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SOCIALISM by Max Weber

A TRANSLATION WITH AN INTRODUCTION

H. F. Dickie-Clark

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School Of Development Studies
University Of Kwa-Zulu Natal
Howard College Campus
Durban 4041

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S O C I A L I S M

by

MAX WEBER

(Translated with an Introduction by H. F. Dickie-Clark)

Institute for Social Research,
University of Natal,
Durban, South Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

The observance in 1964 of the centenary of Max Weber's birth gave fresh drive to the study and discussion of his writings. This introduction to his lecture on socialism does not attempt to contribute to the already very large secondary literature on Weber. It merely presents this example of his work, giving some of the circumstances in which it appeared and suggesting something of what may be gained from it.

Weber spent the summer term of 1918 lecturing at the University of Vienna. Revolution and the end of the war were to come that winter. In both the German and the Austrian army the morale of the troops must have been affected by war-weariness and revolutionary propaganda. As part of the effort to retain control of the situation, officers of the Austrian army were given instruction in political matters presumably so that they would be better able to counteract the demoralization. Weber was invited to introduce the course of instruction at the University of Vienna and the lecture translated here was given on that occasion.

On the topic of socialism itself there is little that is new or profound in this lecture. Understandably, for it was geared to its audience and their purposes. Gerth and Mills tell us that in his regular work at the University during this period Weber was giving a course entitled, "A Positive Critique of the Materialist Concep-

tion of History"^{1]}. He himself tells his military audience at this lecture that, "Indeed the nature of the subject is such that one should take six months to deal fully with it. For, at this level of treatment, one is accustomed to present these ideas before a trained, academic audience".

Nevertheless, the lecture does reveal something of Weber's thinking on several matters besides party socialism. His great theme of increasing bureaucratization and the power of the official runs throughout the presentation and becomes a powerful check to socialist expectations and revolutionary hopes. Inevitably, he talks of Marxism and his opinion of the Communist Manifesto as an intellectual product is given with characteristic force and honesty. His extension to non-economic activities of the Marxist notion of the separation of the worker from the means of production is simply and effectively set out.

Weber's guess as to the viability of the Russian revolutionary regime was a bad one. Speaking in July, 1918, he may be forgiven for underestimating how long the Russian "experiment" would last. But the reinstated Czarist officers did not regain control as he thought they might do and the new Russian economy and machinery of state survived even the added trial of external attack.

1] H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, 1948, p. 23.

Weber was probably correct in saying that the workers could not easily come by the specialized knowledge needed for the management of production. However, the success of a socialist order of society depends quite as much on control at the governmental level. For this, administrative experience gained in very large trade unions and political parties is an adequate preparation as the history of the British Labour Party shows.

The comments Weber makes on the militarism of the university-educated class in America are possibly surprising. There is no reference for the example he takes from the writings of bellicose American economists and so it is difficult to evaluate this point^{1]}.

For the rest the American students' interest in duelling and the reluctance of cadets to shovel snow should perhaps, like the superabundance of military private schools in present-day America, be set down to snobbery rather than

1] In a letter to the writer, Professor Reinhard Bendix made the following comment: "The Weber passage you quote is not obviously a direct quotation, but appears to be a paraphrase. Given the wealth of literature at that period it would be fairly hopeless to attempt to find some specific phrasing on which Weber may have based his remarks. But this is also unnecessary. In a book by Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), chp. 9 on "Racism and Imperialism" you will find ample evidence for the type of thinking to which Weber referred, and he is quite right in attributing that thinking to prominent academicians and other spokesmen of the period".

to militarism. Weber's other remark that the Americans "probably thought of modern war . . . as a kind of knightly sport" is also somewhat surprising. In scale, in organization and in sheer slaughter the American Civil War could well claim to have been the first of the modern wars. As such it should have given Americans as good an understanding of war as any nation had before 1914.

Weber's contempt for those intellectuals who enter politics for reasons of personality, severe as it may seem, is derived from important elements in his thinking. In his statement of the qualities needed in the politician he specifically excludes the empty excitability and lack of balance found in this type of intellectual and political dilettante^{1]}. A second reason for Weber's disdain is to be found in his view of scholarship, especially of its "wertfrei" character. This view, with its exclusion of values, implies that scholarship and political action are quite distinct. At its best, scholarship is objective, non-partisan and therefore always uncommitted to values other than its own rules. Political or any other action is always partisan and motivated by the acceptance of some absolute value. Weber, it seems, was critical of the intellectual romantics in the syndicalist movement because they were poor revolutionaries. They could just as well have been criticized for being poor intellectuals.

This distinction between fact and value (or, as Weber sometimes put it, between empirical study and prophecy)

1] See: "Politics as a Vocation" in Gerth and Mills, op. cit., pp. 77 - 128.

which he made so rigorously has in recent years been both watered down by Wrong^{1]} and hotly attacked by Gouldner^{2]}. The attempt to demolish the traditional value-free notion of scholarship may well be simply part of the current demand for a "new sociology" whole-heartedly committed to certain values. As such, Weber would be the last to expect its exponents to abandon their particular demon in the face of rational argument.

On the other hand it seems very possible that both Wrong and Gouldner (and perhaps others also) have been misled by a passage in the translation of some of Weber's methodological writings made by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch^{3]}. The passage which would seem to have been the inspiration of some of Wrong's and Gouldner's

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- 1] Dennis H. Wrong, "Max Weber: the scholar as hero", Columbia University Forum (Summer 1962), pp.31-37. On p. 36, Wrong says, "Yet I do not believe that Weber would have approved of the total disjunction between knowledge and values which is taken for granted today ... As a matter of fact, Weber made it plain that he was not opposed 'to the clear-cut introduction of one's own ideals into the discussion', to a teacher's stating his values in the classroom or in a scholarly work provided he did not preach them, or fail to make clear when he was evaluating rather than describing or interpreting objective fact".
- 2] Alvin W. Gouldner, "Anti-Minotaur: the myth of a value-free sociology", Chapter 13 in The New Sociology, edited by Irving Louis Horowitz, Oxford University Press, New York, 1965. Originally published in Social Problems, 9, (Winter 1962). On p. 198 of The New Sociology, Gouldner says: "If Weber insisted on the need to maintain scientific objectivity, he also warned that this was altogether different from moral indifference".
- 3] Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, translated and edited by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch, Free Press, 1949.

relevant comments reads as follows:

The constant confusion of the scientific discussion of facts and their evaluation is still one of the most widespread and also one of the most damaging traits of work in our field. The foregoing arguments are directed against this confusion, and not against the clear-cut introduction of one's own ideals into the discussion. An attitude of moral indifference has no connection with scientific 'objectivity'1].

The original German^{2]} of the crucial second and third sentences could, I suggest, be more accurately translated as:

The foregoing arguments are directed against this confusion not, however, against standing up for one's own ideals. Lack of convictions and scientific 'objectivity' have no intrinsic relationship.

Thus Weber said nothing at all about the "clear-cut introduction" of values into discussions which, it is implied, were scientific ones. Nor is it necessary to bring the notion of "moral indifference" into it.

While making allowance for the latitude a translator must be permitted, it could be argued that the Shils and Finch rendering is misleading (because value-laden?) and that therefore to the extent that Wrong, Gouldner and others have relied upon it in their discussion of Weber's 'Wertfreiheit', to that extent their position is untenable.

1] Shils and Finch, op. cit., p. 60.

2] In Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre, 2nd edition revised by Johannes Winckelmann, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen, 1951, p. 157, the passage is as follows: „Gegen diese Vermischung, nicht etwa gegen das Eintreten für die eigenen Ideale richten sich die vorstehenden Ausführungen: Gesinnungslosigkeit und wissenschaftliche 'Objektivität' haben Keinerlei innere verwandschaft.“

That Weber's separation of fact and value was in principle rigorous and complete is quite clear from his methodological writings considered as a whole. That this intellectual position involved Weber in agonizing moral conflict is equally obvious and well-known. Thus he finally turned down the offer of a political career in 1918 and even when engaged in a clearly political activity, as when giving this lecture to the Austrian officers, he tried as Baumgarten points out to awaken in them an "objective" interest in socialism^{1]}.

