



THE PROLETARIAN



THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Communism as a system of society means the common ownership of property in the means of wealth production. It applies to any stage of society in which such property is collectively owned by a social group.

A slightly different conclusion is drawn from the question, "What constitutes communism?" Primitive society is communistic—the means of production, hunting grounds, rivers, and at the early stages of domestication of animals, the herds, are owned in common. Even the Owenite and other colonies that have been so numerous in America, could be called communist, but neither primitive society nor the co-operative colonies could be called socialist societies.

Socialism, as a system of society, presupposes social production, the use of gigantic and complicated machinery which is owned by society as a whole, instead of by small groups, as in the previous illustrations.

We have today social production, but ownership of the necessary means and implements is in the hands of the few. Those who own the means of wealth production at all times own the products. Consequently, capitalism presents a contradiction—on the one hand, social production; on the other, private, or class, ownership of the means of production.

This contradiction brings about the necessity of ownership by all, which we call socialism, and makes that form of society inevitable if social progress is to continue.

Socialism can also be explained in another aspect as the science of society. It is the gathering of data offered by history and gotten from observation of existing peoples. An analysis of such data and the formulation of social laws, viz., historical materialism, the class struggle, and the law of value. Past and present society is then reexamined, comparison is made and the truth of these laws proven.

Again, socialism is defined as the theoretical expression of the best interests of the proletariat in the class struggle of present society.

All of these definitions are correct. Indeed, it seems as though at least three aspects should be stated in answer to the query, "What is Socialism?"

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During the debate in the Prussia State Legislature regarding compensation to the Hohenzollern family, the "Yellow" Socialist deputies maintained that no compensation for property seized by the State should be made but that a moderate yearly allowance should be paid.

* * * *

A new defense for imperialism in general, and the policy of the United States in Hayti and Santo Domingo in particular was furnished in a speech by Reverend Gray, Sec'y. for Latin America in the Department of Missions of the Episcopal Church. Said the holy father, in apology for the White Terror in those black republics: "Perhaps we should resort to that fundamental political aphorism which sums up the theory responsible for every step forward that the human race has made, which epitomizes that principle from which law and order have originated: '*Might makes right till right is ready.*' Tho it sounds like Nietzsche, it is really quite the opposite, and in the present case, I am prepared to affirm that *our might makes our right* to protect our canal and to protect our people until our neighbors are ready to do so."

There are now 60 days forced labor for every native in British East Africa.

The Act decreeing it was not issued by the Bolshevik Trotsky, but by His Britannic Majesty's Government, and it is called The Native Authority Amendment Ordinance, 1920.

* * * *

A British correspondent in writing on tendencies of the time has this to say: "More and more, consciously or unconsciously, the average citizen is coming to look upon the House of Commons as a mere 'talking shop.' * * * Men everywhere, and by various methods according to their political bias, are seeking to express, unconstitutionally, the will for which constitutional expression is denied. * * * Beneath the surface vast territories of social change are slipping away from the control of Parliament. * * * Again and again, even against the advice of their leaders, bodies of workers in essential industries have rejected the proposals of the government because they distrusted its motives, and rely more and more upon their own power to effect reforms. Instances could be multiplied of this gradual landslide of the initiative in social reform from parliament to the people. The general effect, however, is a widespread sense of impending social change."

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A Salvation Army appeal in a campaign for Home Service funds—"What breeds Bolshevism? Your money will stop it!"

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A reader informs us that in passing through the lobby of the Chicago Public Library recently he noticed a bulletin board bearing the legend, "What our government wants us to know"—and there was nothing on it.

ATTENTION

Due to the changing of all street numbers in the city of Detroit, our address after January 1st will be 550 MICHIGAN AVENUE. Do not fail to use this new number in order to avoid delay in delivery of mail to this office.

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“Left Wing” Communism

AN INFANTILE DISORDER

By Nikolai Lenin

Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions?

The German “Left” consider the reply to this question to be decidedly in the negative so far as they are concerned. According to their opinion, mere declamations and angry ejaculations (as done by K. Honer in a particularly “solid” and stupid manner) against “reactionary” and “counter-revolutionary” Trade Unions are sufficient to prove that it is not only useless but also not permissible for revolutionaries and Communists to work in the yellow, social-chauvinist, temporising and conservative organizations of the type of the Legien Unions. But, however strongly the German “Left” may be convinced of the revolutionary nature of such tactics, these are in reality fundamentally wrong, and contain nothing but empty phrases.

In order to explain this, I shall begin with our own experience, in so far as it coincides with the general scheme of the present article, the aim of which is to apply to Western Europe everything that is of general significance in the history and the present tactics of Bolshevism.

The relation between leaders, party, class, masses, and at the same time the relation of the proletarian dictatorship and its Party to the Trade Unions, present themselves to us in the following concrete form. The dictatorship of the proletariat is carried out by the proletariat organised in Soviets, which is led by the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which, according to the data of the last party Conference, in April, 1920, has 611,000 members. The number of members varied greatly both before and after the October Revolution, and was considerably less even in 1918 and 1919. We are afraid of too wide a growth of the Party, as place-seekers and adventurers, who deserve only to be shot, do their utmost to get into the ruling Party. The last time we opened wide the doors of the Party for workmen and peasants only was in the days (winter, 1919) when Yudenitch was a few versts from Petrograd, and Denikin was in Orel (about 350 versts from Moscow); that is, when the Soviet Republic was in mortal danger, and when the adventurers, place-seekers, charlatans and unreliable persons generally could in no way rely upon making a profitable career (in fact could sooner expect the gallows and torture) by joining the Communists. The Party, which convenes annual Conferences (the last on the basis of one delegate for each 1,000 members), is directed by a Central Committee of 19, elected at the Conference; while the current work in Moscow has to be done by still smaller boards, viz., the so-called “Orgbureau (Organising Bureau) and “Politbureau” (Political Bureau), which are elected at the plenary sessions of the Central Committee, five members of the C. C. for each Bureau. This, then, looks like a real “oligarchy.” Not a single important political or organizing question is decided by any State institution in our Republic without the guiding instructions of the C. C. of the Party.

In carrying on its work, the Party rests directly on the Trade Unions, which, at present, according to the data of the last Conference (April, 1920), comprise over 4,000,000 members, who are formally non-party. In reality, all the controlling bodies of by far the greater number of unions, and primarily, of course, of the All-Russian Centre or Bureau (A. R. C. T. U. All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions) consists of Communists, who carry out all the directions of the Party. Thus is obtained, on the whole, a formally non-Communist, flexible, comparatively extensive and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely connected with the class and the masses, and by means of which, under the guidance of the Party, class dictatorship is realised. Without the closest connection with the Trade Unions, without their hearty support and self-sacrificing work, not only in economic but also in military organization, it would have been, of course, impossible to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a half years, or even for two and a half months.

It is clear that, in practice, this closest connection means very complicated and varied work in the form of propaganda, agitation, conferences—held often and at the right time, not only with the leading but also with the generally influential Trade Union workers; it also means a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain, though quite a small, number of adherents, whom they teach various counter-revolutionary tricks, such as lending moral support to the cause of (bourgeois) democracy, preaching the “independence” of Trade Unions (independence of the proletarian State!) and even sabotage of proletarian discipline, etc., etc.

The connection with the “masses” through Trade Unions we admit to be insufficient. Practice in the course of the revolution has given rise to non-party workers’ and peasants’ conferences, and we endeavor by every means to support, develop, and extend such institutions in order to maintain a close contact with the disposition and state of mind of the masses, to respond to their inquiries, to push forward the best of their workers to take positions in State institutions, etc., etc. In one of the last decrees concerning the transformation of the People’s Commissariat for State Control into the “Workmen’s and Peasants’ Inspection,” non-party Conferences of this kind are given the right to elect members to the State Control for various sorts of State inspections.

Then, of course, all the work of the Party is done through the Soviets which unite the laboring masses irrespective of the difference of their trade or profession. The County (Uyezd) Congresses of Soviets are a democratic institution such as has never yet been seen in the most advanced bourgeois republics. Through these Congresses, whose proceedings are followed by the Party with very careful attention, as well as through the constant delegation of class-conscious workmen to occupy various positions in the countryside, the city fulfills its function of leading the peasantry. Thus is carried out the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the systematic struggle against the rich, exploiting, and speculating peasantry.

Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian State considered from “above,” from the point of view of practice in realization of the dictatorship. It is hoped that the reader will understand why, to a Russian Bolshevik well acquainted with this mechanism and having watched its growth out of small underground circles during twenty-five years, all talk of “from above” or “from below,” “the dictatorship of leaders” “or the dictatorship of the masses” cannot but appear as childish nonsense. It is something like discussing whether the left leg or the right arm is more useful to man.

Not less laughable and childishly nonsensical appears to us the important, learned and horribly revolutionary disquisitions of the German “Left” as to why Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary Trade Unions; why it is permissible to refuse such work; why it is necessary to leave the craft unions and to create in their stead quite new and quite pure “workmen’s unions” invented by exceedingly nice (and, for the most part, probably very youthful) Communists, etc., etc.

Capitalism inevitably leaves, as an inheritance to Socialism, on the one hand, old professional and craft differences created among the workers in the course of centuries; and on the other, Trade Unions, which only, very slowly and in the course of years, can and will develop into broader industrial rather than craft organizations (embracing whole industries and not merely crafts, trades and professions). These industrial unions will, in their turn, lead to the abolition of division of labor between people, to the education, training and preparation of workers, who will be able to do *everything*. Communism is moving in this direction; it must move and will arrive at that goal but only after a great many years. To attempt in practice today, to precipitate development of this characteristic of a thoroughly developed, stable and completely matured Communism would be like trying to teach a four-year-old child higher mathematics.

We can and must begin to build up Socialism, not with the fantastic human material created by our imagination, but out of the material left to us by capitalism. This, no doubt, is very "difficult," but every other way of tackling the problem is not serious enough to even discuss.

Trade Unions marked a gigantic step forward of the working class at the beginning of capitalist development, as a transition from the disintegration and helplessness of the workers to the beginnings of class organizations. When the proletarian revolutionary party (which does not deserve the name until it learns to connect leaders-class-masses into one single indissoluble whole), when this last, *highest*, form of proletarian class-organization began to grow up, the Trade Unions unavoidably revealed some reactionary traits, a certain craft limitation, a certain tendency to non-political action, a certain conservatism, etc., etc. But the development of the proletariat did not and could not, anywhere in the world, proceed by any other road than that of Trade Unions, with their mutual activity with the working-class party. The seizing of political power by the proletariat, as a class, is a gigantic step forward; and it is incumbent upon the party to educate the Trade Unions in a new manner, distinct from the old one, to guide them, not forgetting meanwhile that they remain and will remain for a long time a necessary "school of Communism," a preparatory school for the training of the proletariat to realize its dictatorship, an indispensable union of the workers for the permanent transference of the management of the country's economic life into their hands as a class (and not to single trades), to be given later into the hands of all the laboring masses.

