

BULLETIN OF THE COMMUNIST PLATFORM

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INTRODUCTION

In June 1977 a Congress was held in India to discuss the perspective of building a Communist Platform within the working class movement. Although the political heterogeneity of those attending the Congress and lack of adequate preparation precluded the formulation of a very concrete collective perspective, it was agreed that it would be necessary to prepare for another congress in which well-defined political tendencies which agreed on the necessity of building such a platform would debate theses on the nature of the present epoch and perspectives for the working class struggle in it. It was hoped that as a result of this debate it would be possible to arrive at a platform Manifesto which would constitute a more defined political basis for an international platform group.

Subsequently, discussions have taken place mainly within various centres but also between comrades from different centres on topics relating to the understanding of the present epoch, the present stage of development of the class struggle in India, perspectives for the working class movement in India and the relationship between communism and the working class as a whole. Attempts have been made to concretise and put into practice some of the conceptions which were argued at the congress, or have been developed since then. But hitherto these discussions have taken place in relative isolation from one another, a situation which it continued will retard preparations and practical interventions for the next congress. Many comrades who attended the last congress and had suffered from the inadequate circulation of discussion material prior to it suggested that an efficient circulation of such material was a minimum condition for a successful congress in the future. It is in order to fulfil this need that the Bulletin of the Communist Platform is being produced, and it is hoped that all comrades working towards such a platform, whether they attended the June congress or not, will fully participate in the debate it carries. It is important to emphasize here that although a broad political orientation is shared in common by those who participate, the bulletin is not the organ of any tendency, and will carry differing viewpoints within this common orientation.

A bulletin, however, is only a first step. Clearly, all those who adopt the building of a Communist Platform as a perspective, despite political differences among themselves, have enough premises in common to undertake political activity of a limited type in collaboration with each other. This would require an interim organizational framework, which can for the moment be called a platform Association, to accomodate such joint activities. What is the minimum basis for such an association? What requirements should groups or individuals wishing to join it have to meet? What activities can they undertake in common? Some comrades have already given thought to these questions. What is required now is a general debate concerning the basis and functioning of a platform Association. The debate can at least begin in the pages of the Bulletin although its resolution may require something more, such as an interim congress.

In some ways the debate on the relationship between revolutionaries & the proletariat as a whole, forms of organization of revolutionaries and of the proletariat as a whole, constituted the focus of the June congress. The debate is continued in the first issue of the Bulletin with three contributions: one on the history of the First International; the second from the platform of the Communist Organization in the British Isles, the members of which will be participating in the discussions leading to the next congress and hopefully also in the congress itself; and the third from Gramsci's Ordine Nuovo articles. The crucial importance of reappropriating and developing Marx's work on capital has been repeatedly affirmed in the course of the platform discussions; the reproduction from Rosdolsky and the Grossmann translation will assist those engaged in this work. The paper on Wage-Labour is an attempt at such a development of capital in the direction of achieving a deeper understanding of the process of the production and sale of labour-power as a commodity. Finally the articles on the

Industrial Truce and New forms of struggle in Pune are contributions to a discussion of the present stage of the class struggle and working class perspectives.

Contributions are invited for subsequent issues of the bulletin under the following main rubrics:

(1) International class perspectives: Reproductions of the major documents, draft analyses, programmatic statements of tendencies within or close to the Platform. Debates on these documents, e.g. replies, comments, critiques. A discussion of the future International, and the steps towards its formation, e.g. the debate on the Platform Association and how it is to be constituted, evaluations of the June Congress, perspectives for the next congress and the form of organization which is to emerge from it. Critiques of the left tendencies.

(2) Class perspectives IN India: Reports on the present stage of the class struggle (preferably concrete reports, by area). General contributions to an understanding of the present conjuncture, the crisis of the last ten years, developments in State activity, etc. Elaboration of perspectives, including proposals for intervention in and relations to workers' struggles.

Contributions on the following topics will also be welcome and necessary:

(3) The Continuation of Marx's Capital: On the questions central to the further development of the programme of Capital. Thus essays, comments, notes - on the relation of the theory of the value form to the rest of capital, the architectural design and method of construction of capital, the notions of wage-labour and the wage-form, productive and unproductive labour, social capital and reproduction, theory of competition, theory of crisis, etc.

(4) Historical Materialism: Contributions to the understanding and development of the categories of historical materialism - mode of production, the state, etc. The philosophical premises of Marx and the dialectical method.

(5) Towards a theory of our epoch: Contributions on the history of the bourgeois mode of production over the last century and on the history of class formation, state formation and class struggle. Debates on Imperialism, World Economy, the Post-war Boom, the modern State, modern class formations. Contributions of a documented historical nature on the major phases of the bourgeois revolutions, their special characteristics in each phase, etc. Analyses of particular historical sequences (e.g. the development of capitalism and the bourgeois revolution in Germany 1820 - 1918). The contributions of the earlier Marxist tradition - Marx, Engels, Trotsky, Gramsci. The notion of 'hegemony', 'class bloc', 'alliance'. The peasantry in the bourgeois revolution.

(6) Leninism and the Leninist Party: Contributions continuing a debate started at the last congress, but not confined specifically to Lenin's theory of class consciousness any longer. A debate on 'Leninism' and the Bolsheik tradition, including Trotsky, Trotskyism, the Fourth International, the post-war left, etc.

(7) Institutions of the class: Contributions on the forms and nature of working class organizations including trade unions, factory committees, councils, soviets, etc. Discussions of concrete experiences of the past. Debates on workers' control, syndicalism, labour aristocracy, etc. Discussions of the labour-process in modern industry.

(8) Class Analysis: Contributions, preferably researched, towards an understanding of the long-term tendencies of development of capitalism in India, its various stages and forms, their special features.

Debates on the forms and extent of penetration of the capital Wage-labour relation in the country as a whole, the forms of domination of labour by capital. Debates on the methods of and concepts for a class analysis.

(9) Translation programme: Translations of important texts in French, German, Italian, Japanese etc. Such as would be useful to (1) to (8) above.

As a result of the fact that discussions of the Platform perspective were initiated in India, There is an inevitable bias at first towards topics related to a discussion of perspectives for political work in India. This is purely contingent, however. International groups and tendencies who wish to receive the bulletin regularly and participate in the debates in it are warmly invited to do so; sections on class analysis and concrete class perspectives for countries other than India will be added as and when such contributions are sent in. To the extent that this occurs, the bulletin will be transformed from one which is in principle International to one which is so in reality.

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A Note on the history of the First International

"The foundation of the International itself was the result of these circumstances (upsurge in the workers' Movement S.P.), and by no means due to the efforts of the men engaged in it. It was not the work of any set of clever politicians; all the politicians in the world could not have created the situation and circumstances requisite for the success of the International."

Report on Marx's Speech, 1871.

(The First International and After, pp.271)

"It is the business of the International Working Men's Association to combine and generalize the spontaneous movements of the working classes, but not to dictate or impose any doctrinary system whatever."

(Instructions for the Geneva Congress, Marx, 1866

(The First International and After, pp. 90)

"When Marx established the International he drafted the general rules in such a way, that all working class socialists of that time could come in, and it was only thanks to this broad concept, that the International was able to grow as it did."

Engels, Letter to Wischniewski, 1887.

(Braunthal, History of the International, 1864-1914)

pp. 179-180.

SECTION I

THE REPRESENTATIVE STATE AND THE WORKER'S MOVEMENT

The present is in a definite sense the product of the past. From a revolutionary standpoint History must be practical i.e. must have practical meaning, both as the genesis of what exists and hence as a determination of what is yet to be. Looked at from this perspective, the discussion about the history of the First International should focus on two issues: Did an adequate material and social basis yet exist for the growth of an International Workers' Party and in this context what is the adequate concept of a workers' Party and in what circumstances is it possible, indeed necessary, for it to grow. And if, the answer to this question (about the material basis for Internationalism) is that it did not yet exist in an adequate form, then what was the specific political character of the Workers' Movement which gave rise to the First International. Precisely because the discussion of this point involves a virtual reconstruction of the history of the workers' Movement, something which can be attempted as a part of a much more comprehensive paper, the following is only in the nature of an initial comment.

That the social emancipation of the proletariat can only be accomplished on an international basis is a well known and fundamental principal of Classical Marxism. If this requires to be reemphasized today, it is only because in the history of the last hundred years, the predominant political form of the workers' Movement or those who while

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basing themselves entirely on a backward peasantry 'proclaim' themselves as 'Socialist' has been NATIONAL. It is only in the periods of a relative upsurge in the Workers' Movement, that on two occasions (the First and the Third Internationals), a genuine and an influential attempt has been made or more properly has been made necessary, to build a practical international working class Movement. By practical is meant what Marx pointed out in his Critique of the Gotha Programme - a Movement, which not only recognizes or proclaims IDEAS about international solidarity, but carries out the "international functions of the working class", something well emptied in the activity of the First International itself. In order to be able to argue, that Marx's assumption about the necessary international character of the Communist Revolution, not only remains valid, but is going to become a practical necessity only in the coming historical phase, one has to show the specific circumstances which gave rise to the previous Internationals also determined their 'failure' to carry through a world-wide revolution.

Marx had emphasized in the Manifesto, that, "Though not in substance, but in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle." Marx explained what he meant by this apparently contradictory formulation. The workers' struggle was national in form, even though, "The working men have no country." This was because, "The proletariat must first of all acquire supremacy political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is so far itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word." What is the bourgeois sense of the word imply. "For anyone who is aware of the rise of the national states since the Fifteenth Century, this could mean nothing else but the constitution of the nation as an exclusive sphere of power for the individual state against the sovereignty of other states, a sphere in which the Citizen had a purely formal (i.e. not real) right to rule through his representatives, a right which was in fact annulled by the social slavery imposed by the division of labor, characteristic of bourgeois society, one expression of which was the separation of power between the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary. In other words it is the hallmark of the representative or bourgeois state, that politics continues to be an exclusive sphere by itself, one which is constituted on an electoral basis, while all others are constituted on a nominative, hierarchical or competitive basis. Hence, the mere existence of a 'bureaucracy' seemed to Marx the symbol of an alienated social existence, one in which society had to delegate its Universal Interest to the care of a set of specialists, selected on the basis of professional qualification precisely because these were absent (or considered to be absent) in the society at large. As Marx explained in his very first tract on the state, this only means that, "The state resides not in civil society but outside it; it comes into contact with it only through its 'representatives', who have been entrusted with 'superintending the state's interest in Civil society. The 'police', the 'judiciary' and the 'administration' are not the representatives of a civil society, which administers its own universal interests in them and through them; they are the representatives of the state and their task is to administer the state against civil society." (Coletti ed, Early Writings, pp.112) The modern state is also the modern nation, founded on the basis of equality of citizenship and language and a collective tradition of struggle against the undemocratic state. In other words as long as the nation is identical with the state, and the latter exists in the form of institutionalized organs of power opposed to society (i.e. it is inherently their nature to be opposed to society or the working class) there can be no question of proletarian emancipation.

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If proletarian emancipation is by definition understood as a product of the "self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority" then it must abolish governance as a special function. As Lenin would put it in "State and Revolution", the social emancipation of the Working Class demands a political form in which because everyone 'rules' in turn, hence no one rules by profession. The first historical example of such a form was the Paris Commune, whose distinctive hallmark was the abolition of the managers of the State - the standing army, appointed Judiciary, bureaucracy etc. As Marx pointed out, because the Commune was a worker's government, "The Communal constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon it and clogging the free movement of society." This follows of necessity from the very character of the Working Class, because unlike the Bourgeoisie for the working class there is no contradiction between its private and public existence, between its social and political life. The capitalist organizes his material and personal life on the basis of private property and unadorned individual egoism; the Proletariat has no private property or individual existence without at the same time acting as a class. Indeed, in a society based on commodity exchange or exchange of equivalents, it is not even guaranteed a fair contract unless it organizes itself into its own class associations. And as production becomes more and more a collective affair even the very labor or skill of the worker has any meaning only as a moment of social labor. In other words, bourgeois society creates two opposed spheres - the economic based on its own despotism and the political based on formal or legal equality in the form of the state sphere, which is a necessary expression of the fact that even its 'economic' despotism is based on an exchange of equivalents or the contractual wage form. The pure formalism of the political sphere is shown by the fact that the bourgeoisie has no inherent interest in universal suffrage, and is quite prepared to go against the tribe of its own representatives, when the vote threatens its social stability i.e. the purse. As opposed to this for the proletariat everyone of its social issues from wages to work organisation is first of all an UNIVERSAL issue (applies to the entire working Class) and not merely a particular one in opposition to the other members of its class (as it is with the bourgeoisie). Hence, for it universal suffrage (decision through universal mandate) is an inborn necessity not only in a formal sense or in the restricted sphere of the Legislature but universally in every social function. That is why it must abolish the representational state in order to truly represent itself as what it really is - the dissolution of all classes and nationality within civil society.

Then what did Marx, mean when he argued that before being able to emancipate itself, "the proletariat must become the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation." Especially after, the Paris Commune, he could not have meant, that the Proletariat establishes precisely the type of government typical of the bourgeois state one which reproduces the separation between the 'Political constitution' and the Executive or turns citizenship into a right decreed by the state. The Paris Commune, it might be remembered had completely abolished the very notion of citizenship, allowing peoples of all countries to live, work, and administer without any qualifications. This was because, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purpose." (The Civil War in France) Here, it is not a question of anyone's desire, will or intention, not even that of the 'most clever politicians', anywhere in the world. History is not the

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subjectivism and caprice of political parties or great men. It is the very objective character of "the centralised state power", which, "with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, and judicature is wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labor." (The Civil War in France) What is objective and inherent, is that this division of labor excludes society. Thus the rise of the nation state meant that "Every common interest was straightaway severed from society, counterposed to it as a higher, general interest, snatched from the activity of society's members themselves and made an object of government activity." (Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire) As the self-rule of the overwhelming majority, of society over and through itself the Proletarian Republic has to replace government activity by its self activity. Any society where this has not taken place could not have emancipated the proletariat, whatever the benevolent "intentions" and proclamations of its ruling parties. If there was one thing which Marx never tired of repeating, it was that "Just as in private life one differentiates between what a man thinks and says of himself, and what he really is and does, so in historical struggles one must distinguish still more the phrases and fancies of parties from their real organism, and their real interests, their conceptions of themselves from their reality." (The Eighteenth Brumaire).

The Proletariat "must constitute itself the nation." This must be understood, first of all in a social sense. It must become the majority of the Nation. AS Marx put it, "The bureaucracy can be superseded only if the universal interest becomes a particular interest in reality and not merely in thought." (Early Writings pps. 106-109) This can only happen, when the particular interest of the working class is actually the interest of society as a whole. However, the process of the universal interest becoming a particular one includes its expression in thought. The State must become the subjective concern of the people, in order for them to realize its inherent contradictions and fallacies, and therefore abolish them when the situation is historically ripe. The only manner in which the working class can begin to intrude into the State, so to speak, is through Universal suffrage, which as we pointed out earlier is inherently adapted to its social interest. That is precisely why, it is the working Class, whose presence and struggle make the modern representative state the universal political form, one which the working class increasingly strives to utilize for itself. As Hegel once pointed out in his Philosophy of Right, "The real significance of the Estates (The Legislature) lies in the fact, that it is through them that the state enters the subjective consciousness of the people and that the people begin to participate in the state." (Early Writings pp. 131). Or as Marx, in the Eighteenth Brumaire pointed out the necessity of the modern representative state for the 'education' of the working class wrote, that whatever is formally given by the state appears to the social mass as a real power. The Bourgeoisie shrank from establishing even a Bourgeois Republic in France, because it had "a true insight into the fact that all the weapons which it had forged against feudalism, turned its points against itself, that all the means of civilisation it had produced rebelled against its own civilisation. "The Parliamentary regime lives by discussion; how shall it forbid discussion. Every interest, every social institution is here transformed into general ideas, debated as ideas. How shall any interest, any institution, sustain itself above thought and impose itself as an article of faith. The Parliamentary regime leaves everything to the decision of the majorities; how shall the great majorities outside Parliament not want to decide."

