule and the more privileged status of those wielding the most efficient combination of knowledge, intelligence and ruthlessness, may persist in one form or another.

9. For those who are not out for power or personal advantage, and whose sentiments are with the horny-handed underdog, there is only one thing to do: To give up the idea that there could be any specific organization of "really proletarian" rebels, which is more "honest" or more "consistent" than all the other parties or groups. For every organization wants only one thing: power; that is privilege, for itself and for its more active members. Those who are eager for a good fight may further the cause of the workers by joining any revolutionary or trade union organization which in one way or another is opposed to the existing system. Each of these organizations, in its endeavor to win the workers, is bound to help them in obtaining higher wages, shorter hours and jobs or relief for the unemployed. Within any of these organizations a disinterested working class rebel can do his useful work by pushing forward any working class struggle for better conditions; and by denouncing the leaders if for one reason or another they may be suspected of restraining the masses or of selling them out. Any large-scale wage struggle, any large-scale campaign of the unemployed for jobs, is fraught with the potentialities of a general uprising of the masses, of the expropriation of the capitalists, and of the establishment of a planned socialist econo-

my, with its further struggles for more and always more, continuously reducing the disparities between the material and educational level of the bureaucratic masters and that of the slaves of physical labor.

This is my conception of the Permanent Revolution. It is permanent, and it knows of no millenium in which full harmony has been achieved once for all eternity.

The final revolution may be left to those who dream merely of their own elevation over the masses.

- Max Nomad -

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THE PARTY AND THE WORKING CLASS.

The first traces of a new labor movement are just becoming visible. The old movement is organized in parties. The belief in parties is the main reason for the impotence of the working class; therefore we avoid forming a new party - not because we are too few, but because a party is an organization that aims to lead and control the working class.

In opposition to this, we maintain the working class can rise to victory only when it independently attacks its problems and decides its own fate. The workers should not unquestioningly accept the slogans of others, nor of our own groups, but must think, act and decide for themselves. This conception is in sharp contradiction to the tradition of the party as the most important means of educating the proletariat. Therefore many, though repudiating the Socialist and Communist parties, resist and oppose us. This is partly due to their traditional concepts; after viewing the class struggle as a struggle of parties, it becomes difficult to consider it as purely the struggle of the working class, as a class struggle. But partly this concept is based on the idea that the party nevertheless plays an essential and important part in the struggle of the proletariat. Let us investigate this latter idea more closely.

Essentially, the party is a grouping according to views, conceptions; the classes are groupings according to economic interests. Class membership is determined by one's part in the process of production; party membership is the joining of persons who agree in their conceptions of the social problems. Formerly it was thought this contradiction would disappear in the class party, the "workers' party". During the rise of the Social-Democracy, it seemed that it would gradually embrace the whole working class, partly as members, partly as supporters. Because Marxian theory declared that similar interests beget similar viewpoints and aims, the contradiction between party and class was expected gradually to disappear. History proved otherwise. The Social-Democracy remained a minority, other working class groups organized against it, sections split away from it, and its own character changed. Its own program was revised or reinterpreted.

The evolution of society does not proceed along a smooth even line, but in conflicts and contradictions.

With the intensification of the workers' struggle, the might of the enemy also increases and besets the workers with renewed doubts and fears as to which road is the best. And every doubt brings on splits, contradictions, and fractional battles within the labor movement. It is futile to bewail these conflicts and splits as harmful in dividing and weakening the working class. The working class is not weak because it is split up - it is split up because it is weak. Because the enemy is powerful and the old methods of warfare prove unavailing, the working class must seek new methods. Its task will not become clear as the result of enlightenment from above, it must discover it thru hard work, thru thought and conflict of opinions. It must find its own way; therefore the internal struggles. It must relinquish old ideas and illusions and adopt new ones, and because this is difficult, therefore the magnitude and severity of the splits.

Nor can we delude ourselves into believing that this period of party and ideological strife is only temporary and will make way to renewed harmony. True, in the course of the class struggle there are occasions when all forces unite on a great achievable objective and the revolution is carried on with the might of a united working class. But after that, as after every victory, come the differences on the question: what next? And even if the working class is victorious, it is always confronted by the most difficult task of subduing the enemy further, reorganizing production, creating new order. It is impossible that all workers, all strata and groups, with their oft-times still diverse interests should, at this stage, agree on all matters and be ready for united rapid and decisive further action. They will find the true course only after the sharpest controversies and conflicts and only thus will achieve clarity.

If, in this situation, persons with the same fundamental conceptions unite for the discussion of practical steps and seek clarification thru discussions, and propagandize their conclusions, such groups might be called parties, but they would be parties in an entirely different sense from those of today. Action, the actual struggle, is the task of the working masses themselves, in their entirety, in their natural groupings as factory and millhands, or other natural productive groups, because history and economy have placed them in the position where they must and they only can fight the working class struggle. It would be insane if the supporters of one party were to go on strike while those of another continue to work. But both tendencies will defend their position on strike or no strike in the factory meetings, thus af-

fording an opportunity to arrive at a well-founded decision. The struggle is so great, the enemy so powerful that only the masses as a whole can achieve a victory - the result of the material and moral power of action, unity and enthusiasm, but also the result of the mental force of thought, of clarity. In this lies the great importance of such parties or groups based on opinions, that they bring clarity in their conflicts, discussions and propaganda. They are the organs of the self-enlightenment of the working class by means of which the workers find their way to freedom.