A certain conservatism of the Trade Unions, in the sense mentioned, is unavoidable under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not to understand this means completely to fail to understand the fundamental conditions of the transition from capitalism to Socialism. To fear this reactionary tendency, to try to avoid it, to jump over it, is as foolish as it can possibly be; it indicates lack of confidence in the role of the proletarian vanguard to train, educate and enlighten, to infuse with new life, the most backward groups and masses of the working-class and the peasantry. On the other hand, to postpone the realization of the proletarian dictatorship until such a time as there is not left a single professionally narrow-minded workman, until all are quite free from craft and Trade Union prejudices, would be a still greater mistake. For a Communist, with a correct understanding of his own ends, the art of politics lies in correctly calculating the conditions and the moment when the proletarian vanguard can take over power successfully. He must decide when, after this assumption of power, that vanguard will be able to obtain adequate support from sufficiently inclusive strata of the working-class and non-proletarian laboring masses, and when it will be able to maintain, consolidate and extend its supremacy, educating, training and attracting ever widening circles of the laboring masses.

In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionary spirit has revealed, and was unquestionably bound to reveal, itself in the Trade Unions much more strongly than in our country. Our Mensheviks had (and in a very few Trade Unions still have) the support of these organizations, just because of their craft narrow-mindedness, professional selfishness, and opportunism. In the West the Mensheviks have acquired a much firmer footing in the Trade Unions. There a much wider stratum of labor aristocracy—those professional, narrow-minded, selfish, brutal, jealous, petit bourgeois elements—has cropped up, imperialistically inclined, and bribed and corrupted by imperialists. That this is so needs no proof. The struggle against Gompers, Jouhaux, Henderson, Meerheim, Legien and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult than the fight with our Mensheviks, who represent a thoroughly homogeneous social and political type. This struggle must be mercilessly conducted until, as was done in our case, all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism have been completely exposed and thrown out of the unions. It is impossible to conquer political power, and the conquest should not even be attempted until this struggle has reached a certain stage. This certain stage must vary in different countries and different circumstances. Only clear-minded, experienced and well-informed political leaders are able to estimate it correctly. In Russia, incidentally, the measure of success in this struggle was gauged by the election to the Constituent Assembly in November, 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of October 25, 1917. In these elections the Mensheviks were totally defeated, having obtained 0.7 million votes (1.4 millions if the vote of Trans-Caucasia be added) as against 9 million votes obtained by the Bolsheviks.*

We carry on the struggle against the labor aristocracy in the name of the working masses, in order to gain them over to our side; and we do battle against the opportunists and

social-chauvinists leaders in order to achieve the same object. To forget this most elementary and self-evident truth would be stupid. But the German "Left" Communists commit just this stupidity when, because of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary heads of the Trade Unions, they jump, by some inexplicable mental process, to the conclusion that it is necessary to abandon these organizations altogether! They refuse to work in them! They invent new *invented* working-men's unions! This is an unpardonable blunder, and one by which the Communists render the greatest service to the bourgeoisie. Our Mensheviks, like all opportunists, social-chauvinist Kautskian leaders of Trade Unions, are nothing more nor less than the "agents of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement" (as we always express it), or "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class," according to the excellent and highly expressive summary of the followers of Daniel DeLeon in America. Not to work within the reactionary Trade Unions means to leave the insufficiently-developed or backward working masses to the influence of reactionary leaders, agents of the bourgeoisie, labor aristocrats—"bourgeoisified workers." (See Engels' letter to Marx in 1852, concerning British workers).

It is just this absurd "theory" of non-participation by Communists in reactionary Trade Unions that demonstrates most clearly how light-mindedly these "Left" Communists regard the question of influence over the "masses," how they contradict their own outcries about the "masses." In order to be able to help the "masses" and to win their sympathy, confidence, and support, it is necessary to brave all difficulties, attacks, insults, cavils and persecutions by the leaders (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are, in most cases, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), and to work by every possible means wherever the masses are to be found. Great sacrifices must be made, the greatest hindrances must be overcome, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, stubbornly, insistently, and patiently, in all those institutions, societies, and associations, however reactionary, where proletarians or semi-proletarians gather together. As for Trade Unions and Co-operatives (this applies, at least sometimes, to the latter), they are just the organizations where the mass is to be found. In Great Britain, according to data given in the Swedish paper, *Folkets Dagblad Politiken*, of March 10, 1919, the Trade Union membership from the end of 1917 to the end of 1918 rose from 5.5 millions to 6.6 millions—i. e., an increase of 19%. Towards the end of 1919, this number reached 7.5 millions. I have not at hand the corresponding data about France and Germany, but the facts testifying to the rapid growth in membership of the Trade Unions in these countries are quite incontestable and are generally known.

These facts speak most clearly, and are confirmed by thousands of other indications, of the growth of class-consciousness, and of the passion for organization, which exists especially amongst the proletarian masses, in the "rank and file," amongst the backward elements. Millions of workers in England, France and Germany who were not at all organized heretofore have, for the first time, entered the most elementary, most simple and most easily accessible form of organization—for those still imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices—namely, the Trade Unions. And the revolutionary but unwise "Left" Communists stand by, crying "The mass, the mass!" and refuse to work with the Trade Unions; refuse on the pretext of their "conservatism," and contrive new, spick and span "Workers' Unions." Guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices, guiltless of craft feeling and narrow professionalism! These Workers' Unions, they claim, will be (will be!) all-embracing, and for participation in them the only (only!) requirement is "the acceptance of the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat." (See the previous quotation!)

A greater lack of sense and more harm to the revolution than this attitude of the "Left" revolutionaries cannot be imagined. Why, if we in Russia, after two and a half years of incredible victories over the Russian bourgeoisie and the Entente, had demanded that entrance into the Trade Unions must be conditional upon the "acceptance of the dictatorship," we should have committed a stupid act, impaired our influence over the masses, and helped the Mensheviks. For the whole of the Communist problem is to be able to *convince* the backward, to work in their *midst*, and not to set up a *barrier* between us and them, a barrier of artificial childishly "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that Messrs. Gompers, Jouhaux, Henderson, Legien, etc., are very grateful to such "Left" revolutionaries who, like the German "Opposition-in-principle" Party (Heaven preserve us from such "principle") or like revolutionaries in the American "Industrial Workers of the World," preached the necessity of quitting reactionary Trade

Unions and of refusing to work in them. Undoubtedly the leaders of opportunism will have recourse to all the tricks of bourgeois diplomacy, will appeal to the help of bourgeois governments, to priests, police, courts, in order to prevent Communists from entering the Trade Unions, by all and every means to put them out, to make their work inside these organizations as unpleasant as possible, to insult, hound and persecute them. It is necessary to be able to withstand all this, to go the whole length of any sacrifice, if need be, to resort to strategy and adroitness, illegal proceedings, reticence and subterfuge, to anything in order to penetrate into the Trade Unions, remain in them, and carry on Communist work inside them, at any cost. Under Czarism until 1905 we had no "legal possibilities," but when Zubatov, the secret service agent, organized Black Hundred workers' meetings and workmen's societies for the purpose of ferreting out revolutionaries and fighting them, we sent members of our party into these meetings and societies. (I personally remember one such comrade, Babushkine, an eminent Petrograd workman, who was shot by the Czar's generals in 1906). They put us in touch with the masses, acquired much skill in conducting propaganda, and succeeded in wresting the workers from under the influence of Zubatov's agents. Of course, in Western Europe, which is soaked through and through with inveterate legalists, constitutionalists, bourgeois-democratic prejudices, it is more difficult to carry on such work; but it can and should be carried on, and carried on systematically.

The Executive Committee of the Third International should, in my opinion, directly condemn the policy of non-participation in reactionary Trade Unions; and they should suggest to the next conference of the Communist International the necessity of issuing a general condemnation of such policy, stating in detail the reasons for the irrationality of non-participation and the excessive harm it brings to the cause of the proletarian revolution. They should specify in particular the line of conduct of some Dutch Communists who, whether directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, wholly or partially, supported this erroneous policy. The Third International must break with the tactics of the Second, and not evade or belittle sore points, but face them squarely. The whole truth has been put squarely to the German Independent Social-Democratic Party; the whole truth must likewise be told to the "Left" Communists.

Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments?

The German Left Communist, with the greatest contempt—and the greatest lightmindedness—replied to this question in the negative. Their arguments? In the quotation cited above we saw: "To refuse most decisively any return to the historically and politically worn-out forms of struggle of parliamentarism."

This is said with absurd pretentiousness, and is obviously incorrect: "Return" to Parliamentarism! Does that mean that the Soviet Republic already exists in Germany? It does not look as though such were the case. How is it possible, then, to speak of "returning?" Is not this an empty phrase?

Historically, "Parliament has become worn-out;" this is correct as regards propaganda. But everyone knows that it is still very far from being threadbare when the *practical* question of eliminating Parliament is under consideration. Capitalism could, and very rightly, have been described as "historically worn-out" many decades ago, but this in no way removes the necessity of a very long and a very hard struggle against capitalism at the present day. Parliamentarism is "historically worn-out" in a world-historical sense; that is to say, the epoch of bourgeois parliaments has come to an end, the epoch of the proletarian dictatorship has begun. This is incontestably true. But the scale of the world's history is reckoned by decades. Ten or twenty years sooner or later—this from the point of view of the world—historical scale makes no difference, from the point of view of world-history it is a trifle, which cannot be even approximately reckoned. But this is just why it is a crying theoretical mistake to refer, in questions of practical politics, to the world-historical scale.

Parliament is "politically worn-out?" This is quite another matter. If this were true, the position of the "Left" would be strong. Whether it is actually true must be proved by the most searching analysis; the "Left" do not even know how to tackle the problem. In the "thesis on Parliamentarism," published in No. 1 of the *Bulletin of the Provisional Amsterdam Bureau of the Communist International*, February, 1920, which obviously expresses Dutch-Left (or Left-Dutch) views, we shall see that the analysis, too, is very poor.

In the first place, the German "Left," as is known, consider-

ed parliamentarism "politically worn-out" as far back as January, 1919, contrary to the opinion of such eminent political leaders as Rosa Luxemburg and Carl Liebknecht. It has now been seen that the "Left" made a mistake. This alone radically destroys the proposition that "parliamentarism is politically worn-out." It is incumbent upon the "Left" to prove that their mistake at that time has now ceased to be a mistake. They do not, and cannot, give even the shadow of a proof of their proposition. The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest criteria of the seriousness of the party, and of how it fulfills in practice its obligations towards its class and towards the laboring masses. To admit a mistake openly, to disclose its reason, to analyze the surroundings which created it, to study it tentatively the means of correcting it—these are signs of a serious party; this means the performance of its duties; this means educating and training the class, and, subsequently, the masses. By neglecting this, by failing to proceed with the utmost care, attention and prudence to investigate their self-evident mistake, the "Left" in Germany (and some in Holland) prove themselves thereby to be not a class *party*, but a circle, not a *party* of the masses, but a group of intellectuals, and a handful of workers who imitate the worst characteristics of the intellectuals.

Secondly, in the same pamphlet of the Frankfurt group of "Left-Wingers," from which we have already cited in detail, we read: "Millions of workmen, still following the policy of the centre" (The Catholic "Centre" Party) "are counter-revolutionary. The village proletarians produce legions of counter-revolutionary troops." (p.3.)