I began working on this translation as long ago as 1954 and I must acknowledge the help that I received then from the late Dr. C. J. Meyer of Rhodes University. For recent assistance in supplementing my dictionary-bound German, I am grateful to Professor Hansi Pollak and especially to Dr. Hildegard Stielau. I must also thank J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) of Tübingen, the publishers of Max Weber's "Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik" which contains this lecture, for permission to publish an English translation.

Institute for Social Research,
University of Natal, Durban,
Republic of South Africa. 1967.

1] Eduard Baumgarten, Max Weber Werk und Person,
J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen, 1964, page 529.

Foreword by the Publishers, 1918

The following lecture was delivered by University Professor Dr. Max Weber of Heidelberg while teaching at the University of Vienna. It was given before an audience of officers of the Imperial and Royal Army as a general introduction to a course of lectures on socialism.

Because it might be of interest beyond this circle it is published, with the permission of the lecturer, from a shorthand report.

Gentlemen,

This is the first time I have had the honour of speaking in the circle of the officers' corps of the Imperial and Royal Army. It is, understandably, somewhat perplexing for me, particularly since I am unfamiliar with those inner workings of the army routine which are decisive in maintaining the authority of the officers over the other ranks. It is obvious that the officer of the Reserve or the Territorials (Landwehr) must always be an amateur. Not only because he has not had the professional training of the military academy, but also because he does not keep in constant touch with the whole inner nerve system of the profession.

Nonetheless, I believe that someone like myself who has been in the German army for some time, and in very different parts of Germany, can have a limited insight into the relations between officers, non-commissioned officers and men. Enough, at least, to see that certain kinds of influence might be exerted while other kinds would be difficult or impossible. Of course, I am quite ignorant of how such things are arranged in the Imperial and Royal Army. If I have any idea at all of relationships within the Imperial and Royal Army, then it is only of the enormous practical difficulties which flow from linguistic differences. Reserve officers have often tried to explain to me how, without any real knowledge of the language of the other ranks, they manage to maintain sufficient contact to exert some influence over them in matters other than service ones.

I myself can speak only from the German standpoint and may I, first of all, make some observations on the way in which we exert influence in these matters. These remarks are made from a "worm's eye" or restricted view of the matter ("aus der Froschperspektive"). Thus, for instance, during my frequent travels in Germany, if I was not going far and had no very exacting task ahead of me, I made it my rule always to travel in the Third Class. In this way I have come into contact with many hundreds of men who were returning from or going to the Front. Moreover, I had such contacts just at the time when what is called information work (Aufklärungsarbeit) had been started. On these occasions, without specifically broaching the subject, I have heard the men express very different views on it. As it happened, my experience was almost always with very reliable men who never questioned the authority of the officers. Only occasionally did one find men who adopted a somewhat different attitude. Now, the point that one must acknowledge is that there is an inherent problem in all information work. This problem is that as soon as the men become suspicious that party political interests are involved in any way many of them will be sceptical. When they go on leave they are in touch with their party men and then, of course, it becomes difficult to retain their confidence.

In Germany too, and understandably enough, there are occasional grumbles; now against the General Staff, at another time against something else. However, military authority itself has never been basically questioned and

indeed the men recognize unreservedly the military competence of the officers, This I have always found to be so.

On the other hand, one hears the following idea expressed again and again in a number of partial, naive utterances. "Yes, when we are advised by the officers on our private affairs, the fact of the matter is that our officers belong to a different social class and with the best will in the world cannot put themselves in our place. Nor can they understand our position as clearly as we, who stand behind the machine or the plough, can do". Thus the men do not unreservedly acknowledge the authority of the officers in matters in which they themselves claim competence and I have the feeling that, perhaps, if tackled in the wrong way, the information service will cause the military authority of the officers which remains quite unshaken to suffer also.

Then there is another mistake which, although no longer made, was common in earlier discussions on socialism particularly among the party-political opponents of the Social Democrats. There are good reasons why one has long given up talking to the workers about their trade union and party officials. It used to be said of them, "They are really the people who live off the workers, far more than do the entrepreneurs". To which every worker can obviously reply, "Certainly these people live on my pennies. I pay them. But for that very reason they are responsible to me. They are dependent on me and I know that they have to represent my interests. So I am not prepared to argue about that, for they are worth their few pennies to me".

Much the same applies to those intellectuals who everywhere coin the watchwords, battle-cries and phrases used by all parties, including those of the Left and the Social Democrats. We have by now rightly given up trying to discredit these people in that way.

More specifically, in my opinion, it is a matter for congratulation that in Germany relations with the trade unions have been good. In other respects one may think what one likes of the trade unions. They also make foolish mistakes. Yet, good relations with them are especially prudent from the military standpoint. For they represent, after all, something which characterizes military organizations also. One may think what one pleases about strikes. They are indeed chiefly a struggle over self-interest, over wages. But very often, however, they are a conflict over ideals as well. For example, over honour as it is understood by the worker. And each one of us has his own idea of what honour means. This sentiment of honour and of comradeship among the workers in a factory, or in the same department, holds them together and is the same sentiment upon which, in another sphere, the cohesion of military units depends.

There is no means of doing away altogether with strikes. One has only the choice between openly recognised or secret combinations of this kind. I consider therefore that it is wise, from a military standpoint also, to come to terms on the following basis. One must accept that such is the position and as long as one can live peaceably with the unions and as long as they do not endanger military

interests, then it is best to reach an agreement with them as has actually happened in Germany. These are my own impressions.

But now I would like to return to my subject; socialism and the adoption of an attitude towards it. It is for this that you have honoured me by inviting me here. Indeed the nature of the subject is such that one should take six months to deal fully with it. For, at this level of treatment, one is accustomed to present these ideas before a trained academic audience.

First I draw your attention to the fact that there are many different kinds of socialists. There are people who call themselves socialists but who would not be accepted as such by a member of any of the various socialist parties. Today all parties of pure socialist character are democratic parties. I would like next to delve briefly into this democratic character. What, then, is democracy today? This question which I am now able to discuss only briefly, is pertinent to our whole discussion; for democracy can mean a great number of different things. Essentially, it means that no formal inequality of political rights exists among the separate classes of the population. But what a variety of consequences that has!

In the older type of democracy in the Swiss cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Appenzell and Glaurus all the citizens gather together even today. In Appenzell there are 12,000 enfranchised people. In the other cantons there are from 3,000 to 5,000. They gather there on a great square and vote on everything from the election of a magis-

trate to a new finance bill. Or after discussion they decide on any question by the simple raising of hands. When, however, you look further at the lists of magistrates who have been chosen over a period of fifty or sixty years in this old kind of Swiss democracy, you will find that the names, to a remarkable extent, are the same and that certain families have held these offices over many years. Thus, although a democracy indeed exists in law, this democracy is nonetheless aristocratically governed. And for the very simple reason that the office of Swiss Magistrate is not something which any business or professional man could undertake without ruining his livelihood. A magistrate must be one who in the economic sense can be spared and as a rule such a person can only be a man of means. Otherwise he must be highly paid and provided with a pension.

Democracies have only this simple choice; either they are cheaply administered by rich people in honorary posts, or expensively by paid professional officials. The latter alternative which has meant the development of a professional bureaucracy has actually been the fate of all modern democracies in which titular offices have not lasted, that is to say, in states of great size.