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For the working Class the struggle for universal suffrage is therefore only the beginning of an assertion of its inherent nature, in conditions where politics at most be constituted in the form of an exclusive sphere, as the sphere of formal or abstract equality. However, the very fact that the people can even formally claim to rule themselves merely by virtue of being a legal personality called the Citizen, who need not have any other qualifications (property, status or education) is the last extreme of the development of the State. It is the form of popular sovereignty without its content. That is precisely why Marx would insist, that the "representative constitution is a great advance because it is the open logical and undistorted expression of the situation of the modern state. It is an undisguised contradiction." (EN, pp.141) The representative constitution proclaims, that men must rule themselves merely because they are men, but it disallows this very possibility by restricting the representation of society merely to the legislative sphere. That is why, it is the "incarnation of contradiction between the state and civil society within the state (even while it) symbolizes the demand that this contradiction be resolved." (EN, pp.131)

SECTION II

The Stage of Development of the working Class Movement in the period of the International

This note is only concerned with the First International and does not yet presuppose a periodization of the different phases of the workers' Movement, which will only emerge out of a series of such enquiries into its history. Hence, we can now move on to a discussion of the actual conditions in which the First International developed, especially when these are compared with the necessity of the representative state as a moment in the historical development of the confrontation between the working class and the state. It is only within the representative state, one which sanctions the principle of rule through representation, that the working class can organize itself into trade unions to represent its own interest. It is only here that its political party can hope to utilize the state in its immediate interest, and therefore enable the Class to realize in practice the limitations of formal democracy. This point itself needs to be elaborated at a conceptual level, but for the present it will suffice to focus the discussion on the First International.

It does not need much emphasizing, that in the 1860's, the state which the developing working class movement had to confront no where had a stable or crystallized representative form. Generally speaking almost all the states of this period including the British state, should be seen as various transitional forms between the Monarchical Absolutist States and the Representative Democratic States, a passage which in Western Europe may be said to have covered almost five to six Centuries. At any rate it is undisputable, that in the middle of the nineteenth Century, the Workers' Movement, far from acquiring a social hegemony had yet to gain a recognized place in the existing political scheme of things. In Britain, the 1832 Act had only granted the vote to the middle classes, and even the Chartist attempt to break into the State had failed. (Cf. Cole, British Working Class Politics, 1832-1914). In France, the Second Empire had reduced voting to the farce of a presidential referendum.

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In Germany, for many years after the dencouement of 1848, what to say of the Working Class even the enfranchised sections of the middle classes had very little power due to the independence the Executive and the Army exercised from the Reichstag (Cf. Gordon & Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army.)

As against the continued domination of the state by strata deriving their power either from narrow property based franchise or from aristocratic privileges and monarchical nominations, the Working Class had not even emerged as an organized nation wide social force. As Ryazanov pointed out, it was only in 1851, that "the first stable union of the English machine making trades was organized. This union was headed by two workers who succeeded in repressing the typically English Craft spirit according to which it was customary to form trade unions within the confines of one or two towns or at the most, one or two counties." And then "Each separate Craft within the same industry was invariably prone to organize an independent union." And even now, "It was difficult to transform the Union of Textile workers into a national Union for the simple reason that the major part of the textile industry was concentrated in a very small area. Almost all of the textile workers in England were huddled together in two counties. Thus a county Union was equivalent to a national union." (Ryazanov, Karl Marx and Freidrich Engels) pp.132-133) If this localized spread of the most advanced section of the industry in the most developed of the capitalist countries indicated a low development of social capital, then one can visualize the condition in other more backward countries.

And true enough, the limited literature available immediately indicates, that on the continent, the Class had to develop even a stable Union Movement. The first form of its organization the co-operative Movement could nowhere acquire a universal form. Co-operatives by their nature required control over or access to credit facilities, that would sooner than later integrate them into the developing financial structure of capital. And then co-operatives essentially evaded the question of wage-bargaining, so central to the very existence of the Class. Thus as Cole points out already by the 1850's, "Co-operation under a variety of influences was cutting its socialistic connections on the continent as well as in Great Britain, and was to some extent receiving encouragement as a means of channelling working class activity into non-political courses." As against this alternative forms of organization were yet to emerge. After 1848, "Trade unionism in most of the continental countries had been broken up in connection with political defeat; and the local craft unions which managed to maintain their existence were reduced in the main to friendly society work or to maintaining loose connections through journeymen travelling from place to place in search of employment. Only in U.K. was the TU Movt. able to develop steadily and this development was limited to skilled workers and still had to encounter in the 1860's, a further challenge to its right to exist." (Cole, Marxism and Anarchism, pp. 9) Similarly even in the early 1860's in Switzerland, "The Movement was in an embryonic form. The Swiss had more political liberty than existed anywhere else on the Continent and also a considerable movement of local TUs in the leading towns. They had, however, no national organization-none even, that bound together the various districts of either French or German Switzerland." And in any case only the building workers could be said to belong to an industry with any future. For the most part in French Switzerland, "the Jura, the predominant form of industry was domestic employment, especially in watchmaking, in the service of capitalist merchants.

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These branches of small scale industries were already being threatened by the development of factory industries in Britain and USA. Many of the domestic workers ready to rally behind any militant movement." (Cole, Ibid.) These, however, would at best provide the social basis of Anarchism and Bakunin's Jura Federation.

In 1865, Wilhelm Liebknecht sent to the General Council a "Report on the Working Class Movement in Germany" (Cf. The General Council of the First International, Minutes, 1864-1866, pps. 251-260, Moscow, 1974). This provides a fruitful insight into the initial character of the Workers' Movement in Germany at this time. According to Liebknecht, before 1848, in connection with the Worker's Movement, "What had been thought, written done had been thought written and done almost exclusively either by men not strictly belonging to the working class or by workmen that were living or had been living in England, France, or Switzerland. It had not grown out of the German Working Classes. "And then "The part which the workmen took in the movement of 1848 and 1849 was as honourable as it was unclear and undefined. They were the foremost on every barricade, in every battlefield, but not having a distinct idea of their class interests, of the relations of capital and labor, they fought for the good of others and not their own. "Even later "From 1859 to 1862, the German Workmen formed but the chorus of the "liberal" middle class party; at the elections they were simply, to use an American expression the "voting cattle" of the Progressists." At the time when Lassalle died the workers although they had begun to organize themselves into distinct Societies had very few recognized rights. "In Prussia, as in most German States, the elections are indirect, and the electors, according to the taxes they pay, divided into three different classes. The third Class containing the Working Class and the great majority of the people, counts only as much as each of the other two classes, containing the rich minority; so, that the vote which the Working Classes possess is obviously illusory." Also, Workers' Societies, as such, are by the German laws prevented from combining, even from corresponding with other societies, especially with societies from foreign countries." The struggle to create the conditions for the existence of a national party was to be the immediate future of the German working class movement.

Not only was the Worker's Movement yet to organize itself, it was also fast becoming clear, that it would not get any political rights without struggling for it on its own and often against a purely middle-class radicalism. The French Revolution had shown that petit-bourgeois democracy on its own could not even realize the elementary goals of Bourgeois Democracy. The terreur rouge of the Jacobins was intense but it was also spasmodic. The terreur blanche of the Thermidorian Reaction and the realpolitik of the Napoleonic Camarilla were rooted firmly in the interest of bourgeois factions and the sterile passivity of the petit-bourgeoisie, if not its enthusiastic obedience to the monarchical patriarch. The Nation had no place for the working Classes; they had to gain a recognition for themselves. The emancipation of the Working Class can only be the work of the working class. This held true as much within the bourgeois state, as it would against it.

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If Chartism, as one author points out was sharply, "pervaded by a sense of class - both a positive sense of identification and a negative hostility to superior classes", it was because at this time the general current of "middle class radicalism seemed in many cases to be acting against the interests of the working classes." (Cf. Torothy Thompson, The Early Chartists Introduction). The 1832 act had deceived the workers. Despite the fact, that the social basis of Chartism lay in the most advanced sections of the industrial workers, and many of the leading Chartists were deeply involved in the TU Movt. their attack was not against Private Property but the principles of the Absolutist State. A reading of the selection of Documents provided by Mrs. Thompson confirms this view. The social distress created by industrialization could not be resolved without political power to make laws. As one pamphlet issued by the Kettering Radical Association of Workers put it, since men in Parliament always legislate for their own Class, "so long our legislators are required to be men of property, this exclusive legislation will always be against the working classes never in their favor." (pp.102) They wanted for themselves the implementation of the principle that, "No man shall be taxed without his consent." They only desired, "the establishment of such a mode of government as shall ensure the greatest possible happiness to all classes of the community. This short sentence embodies the sum total of our radicalism." They wanted a place within the Nation. "As men we deem ourselves entitled to our Native rights. As members of that great society called 'the Nation', we claim to be considered such." This would continue to be the programme of the British working Class right into the 1860's and then the workers managed even to gain some liberal allies. By 1866, "The English Trade Unions, led by the workers who were members of the General Council, were carrying on a stubborn struggle for a wider suffrage." And "Since universal suffrage was the object, the proletarian leaders, partly because of financial considerations entered into an agreement with the most radical section of the bourgeois democracy which had universal suffrage on their programme." This struggle led to the concessions of 1868. (Ryazanov, op. cit. pp.168-169). As we shall see later it also led to a decreasing interest in the International.

To take another example, in Germany too the 1848 Revolution had shown that neither the bourgeoisie nor its middle class representatives were capable of establishing a democratic Republic based on Universal suffrage. As Marx saw it, the revolutions of 1648 and 1789 had atleast been the "proclamation of the political order for the new European society." In them, "the victory of the bourgeoisie was at the same time the victory of a new social order." However, because it had "developed so sluggishly" the German "bourgeoisie was not like the French bourgeoisie of 1789, the class which represented the whole of modern society in face of the representatives of the old society, the monarchy and the nobility. It had sunk to the level of a type of estate, as clearly marked off from the people as the from the Crown, happy to oppose either, irresolute against each of its opponents taken individually, because it always saw the other one in front of it or in the rear." (The Revolutions of 1848, pp. 193-194). It wanted power by an agreement with the Crown. But this was impossible, as long as the latter was backed by the Army and the agrarian Propertied classes, and their overthrow required a popular revolution. That is why revising his earlier view Marx declared in 1848, that, "a purely bourgeois revolution, along with the establishment of bourgeois hegemony in the form of a

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constitutional monarchy is impossible in Germany. What is possible is either the feudal and absolutist counter-revolution or the social-republican revolution." (RO 1848, pp 212).

The social-Republic was the democratic Republic established under the weight of the working Class yoked to a section of petit-bourgeois democracy, that which stood for radical democracy. The ideal condition for the petit-bourgeoisie to be able to prolong its existence under bourgeois domination, especially where it is numerous is the democratic Republic, through which it can hope to check the growth of Big property. For other social reasons this was the case with the proletariat as well. Thus arose social-democracy, which expressed the fact, that while the bourgeoisie had become incapable or uninterested in democratizing the state, the proletariat was on its own not yet powerful enough to destroy it. It was in France, that the social democracy was first formed. "As against the coalesced bourgeoisie, a coalition between petty-bourgeois and workers had been formed, the so-called social democratic party." Its programme expressed the inability of either class to act on its own. Hence, "From the social demands of the proletariat, the revolutionary point was broken off and a democratic turn given to them; from the democratic claims of the petty bourgeoisie the purely political form was stripped off and their socialist point thrust forward." This is what determined the "peculiar character of social-democracy" which is "epitomised in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded as means, not of doing away with two extremes, capital and wage-labor, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society on a democratic way but a transformation within the bounds of the petty-bourgeoisie." (Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire).

if proletariat is not powerful enough to destroy it, other classes, not being are formed

Not only in Britain and France, but also in Germany, the growth of the working-class movement was the same as the growth of social democracy, not only under Lassalle, but also under Liebknecht. Their aims were essentially national, because that was the form and the terrain within which alone could democracy be immediately established. Liebknecht's declaration to the petit-bourgeoisie, that, "democratic and socialistic are for me altogether identical expressions and as the workers form the great part of the democratic army, ... the democratic People's Party must simply unite itself with the democratic worker's Party" only expressed the existing self-perception of the working class movement. The struggle for a 'greater German democracy' was the political aim, which could not be separated from the "social question". It was as a consequence of this, that Bebel and Liebknecht associated with the International to the extent that this brought or was expected to bring moral and material support for the building of a German National Party. (Of Morgan, The SPD and the First International, passim.)

The question arises, however, that if the main historical tendency of this period was the necessary growth of national parties of the Working Class, how did the First International

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arise, which even with all its moderation nonetheless declared in its Provisional Rules, that, "the emancipation of Labor is neither a local nor a national but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence practical and theoretical of the most advanced countries." Indeed, the historical decade in which the First International acquired a prominence slightly predates the effective emergence of even the national centers of workers' Movement.

It is important to emphasize, that the necessity of the First International was created not because the respective workers' Movement of different countries had so to speak exhausted the limits of their development within the nation state, and now required to collaborate practically on an International scale, but because they had not even acquired an effective national existence. It was the expression of the embryonic stage during a period of upsurge in the Worker's Movement, when because they did not exercise any power or weight within their own anti-democratic states, the Workers' societies and more specifically the Trade Union Movements in the absence of national political parties were led to form an International Association, to attempt and pool together their resources in their struggles.

To begin with a kind of internationalism, a spirit of solidarity had been engendered in Europe, ever since the French Revolution signalled a developing struggle for democracy. The simultaneity of political outbursts, for example, in 1830-1832 only heightened this feeling of solidarity. The Chartists, for instance, on their own "rallied to the defence of the Colonies such as Canada; they espoused the cause of Ireland; they expressed affiant sympathy with the Polish Nation and condemned Palmerston's accommodating attitude towards Tsarism." (Stekloff, History of the First International, pp.14) Most of the Democratic or Worker's societies, in this period were compelled to go beyond mere expressions of solidarity and build up external foci of support in the face of hostile conditions at home. "The very life of these societies, their structure, the environment in which they had to work impelled them in this direction." Often many of their members were exiled, to foreign countries. Thus, for example German Societies like The Unions of German handicraftsmen, the Exiles' League (1834-1836), and the Federation of the Just (1836-1839), were all organized in Paris which was (after 1832), "full of political refugees who had assembled there after a series of revolutionary movements and outbreaks in Germany, Poland, Italy, parts of Russia etc." Stekloff characterizes their internationalism as "bourgeois-democratic". This was partly still true of the Fraternal Democrats, which may be regarded as the immediate predecessor of the International. Its aims were stated to be "The mutual enlightenment of its members and propaganda of the great principle embodied in the society's motto, "All men are brethren." (Stekloff, pp.23). It would be natural for the International to draw in many of these societies into its fold, and make use of their established networks. The German Worker's Education Society in London joined the International soon after it was founded. Britain and Switzerland especially after 1848 were leading centers, where exiles from all countries gathered together. These two countries were also leading centers for organizing the International, especially the former, where the General Council was located until it was transferred to New York after the famous Hague Congress.