Naturally such parties are not static and unchangeable. Every new situation, every new problem will find minds diverging and uniting in new groups with new programs. They have a fluctuating character and constantly readjust themselves to new situations.

Compared to such groups, the present workers' parties have an entirely different character, for they have a different objective; they want to seize power for themselves. They aim not at being an aid to the working class in its struggle for emancipation, but to rule it themselves and proclaim that constitutes the emancipation of the proletariat. The Social Democracy which rose in the era of parliamentarism conceives of this rule as a parliamentary government. The Communist Party carries the idea of party rule thru to its furthest extreme in the party dictatorship.

Such parties, in distinction to the groups described above, must be rigid structures with clear lines of demarcation thru membership card, statutes, party discipline and admission and expulsion procedures. For they are instruments of power, fight for power, bridle their members by force and constantly seek to extend the scope of their power. It is not their task to develop the initiative of the workers; rather do they aim at training loyal and unquestioning members of their faith. While the working class in its struggle for power and victory needs unlimited intellectual freedom, the party rule must suppress all opinions except its own. In "democratic" parties, the suppression is veiled; in the dictatorship parties, it is open, brutal suppression.

Many workers already realize that the rule of the Socialist or Communist party will be but the concealed form of the rule of a bourgeois class in which the exploitation and suppression of the working class remains. Instead of these parties, they urge the formation of a "revolutionary party" that will really aim at the rule of the workers and the realization of

communism. Not a party in the new sense of those described above, but a party as those of today, that fights for power as the vanguard of the class, as the organization of conscious, revolutionary minority that seizes power in order to use it for the emancipation of the class.

We claim there is an internal contradiction in the term: "revolutionary party". Such a party cannot be revolutionary. It is no more revolutionary than the creators of the third Reich. When we speak of revolution, we naturally speak of the proletarian revolution, the seizure of power by the working class itself.

The "revolutionary party" is based on the idea that the working class needs a group of leaders who vanquish the bourgeoisie for the workers and to construct a new government - (note that the working class is not yet considered fit to reorganize and regulate production). But is not this as it should be? As the working class does not yet seem capable of revolution, is it not necessary that the revolutionary vanguard, the party, make the revolution for it? And is this not true as long as the masses willingly endure capitalism?

Against this, we raise the question: what forces can such a party raise for the revolution? How is it able to defeat the capitalist class? Only if the masses stand behind it. Only if the masses rise and thru mass attacks, mass struggle, and mass strikes, overthrow the old regime. Without the action of the masses, there can be no revolution.

Two things can follow. The masses remain in action, they do not go home and leave the government to the new party. They organize their power in factory and workshop, prepare for the further conflict to the complete defeat of capital; thru the workers' councils they establish a firm union to take over the complete direction of all society - in other words, they prove they are not as incapable of revolution as it seemed. Of necessity, then, conflicts will arise with the party which itself wants to take over power and which sees only disorder and anarchy in the self-action of the working class. Possibly the workers will develop their movement and sweep out the party. Or, the party, with the help of bourgeois elements defeats the workers. In either case, the party is an obstacle to the revolution, because it wants to be more than a means of propaganda and enlightenment; because it feels itself called upon to lead and rule as a party.

On the other hand the masses may follow the party faith, and leave to it the further direction of affairs. They follow the slogans from above, have confidence in the new government (as in Germany in 1918) that is to realize communism and go back home and to work. Immediately the bourgeoisie exerts its whole class power the roots of which are unbroken; its financial forces, its great intellectual resources, and its economic power in factories and great enterprises. Against this the government party is too weak. Only through moderation, concessions and yielding can it maintain itself. The excuse is given then, that more can not be secured at the moment, that it is insanity for the workers to try to force impossible demands. Thus the party, deprived of class power becomes the instrument for maintaining bourgeois power.

We stated before that the term "revolutionary party" was contradictory in the proletarian sense. We can state it otherwise: In the term "revolutionary Party" "revolutionary" always means a bourgeois revolution. Always, when the masses overthrow a government and then allow a new party to take power we have a bourgeois revolution - the substitution of a ruling caste by a new ruling caste. It was so in Paris in 1830 when the finance bourgeoisie supplanted the landed proprietors, in 1848 when the industrial bourgeoisie supplanted the financiers, and in 1870 the combined petty and large bourgeoisie took over the reins.

In the Russian revolution the party bureaucracy came to power as the ruling caste. But in Western Europe and America the bourgeoisie is much more powerfully entrenched in plants and banks, so that a party bureaucracy cannot push them aside. The bourgeoisie in these countries can be vanquished only by repeated and united action of the masses in which they seize the mills and factories and build up their councils.

Those who speak of "revolutionary parties" draw incomplete, limited conclusions from history. When the Socialist and Communist parties became organs of bourgeois rule for the perpetuation of exploitation, these well meaning people merely concluded that they would have to do better. They cannot realize that the failure of these parties is due to the fundamental conflict between the self emancipation of the working class through its own power and the pacifying of the revolution through a new sympathetic ruling clique. They think they are the revolutionary vanguard because they see the masses indifferent and inactive. But the masses are inactive only because they cannot yet comprehend the course of the struggle and the unity of class interests, although they instinctively sense the great power of the enemy and the enormity of their task. Once condition force them into action they will attack the task of self organization and the conquest of the economic power of capital.

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