Such is the present situation in America. In that country the theory of the matter is very much as it is in Switzerland. For the President of the whole Union and also most of the officials of the state governments are elected by direct or indirect equal franchise even if not by meetings of the entire citizenry (Landesversammlungen).

The President then nominates the other officials of the Federal government. It has been found that the officials nominated by the elected President are very much more efficient, and above all, less corrupt than those officials elected by the people. This is because the President and the party behind him obviously are held responsible by the voters for seeing that the officials they nominate possess, at least in some measure, the qualities which the voters expect of them.

This American democracy depends upon the rule that every four years when the President changes the over 300,000 officials whom he has nominated also change, and every four years the Governors of the individual states and their many thousands of officials change too. This type of democracy is now coming to an end. It was government by amateurs for these officials who were appointed by the party were nominated because they had performed services for the party. One enquired but little into their qualifications for the work. Until recently a test of these by means of examinations or something of that kind was formally unknown in the American democracy. On the contrary, the viewpoint often was that offices should to a certain extent be held in turn so that each party should get a chance at the manger.

I have frequently spoken to American workers about this. The genuine American Yankee working man has a high level of wages and education. The wage of an American worker is higher than that of many assistant professors at American universities. These working men have all the

habits of bourgeois society. They appear in top hats with their wives who have perhaps slightly less versatility and elegance, but who otherwise behave exactly like any lady. Meanwhile, the immigrants from Europe stream into the lower strata.

Thus if I sat with one of these working men and said to him, "How can you allow yourselves to be ruled by these officials who are placed in office over you and obviously owe their positions to the party? They have to contribute to the party a certain portion of their earnings and then after four years they have to get out without any pension. Thus obviously, they must make as much as they can out of their offices. How can you allow yourselves to be governed by this corrupt group which in such notorious fashion steals hundreds of millions from you?" Then to this question I would get a characteristic answer which I venture to give you word for word in their direct fashion. "That doesn't matter at all. There is more than enough money for this stealing and there is always enough over for others - ourselves included - to earn. We spit upon these officials, on these 'professionals'. We despise them. But if the official positions were taken over by an examined, educated class, as with you over there, then they would spit on us!" For them this argument was decisive. They fear the development of an officialdom such as in fact exists in Europe, of a bureaucracy made up of a class of university-trained and specialised officials.

Now, obviously, the time is long past when even in

America one can be governed by amateurs, and a professional officialdom is growing very rapidly. Professional examinations have been introduced and while at first formally obligatory only for the more technical posts, they are rapidly being extended. There are already about 100,000 Presidential nominees who may be nominated only on the completion of an examination. In this way, the first and most important step towards the overthrow of the old democracy has been taken.

What is more, the American university has thereby also begun to play an altogether different rôle and to change basically in spirit. For - and this is not always known outside America - the American universities and the classes educated in them were the originators of the war and not the armaments manufacturers who are found in all countries. When I was over there in 1904, there was nothing I was more often asked about by American students than how student duels were arranged in Germany and what one must do to come by duelling scars. For they considered duelling to be a chivalrous institution which they also must have. The gravity of this lies in the fact that writings, especially in my subjects, were tuned to this mood. Even in the best works of that time I found the following conclusion. "It is fortunate that the world economy is moving towards the point at which it will be profitable ('a sound business view') to take world trade away from each other by means of war. Then at last we Americans will cease to be undignified dollar-earners and chivalty and a warlike spirit will once more rule the world".

They probably imagined modern war to be something like the battle of Fontenoy where the herald of the French called out to the enemy, "Gentlemen of England, you shoot first!" They thought of war as a kind of knightly sport which would replace this polluting hunt after money with aristocratic and class sentiments. As you see, this caste criticises America exactly as America, as far as I know, is criticized in Germany and it acts accordingly. From this caste, moreover, come the country's most influential statesmen.

As a consequence of this war, America will emerge as a state with a great army, an officers' corps and a bureaucracy. Already in 1904 I spoke to American officers who were very little in agreement with the demands which the American democracy makes on them. For example, it happened that I was staying with the family of a daughter of a colleague and the servant-girl had just left - as you know, over there the servant-girls had a two hour period of notice. The two sons of the house who were Marine cadets came in and the mother said, "You must go and sweep away the snow or I shall have to pay a fine of a hundred dollars a day". The sons, who were at that time in the company of German naval officers, considered that it was not done for them to sweep away snow. Whereupon the mother said, "If you do not do it, then I must do it myself".

It is self-evident that for America this war will result in the development of a bureaucracy and so also of chances for the advancement of university men - understandably, that also lies behind it. In short, it means that America is being Europeanized at least as quickly as

it has been said that Europe was being Americanized. Modern democracy, wherever it is of the large-scale variety, will become a bureaucratic democracy. This must be so because the titular officials, aristocratic or other, are replaced by a paid officialdom. This is taking place everywhere; in political parties as well. And this fact which is inescapable is the first with which socialism too, has to reckon. There is a necessity for lengthy specialist training, ever more specialised knowledge and for leadership by such a trained, specialised bureaucracy. In no other way can a modern economy be conducted.

In particular, however, it is this inescapable, universal bureaucratization which lies behind one of the most frequently cited shibboleths of socialism; the cry of "the separation of the workers from the means of production". What does this mean? The worker is, so we are told, "separated" from the actual means with which he produces and from this separation results the wage slavery in which he finds himself. Here one is thinking of the fact that in the Middle Ages the worker was the owner of the tools he used, while the modern wage-earner obviously is not, nor can he become, the owner. This is so whether the mine or factory is operated by an entrepreneur or by the state. Furthermore, one is thinking of the fact that the craftsman himself bought the raw materials with which he worked, while nowadays this is not, nor can it be, the case with the wage-earner. Finally, one is thinking that in accordance with the system of the Middle Ages, and even today where handwork still exists, the product was at the free disposal of the craftsman who sold it on the market and

could thus convert it to his own profit. In the case of large enterprises the product is not at the disposal of the workers but of those who own the means of production whether they be private entrepreneurs or the state.

This is all true, but it is something which is in no way peculiar to the economic process of production alone. We experience the same thing in the universities, for example. The old-time lecturer or professor worked with a library or with technical equipment which he himself had provided or made. With these he then produced the chemicals or whatever else was needed for his scientific activities. On the other hand, the majority of present-day workers in modern universities, especially the assistants in the large institutes, are in exactly the same position in this respect as is any industrial worker. They can be dismissed at any time. On the premises of the institute they have no other rights than have workers in a factory. They must abide by the standing regulations exactly as workers must. They do not own the materials, apparatus or machines, etc., which are used in an institute for Chemistry or Physics, a dissecting room or a clinic. On the contrary, these are the property of the state although they are managed by the head of the institute who draws an emolument for doing so; while the assistant receives an income which is determined in virtually the same way as is that of a skilled workman.

We find exactly the same in armies. The knight of old was the owner of his horse and equipment. He had to equip and maintain himself. The organisation of an army in those days rested upon the principle of self-equipment and,

as in the cities of Antiquity, so also in the mediaeval armies of knights, one had to provide one's own armour, lance and horse and bring one's provisions with one. The modern army came into being at that moment when the ruler himself began to equip his troops. When, as a result, the soldier and the officer - who indeed is something other than merely another official, but who in this sense corresponds closely to an official - were no longer owners of the means of waging war.

Indeed, the cohesion of the modern army rests upon this fact. It was for this very reason that the Russian soldiers were for so long unable to escape from the trenches. For as long as this organisation of officers' corps, commisariat and existing officials was in being, every man in the army knew that his sustenance and indeed his whole existence was dependent upon the continued functioning of this organisation. They were all "separated" from the means of waging war quite as much as workers are ever separated from the means of production.