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However, if the sections of the First International did rise much above this liberal ecumenism and put forward as well as practised an Internationalism, clearly demarcated from if not entirely opposed to bourgeois-democratic solidarisation, the reason lay both in its social basis and the upsurge in the worker's Movement during the tenure of its existence. The conditions for the organization of the International was created by the economic crisis of 1857-1858. In Britain this "had a particularly strong repercussion in these new branches of capitalist production" - building, large scale shoe-making and clothing industries. "Great masses were left without work, and a reserve army of unemployed which made its pressure felt on the workers in the shops and the factories was formed. The employers on their part did not hesitate to make use of this weapon to oppress the workers, cut down wages, and lengthen the working day. But the workers, to the great surprise of their employers, answered this with a general strike in 1859, which became one of the greatest strikes London had ever known. As if further to increase the surprise of the employers, the strike of the building trades found strong support in other bodies of workers in all branches of industry." In connection with this the politically influential Trades Council was formed in London, "at the head of which stood the three chief leaders, Odger, Cremer, and George Howell; they are also the ones whom we meet at the first General Council of the First International." Patterned on this "similar trades councils were formed in many other parts of England and Scotland." After the passivity of the economic boom during 1849 to 1858, "in 1862, class organizations of workers again came into being." (Ryazanov, pp.135-136). These were to form the basis of the International in Britain.

"When we turn to France we see that the Crisis there was no less severe. It reacted strongly not only on the Textiles industry but also on all other industries for which Paris was then famous." The expanding building trades with their various sub-divisions ranging from the unskilled to the highly skilled on the one hand and the workers engaged in the manufacture of articles of luxury - the representatives of artistic trades - on the other hand supplied the rank and file for the new mass labor movement that unfolded itself in the early sixties. "Also, along with this revival of the labor movement came the awakening of the old Socialist groups." the Proudhonists, the followers of Armand Levi and the Blanquists. However, it must be noticed that it were not the Socialists neither Marx in England nor any of the particular Socialist groups in France, who took the actual initiative to organize the International.

Two specific causes compelled the workers in London and Paris to give a permanent practical form to the off and on contacts that had existed between them. The first event was the American Civil War (1860-1865). Due to this "The Textiles industry of the World were experiencing a crisis. The shortage of Cotton caused a rise in the prices of all the other raw materials in the Textiles industry." Tens may hundreds of thousands of workers were laid off. "The governments confined themselves to handing out pitiful pittance." Consequently, the London Trades Council, along with others took the initiative to appoint a special committee to organize help for the distressed workers. "In France also there

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Two specific causes compelled the workers in London and Paris to give a permanent practical form to the off and on contacts that had existed between them. The first event was the American Civil War (1860-1865). Due to this "The Textiles industry of the World were experiencing a crisis. The shortage of Cotton caused a rise in the prices of all the other raw materials in the Textiles industry. "Tens nay hundreds of thousands of workers were laid off. "The governments confined themselves to handing out pitiful pittances. "Consequently, the London Trades Council, along with others took the initiative to appoint a special committee to organize help for the distressed workers. "In France also there was organized a special committee for this purpose. The two committees were in frequent communication. It was this that suggested to the French and English workers how closely allied were the interest of labor of different countries."

During those the Polish rebellion against the Tsar too was attracting huge solidarity demonstrations in London. In April 1863, "a monster mass meeting was called in London" consisting of ordinary democrats but also attended by Odger and Cramer representing the British and Tolain representing the French workers. However, it was another issue, which was raised, the next day, when "another meeting took place arranged on the initiative of the London Trades Council, this time without the participation of the bourgeoisie." Here, the issue which was raised was, that except during phases of an economic crisis, the rapid growth of industry in Britain, the migration of large numbers of Britons to the Americas, and the many concessions the British workers had won from the Capitalists, created serious "competition of the French, the Belgian, and particularly the German workers." Thus the address which was sent to the French workers emphasized that "A fraternity of peoples is highly necessary for the cause of labor; for we find that whenever we attempt to better our social condition by reducing the hour of toil, or by raising the price of labour our employers threaten us with bringing over Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians and others to do our work at a reduced rate of wages ; and we are sorry to say, that this has been done not from any desire on the part of our continental brethren to injure us, but through a want of regular and systematic communication between the industrial classes of all countries." When, after a Year, the French workers after having issued the Manifesto of the Sixty, emphasizing the distinctness of the workers' interests had been issued, sent a reply which was paradoxically more political in character. According to it, since "capital is concentrating and organizing in mighty financial and industrial combinations" ... "We the workders of the world, must unite and erect a barrier to the baleful system which would divide humanity into two classes." Here, the impact of Proudhonism is evident. It was on the occasion of presenting this return address, that the French workers also suggested the founding of a central control commission with representatives from various countries. It was to the meeting of this committee, that Marx was invited. As Ryazanov points out, "Marx's chief role in the First International, with the foundation of which he had nothing to do, began after it was organized." (pp. 147).

We will take up the question of the nature of Marx's participation within the International and the function of the International as a working Class Party in the Third section. Here it remains to point out two things - Firstly, that not only the conditions for its creation, but the basis of its growth was provided only by its participation in the growing strike Movement led by newly formed Unions, which were now demanding a share in political power to be able to improve the social

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position of the working Class. Secondly, the fact that the movement was yet far from acquiring a self-consciously Communist Character e.g. yet openly accepting the Communist Manifesto, as the Communist League had earlier done only expressed the backward social conditions within which many of the different ideological tendencies within the International had grown up.

As Stekloff points out, if anything sustained the growing influence of the International, it was its "active participation in all the manifestations of the workers' political and economic struggles, and especially its participation in the strike movement, which at this time began to involve wider and ever wider masses of the workers -- above all on the Continent." The economic crisis of 1866, followed by the bad ~~the~~ harvests of 1866 and 1867, which raised the price of bread, only aggravated the misery which Marx had shown in his Inaugural Address afflicted the working Class in the midst of growing wealth. There he had pointed out, that "It is an extremely momentous fact, that the misery of the working class in the years 1848-1864 has not lessened, inspite of the unexampled development of industry and growth of trade during this period." This was due in part to the very character of the capitalist production during this period, which had yet concentrated on the modernization of few branches of industry, as also to the fact that in a period when the production of Absolute surplus value through an elongated working day still remained one of the chief means of capitalist exploitation, the labor Movement by and large, as the reports of the delegates to the London Conference of the International showed, lacked, "strong and well knit organizations, suffered from a grievous shortage of funds and the complete absence of a labor press." (Stekloff, pp.56) To this was superadded the fact, that in France and some of the other continental countries, it was only the few years before the 1866 - 1868 crisis, in which the various laws against combination among the workers had been withdrawn or modified. It was not unnatural that strikes in these conditions were not only numerous, they often tended to assume the form of incipiently revolutionary confrontations with the Semi-absolutist or partially democratized states, as for example during the Geneva Building Worker's Strike in the Spring of 1868 or shooting down of a hungry crowd of miners at Marchienne in Belgium. "The strike movement continued during 1869 to spread throughout Europe, the conflicts assuming a more and more acute character, and frequently being signalized by the intervention of the armed force of the state." (Stekloff, pp. 133) The International emerged as the most energetic champion of this Movement. It organized campaigns to prevent the import of foreign strike breakers or competing workers, and to direct all possible aid by inaugurating collections and sending money to striking workers. "Nowhere did it take initiatives in bringing about strikes. Its activities in this direction were limited to intervention where intervention was demanded by the character of the local conflicts." (Stekloff, pp. 89). It was only because of this that its political and moral impact acquired substance.

The nature of this influence, however, must be carefully examined. If we go merely by the number of affiliations, the International presents an imposing picture. According to Applegarth, by 1869, "there were 230 branches of the International in Britain with 95000 members. In Belgium, according to Testut, the International reckoned its adherents by the thousands." However, as Stekloff points out many of these affiliations occurred because the International appeared to be the only organized Center for lending

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moral and material support to the workers in different countries. In such a situation, "Unions (themselves bodies of uncertain composition) and whole localities would notify their adhesion to the International with the utmost light-heartedness and would then with the same levity drift away from it. And even during the period when these unions or localities adhered to the International, though they might give moral support and at certain times endow it with considerable political influence, they did not furnish it with funds or endow it with enduring organizational strength." (Stekloff, pp. 146) Indeed, in most countries the drift away from the International was connected with the growth of organized national centers of the labor movement, the Federal Council in Britain, the SPD in Germany, the Spanish section dominated by the Anarchists, the emerging socialist party in Belgium and the Workers' Party in U.S.A. Indeed in the last place the affiliation with the International always remained platonic, because the American Labor Movement perhaps organized itself on a national scale at the fastest possible pace.

The main basis of the International lay in Britain at least as far as Marx's own support was concerned. However, once the Federal Trades Council decided, that it could enter into "direct relationships with the federations of other lands" in so far as these had now begin to function, the attraction of mediating this relationship through the General Council declined. Soon enough, the Britishers also joined the chorus of protest against the so-called 'authoritarianism' of the General Council, which was not prepared to allow the free functioning of separate national fractions. Their withdrawal was also rooted in the growing passivity of the labor Movement once the revival of industry set in after 1868. "This had the effect of a soothing syrup, as far as the British Proletariat was concerned." The extension of franchise, the legalization of the Trade Unions in 1871, the withdrawal of all restrictions on all 'legal' strikes in 1872, lessened the attraction of 'international' support and enabled the use of other methods, "such as peaceful negotiations, courts of arbitration, mediation etc." (Stekloff, pp. 222) Ryazanov, pp. 201-202).

The definitive event, which caused the disintegration of the International or at least the revolt against the General Council was the defeat of the Paris Commune. This brought on a concentrated repression of the labor movement by the Continental states on the one hand and the revival of sectarian politics, which the upsurge of the working class movement in the more advanced capitalist countries had subdued or at least integrated within the International during the 1860's. The character of the Commune and its lessons in regard to the relationship between the Party and Class, as well as the nature of the social emancipation of the Proletariat require a separate paper and will be dealt with elsewhere. Here it would suffice to note, that the fall of the Commune meant, that, "The French labor movement was paralyzed for a few years. It was represented in the International by a host of communist refugees amongst whom a bitter factional strife was raging. The German labor movement also suffered a serious setback." Bebel and Liebknecht had been arrested. "Schweitzer, who had lost the confidence of the party was forced to leave it." In a period when organizations so largely depended on the personal initiative of leaders, this meant as grievous blow. "The International thus

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lost support from the two greatest countries on the Continent."
(Ryazanov, pp. 192)

The only countries where the Labor movement continued to have an agitational form for some time were the Latin countries Italy, Spain etc. where the International had grown precisely during the very last years of its existence, in the form of Bakunin's International Alliance. The nature of the movement in these countries whose theoretical expression was anarchism, however, only intensified the schism within the International hastening its effective disintegration. This had already been initiated in different countries including Belgium and Italy, where many of the Internationalists were on trial or it was suppressed by a simple decree. (Cf. Report to the Hague Congress, FI and after, pps. 320-322) According to Cole, this repression meant that, "In the 1870's as in the 1850's there were too many little groups, largely of exiles, busily holding inquests on their defeat and blaming one another for it, for any advance to be made towards a new form of unity. The centres in which the International had been most active were in need of a rest and were taking one either compulsorily, as in France and Italy, or of their own accord." According to Cole, this was partly due to the recession which began around the mid-1870's. In the older countries where they were not very strong "Trade Unions found themselves reduced to postures of defence, where they were able to stand out at all." (Cole, Marxism and Anarchism, pp. 211) This passivity coming in the wake of the defeat of the Paris Commune only undermined further the necessity for unity, which had been provoked by the period of the relative upsurge in the worker's movement. In essence, this and not merely the ideological differences between the Marxists on the one hand and Proudhonists or Bakuninists on the other explain the disintegration of the International into small inward looking sects.

Engels' recognized the historical conditions which alone had created the International and allowed it to exist. Writing to Sorge, one of Marx's most ardent supporters, when he resigned from the International in September 1874, he said, "Your resignation gives the quietus to the Old International. This just as well. The organization belonged to the epoch of the Second Empire, when the Labor Movement was again beginning to become active, and when the oppressions that prevailed throughout Europe made unity and abstention from internal disputes possible. It was a time when the joint cosmopolitan interests of the Proletariat could come to the front." Marx and Engels made the same point more explicitly in their Critique of the proposed Gotha Programme. There they pointed out that, "The International activity of the working classes does not in any way depend upon the existence of the International Workingmen's Association. This was only the first attempt to create central organ for that activity; an attempt which was a lasting success on account of the impulse which it gave, but which was no longer realisable in its first historical form after the fall of the Paris Commune." In other words each specific phase of the worker's Movement produces parties of a particular type. The International could not have existed in the face of "Passive" worker's Movement.

Part 3 : The International as a Worker's Party

"Even under the most favourable political conditions all serious success of the ~~proletariat~~ proletariat depends upon an organization that unites and concentrates its forces. This want has given birth to the International Workingmen's Association. That Association has not been

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hatched by a sect or theory. It is the spontaneous growth of the proletarian movement, which itself is the offspring of the natural and irrepressible tendencies of modern society. Its destiny henceforward coalesces with the historical progress of the class, that bear in their hands the regeneration of mankind."

The Fourth Annual Report of the General Council, 1868.

Considered in isolation, Engels' letter to Wischnevetzki, quoted at the very start of this paper tends to create the impression, that it was the way Marx formulated the Provisional Rules in order to allow for all working class socialists to join the International, "this broad concept" which ensured its success. And indeed this is the spirit in which the vulgar dogmatism and ideologism of the Soviet School interprets the history of the First International. In the Preface to the 1974 edition of the first volume of the General Council Minutes, the Moscow publishers write, "In the ranks of the IMMA, the advanced workers of Europe and America got a schooling in proletarian internationalism, imbibed the ideas of Marxism, and finally discarded petty - bourgeois sectarianism for the proletarian party principle". In other words they became, to use a word which Marx often employed as a term of abuse for the Proudhonists and the Bakuninists, "doctors of social science" (FI and After, pp. 329) or "the heiratic practitioners of a secret science." (ibid, pp. 307). Not unnaturally all this is done in order to paint Marx and Engels as the great teachers of the Proletariat. According to the same Preface, "The great significance it was to acquire was due to the notable part played in it by Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels whose preceding theoretical and practical activities and years of struggle for a proletarian party had prepared the ground for the establishment of the Association."

It is not only, that such ideologism ignores the facts of history, it does so in a vicious manner. We have already seen how Marx much less than Engels had done anything, could do nothing after the disintegration of the Communist League to build a new proletarian party. Anyone who had chanced to read Ryazanov's book would know that "The formation of the International was accomplished without Engels and upto 1870 he took only an insignificant and an indirect part in it." (Ryazanov, pp. 199). Far from the 'advanced workers' of Europe and America 'imbibing the ideas of Marxism', Ryazanov comparing the few Bakuninists with the even fewer Marxists would write, "Things were much worse with the Marxists". Behind Marx and Engels, there was only a small group of people who were acquainted with the principles of the Communist Manifesto and who understood fully all the teachings of Marx. The writings of the German socialists during the first half of the seventies, even the brochures written by Wilhelm Liebknecht show the deplorable state in which the study of Marxian theory was at that time. The pages of the central organ of the German party were often filled with the most grotesque mixture of various socialist systems. The method of Marx and Engels, the materialist conception of history, and the teaching about the Class struggles - all this remained a sealed book." (Ryazanov, pp. 207) Cole, pp. 12). If we were to accept the words of the Moscow publishers, it would be impossible to explain why after having 'learned' so much the 'advanced workers' did not immediately set about creating a new International.

It would be impossible to grasp the actual function of the International and its active role within this purely pedagogic conception of revolutionary politics.

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(a) The FI AND Sectarianism :

It is true that the International and especially Marx's role in it was to struggle against sectarianism or doctrinarism, which he saw basically as an attempt to impose Ideas on Reality rather than explain and participate in what was actually happening. As Marx explained when he used the term 'scientific socialism' it was "used only in opposition to utopian socialism, which wants to attach the people to new delusions, instead of limiting its science to the knowledge of the social movement made by the people itself." (pp. 337) FI and after. As opposed to this, the sects based themselves on prescriptions not grounded in reality. "Individual thinkers provide a critique of social antagonisms, and put forward fantastic solutions which the mass of workers can only accept, pass on, and put into practice. The mass of the workers always remain unmoved by if not hostile to their propaganda ... because by their very nature, the sects are abstentionist, strangers to all genuine action, to politics, to coalitions in brief to any unified movement," (Ibid, pp. 298) Thus Proudhonism having arisen from the days of political passivity in France during the Second Empire continued to demand abstentionism from political action even when the Proletariat had begun to demand its political rights. Similarly Anarchism basing itself on the absence of a genuine proletarian movement in the more backward countries, where Absolutism denied the possibility of organizing a reformist struggle demanded that the entire Proletarian Movement do the same. (Cf. Stakoff, pps. 68-70- 310 - 312; Cole, pp. 119-120).