Everything shows that this is said in much too off-hand and exaggerated a manner. But the fact here stated is fundamentally correct, and its acknowledgment by the "Left" goes to prove their mistake with particular clearness. How is it possible to say that "parliamentarism is politically worn-out" when "millions" and "legions" of proletarians not only stand up for parliamentarism generally, but are directly counter-revolutionary? It is clear, then, that parliamentarism in Germany is *not* worn-out politically as yet. It is evident that the "Left" in Germany have mistaken their desire, their *ideo-political* attitude, for objective reality. This is the most dangerous error which can be made by revolutionaries. In Russia, where the fierce and savage yoke of Tsarism, extending over a long period, had created an extraordinarily great variety of revolutionaries of every creed, remarkable for their wonderful devotion, enthusiasm, strength of mind, and heroism, we watch this mistake particularly closely; and it is because we studied it with particular attention that this mistake is especially familiar to us, and especially apparent to our eyes when revolutionaries in other countries fall into it. For the Communist in Germany parliamentarism *is*, of course, "Politically out-worn;" but—and this is the whole point—we must not deem that that which is outworn for us is necessarily outworn for the class, the masses. Here, again, we see that the "Left" do not know how to argue, do not know how to behave as a class, as a party of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. This is incontestable. It is our duty to tell them the bitter truth. It is our duty to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices by their right name. But, at the same time, it is our duty to watch soberly the actual state of consciousness and preparedness of the whole class, and not of the Communist vanguard alone; of the whole laboring mass, and not merely of its foremost men.

If, not "millions" and "legions," but merely a considerable *minority* of industrial workers follow the Catholic priests, and if a considerable minority of village workers follow the land owners and rich peasants (grossbauern), it inevitably means that parliamentarism in Germany is *not* politically outworn as yet; hence participation in parliamentary elections and the struggle on the parliamentary platform is *obligatory* for the party of the revolutionary proletariat, just for the purpose of educating the backward masses of its own class, just in order to awaken and enlighten the undeveloped, down-trodden, ignorant masses. Just so long as you are unable to disperse the bourgeois parliament and other reactionary institutions, you are *bound* to work inside them, and for the very reason that there are still workmen within them made fools of by priests or by the remoteness of village life. Otherwise you run the risk of becoming mere babblers.

Thirdly, the "Left" Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them that it were better to praise us less, and go more thoroughly into the tactics of the Bolsheviks, to get better acquainted with them. We participated in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, in September-

November, 1917. Were our tactics right or not? If not, this should be clearly stated and proved; this is essential for the working out of the right tactics for international Communism. If, on the other hand, we were right, certain inferences should be drawn. Of course, there can be no question of approximating Russian conditions to the conditions of Western Europe. But where the special question of the phrase "parliamentarism has become politically outworn" is concerned, it is necessary by all means to gauge our experiences; since, without a proper estimate of concrete experiences, such conceptions too easily resolve themselves into empty phrases. Had not we Russian Bolsheviks, in September-November, 1917, more right than any Western Communist to consider that parliamentarism in Russia had become politically outworn? Undoubtedly we had, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliamentarism has existed for a long or a short period, but to what extent the laboring masses are prepared, spiritually, politically and practically to accept the Soviet regime and to disperse (or allow to be dispersed) the bourgeois democratic parliament. That in Russia, in September-November, 1917, the working-classes of the towns, the soldiers and the peasants, were, owing to a series of special circumstances, exceptionally well prepared for the acceptance of the Soviet regime and the dispersal of the democratic bourgeois parliament, is a quite incontestable and fully established historical fact. However, the Bolsheviks did not boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections before, as well as after, the conquest of political power by the proletariat. That these elections gave very valuable (and for the proletariat highly beneficial) political results—this I hope to have proved in the above-mentioned article, which deals in detail with the data concerning the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia.

The inference which follows from this is quite clear; it has been proved that participation in bourgeois-democratic parliaments a few weeks before the victory of the Soviet Republic, and even after that victory, not only has not harmed the revolutionary proletariat, but has actually made it easier to prove to the backward masses why such parliaments should be dispersed, has made it easier to disperse them, and has facilitated the process whereby bourgeois parliaments are actually *made* "politically outworn." To pretend to belong to the Communist International, which must work out its tactics internationally (not on narrow national lines), and not to reckon with this experience, is to commit a great blunder, and, while acknowledging internationalism in words, to draw back from it in deeds.

Let us have a look at the arguments of the "Dutch Left" in favor of non-participation in parliaments. Here is the most important of their theses, No. 4:

"When the capitalist system of production is broken down and society is in a state of revolution, parliamentary activity gradually loses its significance as compared with the action of the masses themselves. When then under such conditions Parliament becomes the centre and organ of counter-revolution, while on the other hand the working-class creates the tools of its power in the shape of Soviets, it may even become necessary to decline all and any participation in parliamentary activity."

The first sentence is obviously wrong, since the action of the masses—a big strike for instance—is more important always than parliamentary activity, and not merely during a revolution or in a revolutionary situation. This obviously meaningless argument, historically and politically incorrect, only shows, with particular clearness, that the authors absolutely ignore both the general European experience (the French experience before the revolutions of 1848 and 1870; the German from 1878 to 1890, etc.), and the Russian, cited above, with regard to the importance of unifying legal and illegal forms of the struggle. This question has immense significance generally as well as specially. In all civilized and advanced countries, the time is coming speedily—it may, in fact, be said already to have come—when such unification becomes more and more—and, to an extent, has already become—obligatory for the party of the revolutionary proletariat. It is necessitated by the development and approach of the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, by the furious persecution of Communists by republican and all bourgeois governments generally, breaking the law in innumerable ways (the American example alone is invaluable). This most important question has not been at all understood by these Dutch "Left Communists" or by the "Left" generally.

The second phrase of the thesis is, in the first place, historically untrue. We Bolsheviks took part in the most counter-revolutionary Parliaments. Experience showed that such participation was not only useful, but necessary to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, directly after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (in 1905), to prepare the way for the

second bourgeois revolution (February, 1917), and then for the Socialist revolution (November, 1917). In the second place, this phrase is strikingly illogical. If Parliament becomes an organ and a "centre" (by the way it never has been in reality, and never can be, a "centre") of counter-revolution, and the workmen create the tools of their power in the form of Soviets, it follows that the workers must prepare themselves—ideologically, politically, technically—for the struggle of the Soviets against parliament, for the dispersion of parliament by the Soviets. But it does not at all follow that such a dispersion is made more difficult, or is not facilitated, by the presence of a Soviet opposition within the counter-revolutionary parliament. In the course of our victorious fight against Denikin and Kolchak, it never occurred to us that the existence in their rear of a Soviet, proletarian opposition, was immaterial to our victories. We know perfectly well that the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918, was not made more difficult, but was facilitated by the fact that, within the dispersed counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly, there was a consistent Bolshevik, as well as an inconsistent Left-Social Revolutionary, Soviet opposition. The authors of the theses got into a muddle; they forgot the experience of many, if not all, revolutions, which proved how particularly useful during a revolution is the co-ordination of mass action outside of reactionary parliament with an opposition inside the parliament which sympathises with—or better still directly supports—revolution.

These Dutchmen (and the "Left" in general) altogether argue here as doctrinaires of revolution, who never took part in a real one, or never deeply reflected on the history of the revolution, or naively mistake the subjective "denial" of a certain reactionary institution for its destruction in reality by the united forces of a whole series of objective factors. The surest way of discrediting a new political (and not only political) idea, and to cause it harm, is, under pretext of defending it, to reduce it to an absurdity. For every truth, as Dietzgen senior said, if it be "carried to excess," if it be exaggerated, if it be carried beyond the limits of actual application, can be reduced to an absurdity; and, under the conditions mentioned, is even bound to fall into an absurdity. In their very zeal to help, the Dutch and German "Left" did unwitting harm to the new idea of the superiority of Soviet power over bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of course, anyone who should say, in the old sweeping way, that refusal to participate in bourgeois parliaments can under no circumstances be permissible, would be wrong. I cannot attempt here to formulate the conditions under which a boycott is useful, for the scope of my article is more limited; here I only want to estimate all the possibilities of Russian experience in connection with certain burning questions of the day, questions of international Communist tactics. Russian experience has given us one successful and correct application of the boycott (1905), and one incorrect application of it, by the Bolsheviks. In the first case we see that we succeeded in preventing the convocation of a reactionary parliament by a reactionary government, under conditions in which revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) outside parliament was growing with exceptional rapidity. At that time not a single element of the proletariat of the peasantry gave any support to the reactionary government; the proletariat secured for itself influence over the backward masses by means of strike and agrarian movements. It is quite evident that this experience is not applicable to present-day European conditions. It is also quite evident, on the strength of the foregoing arguments, that even a conditional defense of the refusal to participate in parliament, on the part of the Dutch and the "Left," is thoroughly wrong and harmful to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat.

In Western Europe and America, parliament has become an object of special aversion to the advanced revolutionaries of the working class. This is self-evident, and is quite comprehensible, for it is difficult to imagine anything more abominable, base, and treacherous than the behavior of the overwhelming majority of Socialists and Social-Democratic deputies in Parliament, during and after the period of the war. But it would be, not only unreasonable, but obviously criminal to yield to such a frame of mind when solving the question of how to struggle against this generally admitted evil. In many countries of Western Europe the revolutionary mood is, we might say, a "novelty," a "rarity," which has been too long expected, vainly and impatiently it may be; and it may be because of this that people more easily yield to their frame of mind. Of course, without a revolutionary disposition on the part of the masses, and without conditions tending to enhance this disposition, revolutionary tactics will never materialize in action. But we in Russia, have convinced ourselves, by long, painful, and bloody experience, of the truth that it is

impossible to build up revolutionary tactics solely on revolutionary dispositions and moods.

Tactics should be constructed on a sober and strictly objective consideration of the forces of a given country (and of the countries surrounding it, and of all countries, on a world scale), as well as on an evaluation of the experience of other revolutionary movements. To manifest one's revolutionism solely by dint of swearing at parliamentary opportunism, by rejecting participation in parliaments, is very easy, but, just because it is too easy, it is not the solution of a difficult, a most difficult, problem. In most European states, the creation of a really revolutionary parliamentary group is much more difficult than it was in Russia. Of course. But this is only one aspect of the general truth that it was easy for Russia, in the concrete, historically quite unique, situation of 1917, to begin a social revolution; whereas, to continue it and complete it will be more difficult for Russia than for other European countries.

Already at the beginning of 1918 I had occasion to point out this circumstance, and since then an experience of two years entirely corroborates this point of view. Certain specific conditions existed in Russia which do not at present exist in Western Europe, and a repetition of such conditions in another country is not very probable. These specific conditions were (1) the possibility of connecting the Soviet Revolution with the conclusion, thanks to it, of the imperialist war which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible extent; (2) the possibility of making use, for a certain time, of the deadly struggle of two world-powerful groups of imperialist plunderers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of withstanding a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly because of the gigantic dimensions of the country and the bad means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-revolutionary movement amongst the peasantry that the proletarian party included in its programme the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist Revolutionaries, a party sharply hostile to Bolshevism), and at once realised these demands through the proletarian conquest of political power.