The functionary of feudal times was in exactly the same position as a knight. He was a vassal who had been invested with the powers of government and of jurisdiction. He bore the costs of these functions out of his own pocket and got emoluments in return. He was thus in possession of the means of ruling. The modern state came into being when the ruler took all these means of power into his own hands, appointed paid officials and thereby achieved the "separation" of the officials from the means of government.

Thus everywhere it is the same. Through the agency of a bureaucratic, organised human apparatus the means within the factory, the government, the army and the university institutes are concentrated in the hands of those who control this human apparatus. This development is due in part to the technical nature of modern implements - the machines, guns, etc., and in part simply to the greater efficiency of this form of human co-operation; to the growth of "discipline" in army, in bureaucracy, in industry and in business or profession.

In any case, however, it is a grave mistake to hold that this separation of the workers from their means of production is peculiar only to economics and, moreover, to the economics of private enterprise. The basic facts of the case remain the same whoever the master of the apparatus may be. The "separation" from the means of production continues when, instead of a private manufacturer, a State President or a Minister has them at his disposal. So long as there are mines, blast furnaces, railways, factories and machines they will never become the property of a single worker or a number of workers in the same sense that the materials used in handwork in the Middle Ages were the property of a single guildmaster, provincial corporation, or guild. That is debarred by the nature of present-day techniques.

How then is socialism related to this fact? As has already been mentioned, the word has many meanings. But one usually thinks of the opposite of socialism as being private enterprise. That is to say, a condition in which

the satisfaction of economic needs is in the hands of private entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs obtain the essential plant, administrative staff and labour force by purchase and wage agreement, they have the goods produced at their own economic risk and then in expectation of profit they sell them on the market. This kind of private enterprise in economics has been called in socialist theory "the anarchy of production". For it leaves to chance whether or not the personal interest of the individual entrepreneur in making a profit will be able to guarantee the supply of goods to those who need them.

Now, demands can be met by undertakings which are either private or non-private. The latter kind of enterprise because it is systematically organised is, in the widest sense of the word, socialistic. In any given society the extent to which either kind of enterprise is used has been subject to historical change.

In the Middle Ages, for example, republics like Genoa waged their great colonial wars on Cyprus by means of limited liability companies, the so-called *Maonae*. These supplied the necessary money, hired an adequate number of mercenaries and conquered the land. Thereafter, they received the protection of the republic and obviously exploited the land for their own purposes either as plantations or as an object for taxation. In a similar fashion, the East India Company conquered India for England, but exploited the country itself. The *condottiere* of the late Italian Renaissance period belonged to the same category. He, just like Wallenstein, the last of them, recruited his

army in his own name and out of his own resources. Into his pocket there flowed also a share of the loot taken by the army and naturally he would stipulate that a certain sum should be paid to him by the prince, king or emperor as compensation for his efforts and to cover his costs. The colonel of a regiment in the eighteenth century, in a rather less independent manner, was also a contractor who had to furnish and clothe recruits. It is true that he could have recourse to the depot of the ruler, but he always operated to a great extent at his own risk and for his own profit. Thus the waging of war by private enterprise, which to us today would seem monstrous, was then regarded as altogether normal.

On the other hand, no mediaeval city or guild would ever have considered leaving to free trade the provision of either the city's supply of grain or the guild's supply of imported raw materials which were essential for the work of their master craftsmen. Instead, from Antiquity - especially in Rome - and throughout the Middle Ages the city itself was responsible for its food supply which was merely supplemented by free trade. That is broad sections of the economy co-operated in much the same way as happens now in a wartime "planned economy" (Durchstaatlichung), as people like to call it.

From this perspective, the hallmark of our present-day economic situation is that private enterprise combined with a private bureaucratic organization (and thus involving the separation of the workers from the means of production) together control the field of industrial production to a

greater extent than ever before in world history. Moreover, this change coincides with the establishment of mechanical production in the factory. This in turn results in a local accumulation of workers in one and the same area, in the worker becoming inseparably linked to his machine and finally, in a common labour discipline in the machine-room or mine. It is this discipline which first gave its particular character to the modern type of "separation" of the workers from the means of work.

Modern socialism was born, then, out of these circumstances; out of the discipline of the factory. There have been various kinds of socialism at all times and in every country of the earth, but modern socialism in its characteristic form is possible only on this basis.

This subjection to labour discipline is very keenly felt by the industrial worker because, in contrast to a slave plantation or a socage farm, modern industry depends upon an extremely rigorous process of selection. A present-day manufacturer does not employ every likely-looking worker merely because he is prepared to work for a reasonable wage. Instead, he places the man at a machine on piece wages and says, "All right, set to work and let us see how much you can earn." And if the man is incapable of earning a certain minimum wage he is told, "We are sorry, but you have no talent for this job and we cannot use you." He is rejected because the machine is not fully exploited if it is not operated by a man who is able to use it to the full.

This or something similar happens everywhere. In contrast to the slavery of Antiquity where the master was linked to the slaves he owned because their death meant financial loss to him, all modern industry rests upon this principle of selection. Furthermore, the competition of manufacturers with each other which ties the individual entrepreneur down to certain wage maxima, makes this selection extremely rigorous. So this constraint on the wages of the worker is linked with the necessity for discipline.

If today the workers come to the entrepreneur and say, "We cannot exist on these wages and you could pay us more." Then the employer, at least in peace time and in those branches of industry where there is really keen competition, is able in nine out of ten cases to demonstrate from his books to the workers that such is not the case. He can show that his competitors pay such and such a wage, and that if he paid his workers only so and so much more per head, then every bit of profit he is able to pay out to the shareholders would disappear. Therefore he could not remain in business because he would not be able to get any credit from the bank. In all this, the entrepreneur is very often telling only the naked truth. In addition, when there is competition, the making of a profit depends upon replacing as many workers as possible, and especially the more highly paid ones, with new labour-saving machines. In this way, "skilled" workers are replaced by "unskilled" ones or by "semi-skilled" workers whose skills are directly acquired at the machine. This is unavoidable and happens

all the time.

All this is what socialism interprets as "the power of things over people", i.e., of the means over the end, which in this case is the supplying of needs. Socialists understand that while in the past there were individuals who could be made responsible for the fate of customers, bondsmen or slaves, nowadays this cannot be done. For that reason they attack the system of production as such, and not persons. The well-schooled socialist absolutely refuses to make the individual employer responsible for the workers' lot and will argue that it is the system, the coercive conditions to which both the employers and the workers are subjected, which is the cause.

But what then would socialism be in a positive sense, when compared to this system of private enterprise? In the broadest sense, socialism falls into the category of what is called a "communal or public economy" (Gemeinwirtschaft). This is to say, an economy in which the profit motive would be absent and private entrepreneurs would no longer engage in production at their own calculation and risk. Instead, national officials would control production in accordance with certain economic principles or viewpoints which will be discussed presently. As a result of this difference, the so-called anarchy of production, i.e., competition among entrepreneurs, would also be avoided.

Many people especially in Germany say that, as a result of the war, we are already well on the way towards such a "communal economy". In view of this may I briefly

point out now that the economy of any nation could be organised on the basis of either of two rather different principles.

The first of these principles is to be seen in what we nowadays call "economic planning" and is undoubtedly familiar to all who work in war industries. It depends upon co-operation between the management of an industry and civil or military state officials. In this way, not only could raw materials, credit, prices and customers be largely and systematically regulated, but the state's participation in profits and decision-making within these combines can also take place.

Some people believe that with this kind of supervision of entrepreneurs by officials and control of production by the state, we already have the "real", "true" socialism or are on the way to it. But there is widespread scepticism of this belief in Germany. I want to leave out of account the question of how production is organised during wartime. For as every sensible person knows, in peace time it would not be possible to carry on economically as we have been doing unless we wish to be ruined. In peace time any such enforced cartellization of the manufacturers in each branch of industry and the participation of the state in such cartels in which the state would surrender far-reaching rights of control in return for a share of the profits, would really mean not the control of industry by the state but the control of the state by industry. And indeed it would be control

of a most unpleasant kind.