"In comparison with the fantastic and mutually antagonistic organization of the sects, the International is the real and militant organization of the Proletariat in every country linked together in common struggle against the capitalists and the landowners." However, the more significant part of the text relates to the conception of the programme which Marx puts forward. He did not here insist, that the Communist Manifesto alone be accepted as the programme of the International. For "the rules of the International only speak of Workers' societies, all seeking the same object, and all accepting the same programme - programme limited to outlining the major features of the Proletarian Movement, and leaving the details of the theory to be worked out as inspired by the demands of the practical struggle, and as growing out of the exchange of ideas among the sections, with an equal hearing given to all socialist views in their journals and congresses." (FI and after, pp.299) This was not a mere ruse to get together as many people as possible but grounded in a specific conception of the relationship between theory and the working class Movement, a point which was forcefully underlined by the General Council itself, when the question of admitting Bakunin's Alliance came up.

It is quite well known how vehemently Marx disagreed with Bakunin's ideas on almost every point. (Cf. General Con. Minutes, op cit. pps. 379 - 383 Vol for the years 1868 - 1870; Also Conspectus of Bakunin's Statism and Anarchy, FI and after, pps 333 - 338) Yet, the General Council, of which he was a member recognized the revolutionary character of its activity, and was prepared to admit it with only one qualification, that the Alliance substitute for its aim of 'the equalization of classes' the 'abolition of classes'. As the specific resolution of the General Council explained, this was premised on the understanding, that, "Since the sections of the working Class in various countries have reached different stages of development, it follows that their theoretical opinions, which reflect the real movement, will be equally divergent." However, the "Community of action established

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by the IWWA and the exchange of ideas fostered by it, cannot fail gradually to give rise to a common theoretical programme." Thus, "it is no part of the function of the General Council to make a critical study of the Alliance's programme (or) to analyze whether or not it is a genuine expression of the Proletarian Movement. All we need to know is that it contains nothing counter to the general tendency of our Association, in other words, the complete emancipation of the working class." (FI and after, pp. 281).

In other words, the various sects, which agreed to join the International did not necessarily discard their "sectarianism". But why did they want to join the International at all. Why is it that Proudhonism which preached total political abstentionism was ultimately drawn into the trade-union struggle, why was it that Blanquism which propagated conspiracy as the only form of political action would later play a part in the Paris Commune. As Marx would remark elsewhere "The development of Socialist sectarianism and that of the genuine working class movement are always in inverse ratio." (Stekloff, pp. 74) Marx, of course understood this to mean that as long as the working Class Movement had not developed a mass character, sects so to speak represented the real character of the undeveloped Movement. However, the same is true of the relatively passive phases through which the working Class struggle has had to pass through. It is only in times of a social upsurge, that those amongst the 'sects' who are revolutionary are necessarily drawn into the struggle although with all their erroneous ideas which make them prone to mistakes. It is only in periods of such relatively longlasting upsurges, that the inherent unity between the social character of the Working Class and its revolutionary political functions is expressed most explicitly, and tends to draw all revolutionary elements into one organization, turns the sects into members of a party. For as the General Council, explained elsewhere, it was "in the militant state of the working class, (that) its economical movement and political action are indissolubly united." (Pyazanov, pp. 193). C. as Marx commented in relation to the Proudhonists, "The working class movement is today so powerful, that these philanthropic sectarians dare not repeat for the economic struggle, those great truths they use to repeat for on the subject of the political struggle." (FI and After, pp. 329). This meant that Marx neither feared uniting with the sectarians when they were prepared to enter the common struggle nor feared fighting with them against their ~~wrong~~ wrong ideas. Indeed as he pointed out, "the history of the International was a continuous struggle on the part of the General Council against the sects, "which attempted to maintain themselves in opposition to the genuine WC Movement" (Stekloff, pp. 74).

(b) THE PARTY AND THE PROGRAMME :

In the various conceptions of 'revolutionary' politics developed after the FI, the Party really acquired its hegemonizing role in the Class through its Programme. The Programme was supposed by its very definition to introduce something, which was not present in the Class struggle, to suggest something which was necessary for the Class, but unknown to it. To take two examples - the social Democratic conception in which the separation between the minimum and the maximum programme was made precisely, because the latter half was not immediately accessible to the class. Trotsky's Transitional Programme was meant to provide a bridge so to speak between the existing

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consciousness of the class and its revolutionary consciousness. The programme concentrated the IDEAL FORM of Revolutionary consciousness, as counterposed to the meanness and inadequacy of the existing consciousness of the Class. We shall take up the question of the historical conditions which gave rise to such a conception elsewhere. It is sufficient to note, that the schism between Reality and Revolutionary thought or theory was written into the very notion of the Programme. Its formalism was not an error, a mistake of analysis or a paucity of information. Its formalism was its privilege, its very function which was to direct reality into well thought out and ideal channels, to charter the course of history, when history had supposedly forgotten itself.

It is sufficient to note, that Marx's notion of a 'Programme' for the International had little in comm with this. When Marx wrote the Inaugural Address and drafted the Provisional Rules, he had as Ryazanov points out to make a 'concessions'. This makes it seem to Ryazanov as if Marx was ~~not~~ deliberately forging a United Front in order to overcome his isolation. This was not at all how Marx himself saw the Inaugural Address, or his various 'Programmatic' interventions on behalf of the general council. On the contrary as he himself pointed out, if he had 'deliberately restricted' himself it was to bring out "those points, which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by workers and give direct nourishment and impetus to the organization of the workers into a class." (Braunthal, pp. 123).

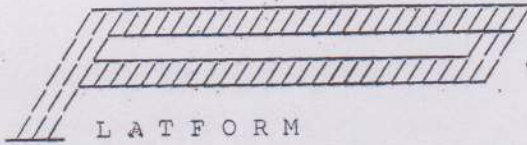
An individual thinker can definitely through his genius and scientific analysis anticipate the course of history, but he cannot foist this upon history irrespective of its own course of development. It is noteworthy, that by the time he wrote the Inaugural Address, Marx had both the Communist Manifesto, he first volume of capital and much else written down. Yet he did not insist on making these into the 'Programme' of the International. Rather he wrote the Inaugural Address in a form which limited itself to explaining how some of these very tendencies manifested themselves in the actual movement of history. Thus he sought to base the necessity of a confrontation between capital and the working class on the actual course of industrialization which till then had produced wealth at one pole and poverty and social misery on the other. He did not proclaim that the International alone could advance the workers' movement. Rather he saw in the passing of the Bill restricting the working day to Ten Hours, "not only a great practical success" but "the victory of a principle, it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the ~~middle~~ middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class", "that the blind rule of the supply and demand laws" was defeated by the principle of "social production controlled by social foresight." (FI and After pp. 79). Similarly the Proudhonist co-operative movement was not condemned or scorned. On the contrary, "The value of these social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed instead of by agreement they have shown, that production on a large scale may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hinds".

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Equally well "the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864" has "proved that if kept within the narrow circle of the causal efforts of private workmen" co-operatives will not destroy capital. Hence "to conquer political power has become the great duty of the working classes," (Ibid p. 80).

In other words the 'Programme' so to speak, was the actual summing up of the experience of the worker's movement the expression in theory of what the class was doing in practice, even in various experiential forms constructed by itself.

Marx himself emphasized this in an interview given to an American Newspaper. According to him FI. "did not lay down the form which the political movement must take; it required only that these movements should be directed towards the achievement of a definite objective. The International encompasses a network of labour sections all over the world. In any part of the world, the workers are faced with particular problems which they are trying to solve in their own manner. The International does not claim the right to dictate (to them)" (Braunthal 1914-1943, pp. 179-180) It is in this sense that "the business of the IWMA" was only "to combine and generalize the spontaneous movements of the working classes but not to dictate or impose any doctrinary system whatever." (FI and After pp. 90).



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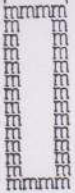
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C O B I



CLASS, PARTY AND PROGRAMME

The complex dialectical relationship between the class, its party and its programme is seldom rigorously studied by revolutionaries. Either they are content with simplistic phrases about the party leading the masses as a (physiological) head 'guides' the body as a whole; or b) the party is seen as the class in concreto, producing the teleological notion that the class really only exists to produce 'its highest expression', the Party; or c) because of the intrinsic difficulties of producing a real vanguard party and having produced it, of consolidating it, falling to the easy libertarian option of 'doing without' such a party, ostensibly to give the masses 'free reign for their creative abilities'. All three lines are profoundly mistaken and have been historically demonstrated as such. The contemporary proof of this lies in the fact that no revolutionary organisation in the West is able to show that it knows how to produce the strategic guidance for the class up to, and into, its seizure of state power, i.e., the party's programme. This is not an appendage to be gotten when the party has been formed, or to be written up by a preparatory committee to be adopted at the founding congress. On the contrary the struggle for the Programme is the same process of struggle as that for the Party - the one is the condition of the other. Marx made this fundamental point in no less fundamental a document than 'The Communist Manifesto':

Whereas "The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority...

"The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties in every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."

This understanding, when put in concrete and disseminable form, is nothing other than the party's programme. It is of course a condition of such a function that there be a Party of Communists.

THE PARTY FORM

It is an intrinsic part of old libertarian and new left ideology, that the communist organisation has no determinate party form according to Marx's conception, and that its advent is the peculiar product of Lenin's struggle against the diffuse 'open party' of the Mensheviks. It is thus held that what was required for the illegal struggle of revolutionaries against the Czarist autocracy is at best redundant and at worst obstructive and restrictive in 'modern' bourgeois democracies. This is a fatal fallacy that the waxing and waning of bourgeois democracy in modern times, and with it the existence of revolutionaries, should have disabused all but the wilfully blind. Greece, Chile and Argentina are but a few reminders, as also is the fate of Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

Such stupidity has no basis whatever in Marx's conceptions or practice. Describing the relationship of Proletarians and Communists in Section 2 of "The Manifesto", Marx and Engels state that "The Communists do not form a separate

party opposed to other working class parties" (emphasis added). For, "They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."

"They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement." Meaning of course "That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves"; as the general rules of nothing other than an organisation to lead such a movement - The International Working Men's Association or First International - made clear in its opening lines. For there to be a real social revolution, a thorough upheaval, and not merely a transfer of power from one ruling minority to another, the proletariat must take the field constituted as a class uncompromisingly acting in its own historic interests. But it cannot do this spontaneously, just being left to something as obscurantist and ahistorical as 'its own class instinct'. For, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas", as Marx and Engels emphasised in 'The German Ideology'; "i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it." "In a political struggle of class against class", writes Engels, "organisation is the most important weapon." But as Marx elucidates in the Inaugural Address of the W.M.I.A.: "One element of success (workers) possess - numbers; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge."

So there must be both organisation and knowledge in the workers' hands if they are to emancipate themselves. Whence is this knowledge to come, and why is it much more - indeed qualitatively different from - the day to day immediate experience of workers, enshrined in their spontaneous organisations as Trades Unions?

PUSHING FROM WITHOUT

Any qualitative and conscious change in society has two prerequisites -

- 1) A comprehensive view of society and its history, with especial reference to its mode(s) of production.
- 2) The derivation from that and other societies of laws governing the succession of social forms.

Characteristic of all class societies is a high degree of division of labour. Indeed Engels says in 'Socialism Scientific and Utopian': "It is, therefore the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes."

Particularly pronounced and pernicious is the division between mental and manual labour, between thinking and doing. Always the development of knowledge and systematic reflection on social affairs is the preserve of the ruling class and its 'experts' or 'professionals'. Only rarely and partially do the toiling masses have sufficient time, leisure and scope to autonomously develop their own world-view. Hence historically and contemporaneously, powerful proletarian movements conscious of

themselves as such could only arise to the extent that those with the necessary knowledge - disaffected bourgeois intellectuals - brought to the workers' movement the breadth and depth of knowledge from which as toilers they had been alienated. Such were of course Marx and Engels; and it is no coincidence that where bourgeois society was able to develop smoothly on a broad front (Britain and the U.S.) few intellectuals threw in their lot with the workers' movement, whereas when the reverse held (Germany, Russia) strong socialist movements arose with the wholesale defection of intellectuals from the bourgeoisie. This is what caused Marx to write (in 'The Poverty of Philosophy') a year before the 'Manifesto' was published: "Just as the economists are the scientific representatives of the bourgeois class, so the Socialists and Communists are the theoreticians of the proletarian class". (Original emphasis).

This does not mean that disaffected bourgeois intellectuals are the theoreticians of the proletariat. It does mean, as Lenin correctly emphasised in 'What Is To Be Done?', that the requisite knowledge comes to the class from without. In this sense a worker who has managed to tap the sacred preserves of social knowledge and seeks to integrate it with the direct experience of the working class, is himself an outsider in 'normal' times; i.e. when the proletariat under the sway of the ruling ideas and grinding labour is thus 'content' to leave the 'thinking and philosophising' to others; i.e. to the classes above them, into which indeed, educated members of the working class are expected to naturally 'graduate'.

Communists therefore function to catalyse the class into acting in its own historic interests by reuniting knowing with doing, science with productive labour. This they cannot do as a random collection of individuals, more or less autonomous, but only as an organised body - just such a body as the Communist League, for which Marx and Engels wrote the 'Communist Manifesto' itself.

The Communist Party then is not the incarnation of the perfect trade union, striving 'to lead' each and every spontaneous struggle. Neither is the communist cadre acting as such when he resembles a militant trade union secretary, rather than a scientific socialist political leader; then he functions as a tribune of the whole class, not for a particularistic category of trade.

Communists are scientific socialists acting according to Engels' dictum, that "Socialism, having become a science (under Marx) demands the same treatment as every other science - it must be studied".

But not studied, alone in splendid isolation, as 'independent' Marxists.

First of all, Marxism is a method of understanding the world for the express purpose of changing it. This means that Marxism can only be studied by attempting interventions on the basis of Marxist theory, and in turn enriching the theory on the basis of the experience learned. Learned of course means 'critically reflected upon'. Contrary to the illusions of the "mass-workers", experience itself, in its raw state, cannot be integrated into knowledge, for it does not yet exist on that plane.

Still less do 'interventions', nomatter how militant, its themselves generate theory - only hysteria and then disillusion. First the theory is carefully studied; then, and only then, can controlled, and thus meaningful, political practices take place. Practices in the plural that is - and over time; those of an individual can never themselves have sufficient scope and history. And this process demands the groupment of Marxists. Only when thus associated can the learning process rise above the transient particularism of the individual, to the breadth, continuity and, thus overview of the collective. In this association, the Party is not the sum of its parts, but a new sui-generis entity acting on a higher plane - that of the historic interests of the working class, which only a new collective entity - the Party - can foreshadow.

Thus the Party is not the association of militant trade unionists, with middle-class 'leaders' and 'theoreticians' urging them on to do what comes naturally. On the contrary, it is the collective into which workers, intellectuals, salaried, etc. have entered for the explicit purpose of fighting against the roles imposed by class society - e.g. that of being 'a trade unionist', 'an intellectual', etc. Instead we have new men and women - communists - fighting for the future by studying the past and present on a world scale. The immensity of this task is only made possible by the existence of a unitary party that is collective organiser and thinker. It absorbs individuals stamped by the capitalist division of labour, and remoulds them according to the holistic consciousness and division of labour requirement of itself as a qualitatively different organism.