The absence of these specific conditions—not to mention various minor ones—accounts for the greater difficulty which Western Europe must experience in beginning the social revolution. To attempt to "circumvent" this difficulty, by "jumping over" the hard task of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes, is absolute childishness. You wish to create a new society? And yet you fear the difficulties entailed in forming, in a reactionary Parliament, a sound group composed of convinced, devoted, heroic Communists! Is not this childishness? Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Hoglund in Sweden succeeded, even without the support of the masses from below, in giving examples of a truly revolutionary utilisation of reactionary parliaments. Why, then, should a rapidly-growing revolutionary mass party, under conditions of post-war disappointment and exasperation of the masses, be unable to hammer-out for itself a Communist faction in the worst of parliaments? It is just because, in Western Europe, the backward masses of the workers and the smaller peasantry are much more strongly imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they are in Russia, that it is only in the midst of such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can and should carry on their long and stubborn struggle to expose, disperse, and overcome these prejudices, stopping at nothing.

The German "Left" complain of bad "leaders" in their party and give way to despair, going to the length of a laughable "repudiation" of the said "leaders." But when conditions are such that it is often necessary to hide the "leaders" underground, the preparation of good, reliable, experienced and authoritative "leaders" is an especially hard task, and these difficulties cannot be successfully overcome without co-ordinating legal with illegal work, without testing the "leaders" in the parliamentary arena, among others. The most merciless, cutting, uncompromising criticism must be directed, not against parliamentarism or parliamentary action, but against those leaders who are unable—and still more against those who do not wish—to utilise parliamentary elections and the parliamentary platform as revolutionaries and Communists should. Only such criticisms—added, of course, to the expulsion of worthless leaders and their replacement by capable ones—will constitute useful and fruitful revolutionary work. Thus will both the leaders themselves be trained to become worthy of the working-class and the toiling masses, and the masses learn correctly to understand the political situation, and to understand the often very complicated and intricate problems that originate from such situations.

The Next War

When the Great War was raging, we were solemnly told by a perverted press that it was "a war to end all war." We were told that once the terrible Hun was defeated, our future existence on this earth was to be so sublime that compared to it Adam and Eve's existence in the Garden of Eden was eternal torture and slavery. Under the hypnotic spell of such a rosy future, the worker went out to crush what he considered the only obstacle in the way of the consummation of such a blissful existence. But, alas! Things are not always what they seem, and the returned soldier is beginning to feel somewhat like the country youth who has been enamored of the painted demi-monde of the city when he sees her away from the blinding influence of the white lights. The tinsel is fast dropping from chauvinism, and underneath all, the cruel facts of capitalism are being manifested. The democracy that the workers went forth to save is proving to be nothing more nor less than the dictatorship of a few Imperialists and a system of brutal exploitation and enslavement of the masses. Already we have unemployment and starvation throughout the world, and on every hand we see degradation and misery among the working class. How does the master class account for it? The truth is, they don't! They say it is a sign of a return to a "normal" state of affairs; and in this they are correct from their point of view, for, as the socialist has long pointed out, a large unemployed army is essential to the capitalist. With its aid, he is enabled to break down the resistance of those engaged in production and so reduce the standard of living very appreciably. Aside from this, the unemployed army is one of the most fertile fields for producing recruits for the army and navy, which are used not only to settle the masters' quarrels abroad but also to crush any attempt on the part of the workers at home to fight for better conditions. That an army and navy of considerable size will be needed in the near future can easily be seen by a careful observer of world events, and that the capitalist can see it can be proved from quotations from their own press. The *"Bankers' Magazine"* for July, 1920, in an article dealing with Anglo-American relations, quotes the *"London Dispatch"* of June 16th as follows: "British big business is rapidly mobilizing for the war after the war—the battle for the world's trade. Britain's logical enemy is the United States, and British business men are preparing to fight with America's own weapons, the 'trusts.'" To the uninitiated in Socialism this statement does not seem to convey much, and the average worker weaned on bourgeois sops, would dismiss it with the remark that it is only a sign of a healthy competitive spirit, but that it is something more than this a further quotation from the same organ will prove—"Because if foreign trade is nothing more than an economic war it will surely lead to a world-wide military conflict." There we have it! Socialists for saying the same in regard to the last war are rotting in prison today, whilst others in European countries who stood by their convictions were lined-up and shot. What becomes then of all the clap-trap of the protection of small nations and other idealistic bunk that was peddled broadcast in order to arouse the necessary enthusiasm in the workers?

The cat is out of the bag, and they are now showing us why they need a larger navy and mercantile marine, for to further quote the same authority: "Then there is our growing naval power, which is already receiving the

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International Notes

By John Keracher

Asia Minor The Encyclopaedia Britannica says: "Asia Minor owes the peculiar interest of its history to its geographical position. 'Planted like a bridge between Asia and Europe,' it has been from the earliest period a battle-ground between the East and the West."

Asia Minor, apart from the struggle over its oil resources, is continuing its historic role as a battle-ground. The Assembly of the League of Nations, in session at Geneva, Switzerland, is confronted with this fact.

When the Allied Powers, at the peace table, chopped up Asia Minor into several mandatory states, all that they left of "Turkey in Asia" was an isolated portion, hemmed in by territory on the west held by Greeks, territory under Italian mandate on the south, French mandatory territory on the southeast, while due east was Armenia. Thus, Asiatic Turkey was shut off effectively, having access only to the Black Sea, the British holding the entrance at Constantinople.

Armenia and Turkey clashed over boundary disputes. Under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the Turks more than held their own against the, then, petty-bourgeois republic. With Wrangel's army swept out of the Crimea and most of the northern shore of the Black Sea, and the Caucasus to the east cleared of other anti-Soviet forces, Soviet influence is rapidly swinging along the southern shore.

By way of bringing the United States into the League of Nations, the Assembly offered this country a mandate over Armenia, the acceptance of which, would have called for military assistance to that republic in its conflict with the Turks.

A permanent Mandate Committee of nine members, drawn from different nations, has been appointed. One of the duties of this committee is to seek for a nation that will accept mandatory power over Armenia. Another project put forth by the assembly was the raising of a force of 60,000 men to send into Armenia, at a preliminary outlay of \$20,000,000 to be raised by appealing to "American Philanthropy." In this connection telegraphic appeals were sent to the United States Government, the American Red Cross Society, and several other Governments and large societies.

"The Committee on Armenia has been assured by military experts here that troops for the expedition are available," Lord Robert Cecil is reported as having stated, and that "only the money necessary to finance the movement is required." Suggestions were put forth by some of those in attendance at the Assembly, that the remnants of General Wrangel's army be used as a nucleus, and that the \$20,000,000 could be raised in the form of a "popular loan" to the Armenian Government.

The whole hoax of helping Armenia against the Turks, under Mustapha Kemal Pasha, was in reality a new blow being prepared against Russia. This "wonderful" scheme has suddenly been upset by the Armenians themselves, as almost simultaneously with these reports, comes the news that the Armenian people have abolished their warring government and set up a Soviet form of government in its place.

This change resulted in immediate peace with the Turks. The masses of Armenia and Turkey will be able now to live in peace, especially if the capitalist-imperialists and

their reactionary adherents can be driven out of these territories entirely. The Turkish Nationalists take the attitude that Soviet Russia is the "warden of the Orient" and not the Allied Powers, whose imperial policies they oppose.

Part of the forces under Mustapha Kemal Pasha have been transferred to the Smyrna front against the Greeks, who have fallen out with their imperial overlords, through their wayward returning to power of the former puppet of Teutonic imperialism, King Constantine.

This anti-imperialist policy of Soviet Russia and its rapprochement with those subject peoples may bring, in the course of time, the whole of Asia Minor under Soviet control. The Allies are conscious of this menace to their control, so we can look for them to make some move to head off the advancing power of Soviet Russia.

Great Britain When Premier Lloyd George announced "martial law" for Ireland, those who have followed recent events there must have realized that another storm was brewing.

On the evening of December 11th the storm burst over the City of Cork, the storm-center of the Sinn Fein rebellion. Within a few hours after the public proclamation of martial law the heart of the city was in flames, \$28,000,000 worth of property being destroyed, including the City Hall, Carnegie Library, the Market building and many others. An auto truck full of "black-and-tans" (auxiliary police) was bombed and several of its occupants killed and wounded. Big drygoods stores in the main streets were bombed and reduced to ruins by the fires that followed. This appears to be the most extensive outburst that has yet taken place amongst the long list of such clashes. The cause is charged up to reprisals on the part of the "black-and-tans" for recent killings of officers and also the before-mentioned truck and its passengers.

Britain's new policy is to send regular troops in where the Royal Irish constabulary and auxiliaries formerly had charge of things. Since the clash, it appears that regular troops are in charge. This is equal to an open declaration of civil war with the "Republic of Ireland." The government of Britain is ready to negotiate peace, but its first proposal is for negotiation with individual members of the Dail Eireann, the so-called republican parliament, or other individuals representing sections of Sinn Fein. Arthur Griffiths, credited with being the founder of the movement, and recently thrown into prison, seems to be alert to the attempt to divide Sinn Fein's forces, and is warning his colleagues not to negotiate unless for the movement as a whole. This would amount practically to a recognition of the "Irish Republic," so an immediate settlement is unlikely.

In addition to the Irish war the general class conflict between capital and labor steadily ripens, although just at present there are no extensive industrial disputes going on. The number of unemployed is very great and the menace to capitalist rule in this direction is the real reason for the erection of barricades at the entrance to the Premier's residence.

The heart of London, especially near the parliament buildings, is heavily policed. The ruling class of Britain is watchful and its government seems to be preparing for any emergency.

Japan The general economic conditions and the political situation reflected therefrom, is giving the ruling class of Japan a hot time of it.

Japan's troubles are not confined to the island kingdom itself, but, as a reward for her imperial expansion they exist in many parts of the world, threatening her with revolt at home and warfare abroad.

The problems of ruling Korea, and dictating policy to China, are supplemented by the necessity of competing with leading world powers in the construction of naval armaments. Viscount Ishii states that Japan will continue to increase its armaments so long as the United States keeps on building ships. Since the conclusion of the great war, Japan has launched five modern ships and is rushing the work on more. This competition in battleship building has no limitations, once started upon. The maintenance of a huge army and navy is a spur to more intensive exploitation of the working masses. Much of the raw material for Japanese industry has to be imported from China, Korea, and elsewhere. They have attempted to grow cotton, but the climate is too moist and the soil that can be used for agriculture is taken up for the raising of rice, the staple diet of the masses.

The colonization of more islands in the Pacific ocean, the battle for control of cables, and the trouble with the United States over the influx of Japanese into California are but some of the factors leading to the precarious position that the ruling class is now confronted with.

The exceedingly rapid expansion of Japan, from barbarism to capitalist-imperialism, has prevented the slow development of a docile, capitalistic-minded proletariat such as that of western Europe and the United States. The Manifesto of the Second Congress of the Third International expresses it thus: "Japan, torn within her feudal shell by capitalist contradictions, stands on the verge of a great revolutionary crisis which is already paralyzing her imperialist aspirations, in spite of the favorable international situation."

The proletariat of Japan showed its capacity for revolutionary action during the rice riots of August, 1918. It therefore would not be surprising if the capitalist lid blew off, in Japan, at any time.

Norway The capitalist class of Norway has recently been carrying on a campaign for thrift, in the form of mass meetings against the importation of luxuries. Amongst the speakers at the meetings were Premier Halvorsen, a former Premier, Knudsen, and the famous Dr. Nansen who is one of the chief lackies of Norwegian capitalists, representing them on the League of Nations.