For, within these combines the political representatives would sit at the same table with the factory owners who would be more than a match for them in knowledge of the industry, in business training and in self-interest. Within Parliament, on the other hand, would sit the representatives of the workers who would demand that the representatives of the state in the cartels use the power they are considered to have to provide for both high wages and low prices. But a state which shares in the profits or losses of industry would naturally be interested in high prices and low wages in order not to ruin its finances. Furthermore, the manufacturers in the combines would expect the state to guarantee that the industries be profitable. In the eyes of the workers such a government would be a class, government in the fullest sense of the word and I doubt if that would be politically desirable. I am even more doubtful if it is wise to suggest to the workers that this state of affairs is the real, "true" socialism, even though it certainly appears to come temptingly close to it.

The workers would soon discover that their fate does not depend on whether the enterprise is privately or state owned. In the coal-mines of the Saar, the life of the workers is exactly the same as in any privately owned pit. If the mine is badly managed and so pays poorly, then it goes hard with the men also. But the difference is that the workers cannot strike against the state and so their sub-ordination under this kind of state socialism is considerably greater. That is one of the reasons why this

form of socialism, this kind of "planned economy", is generally opposed by Social Democrats.

Such a planned economy is a community of cartels (Kartellierungsgemeinschaft) in which the profit motive remains decisive. That is, the earnings of the individual entrepreneurs, now combined in cartels and with one of their number become the state treasurer, still determine how the economy will be carried on. At the present time the political bureaucracy of the state and the officialdom of private enterprise in cartels, banks and giant industries are separate bodies. For that reason it is always possible to bridle economic forces by means of political power. The awkward thing is that under a system of state socialism the two kinds of official would merge into a single bureaucracy and thus be uncontrollable. In any event, the profit motive would remain as the main incentive of production. It would mean, however, that the hatred of the workers which is now directed at the entrepreneurs, would then be incurred in part by the state.

In the light of what has been said, the chief alternative to the profit motive could only be some kind of consumers' co-operative which would ask, "What needs ought to be met by the economy of the state?" It is well known that many consumers' organizations, particularly in Belgium, have gone over to setting up their own factories. If one were to imagine that this became the general practice and was placed under the control of the state, then that would be an entirely and basically different kind of socialism, viz., consumer socialism. At present, we know nothing at

all about who would call such organizations into being or who would manage them. For, so far, consumers as such have not proved capable of more than a very limited amount of organization.

People who share a definite interest in gain are very readily brought together when such a merger can be shown to increase or secure profits. This is why it would be possible to create the kind of managerial socialism which "economic planning" implies. On the contrary, it is extraordinarily difficult to bring together people who have nothing more in common with one another than the wish to buy something or to provide for themselves. This is so because the whole situation of the purchaser stands in the way of socialization. A good illustration of this comes from Germany at the present time where the meals provided by the war-kitchens are tasty and excellently prepared. Even starvation has not, or has only slowly, been able to induce the housewives of the mass of the population to forego their amateurish, individual preparation of meals, in favour of these others which are incomparably cheaper.

With this as introduction, I come at last to the kind of socialism set out in the programmes of the large-scale socialist parties like the Social Democrats.

The fundamental document of this kind of socialism is

the Communist Manifesto of the year 1847, published and circulated in January, 1848 by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. This document, however much one may reject its crucial theses, and I do that, is in its way a scientific achievement of the first order. There is no denying that and it ought not to be denied, since no one would agree, and since it cannot be denied with a clear conscience. There is in the very contentions we reject today an ingenious error which has had politically far-reaching and perhaps not always pleasant consequences. Nonetheless, it has had very fruitful results for science; more fruitful results than an uninspired correctness often brings.

There is one thing about the Communist Manifesto which must be said at once: in intention, if not always in practice, it abstains from moralising. It never occurred to the authors of the Communist Manifesto to bewail the wickedness and baseness of the world. At least this is what they asserted. In point of fact, they were very passionate people and did not always stick to their intentions. But they did not think that it was their task to point out what must be changed in the world. Instead, the Communist Manifesto is a prophetic document. It prophesies the downfall of private enterprise and of the capitalist organization of society. It prophesies also, and as a transition stage, the replacement of this society by a dictatorship of the proletariat. However, beyond this transitory phase lies the ultimate hope: the proletariat cannot free itself from servitude without making an end to all domination of man over man. That is

the essential prophecy, the heart of the Manifesto without which it would never have been written. The masses of the workers, the Proletariat, will first of all get hold of political power through their leaders. But this is merely a passing phase which will lead to an "Association of Individuals", as it is called, which is thus the final condition.

On what this Association will be like, the Communist Manifesto itself and also all the programmes of all socialist parties are silent. We are told that one cannot know. One can say only that this present society is doomed to destruction. It will perish in accordance with natural laws and will be followed by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. All we can say beforehand about what is to come is that the domination of man over man will not continue.

What reasons are given for this inevitable downfall of present society in accordance with natural law? Because the second essential of this pathetic prophecy which led to the triumphant faith of the masses was that it would take its course strictly in conformity with natural laws. Engels once used the illustration that just as in due time the Earth will plunge into the Sun, even so is capitalist society condemned to destruction. What reasons are put forward in support of this belief?

The first reason is that a social class like the bourgeoisie, that is primarily the entrepreneurs and those

who share their interests either directly or indirectly, can maintain its rule only when it can guarantee to the subordinate classes, the wage-earners, at least a bare existence. This it was possible to do under slavery, under feudalism and so on. Always in these cases the subordinates were at least assured of a bare existence and for that reason the rulers were able to maintain their dominant position. But this the modern bourgeoisie cannot do. Indeed they cannot do so because competition forces them to undersell each other to an ever greater extent and more and more to throw on the street ("brotlos auf das Pflaster zu werfen") those workers who have been replaced by machines. There has to be a large class of unemployed, the so-called "Reserve Army of Industry", from which the entrepreneurs can select capable workers for their factories in sufficient numbers and at any time. At the same time, the increasing use of automatic machinery produces this class of unemployed. The result, so the authors of the Communist Manifesto believed, is a steadily growing class of the permanently unemployed, of paupers, who undercut the minimum wage needed for that bare existence which this type of organization can no longer guarantee to the proletariat. When this happens society becomes impossible and it will collapse in revolution.

Today this so-called pauperization theory has in this form been expressly and without exception relinquished as incorrect by all varieties of Social Democrat. On the publication of the jubilee edition of the Communist Manifesto its editor, Karl Kautsky, admitted explicitly that

developments have taken a path other than this one. The argument is now maintained in a different form which, although not undisputed, has laid aside its earlier, pathetic character.

However that may be, what are the chances of success in such a revolution? Could it not be doomed to ever new failures? With this we come to the second argument for the inevitable downfall of capitalism. Competition among the entrepreneurs means the victory of those who are superior in capital and in business ability, but more especially those who have a large capital. As the weaker ones are eliminated, the number of entrepreneurs will become even smaller. The smaller the number of entrepreneurs becomes, the greater, both relatively and absolutely, will be the proletariat. Sooner or later the number of entrepreneurs will be so reduced that it will be impossible for them to uphold their rule. Then one will be able, perhaps quite peacefully and in all politeness, to expropriate these "expropriators" with, shall we say, a life annuity. For they will have seen that the ground under their feet has become too hot, that they are too few in number to retain their dominance.