THE PARTY TYPE

We have now said enough to know that for communist action there must be the party organisation. And we have also said enough to establish the characteristics of this party. Indeed these have been published several times by us without challenge; so we firmly take the characteristics of the Communist Party to be these :

- 1) It is the party of the strategic-historic goals of the proletariat.
- 2) It is the party therefore of theoretical insight and overview.
- 3) It is an internationalist party, combatting nationalism.
- 4) It is a party out for proletarian dictatorship through the seizure of state power.
- 5) It is a disciplined centralised party without room in its ranks for amateurism and liberalism.

It is our contention that this is specifically the Marxist-Leninist type of Party. Though this should already be clear from what has gone before in the words of Marx and Engels themselves, none are so blind as those who do not wish to see. However the pressure of bourgeois individualistic and democratic ideology is so overwhelming in Britain that many otherwise useful comrades cannot readily strip these blindfolds from their eyes.

To try to dispose of these pernicious prejudices once and for all, we are adopting the following procedure, nomatter how laborious. For each of the five fundamental

characteristics cited above we shall give Marx/Engels' own words on the subject, and directly compare this with Lenin's. That these are fundamental propositions, and not chance remarks or lines torn from context, will be seen from their locking together to form an integral worldview.

1) Marx and Engels in the 'Communist Manifesto' :

"The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement."

Lenin in 'Political Sophisms' (1905) :

"That is why it is quite natural that (Bolshevism) as the party of the revolutionary proletariat is so solicitous of its programme, so meticulously defines its final aim long beforehand - the aim of complete liberation of working people - and looks so jealously at any attempt to trim down this final aim; for this same reason (Bolshevism) is so dogmatically strict and doctrinally unbending in separating small, immediate, economic aims from the final aim. Whoever is fighting for all, for complete victory, cannot but be on the lookout lest small gains should bind one's hands, divert one from the path, forget that which is relatively far off and without which all small gains are but the vanity of vanities. On the contrary this care for programmes, this eternally critical attitude to small gradual improvements cannot be understood by and is foreign to bourgeois parties, even those that are the most freedom-loving and people-loving."

Programme includes goals, methods, activity and reflection in work as they go along.

2) Engels in 'Socialism - Utopian and Scientific' :

"To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism."

Marx addressing a sitting of the Brussels Communist Correspondents' Committee :

"To address the working man without a strictly scientific idea and a positive doctrine is to engage in an empty and dishonest preaching game, which assumes an inspired prophet, on the one hand, and nothing but asses listening to him with gaping mouths, on the other... Ignorance has never yet helped anyone."

Lenin in 'What Is To Be Done?' :

"Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement... the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory."

3) Marx/Engels in the 'Communist Manifesto' :

Countries (especially) will have to base themselves on reality, but cannot be satisfied. So according to this - 6 - either there can not be a revolution in colonial countries if they are

"The Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

"The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got.

"United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat".

Lenin in 'Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Questions':

"The recognition of internationalism in word, and the substitution of petit bourgeois nationalism and pacificism for it in deed, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is a very common thing not only among parties of the Second ('Socialist') International, but also among those which have withdrawn from the International, and often even among those which now call themselves Communist Parties....

(So a Nationalist Communist cannot be nationalist!)

"Petit-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the bare recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more, while (quite forgetting that this recognition is purely verbal) preserving national egoism intact; whereas proletarian internationalism demands, firstly, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country be subordinated to the interests of the struggle on a world scale, and secondly, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the sake of overthrowing international capital.

"Thus in states which are already fully capitalist, and which have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against the opportunist and petit-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and most important task".

4) Marx in 'The Gotha Programme':

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." (original emphasis)

Engels in 'On Authority':

"A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is: it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon - authoritarian means if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois?

Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?"

How to / must 'while basing on nationalising' ... and theoretical riddle.

Lenin in 'The State and Revolution':

"Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the Dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petit (as well as big) bourgeois."

Lenin in 'Proletarian Revolution' and the Renegade Kautsky':

"Dictatorship is power based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

"The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is power won and maintained by the violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, power that is unrestricted by any laws".

5) Marx to P. Lafargue in Madrid:

"Above all one must bear in mind that our Association is the militant organisation of the proletariat, and by no means a society for the advancement of doctrinaire amateurs".

Engels on The Congress of Sonvillier and the International:

"And above all (according to anarchism) there should be no disciplined sections! Indeed, no party discipline, no centralisation of forces at a particular point, no weapons of struggle! For what, then, would happen to the model of the future (anarchist) society? In short, where would this new organisation get us? To the cowardly, servile organisation of the early Christians, those slaves who gratefully accepted every kick and whose grovelling did indeed after 300 years win them the victory of their religion - a method of revolution which the proletariat will surely not imitate!"

Lenin in 'Collapse of the Second International':

"(Bolshevik) parties are not debating clubs, but organisations of the fighting proletariat".

Lenin: 'Materials on the Question of the Struggle Within the Social-Democrat Fraction in the Duma':

"(Bolshevism) is a certain organised entity, and those people who do not abide by the discipline of this organisation, who scorn it and violate its decisions, do not belong to it. This is a fundamental rule."

On all the five fundamental characteristics of communist organisation Lenin firmly upholds the propositions of Marx and Engels. Q.E.D. The Communist Party is the Leninist party, or rather, the Marxist-Leninist party.

So what has all the fuss been about these sixty years. What it comes down to is that Lenin had the temerity to point out that these criteria for communist militants could, under capitalism, only be attained by a small minority; and that to practice revolutionary politics consistently these vanguard elements would have to regard themselves as professional revolutionaries - i. e. would have to put politics in command of their whole lives:

"A political party can comprise only a minority of the class, just as the really class conscious workers in any capitalist society constitute only a minority of all the workers. That is why we have to admit that only this class conscious minority can guide and take the lead of the broad masses of the workers". ('The Role of the Communist Party', 1920).

Can it be said that this final and crucial formulation is at all at variance with those of the founders of Scientific Socialism? Well, Engels wrote in the 'Housing Question':

"Moreover, every real proletarian party, from the English Chartists forward, has put forward a class policy, the organisation of the proletariat as an independent political party as the primary condition of its struggle, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the immediate aim of the struggle".
(Last two emphases added).

From this it is crystal clear that the party, which strives to put forward class politics and so consolidate the class, IS IN FACT A MINORITY; precisely and solely of the class conscious; who were they a majority, would already have put an end to capitalism.

So an end to the liberal-consensus prejudices of our Libertarians, Luxemburgists and Labourites, (whose positions have been de facto adopted by the C.P.G.B.). The only informed and honest alternative to the scientific, trained, disciplined vanguard party of the class-conscious minority that strives to lead the class it has consolidated - i.e. the Marxist-Leninist Party - is to avoid Marxism altogether. Alone the Cardanists in France and Solidarity in Britain have the courage of their (mistaken) convictions. And these alone are honest mistakes. They are however obvious ones that no historical materialists should make in the light of 20th century events, even if the 19th century writings of the founders of scientific socialism were not clear enough for them.

One last whimper we will allow the egalitarian chatterers before moving on to the interesting and as yet unresolved problem of just how the proletariat is actually constituted as a class. It is the remark that Leninist parties are difficult to build, cannot guarantee success in revolution and socialist construction, and are subject to degeneration, even as Lenin's party has been. To all this we agree. But where in scientific socialism is it said that class struggle is easy, advance smooth and progress certain? All we say, following Marx and Engels and the century of struggles that have proved them right, is that the Marxist-Leninist party is just the best and sharpest tool the proletariat has for its historic tasks - not a magic wand.

Precisely because the vanguard party is the sharpest instrument of proletarian struggle, so the struggles around its formation, consolidation and class leadership are themselves the sharpest of class struggles.

CONSTITUTING THE PROLETARIAT AS A POLITICAL CLASS

Already in the 'Communist Manifesto', section-1, we find reference to the "formation of the proletariat into a class", and "this organisation of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party". The General Rules of the International Working Men's Association, drawn up by Marx, gives a fuller formulation:

"In its struggle against the collective power of the possessing classes the proletariat can act as a class only by constituting itself a distinct political party, opposed to all the old parties formed by the possessing classes.

"This constitution of the proletariat into a political party is indispensable to ensure the triumph of the social Revolution and of its ultimate goal: the abolition of classes."

The constitution of the proletariat as a class is the critical moment in the historical development of the proletariat. The very possibility of building the revolutionary party is determined by this moment. It consists of nothing less than the qualitative change of the proletariat from a position of subordinate class, an object of capitalism, to the condition of self-assertive independent struggle against its exploitation and oppression.

Without a firm grasp of what is meant by the 'formation of the proletariat into a class', and the ability to understand, master and operate with the processes involved, no revolutionary practice is possible.

The necessity for the constitution of class the class is the site of the greatest confusion and obscurantism amongst left groups. Nowhere is this more true than in Britain, where 'Empiricism' has been the unrivalled, dominant ideological mode since the dawn of capitalism.

The empiricist considers the question in terms of, 'either the class exists or it does not exist'. Since the proletariat is an inherent element in capitalism, then all talk of constituting the class is paradoxical or contradictory. This paradox or contradiction is the result of the 'empirical', concept of 'existing reality', which holds that there exists 'out there', in nature and society, 'objective facts' that can be apprehended to the extent that they are approached with open eyes and common sense. Empiricism holds that reality is transparent to the 'unprejudiced mind'; i.e. one cleared of all misconceptions, thus allowing nature or 'the facts' to impress themselves on the mind (through the senses) as a clear impression on smooth wax. If this were a true description of the learning process, the proletariat in Britain, which prides itself on its 'down to earth common sense' and has long been organised, would long ago have seen through the nature of the system which oppresses, and swept it away.

As the quotation from 'The German Ideology', given earlier, emphatically states, the ideational process is not like empiricism imagines. No child or adult has or can obtain a mind like a blank sheet on which 'reality' can write characters. On the contrary we approach the world full of preconceptions which have been that are instilled by the society in which we have brought up. And the general cast of these ideas, especially the socio-political component, is heavily influenced by the ideas necessary to justify the existence of the ruling class; hence 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas'.

For 'Empiricism' knowledge is a relatively passive process, with the observer as recipient of sense data. In contrast, the sciences are not reflective, pure or tranquil, they are practices of active intervention. Concepts and theories are as much part of their material reality - the conditions of existence of these interventions - as the material objects, processes being studied, or the technical equipment used to investigate the concrete, and the sciences win knowledge by submitting theories to experiment and testing in concrete terms.

Since for 'Empiricism' knowledge is a function of reality itself, the essentially social character of all knowledge is obscured. More particularly the vitally collective partism nature of science is denied. From their development out of pre-scientific modes of thought, and throughout their entire histories, the sciences have had continually to fight to

* to them. Scientific theories are propositions about the real, the material.

defend themselves against the attempts of ruling classes to subordinate them to expedient and pragmatic demands. Collective action by scientists is essential, not only in this defence against anti-science, but equally for the advance of scientific knowledge.

So much is this the case that Lenin commenced his (1908) article 'Marxism and Revisionism' with the pointed observation that:

"There is a well known saying that if geometrical axioms affected human interests (i.e. class interests) attempts would certainly be made to refute them. Theories of the natural sciences which conflict with the old prejudices of theology provoked, and still provoke, the most rabid opposition. No wonder, therefore, that the Marxian doctrine, which directly serves to enlighten and organise the advanced class in modern society, indicates the tasks of this class and proves the inevitable (by virtue of economic development) replacement of the present system by a new order - no wonder that this doctrine had to fight at every step in its course."

In opposition to ideologies and other non-scientific practices, the results of scientific research are not presented as self-evident or eternal truths, but are subject to constant self-criticism and reformulation, in the struggle to understand the world so that it can be changed.

Marxism is a science which has as its object revolutionary class struggle. Taking the strivings of an oppressed class - strivings which had already been given ideological expression as socialism by Saint Simon, Owen, etc. - Marxism shows how 'liberation' can be won, not in the mind, in fantasy, by piety and moral suasion, but objectively, historically, by mastering the inner dynamic of class society through scientific analysis. All that common sense and 'empiricism' can grasp is the surface appearance, the effects, of processes that remain hidden to them. Empiricism is thus historically and practically challenged by scientific socialism in the ideological and political struggles of the proletariat.

But, of course, empiricism/common sense does not simply disappear from the realm of revolutionary struggle. We have already observed that the sciences are constantly subject to attempts by the ruling class to appropriate them, to exploit their authority and to deflect, contain or destroy their social effects by ideological closure. For no science is this more true than Marxism, and in no case is it more pernicious and reactionary in its effects than in its manifestations amongst the left. 'Left empiricists', with their 'practical struggles' obsession, rehearse all the prevalent forms of bourgeois ideology, and treat Marxist theory as a prescriptive set to be 'applied', rather as an engineer would use stress tables. (Except no engineer is likely to confuse technical tables with scientific theories).

On the left also there is a non-scientific/ideological practice which is the dialectical opposite of 'empiricism' but which inhabits the same terrain. This practice is 'theoreticism' and its characteristic error is to pretend to defend the theoretical/scientific from outside science itself, on a cloudy terrain that is and is not philosophy, i.e. ideology. In the last analysis, there can be no external defence of a science. There is no independent legislature that determines the scientificity of science or can guarantee its interests. (Just as there is no 'independent' state guarding the interests of society as a whole). The only effective defence of science is the energetic practice of that science. Marxism is a

science and must be practiced, the practice being that of revolutionary political intervention into the class struggle. This is the only effective weapon that can defeat the effects of ideologies that hold the proletariat in thrall and prevent it constituting itself as a class.

What Marx/Engels are saying is that a class does not exist until it is conscious of itself as such (and thus proceeds to act in its own clear interests). Until then what exists is the economic/material basis for the subsequent formation of a class; no more. A potential class exists where distinct categories of economic agents exist; i.e. where people are constrained to enter into common means for obtaining their livelihood, specifying that they share a common relationship to the means of production. For proletarians, of course, this shared relationship is the sale of their labour power to capital for the process of material production. But this of itself cannot constitute the proletarians as a class; on the contrary at first workers are atomised as individuals in competitive sale of the labour power that each is forced to throw onto the market. "At this stage", says 'The Manifesto', "the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country and broken up by their mutual competition". This is the pre-trades union stage and corresponds to the situation in Britain up to about the middle 19th century (despite earlier attempts at both Trades and 'Grand' Unionism).

The next and inevitable stage was the elimination of competition between proletarians engaged in the same trade, occupation or skill; when organisations were formed to protect the sale of a particular category of labour power, these being literally Trade Unions. Not surprisingly, first and strongest of these were combinations of those with the most valuable labour power to sell - the skilled workers. Only towards the end of the 19th century, with the drying-up of the latent reserve population in the countryside, were the semi and unskilled able to supply them - selves with similar corporate structures, in the movement known as New Unionism (dating from the late 1880s).

The 20th century has seen the growth of general unions, large-scale amalgamations of unions, and, particularly in recent years, an outbreak of white-collar unionism. None of these developments constitute any qualitative advance in the forms of working class economic organisation already established in the 19th century.

It can be seen from these stages in the organisation of the sale of labour power, that the qualitatively distinct "organisation of the proletariat into a class and therefore into a political party" has still to be achieved. In other words the proletariat constituted as a political class does not yet exist in Britain, and neither therefore can the proletarian party, ^{in the form of the Labour Party did come into existence, but it was formed by, and as an arm of, the trades unions in their fight} against the encroachments upon free collective bargaining resulting from the Taff Vale decision of 1901. As the T.U.C.'s own Centenary Survey of 1968 put it:

"It now became clear to the TUC and the Parliamentary Committee, that, if the right to strike was ever to be preserved as an essential instrument of trade union policy, then the new principle (of paying heavy damages to strike bound employers - C.O.B.I.) embodied in the Taff Vale Decision must ¹ secure greater and more influential representation in Parliament." (p.51)

This quintessentially defensist act by defensist organisations could obviously not provide the proletariat with its class

¹ yet exist. At the turn of this century a nominally proletarian party, ¹ be reversed by Parliament. If this was to be done, the trade unions must

party, inseparable as that is from class assertion, which in turn presupposes class consolidation. The class party is the product of awakened class consciousness and autonomy, or such a party - even if professing Marxism - remains a mere middle-class and/or propagandist sect, as Engels called the Social Democratic Federation. It is clear that class consciousness is the prerequisite for the class party, but just what is meant by class consciousness, still less how it is fostered, is never scientifically dealt with by professed scientific socialists.