This sort of campaign indicates that the general economic conditions are far from being sound in spite of their years of war prosperity. It is a well known fact that one of their main industries, namely fishing, is in a state of collapse. The country lately had a period of excitement over labor disturbances at Bergen, through which a Danish labor leader, Robert Vilsen, was deported. The editor of "*Ny Lid*," on his way home from Moscow, was arrested at Trondhjen for trying to take into the country 250,000 kronen in Russian gold. He stated that the money was for the purpose of organizing a Russian consular and diplomatic service in Norway.

The Soviet representative, Litvinoff, spent some time in Christiania negotiating trade relations with the Norwegian government. Litvinoff's proposition was that they send to Russia a delegation of thirty with full diplomatic privileges. The Norwegian government rejected the proposition as it practically meant the recognition of the Soviet Government, but to meet pressure brought to bear upon them by the fishermen, they offered to receive ten Russian delegates, without diplomatic rights, and who as individuals would have to meet with the approval of the Norwegian government. Litvinoff rejected the offer, according to reports, and returned to Russia.

The Norwegian Labor party supports the Third International and had delegates at the second congress. This much we gather from meager newspaper reports, but it would appear that there is a dispute on, over the acceptance of the program, and it will be fought out at the National Labor Congress to be held soon at Christiania.

The revolutionary movement in Norway, like that in most countries today, moves steadily to the left, a condition that is greatly hastened by the economic depression within the country itself.

The Third International

On January 24, 1919, a wireless message from Moscow invited the revolutionary groups and parties in other countries to send delegates to a Congress for the purpose of forming a Communist International.

This Congress met in Moscow, March 2nd to 6th, 1919. Seventeen groups were represented by official delegates, a like number being unofficially represented.

The work of the first Congress was hampered in many ways; it was not then possible to perfect the new world-organization, but the foundation was laid, the general principles and structure outlined, and when it adjourned, the delegates returned to their respective countries to take up the actual work of organizing the world's proletariat into a compact fighting machine.

The Second Congress met under more favorable circumstances in July, 1920. The intervening months saw many changes in the various national groups. It was a period of intense activity—tearing down the old, building the new. In some countries whole parties withdrew from the Second International and affiliated immediately

with the Third; in others, parties severed their old connection but hesitated, not fully endorsing the Third. When the Second Congress met, thirty-three countries were represented, in all of which Communist parties had either been formed or were in the process of formation. The following is a complete list of countries: Russia, Germany, Austria, France, England, America, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, Hungary, Galicia, Poland, Latvia, Czecho-Slovakia, Esthonia, Finland, Bulgaria, Jugo-Slavia, Georgia, Armenia, Turkey, Persia, India, Dutch India, China, Korea, and Mexico.

Full details of the development in all countries are not available, largely because there is at present no agency in this country for the dissemination of such information.

The following brief summary indicates the general tendency in the leading countries:

GERMANY

The German Communist Party was founded in Decem-

ber, 1918, and absorbed what was formerly the Spartacist Union. At the Congress of October, 1919, a split occurred over the question of participation in parliamentary elections and action within the existing trade unions. The majority, which retained the name Communist Party, favored parliamentary action and a policy of permeating the trade unions. The minority adopted the name Communist Labor Party, and refused to participate in elections and favored the formation of new industrial unions of the One Big Union type. The majority was officially affiliated with the Third International; the minority maintained an unofficial connection.

The German Independent Socialist Party was formed in 1917, out of the elements opposed to the war policy of the Majority Socialists, and was affiliated with the Second International until December, 1918. The party was made up of various elements: the right, led by Kautsky, Bernstein and Hilferding; the Center, led by Ledebour, and the Left, led by Stoecker.

At the Leipzig Congress, December, 1919, a motion by Stoecker calling for immediate affiliation with the Third International was defeated by a vote of 169 against 114. The following compromise resolution was finally adopted by a vote of 227 to 54:

Resolution of the German Independent Socialist Party at the Leipzig Congress, December, 1919:

"This Congress declares that one of the most important tasks of the Independent Socialist Party is the ruthless prosecution of the working-class struggle to the exclusion of any policy which aims solely at the realization of reforms within the Capitalist State. This Congress, therefore, decides to break with the Second International. All participation in the Geneva Congress is accordingly rejected by the Independent Socialist Party. The German Independent Socialist Party is in agreement with the Third International in the conception of realizing socialism by the dictatorship of the proletariat based upon the Councils system. There is room for an effective working-class International by the union of our party with the Third International and the revolutionary parties of other countries. For this purpose the Congress instructs the Central Committee to enter into immediate negotiations with these parties on the basis of the program adopted by the Party in order to bring about this union and so, in conjunction with the Third International, to bring about a clearly defined and effective working-class International which shall prove a decisive weapon of world revolution in the working-class struggle for emancipation from the chains of international capitalism. If the parties of other countries should not be willing to enter into the Moscow International with us, the adhesion must be undertaken by the German Independent Socialist Party alone."

At a Congress held in October, 1920, the Independent Socialist Party decided by an overwhelming majority to join the Third International. This was a distinct defeat for such leaders as Bernstein, Kautsky and Hilferding. Shortly after, it was announced that through the efforts of Linovief, the Independent Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party had been united in one organization known as the United Communist Party of Germany, with a membership of about two million.

FRANCE

The Socialist Party of France is reported to have a membership of about two and one-half million. All sections being included: the Right, under Renaudel supported the war; the Center, under Cachin and Longuet favored independent action during the war and became the Majority and took control of the Party in July, 1918; the Left, under Loriot, opposed the war, participated in the Zimmerwald Conference and favored affiliation with the Third International. At the Easter Conference, 1919, a motion to join the Third International received 270 votes; to remain in the Second International, 757 votes; the majority resolution, known as the "Reconstruction resolution," provided for remaining in the Second International temporarily and at-

tempting to "purify" it. This resolution received 894 votes. Since that time there has been a marked tendency toward the Left.

At a recent conference of the Socialists of the Department of the Seine, which includes the city of Paris, a motion by Cachin, editor of "*L'Humanite*," for affiliation without reservations received 13,488 votes; a motion of Longuet for affiliation with reservations received 2,144 votes; a motion against affiliation received 1,061 votes. It is quite likely that other cities will follow the example of Paris, and that the French party will shortly be added to the list of Communist parties.

ENGLAND

There are at present two distinct Communist parties in England. In addition there are several revolutionary groups which have endorsed the principles of the Third International. These parties and groups have been instructed by the International to merge into one party. A unity conference, at which a representative of the International will preside, is to be held in January.

UNITED STATES

The Socialist Party withdrew from the Second International and applied for admission to the Third. The result of the referendum was: For affiliation with reservations, 3,475; against, 1,444. The application, however, was flatly rejected.

The Socialist Labor Party claims to endorse the Third International, but is not affiliated.

The referendum of the I. W. W. for affiliation was defeated by an overwhelming vote. Its official organ, the "One Big Union Monthly," in December printed a bitter attack upon the Soviet government. The protests that poured in from the membership compelled the resignation of the editor, John Sandgren.

The Communist Party and the United Communist Party were instructed by the International to combine, but the unity conferences which have been held (in secret, of course) failed to produce the desired result. The report sent to the International by the United Communist Party reveals a condition which has existed since the formation of the Communist and Communist Labor Parties in September, 1919.

From the time of the Left Wing Conference, (June 1919) there has been an unceasing and bitter factional struggle for control. This was, in fact, the sole reason behind the formation of two Communist parties. And within the parties the struggle continued unabated until the present time. There have been charges and counter-charges of "spy," "centrist," "menshevik," "legalist," "betrayal of the revolution;" each accuses the other of misappropriation of funds, violation of discipline, and every conceivable breach of revolutionary ethics.

The Industrial Socialist League, made up of expelled sections of the Socialist Labor Party, and the Proletarian Party, (known also as the "Michigan Group") are distinctly Communist groups, the latter endorsing without reservations the principles of the Third International. In addition, there are in every large city independent Communist groups, many being in the form of educational societies. If we take into account the thousands of individual Communists who are "unattached," it will be seen that of the workers who agree with the aims and methods of the Third International, the majority remain aloof from those claiming to be the Communist Party.

In the main, there are two reasons for this. First, the incessant struggle of the various factions for control; second, objection to the programs and form of organization.

Both parties have adopted programs implying that this country is on the verge of actual revolution, and are on that account illegal, secret organizations. This revolutionary situation, however, exists only in the distorted imagination of perfervid zealots. In reality, the American working class is politically backward. There is a real need for general Communist agitation, propaganda and education. The Communist parties, having tied their own hands, cannot fill this need.

This country has earned for itself a reputation as the

breeding ground of freak movements—religious, political and economic. Happily, we are not to be allowed to have our own sweet way in the matter of Communist parties. The International has specified that there must be but one party, and that it must be so constituted as to do the work required of it. That such a party, embracing all genuine Communist elements, does not exist must be admitted. All sincere Communists should therefore work for the establishment of a *united* and EFFICIENT party.

A. J. M.

The Marxian Law of Value

I think no proof is needed to show that the tendency of capitalism is to increase the constant portion of the total capital invested in proportion to the variable. Every invention, every bit of new machinery installed, has for its purpose the saving of human labor. Instance after instance could be cited where the introduction of new machinery has eliminated whole crafts. We may safely say, therefore, that the purpose of machinery is to save labor. Saving labor naturally means that Mr. Capitalist is thereby enabled to produce the same amount of commodities with less labor, or, a larger amount of commodities with the same amount of labor. The following formulas will readily explain the phenomenon, and show at the same time upon what Marx based his teaching that capitalism will collapse.

In the early stages of capitalism, the greater portion of capital was invested in that portion known as the variable, or at any rate, we will be well within the truth when we say that his proportion invested in variable was greater than it is now. Assuming again that the rate of exploitation is 100%, in the following we would have

$$50C+100V+100S$$

A profit of 66 1-3% on a total investment of 150. Now let us assume that the constant portion is increased, and the variable remains the same, then we would have

$$100C+100V+100S$$

Profit 50% on a total investment of 200. Should the constant be increased again, we would have

$$200C+100V+100S$$

Profit 33 1-3% on a total investment of 300.

$$300C+100V+100S$$

Profit 25% on a total investment of 400.

$$400C+100V+100S$$

Profit 20% on a total investment of 500.

The greater the portion of constant to the variable, the less will be the profit, and the more capitalism develops, the bigger and larger grows the constant in comparison with the variable. Let us quote Marx: "In this way, the same rate of surplus value, with the same degree of labor exploitation, would express itself in a falling rate of profit, because the material growth of the constant capital, and consequently of the total capital, implies their growth in value, although not in the same proportion. * * * Now we have seen that it is one of the laws of capitalist production that its development carries with it a relative decrease of variable as compared with constant capital, and consequently as compared to the total capital, which it sets in motion." Therefore, "Every individual product, taken by itself, contains a smaller quantity of labor than the same product did on a lower scale of production, in which the capital invested in wages occupies a far greater space compared to the capital invested in means of production. * * * This mode of production produces a progressive decrease

of the variable capital as compared to the constant capital and consequently a continuously rising organic composition of the total capital. The immediate result of this is that the rate of surplus value, at the same degree of labor exploitation, expresses itself in a continually falling average rate of profit. * * * This progressive tendency of the average rate of profit to fall is, therefore, but a peculiar expression of capitalist production for the fact that the social productivity of labor is progressively increasing. * * * Since the mass of the employed living labor is continually on the decline compared to the mass of materialized labor incorporated in productively consumed means of production, it follows that that portion of living labor, which is unpaid and represents surplus value, must also be continually on the decrease compared to the volume and value of the invested total capital."