In a modified form this view is held even today. However, it has been shown, at least so far, that in none of its forms is the argument generally correct. First, it is not correct as far as agriculture is concerned. On the contrary, there has been a large increase in the number of peasants. Next, not incorrectly, but with

consequences other than what was expected, the phenomenon in those branches of industry where it has appeared, has proved that the simple shrinking of the number of entrepreneurs does not exhaust all the possibilities of the process. The elimination of those with little capital is brought about by their subjection to finance capital, cartels or trust organization. However, the concomitant of these very complicated processes is, at first, the rapid increase in the number of "appointees", i.e. of a bureaucracy of private enterprise. These people, whose interests are far from being on the side of a proletarian dictatorship, are increasing many times faster than the workers.

Moreover, the creation of highly diverse interests of so complicated a kind is such that one cannot at the moment assert that the numbers and the powers of those who directly or indirectly belong to the bourgeoisie are decreasing. In any case and at the moment we cannot be certain that a time will come when there will be a mere half dozen or even a couple of hundred or thousand isolated business magnates opposed to millions and millions of proletarians.

Finally, the third argument depends upon the effects of economic crises. Because the entrepreneurs compete with one another - and at this point in the classical writings of socialism there follows a weighty but involved discussion which I must spare you here - it is inevitable that, from time to time, periods of over-production occur.

These are succeeded in turn by bankruptcies, collapses and the so-called "depressions". Such cycles are subject to laws and follow one another in strict periodicity. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx had merely indicated this, later it became a comprehensive fully-fledged theory. For almost a hundred years such cycles of periodic crises can indeed be detected. Since not even the leading economists are fully agreed on how this has come about there is no point in our discussing the matter here and now.

But the older socialism built its hopes on these crises. Above all, it hoped that in conformity with natural laws these crises would increase in intensity and in the ability to create an alarming and destructive revolutionary temper. Until, by becoming greater and more frequent, the crises would produce an atmosphere in which the capitalists would no longer attempt to maintain this kind of economic order.

Today those hopes have been substantially abandoned. For, although the danger of crises has not entirely disappeared, it has lessened in relative importance since the entrepreneurs gave up ruthless competition in favour of cartels. That is, since they decided to eliminate competition to a great extent by means of the regulation of prices and of the market; and since the large banks, e.g. the German Imperial Bank, proceeded to ensure, by controlling credit, that periods of over-speculation occur in substantially smaller proportions than they did formerly.

Thus, although one cannot say that this third hope of the Communist Manifesto and its adherents has not been realised, its suppositions have shifted fairly radically.

The very pathetic hopes which, in the Communist Manifesto, were based on the collapse of bourgeois society have therefore been replaced by much more sober expectations. The first of these is the theory that in the course of evolution, and because production becomes increasingly "socialised", socialism comes into being entirely by itself. By this is understood that the joint-stock company, with its appointed managers, takes the place of the individual entrepreneur. Thus state industries, municipal industries or industries run by local administrative bodies (Zweckverbände) are established which no longer depend upon a single entrepreneur and particularly not on a single private entrepreneur who takes both the risk and the profit. This is true enough although it must be added that hidden behind the joint-stock company, there may very often be a finance magnate or two controlling the general meeting of the company. Every shareholder knows that shortly before the general meeting he receives a communication from his bank in which he is asked, should he not wish to use his vote himself, to transfer the voting rights of his share to the bank, since his voting right is of no use against a capital of millions of kronen.

Above all, this kind of socialization means both an enlargement of officialdom, of appointed business or technical

specialists and also an increase in the numbers of the rentier class. This class, which draws dividends and interest without doing the mental work of the entrepreneur, has nevertheless an interest in the capitalist system because of the source of its income.

In public industries and in those run by local administrative bodies it is the official and not the worker who has complete and absolute control. Indeed, under these circumstances, the workers are less able to achieve anything by strikes than they would be against private entrepreneurs. For the time being, at any rate, it is the dictatorship of the officials which is on the march and not that of the workers.

The second of the more sober expectations relies upon machinery to end the old cleavages among the specialised craftsmen and highly skilled workers such as filled the old English organizations, the Trade Unions. It was hoped that the machine would make it possible for anyone to do any job and thus lead to the replacement of skilled workers by unskilled ones. In this way a unified labouring class would be created and the consciousness of this unity would be of overwhelming advantage in the struggle against the owning class.

The answer to all this is not simple. It is true that to a large extent the introduction of machines is indeed aimed at replacing the highest paid and most skilled worker. For, obviously, any industry would try to replace by machines precisely those workers who are the most

difficult to get. In present-day industry, the group which is increasing most quickly is that of the so-called "semi-skilled" (angelernten) workers. That is, not those workers who have received in the old style a special course of training, but those who acquire their skill directly by working at the machine.

Yet, to a considerable extent, even these semi-skilled workers are often specialists. It takes some years, after all, for a semi-skilled weaver to reach the highest level of skill and thus be able to exploit his machine to the full for the entrepreneur and to earn the highest wages for himself. Certainly, for other kinds of workers the usual training period is less than for the weavers. But, be that as it may, occupational specialization has not been abandoned, even though this increase of semi-skilled workers does mean a perceptible weakening of it.

In another respect occupational specialization and technical training are on the increase rather than diminishing. This is the case among all those others engaged in production, from foremen and headworkmen on, who rank above the actual labourers. At the same time the relative size of this category is also increasing. It is perfectly correct to say that these people, too, are "wage-slaves". However, most of them are paid fixed salaries and not weekly wages. Nor do they get paid on a piece-work basis. And even more important is the fact that the worker naturally hates the foreman, who super-

vises him all the time, much more than he does the manufacturer. In turn, he hates the manufacturer more than he hates the share-holder who is really the one who gets his income without working for it. For the manufacturer has to perform very exacting mental work and, of course, the foreman is even closer to the worker. This is a phenomenon which is found also among soldiers. In general, and as far as I have been able to observe, it is the corporal who is likely to draw the most antipathy. In any case, this development of a homogeneous class is far from being purely proletarian.

The last of the more realistic arguments for socialism depends upon the increasing standardization or uniformity of production. Everywhere there is an apparent striving after an ever greater uniformity and inter-changeability of products and an ever more widespread systematization of businesses. Moreover, the war in particular gives this process great impetus. Only in the highest stratum of entrepreneurs can the old pioneer spirit of the bourgeois capitalism of the past still be found, and, so it is said, it is steadily disappearing even among them. Thus, it is argued that it is increasingly possible to manage this kind of standardized production without having the specific entrepreneurial qualities which the bourgeoisie maintained were indispensable to industry. This argument holds especially for the cartels and trusts where the individual entrepreneur has been replaced by a large

staff of officials.

Again, this is altogether correct. But, as before, only with the same reservation, viz., that this standardization enhances the importance of a particular class. This is precisely the already often mentioned class of officials which most decidedly has to be trained and which will have, as a complement to this training, a very definite class character. It is no accident that we see commercial academies, industrial schools and technical colleges springing up out of the ground like mushrooms. For they cater, at least in Germany, to the aspiration to enter an exclusive student club, to acquire duelling scars, to become entitled to give satisfaction and so, too, to be eligible as Reserve officers. And, after all this, in the office, to have a preferential chance of gaining the hand of the daughter of the head of the firm and in this way becoming accepted into so-called "society".

Nothing is further from the minds of these people than solidarity with the proletariat. Indeed, they rather seek to be increasingly differentiated from the workers. To a lesser but still perceptible degree, something similar applies to many of the lower strata of these appointed employees. All of them strive after at least similar "class" ("ständischen") qualities, be it for themselves or for their children. An unequivocal tendency towards proletarianization cannot be established at present.

However that may be, these arguments show at least

that the old revolutionary hope for a catastrophe, which gave the Communist Manifesto its inspiring power, has already yielded to an evolutionary interpretation. An interpretation, that is, in which the old economy, with its masses of competing entrepreneurs, is gradually transformed into a regulated economy which is controlled either by state officials or by cartels in which the officials participate. Thus the first step towards a genuine, socialistic, state-less society now appears to be this regulated economy and not that of individual entrepreneurs wasted by competition and crises. As a matter of fact, even before the war, among many socialist intellectuals and members of the trade unions, the place of the old catastrophe theory had been taken by an evolutionary expectation that the development of the socialist society of the future would come about through slow transformation. As a consequence of this the so-called "Revisionism" came into being.