Marx is explicit:- "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness." ('Preface to the Critique of Political Economy', 1859).

Men's consciousness of the world, awareness of their place in it, and cognition of their social reality, is always structured by a system of ideology. This is not something imposed upon an otherwise 'factual' view of the world; ideology is their view of the world - how they see it intoto - and ideology itself embodies definitions of what are to be regarded as 'facts'. Only the advent of science permits ideology to be displaced (slowly and unevenly) by objective knowledge.

For Marxists, consciousness, whether ideological or scientific, is an order of material reality. Consciousness has no existence apart from the concrete social institutions and practices within which it is constituted. By ideology we mean that body of ideas arising from, and continuously maintained by, social practice, in turn providing meaning for that social practice, and hence constituting part of the conditions of existence of that practice.

We can therefore see the bankruptcy of the practice that attempts to displace bourgeois ideology and develop proletarian class consciousness, by the force of argument, 'logic', or moral suasion.

On the contrary, proletarian class consciousness can only develop to the extent that bourgeois and reformist practices within the working class are driven out by proletarian ones. The problem therefore is to identify the stages through which proletarian organisation and practices must pass in order to allow the development of revolutionary class consciousness on a mass scale.

The forms of organisation within which a struggle is waged tends to determine the possible practices of the struggle and accordingly the opportunities for the generalisation of proletarian ideology.

Until now the dominant form of struggle in Britain has been that of Trade Union bargaining for the sale of individual categories of labour power. This made possible only a corporatist, defensist ideology amongst workers, preventing them from forming into a cohesive class with a specific class worldview.

Under capitalist production, bargaining over the sale of labour power (the labour struggle) is both inevitable and spontaneous. The labour struggle is an absolute precondition for the subsequent development of proletarian class struggle - but it is not of itself class struggle, and cannot even engender it so long as remaining in the trades union stage. Bargaining as they do within the limits set by capitalist production, unions are forced constantly to compromise with capital, and are entities not constituted to go for working class power. On the

contrary, the trade unions become an essential structural element in the system of the production and reproduction of the relations of production.

Since the labour struggle is both inevitable and spontaneous under capitalism, to call either for revolutionary trades unionism, or contrariwise for the dissolution of trades unionism, is a structural impossibility; the second, precludes any substantive intervention into the arena of the workers most generalised form of struggle. ~~X~~ is totally unscientific. The first, revolutionary trades unionism, What is required is a form of organisation of the labour struggle that recognises the necessity for bargaining and compromises on the economic terrain, but which provides the opportunity for the labour struggle to develop into an economic and then political class struggle. The most advanced historical form of such organisation yet seen was that of 'One Big Industrial Union' as developed by the Industrial Workers of the World.

However the nearest approach possible to that under British conditions, where trades unionism predominates, is that of a Confederation of Industrial Unions, each union organising all the workers within a major branch of production, regardless of trade, skill or grade. This form of organisation is the one which alone permits the labour struggle to develop into a conflict of one economic class against another; rather than of particular groups of workers against their own employers.

Changes in working class organisation cannot be brought about simply by 'seeing' relative advantages and disadvantages, but only when the historical conditions are ripe for change, and when the conditions which have sustained previous forms of organisation have been undermined. Now that the free working of the market is no longer able of itself to ensure the profitability of capitalist production, and the state is forced to step in to regulate directly the price of labour power, the basis of trades unionism as it has hitherto existed - that of selling particular categories of labour power to individual employers - is undermined. Obsolete, they divide the working class and prevent the constitution of the labour struggle at the newer higher level as class struggle. At the same time they also constitute an impediment to the advance of the interests of capital, and from being necessary to it they face mounting pressure from the State, acting to promote capital, to reform or be reformed. A reconstruction in the full interests of the workers can only be achieved through the centralisation of the labour struggle within industrial unions to confront the centralised representative of the bourgeoisie - the state. Failure to go onto the attack, to seize the initiative, will leave the way open for the bourgeoisie to institute a refurbished, more intensively corporatist unionism structured in the interests of capital; a new more sophisticated obstacle to the constitution of the class. The qualitative change in the labour struggle thus induced by industrial unionism, involving masses of workers in unified conflict - albeit over economic objectives - provides the real basis in this concentrated attack upon the state for the mass politicisation of the class. It is only this movement which will constitute the class into a political party (in the traditional sense), and therefore provide opportunity for the party in the formal sense (communist party) to arise as the leader of a mass social movement toward social revolution.

So we reintroduce our original premiss from Marx: "this organisation of the proletariat into a class, and therefore into a political party." This is obviously a dialectical

process and not a simple linear one. The proletariat will be constituted as a political class, when and only when, it can crystallise its class consciousness in a political party. And the party will only come into existence as a real workers' party, to the extent that the class is able to consolidate itself.

But how to break this seemingly closed circuit? The answer lies 'on the outside' initially; in the dynamic created by an organisation of communists - the proto-party corresponding to the proto-class - by its combativity and theoretical adroitness showing the class the means of advancing from class recognition (trades union stage), through class identity (industrial union stage) to class consciousness. And this is the communists' programme; or rather that part of it we call the Mobilisation Programme, centred around advocacy of Industrial Unions to wage economic struggle at the all industry and national levels, with factory and residential councils to wage shopfloor and localised struggles for control. The Communists' intervention to break the closed circuit is a programmatic one. The Party does not exist without its programme.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY :

The ultimate aim of the Mobilisation Programme is to produce soviets, through an interlocking structure and coordinated strategy diagrammed in the Appendix. Soviets are the only method by which the class can go decisively onto the offensive for state power as a class; i.e. ushering in a real social revolution.

The means of implementing the Mobilisation Programme is class assertion; progressively taking all it needs (control in factories, housing estates, schools, hospitals, etc.) until the class has enough initiative and experience to wrest outright control of the whole state power, smashing up the old. The prerequisite of that is an ideological offensive. This commences with wholesale rupture with the bourgeois worldview; a rupture that necessarily demands abstention from electoral activity and the pursuit of reforms. So the Mobilisation programme - here only outlined - cannot consist of an amalgam of social-democratic reforms and impossibilist demands addressed to the sovereign state thereby confirmed as such: "through these demands that it puts to the state, expresses its full consciousness that it neither rules nor is ripe for ruling." (Marx 'Gotha Programme'). Just such an amalgam is the Transitional Programme of Trotskyite hallucination, which is supposed to make the functioning of the bourgeois state impossible, and so propel the masses stumbling into socialism. Instead, and directly counter to the constitutional passivism of the revisionists, our programme shall develop proletarian assertiveness and the initiative without which no class can rule; the form of this rule being the proletarian dictatorship operated through the soviet territorial power:

"The proletariat becomes revolutionary only in so far as it takes part in all activities and all spheres of public life as leader of all the working and exploited masses...

"Only when the Soviets have become the sole machinery of State can there be real participation in government by the entire mass of the exploited, who even under the most enlightened and free bourgeois democracy, have in reality always been 99% excluded from participation in government. Only in the Soviets do the exploited masses begin to learn, not from books but from their own practical experience, how to set about the

work of socialist construction, of the creation of a new social discipline, a free union of free workers". "(Theses on the Basic Tasks of the C.I. Adopted by the Second Comintern Congress", 19.7.20).

This then is the aim and means of the Mobilisation Programme: Its content consists of measures that set the proletariat into coordinated motion, and their achievement supplies both more room for manoeuvre and self-confidence. Elements we have already established, like the fight for the average industrial wage, the 35 hour week (for ALL and not just skilled or white collar workers) and the attack on overtime; but its full development will come only as a result of work done toward the delineation of the Socialist Programme. This situates the Mobilisation Programme, by a thorough analysis of the capitalist mode of production; how it has arisen, its contemporary functioning, and its possible lines of development. Without the Socialist Programme the dynamics of bourgeois society cannot be really grasped - a necessity with a double aspect:

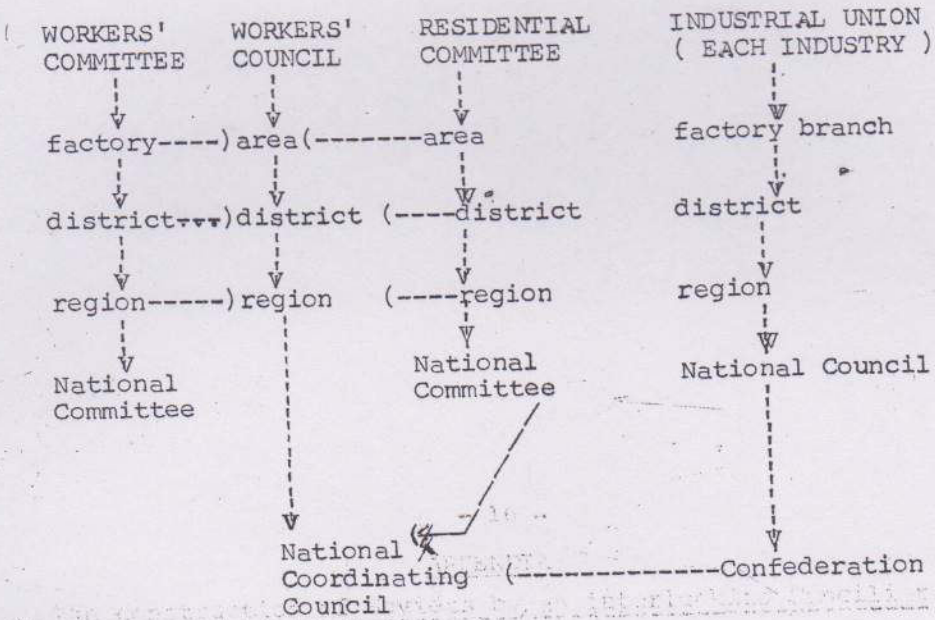
- 1) for understanding the conjuncture that enables state power to be seized;
- 2) for indicating how commodity production is displaced when the state power is in proletarian hands; and thus what path class struggle will continue to take.

A communist party must therefore be armed with both a Mobilisation and a Socialist Programme (how we work toward the latter is given under What Is C.O.B.I.?). Without the Mobilisation Programme there is no agency, no class force that can effect the social revolution; without the Socialist Programme proletarian power cannot be consolidated and commodity production supplanted.

The existence of the Communist Party is both produced by, and producer of, this historic transformation. Hence the struggle to create the Party Programme is simultaneously the struggle whereby the Party itself comes into existence, and both are predicated on their efficacy in constituting the proletarians a political class.

APPENDIX

The construction of Soviets by an interlocking Conciliar structure



NOTES

1. Arrows indicate: 'sends delegates to'.
2. A full explanation of the conciliar structure will be found as an Appendix to 'The Crisis of British Capital: Part 2'.

(1) A. Gramsci, 'Unions and Councils', L'Ordine Nuovo, 11 October 1919.

The proletarian organisation which, as a global expression of the worker and peasant mass, focuses on the central agencies of the Confederation of Labour, is passing through a constitutional crisis similar to that in which the democratic and parliamentary state is hopelessly floundering. The crisis is both a crisis of power and a crisis of sovereignty. The solution of the one will be the solution of the other, in that, in solving the problem of the will to power within their own class organisation, the workers will at the same time create the organic structure of their own state, in victorious confrontation with the parliamentary state.

The workers sense that the whole of 'their' organisation has become a huge apparatus which now obeys only its own laws, inherent in its very structure and its complex functioning, but alien to the mass which has acquired a consciousness of its historical mission as a revolutionary class. They sense that their will to power cannot be expressed in clear and precise form through the existing institutional hierarchies. They sense that even in their own house, in the house which, with blood, tears and patient labour, they have painstakingly built, the machine crushes man, bureaucracy sterilises the creative spirit, and a commonplace and wordy dilettantism strives in vain to conceal an absence of clear ideas on the necessities of industrial production, a total failure to understand the psychology of the proletarian masses. The workers are angered by this state of things but, individually are impotent to change it, the words and wills of individual men are too puny to stand up to the iron laws inherent in the functioning structure of the trade union apparatus.

The leaders of the organisation are oblivious to this profound and widespread crisis. The more obvious it becomes that the working class is not shaped into forms natural to its present historical structure, not mobilised in a formation which continuously adapts itself to the laws which govern the inner process of the real historical development of the class itself, the more these leaders persist in their blindness, exert themselves 'juridically' to settle conflict and dissension. Essentially bureaucratic in spirit, they believe that an objective condition, rooted in the psychology which grows out of the living experiences of the factory, can be overcome by emotional speeches and slogans voted unanimously in assemblies besotted by all the din and tedious rigmarole of oratory. Today they are busy 'keeping up with the times', and, to show they are still capable of 'tough thinking', they revive the old and worn-out syndicalist ideologies; they painfully persist in claiming an identity between trade union and soviet, they painfully persist in the assertion that the present system of trade union organisation itself constitutes the structure of communist society, the system of forces which ought to embody the proletarian dictatorship.

The trade union, in the form it currently assumes in western Europe, is a type of organisation which is essentially different not only from the soviet, but significantly, from the trade union as it is steadily developing in the Russian communist republic.

The craft unions, the camere del lavoro, the industrial federations, the General Confederation of Labour, represent the type of proletarian organisation specific to the historical period dominated by capital. In a certain sense, it can be argued that it is an integral element of capitalist society, exercises a function natural to the regime of private property. During this period, when individuals count only insofar as they own commodities and market their property, the workers too have been subjected to the iron laws of general necessity and have become traders in the only property they have, labour-power and vocational skill. More exposed to the risks of competition, the workers have built up their property into ever larger and more comprehensive 'firms', have created this enormous apparatus for the concentration of human labour, have imposed prices and hours and disciplined the market. They have hired from outside or evolved from their own ranks trusted administrative personnel, expert in this kind of transaction, able to dominate the market, capable of drawing up contracts, assessing commercial risks, initiating economically profitable operations. The essential character of the trade union is competitive, not communist. The trade union cannot be the instrument of a radical renovation of society: it can supply the proletariat with skilled bureaucrats, technical experts on general industrial problems, but it cannot be the basis of proletarian power. It offers no scope for the selection of proletarian individuals capable and worthy of running society; it cannot create the hierarchies in which the

vital energies and driving rhythm of communist society find outlet.

The proletarian dictatorship realises itself in the type of organization which is specific to the activity proper to producers, not to wage-earners, the slaves of capital. The factory council is the first cell of this organisation. In the council, all branches of labour are represented, in proportion to the contribution which every craft and every branch of labour makes to the manufacture of the object which the factory produces as a collectivity: for that reason it is a class, a social institution. Its *raison d'être* is in labour, industrial production, that is, in a reality which is permanent; no longer in wages, in class division, that is, in a reality which is transient and precisely the reality we intend to transcend.

Hence the council realises the unity of the labouring class, gives the masses a cohesion and a form which are of the self-same nature as the cohesion and the form which the mass assumes in the general organisation of society.