Here it might be well to point out that as productivity increases, and the constant portion of the capital increases in proportion to the variable, capitalism is not able to extract as much surplus labor as on a lower plane of production. To illustrate: Let a capital of 100 consist of 80C+20V, and let the variable stand for 20 laborers. Let the rate of surplus value be 100%, that is to say, the laborers work one-half of the day for themselves and the other half for the capitalist. Now take a less developed country, in which a capital of 100 is composed of 20C+80V, and let the 80 variable stand for 80 laborers. But let these laborers work two-thirds of the day for themselves, and only one-third for the capitalists. Assuming all other things to be equal, the laborers in the first case will produce a value of 40, while those of the second will produce a value of 120. The first capital produces

$$80C+20V+20S=120; \text{ rate of profit } 20\%$$

The second capital produces

$$20C+80V+40S=140; \text{ rate of profit } 40\%.$$

In other words the rate of profit in the second case is double that of the first case, and yet the rate of surplus value in the first case is 100%, while it is only 50% in the second case. But a capital of the same magnitude appropriates in the first case the surplus labor of only 20 laborers, while it appropriates that of 80 laborers in the second.

We must not assume, however, that the total profit of the capitalist decreases, but to the contrary, the absolute mass of the total profit increases. Let us again turn to illustration:

$$1. \quad 4C+2V+2S.$$

$$2. \quad 15C+3V+3S.$$

In the first capital, the exploitation is 100%; the profit is 33 1-3%. In the second capital, the exploitation is also 100%; the profit is only 16 2-3%. The absolute mass of surplus has increased 50%, whereas the rate of profit has

decreased 50%. From this it will be seen that in spite of the progressive fall of the rate of profit, there may be an absolute increase of the labor set in motion by it, an absolute increase of the mass of surplus labor absorbed, a resulting absolute increase of the produced surplus value, and consequently an absolute increase in the mass of the produced profit. This increase may be progressive. It *may* not only be so. On the basis of capitalist production, it *must* be so, aside from temporary fluctuations.

Examining the situation, it is clear that there is a tendency for the rate of profit to fall, and that the lower it falls the greater will be the absolute mass of the profits. There have been many who have argued that if the rate of profit should fall to one per cent or to only one-tenth of one per cent, the amount extracted from each laborer would be so infinitesimal as to be hardly noticeable, but these gentlemen fail to realize that before such a condition could exist, there would have to be an immense concentration of capital, a gigantic army of unemployed, an intense exploitation of those who were employed, and in addition those with small fortunes, say of \$100,000 would be put on a level with the proletariat. For the student of sociology, it would be very interesting to observe, but fortunately, capitalism is in a state of collapse, and the student will have to content himself with speculation.

The reader, by this time, will no doubt have asked

himself the question, that in view of the rapid development of industry, why does not the rate of profit fall more rapidly, and there may be some who will point to the fact that in recent years, the rate of profit has not declined, but as a matter of fact, the rate of profit has risen. In analysing the situation, and in stating the law, Marx stated that it was merely a "tendency," and the title of the chapter is "The Law of the Falling Tendency of the Rate of Profit." There are many counteracting causes, such for instance of raising the intensity of exploitation, depressing the wages below their value, cheapening the elements of constant capital, foreign trade, etc. These counteracting causes, and the many contradictions which develop, and come to the surface in the analysis, would require considerable space for discussion, more than is allotted for this article. Nevertheless, in spite of all these counteracting causes, the tendency for the rate of profit to fall is dominant, and will continue to operate.

This phenomenon has puzzled more than one economist, and Marx was the only one to solve it, and he solved it not alone by superior intellect, but by virtue of the law of value. The law of value has solved not only this problem, but also all the rest of the problems of political economy. It is the rule which has given us the solution. The law of value has been as important for political economy as the struggle for existence has been to biology.

Bertrand Russell on Bolshevik Theory

By MURRAY MURPHY

In his second article on Bolshevik Theory, Bertrand Russell attacks the *method* by which the Bolshevik revolution was, and is, carried on. "Not only must there be armed conflict," he says, in reference to this matter, "but they have a fairly definite conception of the way in which it is to be conducted. This conception has been carried out in Russia, and is to be carried out before very long in every civilized country."

There are two things wrong with this declaration: It is, to be sure, true enough that Communists have a "fairly definite conception" of the probable course of the revolution, and experience has in every case verified their expectation; but Professor Russell states this truth in an ambiguous way, implying an absurd degree of mechanical exactness in the supposed course of the revolution, as though every slightest detail of the events in Russia must, according to Bolshevik theory, be exactly reproduced in every other country. But "Our teachings are not a dogma," said Marx and Engels, as quoted by Lenin, "but a *guide* to action." The characteristic conditions in each country must, as Lenin has shown, determine what specific and emergency tactics are necessary.

The second objection to the statement lies in the intellectual setting, so to speak, into which it is introduced—the abysmal ignorance and incredible prejudices of the people to whom the unqualified assertion is made. The majority of the American public still believe that the Bolsheviki are carrying on their work by means of unprovoked murder, arson, rape, and whatnot; then comes Russell, and, without correcting this notion of Bolshevik tactics (which he knows is not true), exclaims that Bolshevism advocates the same measures in every civilized country!

The bulk of the article is occupied, however, with three specific questions: "First, would the ultimate state foreshadowed by the Bolsheviks be desirable in itself?

Secondly, would the conflict involved in achieving it by the Bolshevik method be so bitter and prolonged that its evils would outweigh the ultimate good? Thirdly, is this method likely to lead in the end to the state which the Bolsheviks desire, or will it fail at some point and arrive at a quite different result?"

Professor Russell answers the first question in the affirmative. He concedes, without argument, the desirability of communism, but gives an unfavorable answer to the other two questions. Let us consider these at some length.

Briefly, Bertrand Russell's first charge is that Communism isn't worth the price that must be paid. There must be much war, he says, and, as a result, much misery and loss of life. Why does he not recall the French Revolution in this connection? Would he return to Feudalism if the French Revolution could be undone? Too much war to establish Communism, he says! Does he mean to assert that Capitalism has no wars? Is he ignorant of the bloody wars of the last half-century—the Spanish-American War, the Russo-Japanese War, the Great European War, and many others—about one in every six years? Too much war! Is it better, we may ask, to fight wars for our masters' profits than for our own emancipation? Again, is it better to face an infinity of capitalist wars than by one courageous conflict to end wars forever? Ten million were slaughtered in the last imperialist war; at this moment workmen in a time of "peace" are being shot down in the Virginia coalfields. Professor Russell, in the face of all this, fears that the Bolsheviks are paying too great a price in fighting to free themselves forever from this class slavery. His is, indeed, a "peace at any price" philosophy!

Furthermore, he complains of "the almost universal poverty" and the lack of "every kind of liberty" under the proletarian dictatorship. Does he really think that the

proletariat of Russia never has known poverty or the lack of liberty? But (not to speak of the gross exaggeration of such statements) we may refer to an article in *The Nation* of last July, in which he gives his experiences while on a personal trip to Russia: "It is said—and all I saw confirmed the assertion—that the peasants are better off than they ever were before. I saw no one—man, woman, or child—who looked underfed in the villages." Yet in the face of this very statement by himself, he contends that the present poverty of the Russian people is too high a price to pay for Communism! Is it possible that Professor Russell refers to the poverty of the former Russian bourgeois?

I wonder! Anyhow, why does he blame the Bolsheviks for the distress which may exist in Russia? He could better employ his time in lecturing the Allies on the ethical objections to the Russian blockade.

Speaking of Gorky (see the *Nation* quoted above) in contrast with Lenin, he said: "The materialistic conception of history is all very well, but some care for the higher things of civilization is a relief." Indeed! Then why does he oppose the Bolshveiki, who are willing to fight for the "higher things of civilization?"

Professor Russell's comment on the poverty and governmental restrictions in Russia is particularly hard to understand in view of his assertion in *The Nation* before referred to that Kerensky's regime had led to chaos, and that "some sterner discipline was obviously necessary if the country was to be saved from utter destruction," and, further, "it has to be remembered that the lack of freedom is traceable to war and the blockade as its prime cause." Still further, the British Labor Report, which Bertrand Russell quotes in the *New Republic*, states that in spite of the blockade, the war, and the miserable conditions inherited from Tsarism and the Kerensky government, "a great and efficient sanitary organization has been created by the Commissariat of Public Health," and "A great sanitary propaganda has been carried out, through soviets and trade unions, in both towns and villages, and these epidemics (which had been raging, *M. M.*) are now controlled." And as far as governmental oppression is concerned, the same authority says: "One effect of the present crisis has been to rally all parties to the support of the Government for the purpose of national defense—whatever their differences on questions of internal politics." Would this be the case if the Bolsheviks were a cruel and domineering minority?

The reader may judge whether the poverty and tyranny in Russia are as great as Professor Russell makes out. Then when he reflects that the Bolsheviks are having constant military success, he may likewise judge whether the Russians themselves think the struggle is worth while.

But we must pass on to the second charge, namely, that the Bolshevik methods will not, after all, result in Communism. Their success in battle, he contends, is making them nationalistic and imperialistic. The exercise of power is corrupting them, making out of the Communists proper a new aristocracy. In the article in *The Nation* previously referred to, he puts the charge much more directly: "If the Bolsheviks remain in power, it may be assumed that their communism will fade, and that they will increasingly resemble any other Asiatic government—for example, our own (i. e., the British—*M. M.*) government in India."

This is the sort of argument that is made by one who does not know the basic facts of the Russian Revolution, who misinterprets such facts as he does know, and who does not understand the principles and factors and conditions back of the concrete facts. It is the old bourgeois

fright at the phrase, "proletarian dictatorship," thinly veneered by a sentimental pseudo-logic.

In the first place the idea of nationalism and imperialism and exploitation is utterly abhorrent to Bolshevik psychology; it was opposition to those things that characterized them as an exploited class, it was opposition to those ideas that put them in power, and *it must be continued opposition to those very things that will keep them in power*. Furthermore, Professor Russell forgets—or, rather, never knew, since he does not understand Historical Materialism—that nationalism and imperialism arise out of the nature of the capitalist system, since they further the interests of the bourgeoisie. With capitalism and the capitalist class overthrown, there is no longer a reason for the existence of either nationalism or imperialism; *the material conditions* for such ideas no longer exist. With characteristic bourgeois psychology, however, he bases his belief—that the Bolsheviks will develop an aristocratic tyranny—on abstract notions of "human nature," never taking into consideration the material conditions which determine the reactions of "human nature." Still further, although he accuses Marxists of making no allowance for idealistic motives (which is false, as I showed in my first article—*M. M.*), he himself is guilty of the same thing in his thinking, for he entirely leaves out of account the powerful international psychology developed by the revolutionary movement, and the significance and even more powerful propaganda *by the Bolsheviks themselves* AGAINST THE VERY PLUTOCRACY AND IMPERIALISM THAT RUSSELL THINKS THEY WILL ESTABLISH!

No, Professor Russell's fear of a future Bolshevik imperialistic oligarchy is not based on a correct understanding of all the factors involved; he is, after all, despite his evident sincerity, only a closet sociologist; bookish psychology, bookish information, bookish philosophy—these characterize his writings and limit his powers of analysis.