To take from the masses the belief in a suddenly-dawning, happy future was a serious step and the leaders of Revisionism were at least partly aware of how serious it was. For this belief gave to the masses a gospel which proclaimed to them, as to the Christians of old, "This very night the Lord could come". One can easily dethrone a faith such as was the Communist Manifesto and the later catastrophe theory, but it is then very difficult to replace it by another.

In the meantime, developments have outdated the

controversy between those who held the old, orthodox belief and those who had conscientious objections to it. The controversy is mixed up with the question of whether, and how far, the Social Democrats, as a party, ought to go into "practical politics". That is, should they enter into coalitions with bourgeois parties, should they participate in politically responsible leadership by accepting ministerial positions and in that way try to alleviate the present situation of the workers? Or, would that be "class betrayal" and political heresy, as the politicians convinced of the catastrophe theory must obviously consider it to be?

However, other questions of principle have emerged and on these the thinkers differ. Let us accept for a moment that through cartellization, standardization and bureaucratization, it could become technically possible for the present economy of private enterprise and private ownership of the means of production to be replaced by an economy from which the entrepreneurs were totally excluded. But then who would take over and control this new economy? On that point the Communist Manifesto has remained silent, or has expressed itself in a most ambiguous way.

What would the "Association" of which it speaks be like? In particular, what has socialism to offer by way of embryonic organization, in case it does get the chance to seize power and govern in accordance with its wishes? In the German Empire, and indeed everywhere, socialism has two kinds of organization. First, it has the party

of Social Democrats with its political representatives, appointed editors, party officials and trusted men in the local and central associations by which these people are elected or appointed. Secondly, it has the trade unions. Each of these two organizations can be either revolutionary or evolutionary in character and, consequently, the thinkers of the party are divided about which character these organizations actually have now and about which it is intended or desirable for them to have in the future.

If we take the revolutionary hope as our point of departure, then there are two opposing viewpoints. The first was that of the orthodox Marxism which was based on the old tradition of the Communist Manifesto. It expected everything to come from the political dictatorship of the proletariat and believed that the political parties which were necessarily fitted for the electoral struggle had to be the chief means to such a dictatorship. Thus the party, or a political dictator sired by it, would seize power and, thereupon, the new organization of society would follow.

The opponents of this revolutionary tendency were in the first place those trade unions which were of the old English type and, therefore, not interested in these plans at all. For the revolutionary hopes seemed to lie in the far-distant future and these unions were interested, above all, in working conditions which would improve the existence of themselves and their children. So they wanted to fight for higher wages, shorter working hours, protection of labour and so on.

Thus radical political Marxism turned, on the one hand, against this kind of trade unionism. On the other, it attacked also the purely parliamentary form of compromise socialist politics which, since Millerand became a minister in France, has been called "Millerandism". This is a political policy which tends to make the top leaders far more interested in their ministerial portfolios, and the lesser leaders in getting civil service appointments, than in furthering the cause of revolution. In this way the revolutionary spirit is killed.

During the last decades, a second point of view has been added to what was, in the old sense, the "radical" and "orthodox" policy. This is what we have come to call "syndicalism", from the French expression for a trade union. Exactly as the old radicalism required the political parties to be revolutionary, so syndicalism requires revolutionary activity of the trade unions. The syndicalist argument is that it is not the political dictatorship, nor the political leaders or the officials they appoint, but the trade unions and their confederation who, when the great moment has come, should take the control of the economy into their hands by means of so-called "direct action".

Syndicalism returns to a stronger emphasis on the class character of the socialist movement. The working class must be the means of final liberation. Therefore, all those politicians who gad about in the capitals and are concerned only with the chances of this or that ministry or parliamentary combination are not class comrades but

merely professional politicians. For behind their concern over constituencies there was always the self-interest of editors and functionaries who wanted to benefit from the number of votes gained. Syndicalism rejects all these interests which are bound up with the modern, parliamentary, electoral system. Only the workers themselves, organised in the trade unions, can create the new society. Away then with the professional politicians who live for (and that really means by) politics and not for the creation of a new social and economic order!

The typical methods of the syndicalists are terror and the general strike. They hope that a general strike, by suddenly paralysing all production, will force those concerned, and especially the entrepreneurs, to renounce their control of the factories and hand over to trade union committees. They preach terror, sometimes openly, sometimes in secret and at times they also reject it altogether. On this opinions differ. But they must bring terror to the ranks of those with decisive control in order to paralyse them politically as well as economically.

Obviously, this syndicalism is that kind of socialism which really is a quite ruthless enemy of any army, because all military organization creates vested interests. This is so from the top down to the non-commissioned officers and even down to the ordinary soldiers, for, temporarily at any rate, they are all dependent for their sustenance on the functioning of the military and political machine. Therefore, they are to some extent directly interested in the failure of a general strike. At the very least, they are

a hindrance to it.

The opponents of syndicalism are, first, all socialist parties which play an active part in Parliament. Syndicalists will use Parliament only as a platform from which under the protection of parliamentary immunity, and to spur on the revolutionary feelings of the masses, they preach ever anew that a general strike must and will come. Even that deviates from the real task and is therefore suspect. From the syndicalist's point of view, serious participation in Parliament is not only nonsense, it is also reprehensible.

Secondly, all evolutionists of any kind are also, naturally, the opponents of syndicalism. For example, trade unionists who want only to carry on the struggle for better working conditions. Against them, the syndicalists must argue that the lower the wages, the longer the working hours and the worse the general circumstances are, so much the better for the chances of a general strike. Or, again, it might be the evolutionists in party politics who say that the state is moving towards socialism through increasing democratization. To the syndicalists, who prefer czarism and have the greatest abhorrence for democracy, such a belief is gross self-deception, to say the very least of it.

But now the crucial question is this, from where do the syndicalists expect to get the skills needed to take over control of production? Because it would clearly be a grievous error to think that even a highly trained, experienced trade unionist who knows the conditions of work thoroughly, would on that account know anything about the

management of a factory. For the management of a modern factory depends entirely upon calculation, upon knowledge of commodities and the demand for them, and upon technical training. All of which are matters which are increasingly specialised and which the trade union men, the actual workers, have no opportunity whatever of learning. Therefore, whether they like it or not, they would also be dependent upon non-workers, on theorists from the intellectual stratum. Indeed, the shibboleth that salvation can come only from the actual workers associated in trade unions and not from politicians or anyone else from the outside is strikingly and completely contradicted in fact. For there is no end of bookish intellectuals within the syndicalist movement which, before the war, had the bulk of its membership in France and Italy.

What are they looking for there? It is the romanticism of the general strike and the romanticism of the revolutionary hope, which charms these intellectuals. When one looks at them, one can see that they are romantics who are unequal or averse to the demands of everyday life and so thirst after the great revolutionary wonder and for a chance to feel themselves in power for once. Naturally there are also men with organising ability among them. But the question is whether the workers really would subject themselves to the dictatorship of these intellectuals.

During the fantastic upsets that a war brings and due to the vicissitudes, especially hunger, which the workers experience, it is certainly possible that the masses of workers could be carried away by syndicalist notions.

Then, if they have weapons at hand and should the political and military collapse of the state give them the opportunity, they might seize power under the leadership of such intellectuals. But neither among members of the trade unions nor among syndicalist intellectuals, do I see the capacities needed for the control of production in time of peace.