The factory council is the model of the proletarian state. All the problems central to the organisation of the proletarian state are central to the organisation of the council. In the one as in the other, the concept of the citizen declines, that of the comrade takes its place: collaboration in effective and useful production develops solidarity, multiplies the bonds of affection and fraternity. Everyone is indispensable, everyone is at his post, and everyone has a function and a post. Even the most ignorant and backward of workers, even the most vain and 'civil' of engineers, eventually convince himself of this truth in the experience of factory organisation: all finally acquire a communist consciousness in grasping the great step forward which the communist economy represents over the capitalist. The Council is the most effective organ of mutual education, for the development of the new social spirit which the proletariat engenders from its rich and living experience of the community of labour. Workers' solidarity which, in the trade union, develops in struggle against capitalism, in suffering and sacrifice, is, in the council, positive, permanent, incarnate even in the most trivial moments of industrial production; it is a joyous awareness of being an organic whole, a unified and homogeneous system which, by useful work and the disinterested production of social wealth, asserts its sovereignty, realises its power and its freedom to create history.

The existence of an organisation in which the labouring class is incorporated in its homogeneity as a producing class and which makes possible the free and spontaneous flowering of hierarchies, of worthy and capable individuals, will have important and fundamental effects on the constitution, and on the spirit which informs the activity, of the trade unions.

The factory council, too, is founded on the craft. In every department or workshop the workers are divided into teams and every work-team is a unit of labour (by craft): the council is formed precisely by commissars whom the workers elect by craft (work-team) in the department. But the trade union is based on the individual, the council on the organic and concrete unity of the craft as it realises itself through the disciplining of the industrial process. The team (the craft) feels itself distinct within the homogeneous body of the class, but at the same time feels itself enmeshed in the system of discipline and order which, in its precise and exact operation, makes possible the development of production. As an economic and political interest, the craft is indistinguishable from and in perfect solidarity with, the body of the class, it is distinct from it as a technical interest and as a development of the particular tool it uses in the work process. In the same way, all industries are homogeneous and in solidarity in their object of perfecting production, distribution and the social accumulation of wealth, but each industry has distinct interests in the technical organisation of its specific activity.

The existence of the council gives the workers direct responsibility for production, persuades them to improve their work, instils a conscious and voluntary discipline, creates the psychology of the producer, the psychology of the maker of history. The workers will bring this new consciousness to the trade union and, above and beyond the simple activity of class struggle, the trade union will dedicate itself to the fundamental task of imprinting a new pattern on economic life and labour technique, will dedicate itself to the elaboration of the form of economic life and professional technique proper to communist civilisation. In this sense, the trade unions, formed of the best and most conscious workers, will realise the supreme moment of the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat: they will create the objective conditions in which classes can no longer exist or re-emerge.

This is what the industrial unions in Russia are doing. They have become organisations in which all the individual enterprises of a certain industry are amalgamated, linked up, articulated, to form one great industrial unit. Wasteful competition is being eliminated, major administrative, supply, distribution and storage services unified into large-scale agencies. Work systems, manufacturing secrets, new applications, are immediately common to the whole industry. The multiplicity of bureaucratic and disciplinary functions natural to the relations of private property and individual enterprise is being reduced to the minimal necessities of industry. The application of union principles to the Russian textile industry has reduced the bureaucracy from 100,000 to 3,500.

Organisation by factory shapes the class (the whole class) into a homogeneous and cohesive unity which is plastically adapted to the industrial process of production, and controls it by establishing its final mastery over it. In organisation by factory, then, the proletarian dictatorship takes shape; the communist state, which destroys class dominion in the political super-structures and their interlocking systems.

Craft and industrial unions are the rigid backbone of the great proletarian body. They elaborate individual and local experiences and accumulate them, to achieve that national equalisation of the conditions of work and production on which communist equality is concretely based.

But to make it possible to imprint on the trade unions this positive class and communist purpose, it is necessary that workers direct & all their will and faith to the establishment and advancement of councils, to the organic unification of the working class. On this solid and uniform foundation will rise and grow all the higher structures of the dictatorship and the communist economy.

(2) 'The Programme of the Workshop Commissars', L'Ordine Nuovo 8 November, 1919

Prologue.

This programme has been adopted by the first quasi-general assembly of the factory commissars of Turin. It is more than a programme; it is meant to be an exposition of the concepts which inform the rise of the new form of proletarian power. The exposition is propagandist in intention and is designed to establish a basis for discussion with the proletarian organisations which emerged earlier in time.

This first assembly, therefore, does not arrogate to ~~itself~~ itself the right to formulate a definitive programme, because this is a programme of revolutionary labour and ought therefore to be open, on-going and a radical innovation. Its purpose, rather, is to set in train in Italy a practical exercise in the realisation of communist society.

The arrogation of all rights to oneself is the style of first-comers; it is the style of some of those men who want to ~~embody~~ embody the life of the trade unions in their own persons and who would have everyone believe that the trade union and its agencies fills the whole of social life.

We, in the reality of our power and functions, are a first negation of this theory. It is not a theoretical negation, not an artificial construct of the human mind. Our power has arisen from the spontaneous will of the factory proletariat, weary of having to submit, in a full spate of democratic preaching, to a discipline and a formation of guiding concepts in which it has had no voice; weary of having to live, in constant suspicion, with the fear that, because of the tendencies or weaknesses of individual men, it will be carried along a road which is not the revolutionary road.

It is from this response of the spirit that commissars are arising throughout the nations. The rise of the commissars demonstrates that the manipulation of prices in the field of bourgeois competition and the administration of the means of production and masses of men are two distinct functions. The first has an objective which can be called commercial: on a given bourgeois market, to enhance the value of the labour of a category (craft/trade) so as to sell it at a better price (a function exercised by the trade unions); while the second has the potential objective of preparing men, organisations and ideas, in a continuous pre-revolutionary control operation, so that they are ready

to replace employer authority in the enterprise and impose a new discipline on social life. This is the function of the commissars, who because of the very mechanism of their formation, represent the most democratic of authorities. With the precise objective of fixing the exact limits and competence of these two functions, the programme is preceded by a declaration of fundamental principles.

The example of the ~~xxxx~~ fatal conflict between trade union leaders and council authorities in Hungary has compelled us to try to prevent its repetition in the Italian revolution by defining the relation between the two functions and allotting to each function those duties which its constitution, its informing principle and its daily practice assign to it.

The principle of the democratic mandate must prevail in every authority. The elected mass must be nothing but executors of the will of the mass. This principle has been truly realised in the commissars.

The suffrage in this system is not yet universal, for contingent reasons. There still exists a bourgeoisie with numerous agents, there still exist proletarians ~~xx~~ without consciousness and organisation, who can and must have the right to vote, to exercise their will, but who must not have the right of candidature: they cannot be invested with authority over trade unions of which they have no consciousness, over social life which they do not understand.

But the commissars, precisely because they are elected by all the proletarians, are a social power, and because they are union men elected by all proletarians (and as conscious workers will without doubt win authority over the mass) can represent the will of the union men themselves within the organisations.

The programme, we repeat, cannot be and will never be definitive. Successive regional and even national assemblies must continuously revise it and develop the ideas it expresses.

Meanwhile, to secure its diffusion and discussion, the assembly of commissars has voted the following motions. 1. The factory commissars of Turin, in an assembly held on 31 October, 1919, have drawn up the enclosed programme on the powers of commissars and councils, deciding further (a) to request its publication in every proletarian daily and ~~xxxx~~ journal, (b) to broadcast it in all the factories of Italy, (c) to form industrial commissions composed of the former internal commissions, to study its application in different industries, (d) to have it discussed and eventually accepted by every organisation and co-operative which maintains itself on the terrain of class struggle. 2. The assembly of factory commissars of Turin undertakes to summon a regional assembly as soon as commissars have appeared in the region, to review the programme and to prepare a first regional or ~~xxxxxx~~ national congress.

Declaration of Principles.

1. Factory commissars are the only, true social (economic-plus-political) representatives of the proletarian class, because they are elected, in universal suffrage, by all workers at their workplace. At the different levels of their constitution, the commissars represent the union of all workers which realises itself in the organisation of production (work-team, workshop, factory, union of the factories of a determinate ~~xxxxxx~~ industry, union of the productive establishments of a city, union of the productive organisations of the mechanical and agricultural industry of a district, a province, a region, the nation, the world) of which union the council and the system of councils represent the power and the social leadership.

2. The workers united in the council system recognise the utility of unions of craft and industry in the history of the class struggle and the necessity for them to continue in their function of organising individual categories ~~xx~~ of workers to obtain improvements in wages and working hours, as long as the competitive labour-market as constituted in the capitalist regime survives. They recognise in the trade unions an indispensable form of organisation, because they represent a higher union of workers having equal individual interests stemming from the exercise of similar functions in the order of capitalist production. They maintain that all workers should be organised in trade unions.

3. Directives to the workers' movement must arise directly from union workers at their own workplace and must be transmitted through the factory commissars.

Unions of craft and industry must continue in their present function, which is to negotiate for the collectivity with employers' organisations to obtain good conditions, in wages, working hours, labour regulations, for whole categories, devoting the competence acquired in the struggles of the past to the preparation of clear and effective agreements which will truly take account of the current needs of labour and of the psychology of the factory workers.

The councils, on the other hand, incarnate the power of the working class organised by factory in antithesis to the employer authority exercised in that factory; socially they incarnate the action of the whole proletariat in solidarity in the struggle for the conquest of public power and the suppression of private property.

4. The union workers in the councils accept without question that discipline and order in economic movements, partial or collective, be decided by the trade unions, provided, however, that instructions to the unions are given by factory commissars as representatives of the working mass. They reject as artificial, parliamentary and false every other system which the trade unions want to use to discover the will of the organised masses. Workers' democracy does not base itself on the bourgeois concept of the citizen, it bases itself on the functions of labour, on the order which the labouring class naturally assumes in the process of professional industrial production and in the factories.

5. The factory commissars declare themselves ready to confront any resistance whatever which seeks to deny to their specific organisations the right of control (surveillance) over the internal life of professional proletarian organisations in the factories.

6. The commissars pledge themselves to direct all their propagandist activities towards the fusion into one single national union of all category organisations which are not confederal, but which act on the lines of the class struggle to achieve the aims of the communist revolution.

All the unions of craft and industry of the Italian proletariat should join the General Confederation of Labour. The commissars appeal to all the labour comrades who voted for them in communist consciousness, to use all their powers of personal persuasion to reinforce the organisations of which they are members. If workers, as they claim, have really achieved a full maturity of class consciousness, they must be convinced on the need to build one single, great union of all the proletarian forces of Italy. They must devote maximum activity to the life of the unions, carrying into them the ideas which govern the system of councils, and must work to eliminate all the difficulties which today obstruct proletarian unity. When into the various organisations which are today dissident, the workers have carried that will to victory, ~~to~~ that will to self-government and proletarian power which animate the system of councils, the fusion of these organisations will be nothing more than a simple act of ordinary administration. On the other hand, the commissars call upon labour comrades to break away from those organisations which are built on religious or nationalist principles wholly alien to the functions and duties of workers' organisations.

7. The assembly of all the factory commissars of Turin proclaim with assurance and pride that their election and the establishment of the council system is the first affirmation of the communist revolution in Italy. They pledge themselves to use all the means available to individual commissars and to the council system to see to it that the system of workers' councils, based on commissars elected by workshop and work-team, advances irresistibly throughout Italy, so that in the shortest possible time, it will be possible to summon a national congress of worker and peasant delegates from all Italy.

General Regulations.

Selection and Powers of Commissars.

1. Commissars are chosen in each workshop of the factory, by work-team; their number, at present provisionally fixed by the internal commissions, will be established firmly by the factory council, which will make an exact survey of work operations. Council assemblies will establish the proportion between numbers of workers and numbers of candidates.

Administrative ~~xxx~~ and directive personnel will be divided into the following categories: engineers, technician capi, designers, department secretaries,

the clerical staff of internal administration, sales, accounts and auxiliary services. The exact survey of the specialisms in this sector of productive activity will be made by factory assemblies.

2. The electors are all the proletarians of the factory, manual and intellectual
 3. Eligible as candidates are union men, members of any union which is committed to the class struggle. A commissar whose mandate is revoked is ineligible for three successive assemblies; his right of candidature is thus suspended for one election.
 4. The first elections will be arranged by the old-style internal commissions. The commissions elected will normally remain in office for six months: during this period, they can be renewed in part (in some workshops) or in their entirety throughout the factory, through the resignation of commissars. To the assembly of retiring commissars falls the duty of arranging the new elections, subject to the general principles which are unalterable.
 5. The commissar must constantly enjoy the trust of the electors: he is, therefore subject to instant recall. If he is disowned by one ~~xxx~~ half plus one of his electors or by a majority of the factory assembly, the commissar is obliged to submit his mandate for renewal. The factory assembly will withdraw his right as representative from a commissar who, in these circumstances, does not secure a confirmation of his mandate.
 6. Voting must be by secret ballot in working hours. The scrutiny must be immediate and public, with immediate announcement of result. The name of the candidate on the ballot must be written by hand. During the voting no worker from another shop must enter the workshop. If the result and its validity are in doubt, the voting must be repeated in the presence of the secretary of the council.
 7. The factory council must meet at least two days after the elections. Temporarily, the council will meet in the room of the nearest socialist circle. When councils have been established in the factory, the assembly must meet within the factory itself. The method of convening the council will be fixed by the council itself.
 8. The commissar has a double duty. (a) he is the commissar of the union men of his workshop, exercising surveillance over the category organisation of which he is a member. (b) he is the commissar of ~~xx~~ all the workers in his workshop, responsible for their economic defence and social action.
 9. In the factory councils, commissars, therefore, represent the whole proletariat of the factory. They elect from their midst the executive committee of the factory, to which they give an executive mandate within the factory itself, and a representative mandate in assemblies of councils.
 10. In a general assembly of all local commissars, on the other hand, commissars represent the interests of their category and of local production.
 11. In assemblies of all the executive committees of the place, however, delegates represent the interests of the whole factory proletariat and of production in social life.
 12. The commissars of a whole district who are members of the same union of craft or industry will meet in assemblies of craft or industry. The assemblies will elect from their midst the executive committee of the local section of the union.
- Commissars and Unions.
13. Category assemblies are called on the initiative of commissars representing a tenth of the membership or by the section council. They must be called automatically for every category movement (agitation).
 14. Secretaries ~~xx~~ of union administrative and propaganda sections must be men of proven capacity, able to conduct negotiations with employers' organisations, and must be considered executors of the ~~xx~~ will of the organised workers which expresses itself in the union and in the factory council. They are responsible to the executive committees.
 15. The drawing up of agreements and negotiations with employers' organisations are tasks delegated to these secretaries, assisted by representatives of the executive committees. The ratification of economic agreements touching the category is effected by the category assembly. No ratification is valid without.

16. Before the agreement is submitted to the assembly, a copy of it must be sent to every factory involved.

17. Agreements will thus be discussed in the assembly of commissars and the right to vote on the agreement will also be enjoyed by commissars who are members of an organisation other than that which led the agitation. In the category assemblies, however, commissars do not have the right to criticise men and methods of a union which is not their own.

18. All the commissars gathered in category assembly, on the other hand, have the right to discuss and criticise the methods of those unions which are not committed to the class ~~xxxxx~~ struggle.

The duties of factory commissars.

1. The most important and most delicate of the commissar's duties is within the factory. He must always be the faithful interpreter of the sentiments of his comrades before the representatives of employer authority and in the heart of the council.

It is ~~from the work~~ from the workshop that he derives his power, which resides in the solidarity with which his comrades support his actions and stand disciplined to his advice. Solidarity and discipline are genuine only when his electors recognise in him a sincere representative of their sentiments.

2. Commissars work. The assertion of their power within the factory must be limited in this sense, in that they can suspend work only in determinate circumstances which demand their presence outside the workshop.

3. The function of the commissar during working hours can be summed up as control. He must exercise control (surveillance)

- (a) over the exact application of existing labour agreements and must resolve any disputes which may arise between the work-force of the workshop and representatives of management.
- (b) in defence of the interests and the personal feelings of workers in cases of abuse of power by foremen, their incapacity or unfairness in assessing labour and in the event of a change in the labour process or a crisis of production on the market.
- (c) to maintain the order of labour against employer provocation and the misdeeds of dissidents from the majority will.
- (d) to obtain precise intelligence on i) the value of the capital invested in his own workshop, ii) the production of his shop in relation to all known costs, iii) the increase in production which could be ~~xxx~~ achieved.
- (e) to prevent any alienation by the capitalists of capital invested in factory plant.