"I went to Russia believing myself a communist," naively remarks Professor Russell, but his experiences there, he says, intensified his doubts a thousandfold. But if *he* dreamed of himself as a *communist*, we may remember the significant words of Marx: "I sowed dragons teeth and I reaped fleas."

The Next War

(Continued from Page Seven)

official notice of the British Government. Do we mean to challenge the naval superiority of Great Britain? And if so, will that challenge be met by an expanded British naval program with which we must continually strive to keep pace?" Secretary Daniels' statement will well answer this—In 1924 our navy will equal Great Britain's—or words to that effect. Our masters are still preparing for future wars, and the Church, College, School and Press can be relied upon to prepare the minds of the workers.

But "the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-glee." Already there is arising on the horizon the Nemesis of capitalism. In Russia the workers have settled with their enemies, the capitalists of their country, and have incurred the wrath of a frightened bourgeois world, and sooner or later a case is going to be cooked up in order to get the workers of other countries to go in and shoot down their Russian comrades. Are we going to do this? The answer remains with the workers, for they alone can settle the question, and that effectively, by dealing with their own bourgeoisie.

JAMES CONLAN.

Lenin vs. Kautsky

By ERN REEN

When Kautsky avoided the question of his activities during the war and stubbornly ignored the charges of chauvinism put against him by Lenin, he avoided a very important question. It was a question concerning the soundness of the socialist principles on which the Second International was founded, and a question as to the future policy of socialist parties.

We tried to find an excuse for him in the fact that a greater event, the Russian Revolution, forced into the background the discussion of all that had happened before. But there seems to be no excuse now, when talking about the situation in Russia, Kautsky again ignores Lenin's arguments. Instead of an honest analysis of the charges and the questions in the controversy, his book, "Terrorism and Communism," is full of general statements which are meaningless and contrary to fact, repeated by Kautsky time and again. In the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" Kautsky stated that "Dictatorship means a sovereignty of a single person." Replying, Lenin pointed out numerous examples in history of the dictatorship of a class. It was up to Kautsky now to prove that Lenin was wrong and to show his mistakes or to admit that he, Kautsky, had been in error. Instead, Kautsky repeats several times the same statement: "Dictatorship means dictatorship of a single person," never discussing it, taking it as an unquestionable truth. (See page 38).

Another important question discussed before was that of the agrarian problem. Kautsky accused the Bolsheviks of confusing the petty bourgeois interests of the peasants with the proletarian aspirations of the city workers. Lenin reminds him that in 1905 Kautsky himself was in favor of an alliance of the workers with the peasants and not with the liberal bourgeoisie. Kautsky does not refute it; he does not even mention Lenin's reply. But it is convenient for him to make the reader believe that the Russian revolutionary element is reactionary in character and without any hesitation he repeats: "Some Russian comrades think that the poorer peasantry has the same interests as the city proletariat," while in reality "the peasants' support forced on the Russian revolutionary movement an economically reactionary element," which is of course very detrimental to the purity of the movement. (Pages 26, 70).

Evidently Kautsky holds that the Bolsheviks ought to decline the peasants' support. It might be an interesting theory, but Kautsky forgets to prove its soundness. One thing Kautsky ought to admit, though, in order to be logical: The peasants' support makes the Bolshevik rule—the rule of the majority. But instead of being logical he keeps on repeating: "Bolshevism holds, that Socialism everywhere must be forced by the minority upon the majority and that this can be accomplished only by dictatorship and civil war." (Page 215).

The statement that Bolshevism holds such views on minority and civil war also remains to be proved.

Some of Kautsky's views have undergone a slight change. He no longer anticipates that the social revolution will be carried out by "peaceful economic, legal and moral means;" he admits now that "not a single class gives up voluntarily the power which it conquered, no matter what are the circumstances that brought it to the top." It is also allowable then for the Russian proletariat to defend its power, but "A really Marxian Socialist Party would proportion the problems it puts before the victorious proletariat to the material and moral environments, it would not decree an immediate general socialization in a country of undeveloped production. . . . The proletariat ought to introduce Socialism only in as much as it is possible under the present conditions; it could not be done by the swing of the hand. . . ." Evidently Kautsky is not confident any more that capitalist production must be changed into socialist "at once." It is characteristic that now he condemns the Bolsheviks just as strongly for "ordering an immediate socialization" as before for not introducing Socialism at once.

With an equal ardor Kautsky renews his attacks on the "dictatorship." He does not claim now that Marx spoke of a dictatorship of the proletariat in a sense different from the literal. Now Kautsky quotes Engels' explanation of the dictatorship of the proletariat: "Do you want to know, gentle-

men, what is the dictatorship of the proletariat? Look at the Paris Commune, there was dictatorship of the proletariat."

But the trouble is that the present Russian dictatorship is quite different from that of the Second Paris Commune. The Second Paris Commune respected general suffrage, while the Bolsheviks destroyed it. The fact pointed out by Lenin, that during the Paris Commune the only people left in Paris after the flight of the bourgeoisie, were those supporting the revolution and hence they alone had "the general suffrage," does not seem to trouble Kautsky any at all. Condemnation of Bolshevism justifies to him any mutilation of facts.

True, Kautsky did not write "Terrorism and Communism" for the purpose of improving inaccuracies made by him in previous works. If he does mention the old arguments, it is only accidentally, where they happen to fit in smoothly with other topics. The book has been intended, Kautsky says, for the purpose of a general study of the history of the Paris Commune and terrorism on one side, and Bolshevism on the other.

He devotes to the subject of Bolshevism proper just a small fraction of the book, but all through his work he mentions the Soviet rule on various occasions and draws parallels between it and the Reign of Terror in such a manner as to produce a desired impression without going to the trouble of discussing and proving his statements. Just in such a manner as he dealt with the questions mentioned above. Special attention is given though to the topic not touched upon before—the Terror. It is here where Kautsky reaches its culminating point and where it finally develops its counter-revolutionary activities. All the slander and lies charged by the reactionaries of the world against the first proletarian State are being revised by Kautsky, and all this is presented by him in a more misleading manner than it ever could have been done by the bourgeois representatives, and put in that skillful form, made possible by his knowledge of Scientific Socialism and his ability to misrepresent Marx.

A bloody terror reigns in Russia, Kautsky narrates. Bourgeoisie and intellectuals are made the victims of a revengeful mob. Bourgeois women are mistreated, socialists are persecuted, and added to all these horrors the workers themselves are turned into slaves. The trouble lies in the generally accepted opinion that terrorism is necessarily connected with revolution because such was the example of the French Revolution. But such a conception is very erroneous: Terror during the first Commune, just as now in Russia, was caused only by an attempt to force a premature revolution. The growing speculation, hostility of the peasants and of the non-Parisian population, on the one hand, and the inability of the proletariat to come victorious out of the struggle, and general demoralization among the Communists on the other "caused the leaders of the proletariat to apply the extreme means, the bloody means—Terror." In addition, "in order to conceal from the masses the absence of social and economic victories, the ruling class had to appear strong, had to inflame the masses to influence them, to intoxicate them. Such an effect had to be produced by a bloody terror." (Pages 37, 43). Same are the causes of the terror in Russia: "They (the leaders) tried desperately to instill in the masses the Communist morale. And nothing else could they find, they, the Marxists, the brave revolutionaries, the innovators, except the miserable evasion of the old society, with which it tries to wash its own crimes: tribunal, hard labor, execution. It means terror." (Page 180).

And now with great power Kautsky describes the cruelties of the blood-drunken Paris mobs, with tears he relates the details of the murder of the princess de Lambel. Great is his indignation when he speaks about the socialists who forgot the bloody deeds of the communists and remembered only the revenge of the bourgeoisie. Kautsky thinks that Marx himself made a blunder when he said in his article in November, 1848, about the fall of Vienna: "In Paris will be struck the demolishing response of the June Revolution. . . . To shorten the death agony of the old society and to relieve the tortures of the bloody birth of the new, there is just one means—revolutionary terror." But Marx can be forgiven: Kautsky finds some apologies in Marx's temperament: "It was his indignation against this meanness (with which the defeated Paris Communists were treated) that dictated to Marx the above lines of terror."

A few pages further on, quoting Marx who calls an attempt on the part of certain French revolutionists to organize an uprising in September, 1870, "a foolish thing," Kautsky ironically remarks: "Some people think that the revolutionary nature of Marx would force him into the camp of the Bolsheviks, but we see how Marx in spite of his volcanic temperament considered his first duty to open the eyes of his comrades to the real situation." A wonderful temperament Marx had: it seems to change at Kautsky's will, for his convenience. An important fact that Kautsky overlooks is that in the two instances quoted Marx was confronted with different conditions. In the first case, Marx was analysing the events of 1848 and not delivering an irresponsible threat of a rage-blind man. When, in the second case, Marx called an attempt at an uprising "a foolish thing," he did so because conditions then did not favor a successful revolt and not because he disapproved of "active undertakings in general," and believed only in "organizing work," as Kautsky tries to explain. An honest study of Marx's works on the Paris Commune would show Kautsky that Marx was very much in favor of "active undertakings."

It is impossible to discuss this matter thoroughly in this brief review; this and several other important points which had to be omitted, must be discussed separately.

A tendency to justify the terror practised by the proletariat, this "tradition of terror," is especially harmful at the present time when "a severe criticism of revolutionary methods is necessary and not blind praise." Where the "blind praise" leads to, Kautsky explains: "I know party comrades, very nice ones, honest, who consider it their sacred duty to the revolution to fool the people by false historical dithyrambs in honor of Bolshevism."

This statement is rather too general and vague to have any meaning, but the character of the "false dithyrambs" can be guessed after Kautsky tells his "true" stories about the reign of the Bolsheviks. Mass murders, medieval tortures, destruction of all culture in Russia; of all these Kautsky accuses the Bolsheviks. Even abuse of women is practised by official orders; Kautsky has the authority of M. Vinch Maliev (who is he?) that such is the case: The following "document" is being quoted: "Thereby the soviet authorizes Comrade Gregory Sareieff to requisition and deliver sixty bourgeois girls and women to the barracks of the artillery regiment stationed at Murzilovka, district of Briansk." (Page 171).

The English title of the book from which Kautsky quotes the above "document" reminds us that people in America have been fed for months with stories of that kind, in the movies they were shown all the details of the "requisition" of bourgeois women; and yet later even the most irresponsible reactionary sheets were forced, by the impossibility of fooling the people any more, to admit the forged character of those stories. Almost a year after, in a book written at the end of 1919 on the authority of some suspicious personality, Kautsky presents the same stories as indisputable facts.

As to the identity of the "document" the following reply was given by L. Trotsky in his book, "Against Kautsky:"

" . . . I had an investigation made of every phase of this matter, in order to learn what facts and episodes were at the bottom of this invention. A carefully conducted investigation gives the following results:

"In the district of Briansk there is no place named Murzilovka. Nor is there any such place in the neighboring districts. . . I also tried to trace this matter by following up various artillery divisions. We have not succeeded in finding anywhere even an indirect indication of any event that has the slightest similarity to that indicated by Kautsky. . . ." (Quoted from "Soviet Russia," November 27, 1920).

It seems that consultation with a text book on geography would be of greater value to Kautsky than the "documents" presented by all the authorities, lately discovered by him.