The great experiment at the moment is in Russia, but the difficulty is that we cannot see over the frontier in order to learn how they are actually managing production there. As you know, the Bolshevik government consists of intellectuals, some of whom studied here in Vienna and in Germany. Among them there are certainly only a few Russians. According to what one hears, this government has now gone back to the piece-work system in those factories which function at all. These, from Social Democrat accounts, are but 10% of the peace time number. The reason for this reversion is simply that otherwise the output would suffer. They are leaving the entrepreneurs, who alone have the expert knowledge, at the head of industries and are paying them very considerable subventions. Furthermore, they have gone back to paying officers' salaries to officers of the old regime because they are in need of an army and have realised that, without trained officers, they cannot have one. I am doubtful whether these officers will tolerate for long the leadership of these intellectuals once they have the men under their control again. At the moment they have indeed got to do so. Finally, the Bolsheviks, by threatening to withdraw their bread-cards, have forced some of the bureaucracy to work for them.

However, in the long run, the machinery of state and the economy cannot be carried on in this way and the experiment so far is not very encouraging.

The astonishing thing is that this organization has been able to function at all for so long. It does so because it is a military dictatorship; not one of generals, indeed, but one of corporals. It does so also because the war-weary soldiers returning from the Front have joined up with the land-hungry peasants who are accustomed to agrarian communism. Or the organization may be working simply because the soldiers took violent possession of the villages, extorted contributions and shot down anyone who opposed them.

This is the only large-scale experiment of a "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" which has been made up to the present time. One can assert with all honesty that the discussions at Brest-Litovsk were conducted in all good faith by the Germans in the hope that we might effect a real peace with these people. This was so for various reasons. Those who were fundamentally committed to bourgeois society were in favour of the treaty because they said to themselves: "For Heaven's sake, let these people make their experiment. It will surely fail and then their failure will be a frightening lesson." We others supported the treaty because we argued that, if the experiment should succeed and we could see that culture was possible on this basis, then we might be converted.

The person who stood in the way of peace was Trotsky.

He was not satisfied to limit the experiment to his own house and to hope that, if it succeeded, it would be unparalleled propaganda for socialism throughout the whole world. On the contrary, with the typical vanity of the Russian literati, he wanted still more and hoped, by verbal battles and by the misuse of such words as "freedom" and "self-determination", to unloose civil war in Germany. In this, however, he was so badly informed as not to know that two-thirds of the German army is recruited from the country areas and another sixth from the lower bourgeoisie. These are all people to whom it would be a real pleasure to give a slap in the face to the workers, or to whomsoever else might wish to make a revolution. It is impossible to make peace with fanatics. One can only render them harmless. That was the meaning of the ultimatum and the dictated peace of Brest. Every socialist must realise this and there is not one whom I know, no matter of what persuasion, who does not, at least in his heart, realise it.

When one has discussions with present-day socialists and one wants to act in good faith - and that alone is also intelligent - then there are two questions to put to them regarding the current situation. The first is, what do they think of Evolutionism? That is, of the idea which is a dogma of orthodox Marxism today, viz., that society and its economic order develops in stages strictly in conformity with natural laws and that, therefore, a socialist society cannot come into being before the bourgeois stage has fully matured. Even the socialists themselves hold that, as yet, this is nowhere the case because there are

still peasant farmers and independent craftsmen. So then, the socialists must be asked what their attitude towards this evolutionary dogma is. It will be found that, except in Russia, they all adhere to this standpoint. That is, they all, even the most radical of them, expect as the only possible result of a revolution a bourgeois, not a proletarian, order of society, because the time is as yet nowhere ripe for the latter. All they can hope for is that this new bourgeois society will be nearer in some respects to that final stage from which, it is believed, the change-over to the future socialist order will be made.

When asked for an honest reply, every socialist intellectual will have to give this answer. As a consequence of this, there is indeed in Russia a large class of Social Democrats, the so-called Mensheviks, who think that the Bolshevik experiment of imposing a socialist order from above, at the present stage of bourgeois society, is not only nonsense but also a sin against Marxist dogma. The terrible hatred of these two parties for one another has its roots in this dogmatic accusation of heresy.

If the overwhelming majority of leaders, in any case all whom I have ever come to know, accepts this evolutionary belief, then it is obviously justifiable to ask them this further question: what can a revolution under these circumstances be expected to achieve, especially during the war? It may well cause a civil war and with that, perhaps, the victory of the Entente, but it could not bring

about a socialist society. Further, in the nearly disrupted states which are affected by it, it can and will bring about a regime of peasants and petite bourgeoisie who are the most radical opponents of every kind of socialism. But, above all, a revolution might result in colossal destruction and disorganization of capital and also, therefore, is a setback to the social development demanded by Marxism which presupposes an ever pervasion of the economy by capitalism.

After all, one has to bear in mind that the west European peasant is different from the Russian peasant who lives within his agrarian communism. In Russia the decisive factor is the land question which among us is unimportant. The German peasant is nowadays an individualist who clings to his land and to hereditary ownership which he will hardly be persuaded to abandon. Should he believe these things are threatened, he would rather ally himself to the large landowner than to the radical socialist worker.

So, from the point of view of socialist hopes for the future, the consequences of a revolution during the war, especially if it should be successful, are the worst imaginable, since the favourable result of a more democratic political constitution would be outweighed by the economic reaction it must bring about. This, too, no socialist can honestly gainsay.

The second question which should be put to socialists

concerns their attitude towards a peace. We all know that among the masses now radical socialism is associated with pacifist leanings and the wish that a peace be concluded as soon as possible. However, it is certain that, among the leaders, peace is not what matters most. When questioned, every leader of the radical, i.e., of the real revolutionary, Social Democracy will have to admit this. He must admit, if he is being recklessly frank, that when he has the choice between a further three years of war followed by the revolution, and immediate peace without the revolution, then he will choose the three years of war. Let his fanaticism fight it out with his conscience.

The question is whether the majority of the troops out there in the field, including those who are socialists, hold the same views as these leaders who are dictating to them. It is obviously quite fair and necessary to force the leaders to show their colours. It is certain and admitted that Trotsky did not want peace. No socialist, known to me, tries any longer to deny this. Moreover, the same applies to all radical leaders in every country. Placed before the choice, they too would not wish above all for peace, but for war if it were to lead to the revolution; that is, to civil war. Thus, for the sake of the revolution, they would choose to continue the war even though such a revolution could not according to their own beliefs - I say this again - lead to a socialist society. For, at the most, all they can hope for is what from the socialist point of view would be "a more highly developed form" of bourgeois society. That is, a society which is somewhat

nearer than the present stage to the socialist society which, at some time in the future, will come into being. Exactly how far nearer, it is not possible to say. But then, for the reasons already put forward, this hope is indeed a very doubtful one.

An argument with dedicated socialists and revolutionaries is always a difficult matter. In my experience, one never convinces them. One can only force them, in the presence of their supporters, to show their colours on the question of a peace and on the question of what the revolution really would bring about. The latter is the question of evolutionary stages which, to this day, is a dogma of the genuine Marxism. Only in Russia is it rejected by a sect, native to that country, which believes that Russia is able to leap-frog these stages of Western European development.

This is a thoroughly fair way of dealing with socialism and it is also the only effective or even possible one. For I am of the opinion that socialist convictions and hopes can never be done away with altogether. Trade unions will always be socialist in one sense or another. The question is simply whether the state, and at the moment the army in particular, can afford to tolerate socialism. Up till now no government, not even a proletarian one such as that of the Paris Commune, or now that of the Bolsheviki, has been able to do without martial law when the basis of its rule has been endangered. This Mr. Trotsky has admitted with laudable honesty.

For this reason, the more certain the other ranks are that the conduct of the military authorities is determined by an objective interest in upholding discipline and not by party or class interests; and the more certain they are that only those things come to pass which are really unavoidable in war time, so much the more stable will the military authority remain.

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