To make the stories of the bolshevik atrocities appear more credible, Kautsky claims that bloody terror is justified by the Bolshevik leaders by the pretext of necessity. Quoting Bucharin that "the more capitalism is developed in a country, the more merciless, the more severe, will be its defensive war, and the more bloody will be the proletarian revolution." Kautsky argues that the capitalists did not display such a merciless and severe defense either in Russia in 1917 or in Budapest. Kautsky misinterprets Bucharin, as before he misinterpreted Marx, for Bucharin does not preach bloodshed and atrocities, he merely analyses the conditions and draws conclusions. Kautsky is mistaken when he remarks that the capitalists were not responsible for the bloodshed in Russia as they did not display a severe defense. Evidently he thinks that the adventures of Kolchak, Denekin, Wrangel, and others, adventures that shed

so much workers' blood, do not signify any resistance on the part of the capitalists, and that the Polish offensive did not aim at the destruction of the proletarian State. As far as Hungary is concerned, Kautsky reversed the information which he got from the counter-revolutionaries; even the American press, which is probably the most reactionary and lying in the world, spoke not as much about the red terror in Hungary as about the white terror, which made the Hungarian workers pay in their blood for the mistake they made in listening to Kautskians and giving up their power without any resistance. Kautsky does not mention the tens of thousands of workers tortured to death in Finland by Mannerheim; he does not say a word about the mass-butcherery of the communists in Germany and in Poland by "socialists" in the service of capitalists, nor about the wholesale execution of the workers in various parts of Russia by the allied armies. All that does not mean to Kautsky a resistance on the part of the capitalists. Shedding tears over the fate of the "socialists" persecuted by the Bolsheviks, he does not acknowledge that these "socialists" have been efficient tools in the hands of the counter-revolutionists. It was a "socialist," Tzaikowski, who helped to organize the Archangel adventure; "socialists" made up the ministerial cabinets of Denekin and Kolchak: "socialists" called "active," were responsible for the attempts on the lives of the Soviet officials, one of their victims being Lenin. It is a "socialist," Pilsudsky, who helped the capitalists in their treacherous attack on Russia; and it was a "socialist," Savinkov, a former member of Kerensky's cabinet who was assisting Pilsudski. To complete this infamous list, it is a "socialist," Kautsky, who supplied the exploiting class with the influence over the working masses to lead them astray. The Bolsheviks did not prosecute socialists, they were only defending the proletarian state from the attacks of the capitalists; and it is to their honor that their morale has not been weakened by the action of the renegades to the workers' cause. Neither did the Bolsheviks persecute the intellectuals for merely being intellectuals as Kautsky reports. Even the papers of America know better than to repeat that "the Bolsheviks are killing all the educated people." The general characteristic of intellectuals, given by Kautsky, is very interesting and very significant, for here in a few lines is fully displayed that vacillating, confused and contradicting position which is so typical of him. Talking about the effect of the war on humanitarian ideas, Kautsky says: "Humanitarian ideas have been most influential among the intellectuals. They were free from military services longer than the others even after the volunteer system had been replaced by conscription. . . . as before, the intellectuals occupied a privileged position not outside the army, but in its ranks—they served as privileged volunteers or as officers of the reserve. In this manner the intellectuals longer than others were subjected to the influence of militarism in their thoughts and feelings. . . . and so the class of intellectuals associated with militarism became the pioneers of cruelty and violence. . . ."

"What has been said about the intellectuals is true also with regard to capitalists, whose humane ideas came into conflict first of all with the counter-tendencies of their class." (Page 151).

We might admire the literary skill with which Kautsky, beginning a paragraph with a statement that the intellectuals are the standard bearers of humaneness, smoothly develops it into a conclusion that they are also the pioneers of cruelty. Perhaps he implies that there are two groups of intellectuals: then to be sure there are those who belong to the capitalist class, who hold the privileged positions in the army and are the pioneers of cruelty. We beg to remind Kautsky that intellectuals do not constitute a class of their own, they belong to either of the two: capitalist or proletarian, and Kautsky ought to know better than to divide society into intellectuals and capitalists. The Bolsheviks divided the intellectuals in the same way they divided other people: into those who fought for the proletariat and those who supported the capitalists. Because they supported the capitalists and not for being intellectuals was the second group suppressed.

Kautsky is confused because he can no longer distinguish between a bourgeois and a working man: "It is never possible to draw a sharp line between a bourgeois and a proletarian, there is always something arbitrary in it which makes the idea of the soviets very flexible for erecting the foundation of the dictatorship of violence." (Page 170).

It is hardly necessary for the Bolsheviks to define the difference between a bourgeois and a proletarian: Marx did it long ago. It is strange though that Kautsky has forgotten it.

Kautsky is also mistaken when he claims that, like the intellectuals, the bourgeois have been made the victims of the "blind passion of revenge" for merely being bourgeois; that

they were deprived of all rights including the right to work, and then made to do the most unpleasant, the dirtiest work.

The bourgeois were not denied the right to work. It was they, who in an attempt to choke Soviet Russia in the claws of chaos, refused to work. Kautsky probably forgot about the sabotage of the bourgeois-minded intellectuals, or perhaps he missed that insignificant event while collecting the data on the "requisition" of women.

Another oppressed class in Russia is the working class. Kautsky proves it: "In the former days there was a feeling of enmity between the government bureaucracy and the capitalist bureaucracy. And the worker used to secure his rights sometimes from the first, sometimes from the other. Now the government and the capitalist bureaucracy are united into one: Such is the conclusive accord of the great socialist transformation brought about by Bolshevism. This means the most brutal tyranny ever fallen to the lot of Russia..." (Page 199). Kautsky does not give any examples of the protection afforded the workers by one bureaucracy from the other. He wisely does not attempt to prove the unprovable, for did he try to glance over the history of the proletarian movement, he would find it abundant in examples—proving that he is wrong. Kautsky knows that the strikers in the Lena gold mines, in Siberia, got their rights from the government only in the form of bullets and bayonets. He also knows about thousands of workers being tortured in jails by the government bureaucracy for rebelling against the capitalist bureaucracy. With a slight effort he could recall countless examples. But Kautsky unlearned that every government is a class government and in modern countries it is a *capitalist*, class government. Petty bourgeois liberals divide society into capitalists, workers and "public," and they insist that the government represents the "public." Kautsky also discovered that a government in capitalist countries represents this mysterious "public" and that it is not only neutral in the struggles between the workers and their exploiters, but even has a "feeling of enmity" towards the "capitalist bureaucracy." To Kautsky's credit, we must remark, he outstrips the liberals by discovering the fourth class: the before-mentioned "intellectual" class.

A part of the suppression of the people is the suppression of the freedom of the press. For that Kautsky blames mostly the naivete of the Bolsheviks. "The justification of the system of suppression of the press," he says, "is rooted in the naive opinion that there exists some kind of an absolute truth and that the communists alone possess it. Such a justification is also based on the belief that all writers are liars by nature and only the communists are the fanatics of truth.... As far as truthfulness is concerned we have to repeat after Pilate: 'What is truth?' There is no absolute truth, there is only a process of learning..." (Page 175).

Lack of space does not allow us to reproduce here in full Kautsky's analysis of the absolute truth, its relation to the holy fathers of the Spanish Inquisition and their distinction from Soviet leaders. We must omit this part, for, to be frank, Kautsky wastes time and energy in vain: the Bolsheviks suppressed the counter-revolutionary press not because they were stupid enough to believe in the "absolute truth," but because they were wise enough to understand that in time of civil war the press is a mighty weapon which would serve the reactionaries not for finding the truth but for concentrating their forces and enforcing their position.

A question naturally arises: How could such terrible creatures as the Bolsheviks exist for such a long time? Kautsky easily explains that. "Many revolutionists of the West point with triumph to the fact that Bolshevism is holding power so long—and at a time when these lines are written (May, 1919) it is still very strong. Its critics, on the other hand, predicted its speedy downfall at the very beginning of its domination. It would have come to ruin long ago if the Bolsheviks had remained true to their program; but they gave up one of their positions after the other. They preserved themselves personally, but sacrificed their principles, thereby displaying themselves real opportunists. Bolshevism is victorious in Russia but Socialism is defeated there." (Page 196).

Did the Bolsheviks give up their position? They assumed power with the view of establishing a proletarian state—dictatorship of the proletariat—for the purpose of suppressing the exploiting class and abolishing classes in society. They succeeded in that and Kautsky has as yet failed to prove that they betrayed their aims, that they took an anti-Marxian position in any important case, that they preserved only "themselves personally." His remarks that Lenin is trying to imitate Napoleon and that he, like the Corsican, would like "to move his army to foreign lands, and to carry victoriously the banners of his revolution through Europe..." are nothing else

but quotations from reactionary pamphlets fabricated by the Imperialists, attacking Russia.

Kautsky has not been original in his attacks against the Russian Revolution. First he followed in the footsteps of the Russian Mensheviks and then later was entirely carried away by his own mis-logic into the camp of the reactionaries. He repeated all he learned from them: tales about corruption, pillage, murder, nationalization of women. Finally he found himself where his friends had arrived nearly a year ago: on the summit of a mountain of lies that they had invented. There was nothing left of which to accuse the Bolsheviks. He had either to stop there and enjoy himself with repetition of what he had already told, or to descend; to resort to compromise, to change his position.

Conditions are forcing him to choose the second course, which he begins on the last pages of his book: "No matter what is the opinion of the Bolshevik methods, it must be admitted that the fact that the proletarian government not only assumed the power, but in spite of the most difficult circumstances, held it for almost two years, immensely increases self-consciousness among the workers of all countries. By this the Bolsheviks accomplished a great thing for the social revolution, much more than by their emissaries who brought to the proletarian movement more harm than revolutionary influence." (Page 227).

A surprisingly unexpected conclusion, after all that Kautsky has said before! In vain he tries to mask his inconsistency by distinguishing between the influence of the Bolshevik successes and the harmful work of the Bolsheviks and their emissaries, between Bolshevism proper on one hand and its forms on the other. The distinction is imaginary and artificial. It is clear: There would be no successes for Bolshevism if not for the work of the Bolsheviks.

* * * *

The controversy between Kautsky and Lenin reached its logical end. During it Kautsky never took the position of a Marxian socialist though he tried to involve Marx's name several times—and never tried to apply scientific analysis.

Vague, general statements, misinterpretations of Marx and Engels, false stories copied from doubtful authorities proved to be a weak weapon against the influence of the Bolshevik successes. Hence an abrupt change of front.

What Kautsky's position will next be, the future will show. Of one thing we are confident: Kautsky will no longer succeed in misleading the workers and hampering the emancipation of the proletariat.

EDITOR'S NOTE: When the above article was written, an English translation of "Terrorism and Communism" was not available. The quotations are from the German edition, translated by the reviewer.

NOTICE

We have been delayed in delivery of the book by Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, due to an accident in the print shop. However, we have a stock of "*The Proletarian Revolution*" by the same author and are sending them out as fast as we can fill the orders. We expect to be able to supply "*The State and Revolution*" by the time this paper reaches our readers. The price of these books is 40c per copy.

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM

We are pleased to announce that about January 15th we will be able to supply "*Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*", in any quantities desired. This is one of the most important contributions that Lenin has made to revolutionary literature and should be read by everyone who is interested in the movement. We have printed extracts from this work in this issue of *The Proletarian*. The price will be 50 cents per copy.