4. The commissar must study and urge comrades to study bourgeois systems of production and labour processes and call for criticisms and suggestions of improvements to ease labour and speed up production. He must try to root in the spirit of everyone the conviction that communist equality can be won only through intensive production, that well-being will be achieved not by disorder in production, or a weakening of labour discipline, but rather by a better and more equal distribution ~~of~~ of social duties and rewards, through obligatory labour and the equality of goods.

5. For similar reasons, the commissars must study internal technical innovations proposed by management and not decide about them until they have discussed them with the comrades, inviting them to agree and making sure, if temporary damage to the workers results, that similar sacrifices are made by the industrialist and that the results are helpful to the ~~processes of~~ ~~production~~ processes of production. They must further put pressure on the management for a full application of the laws on safety, health and workshop facilities.

6. To the council falls the duty of organising a school in the heart of the factory for all workers who want to perfect their professional skills. They must find capable teachers within the factory itself and obtain plans and equipment from the management.

7. It is the council's duty, further, to compel management to create an integrated system of education for apprentices and to be vigilant in defence of their interests.

8. The council must intervene in appointments of workers to supervisory jobs, to unmask favouritism and denounce it as an employer's weapon in the class struggle.

9. Indifferent or backward workshop commissars must be shaken up by frequent elections and referendum. All commissars are under obligation to hold frequent referendum in their workshop on social and technical questions, and to call frequent meetings to explain the principles and advice propagated by proletarian organisations.

10. No council has the right to break a labour agreement without having first obtained the approval of an assembly of category commissars and hence of the executive committee of the section.

11. When disputes between a workshop and the management have been settled by the commissar, or when they become a matter of principle, or are caused by a conflict of interests between workshops, the commissar must report the case at once to the office of the commissariat. Throughout the dispute, he is excused work.

Executive Commissariat of the Factory.

Selection, duties, powers.

1. For the execution of ~~its~~ its decisions and for negotiation with management, the factory council will choose a proportionate number of commissars who will form the executive commissariat of the factory. This will replace the former internal commission wherever the latter has been recognised by management.

2. Ratios and election methods will be fixed by individual councils and the assembly of commissars.

3. A fixed number of ~~max~~ delegate members of the commissariat will be excused work for their period of office and delegated in permanence to the appropriate office of the executive commissariat, to receive complaints from commissars, examine them, reject or accept them and to support them with the power which the force of the entire factory concentrates in them.

4. Delegates of the commissariat must exercise surveillance over conversations between union secretaries and employers' agents in the factory.

5. Every evening members of the commissariat are called upon to assess the situation in the factory and the work done by their comrades.

6. Delegates of the E.C. must give all possible support to the commissars' work of control, study and propaganda, whipping on and driving the slow and denouncing the inept and the incapable to the council.

7. Members of the E.C. can remain in office continuously for the duration of the council; they remain in office during the elections and the period immediately following, to instruct the incoming commissariat in their powers and practices.

Members who lose the trust of the commissars in a council vote automatically lose their mandate.

8. The E.C. and the management have equal rights in the posting of notices in the factory.

9. The E.C. must ensure the free distribution of newspapers inside the factory during workbreaks.

10. The E.C. must try to publish a fortnightly factory bulletin which will print statistics designed to deepen the workers' knowledge of the life of the factory, explain the work done by the E.C. and the factory council,

reprint information touching the factory from category journals, etc.

If the factory is too small, it will join with others in the same industry.

11. The E.C. must try to create a social and savings fund, to establish a co-operative and a factory canteen linked to the local co-operative alliance.

12. The E.C. must keep a daily logbook of its work and submit it weekly for the approval of the council.

13. The E.C. will ~~xxxx~~ distribute the duties of propaganda and study between its members and the commissars.

14. The factory council must be summoned by the E.C. if possible every week (Saturday) to hear the E.C.'s report, examine the state and spirit of the factory, to make recommendations to the E.C. on matters concerning the external interests of the factory or the category.

In exceptional cases the council can meet daily.

Publications, notices, ~~xxxx~~ reports, meetings.

1. The assembly of commissars of Turin resolves to recognise the newspaper Avanti as the only political daily of the region and to ask it to publish its notices, reports, advertisements of commissar meetings. It has no confidence in other dailies which squander the social substance.

2. It resolves, moreover, to call for the publication of articles propagating new ideas from all proletarian periodicals. The periodicals' replies to the commissars' requests will be read at the next assembly.

(3) 'Unions and councils', L'Ordine Nuovo 12 June 1920.

The trade union is not this or that definition of a trade union. The trade union becomes a determinate definition, that is assumes a determinate historical character insofar as the strength and the will of the workers who constitute it imprint upon it that direction, and inject into its action that objective, which are affirmed in the definition.

Objectively, the trade union is the form which the labour-commodity assumes and can only assume in a capitalist regime when it organises itself to dominate the market. This form is a bureau of functionaries, technicians of organisation (when they are technicians), specialists (when they are specialists) in the art of concentrating and guiding the workers' forces so as to establish, with the power of capital, a balance advantageous to the working class.

The development of trade union organisation is characterised by these two facts: 1. the union embraces an ever greater quantity of effective workers, that is, incorporates into the discipline of its form an ever greater quantity of effective workers. 2. the union concentrates and generalises its form so as to locate in a central bureau the power of the discipline and of the movement, that is, it detaches itself from the masses which it has regimented, that is, it places itself beyond the play of caprice, whim, chatter, which are natural in large and tumultuous masses. The union thus becomes capable of negotiating agreements, of assuming responsibilities; it thus compels the employer to accept a legality in his relations with the worker, a legality which is conditional upon the trust which the employer has in the solvency of the union, the trust which the employer has in the union's capacity to secure respect for the contracted obligations from the working masses.

The advent of an industrial legality has been a great conquest by the working class but it is not the ultimate and definitive conquest. Industrial legality has improved the conditions of material life of the working class, but it is no more than a compromise, which it was necessary to make, which it will be necessary to support so long as the relations of force remain unfavourable to the working class. If the functionaries of the union organisation consider industrial legality as a compromise necessary but not permanently necessary, if they deploy all the means at the disposal of the union to improve the relations of force in a sense favourable to the working class, if they undertake the full labour of spiritual and material preparation

needed for the working class to be able, at a determinate moment, to initiate a victorious offensive against capital and to subject it to its laws, then the trade union is a revolutionary instrument, then union discipline, even when directed towards making the workers respect industrial legality, is a revolutionary discipline.

The relations which should exist between trade unions and factory council should be considered from this point of view: from the assessment one makes of the nature and the value of industrial legality.

The council is the negation of industrial legality. It tends to annihilate it at any moment, tends continuously to lead the working class towards the conquest of industrial power, to make the working class into the source of industrial power. The trade union is an element of the legality and must set itself the task of making its members respect that legality. The trade union is responsible to the industrialists, but it is responsible to the industrialists insofar as it is responsible to its own members. It guarantees continuity of labour and wages, that is, bread and a roof for the worker and the worker's family. The council tends, because of its revolutionary spontaneity, to unleash the class war at any moment; the union, because of its bureaucratic form, tends not to permit the class war ever to break out. The relations between the two institutions should be such as to create a situation in which a capricious impulse of the council cannot result in a backward step for the working class, cannot cause a defeat for the working class, a situation, that is, in which the council accepts and assimilates the discipline of the union, a situation in which the revolutionary character of the council, exercises an influence on the union, as a reagent which dissolves the bureaucracy and the bureaucratism of the union.

The council means to break out, at any moment, from industrial legality; the council is the mass, exploited, tyrannised, coerced into slave labour, and therefore it tends to universalise every rebellion, to give value and decisive meaning to every one of its acts of power. The trade union, as a bureau jointly responsible for legality, tends to universalise and perpetuate legality. The relations between union and council must create the conditions in which the break out from legality, the offensive of the working class, occurs at the moment most opportune for the working class, occurs when the class has that minimum of preparation which is indispensable to a lasting victory.

The relations between union and council cannot be established by any other bond than this: the majority or a conspicuous number of the electors of the council are members of the union. Any attempt to link the two institutions in relations of hierarchical dependency can lead only to the destruction of both.

If the conception which makes the council a mere instrument of trade-union struggle is materialised in a bureaucratic discipline, in a union power of direct control over the council, the council is sterilised as a force of revolutionary expansion, as a form of the real development of the proletarian revolution which tends spontaneously to create new modes of production and labour, new modes of discipline, which tends to create the communist society. Since the council arises directly from the position which the working class has come to acquire in the field of industrial production, since the council is an historical necessity for the working class, the attempt to subordinate it hierarchically to the union will, sooner or later, cause a conflict between the two institutions. The power of the council lies in the fact that it is inherent in the consciousness of the working mass. It is the very consciousness of the working mass which seeks to emancipate itself in autonomy, which seeks to assert its freedom of initiative in the making of history: the whole mass participates in the life of the council and feels it is something in the process. In the life of the union a very restricted number of members participate. The real strength of the union lies in that fact, but in that fact, too, is a weakness which cannot be put to the test without very grave risks.

If, however, the union were to lean directly on the councils, not to ~~mix~~ dominate them, but to become their superior form, the tendency proper to the councils to break out from industrial legality at any moment, to unleash at any moment the decisive action of the class war, would be reflected within the union. The union would lose its capacity to contract obligations, would lose its character as a disciplinary and regulatory power over the impulsive forces of the working class

If trade union members establish a revolutionary discipline within the union, establish a discipline which appears to the mass as a necessity for the victory of the workers' revolution and not as a servitude to capital, that discipline will without doubt be accepted and assimilated by the council, will become the natural form of action taken by the council. If the bureau of the union becomes an organ of revolutionary preparation, ~~xx~~ and appears as such to the masses in the action it undertakes, in the men who compose it, in the propaganda it develops, then its concentrated and absolute character will be seen by the masses as a major revolutionary power, as one more condition (and one of the more important) for the success of the struggle to the death they have undertaken.

In Italian reality, the trade union bureaucrat conceives of legality as something permanent. He too often defends it from the same point of view as the proprietor. He sees only chaos and the wilful in everything that happens amongst the working mass: he does not universalise the worker's act of rebellion against capitalist discipline as rebellion, but as a physical act which may in itself, and by itself be trivial. Hence the yarn about the 'porter's mac' has been spread about and interpreted by idiot journalists, like the fable about 'the socialisation of women in Russia'. In these conditions, trade union discipline can be nothing but a service rendered to capitalism; in these conditions, any attempt to subordinate the council to the union can only be deemed reactionary.

Communists, since they want the revolutionary act to be as far as possible conscious and responsible, want the choice of the moment to unleash the workers' ~~as~~ offensive (insofar as there is a choice) to rest with the most conscious and responsible sector of the working class, the sector which is organised in the ~~Sax~~ Socialist Party and participates most actively in the life of the organisation. For that reason, communists cannot want the union to lose any of its disciplinary energy and its systematic concentration.

Communists, forming themselves into permanently organised groups, within the unions and the factories, must carry into the unions and the factories the conceptions, the theses, the tactics of the IIIrd International. They must influence union discipline and determine its ends. They must influence the decisions of factory councils and transform into revolutionary consciousness and creativity the rebellious impulses which surge up out of the situation which capitalism has created for the working class. The communists of the party, have the greatest interest, because upon them weighs the heaviest historical responsibility: by continuous action to promote relations of inter-penetration and natural interdependence between the different institutions of the working class, which will energise discipline and organisation with the revolutionary spirit.

(4) 'The Communist Party', L'Ordine Nuovo 9 October, 1920

Political parties are the reflection and the nomenclature of social classes. They emerge, grow, decline, renew themselves, as different strata ~~xx~~ ~~xx~~ of the social classes in conflict experience changes of real historical significance, find their conditions of existence and growth radically altered, acquire a better and clearer consciousness of themselves and their own vital interests. What has become characteristic of the present historical period, as a consequence of the imperialist war which has profoundly changed the national ~~xxx~~ and the international apparatus of production and exchange, is the rapidity of the process of the dissociation of traditional political parties, born on the terrain of parliamentary democracy, and the ~~x~~ rise of new political organisations. This general process is subject to an implacable inner logic, buttressed by the flaking away of old classes and old castes, and by the vertiginous transitions from one condition to another of whole strata of the population throughout the territory of the state and often across the entire territory of capitalist dominion.

Even social classes which have been historically lazy and slow to differentiate themselves, like the peasant class, cannot escape the corrosive action of the reagents which are dissolving the social body; it even seems that the more lazy and retarded they ~~xxx~~ were in the past, the more swiftly these classes thrust today towards the dialectically extreme consequences of the class struggle - towards civil war and a laying waste of economic relations. In Italy, in the space of two years, we have seen the rise ~~xx~~ from virtually nothing of a powerful party of the rural class, the popular party, which at its birth claimed to represent the economic interests and the political aspirations of all the social strata of

the countryside, from the great landowning baron to the middle peasant, from the small tenant farmer, the share-cropper to the poor peasant. We have seen the popular party win about a hundred seats in parliament with a bloc list in which the latifundist baron, the owners of forests, the great and middle landowners, a tiny minority of the rural population, had an absolute predominance. We have seen the immediate outbreak and the rapid, spasmodic development within the popular party, of internal conflict between tendencies, a reflex of the differentiation within the primitive electoral mass. Great masses of small owners and poor peasants are no longer willing to be the passive mass of manoeuvre which serves the interests of the big and middle landowners; under their energetic pressure, the popular party splits into a right wing, a centre and a left, and we have even seen the extreme left of the popolari, under the pressure of poor peasants, striking revolutionary attitudes and entering into competition with the Socialist Party, which has itself become the representative of great masses of peasants. We are already seeing the decomposition of the popular party, whose parliamentary fraction and central committee no longer represent the interests and the newly-acquired self-consciousness of the electoral masses, and of the forces organised in the white-collar unions, represented, on the contrary, by extremists who do not want to lose control of them, cannot delude them with a legal action in parliament and are therefore moving towards violent struggle and the demand for new forms of government.

The same process of rapid organisation and even more rapid dissociation can be seen in the other political current which wants to represent the interests of the peasantry: the association of ex-servicemen. It is a reflection of the formidable internal crisis which wracks the ~~immaculate~~ Italian countryside and manifests itself in the gigantic strikes in southern and central Italy, in the invasion and partition of great estates in Puglia, in the attacks on feudal castles and in the appearance in Sicilian cities of hundreds and thousands of armed peasants.

This profound upsurge of the peasant classes rocks the structure of the parliamentary democratic state to its foundations. Capitalism, as a political power, has been reduced to the corporate associations of factory owners; it no longer has a political party whose ideology also embraces the petty-bourgeois strata in town and country and thus secures the continuance of a legal state on a broad base. Capitalism has been reduced to finding a political representation only in the great newspapers (400,000 circulation, a thousand electors) and in the Senate, immune as institutions to the actions and reactions of the great popular masses, but without authority and prestige in the country; hence the political power of capitalism tends to identify itself ever more closely with the high military hierarchy, with the royal guards, and with the myriad adventurers who have pullulated since the armistice and aspire, each against the other, to be the Kornilov and the Bonaparte of Italy; so the political power of capitalism can realise itself today only in a military coup d'etat and the attempt to rivet an iron nationalist dictatorship which will drive the brutalised Italian masses to restore the economy by the armed plunder of neighbouring countries.

The bourgeoisie is exhausted and worn out as a ruling class; with the exhaustion of capitalism as a mode of production and exchange; there does not exist within the peasant class a homogeneous political power capable of creating a state; therefore the working class is ineluctably summoned by history itself to assume the responsibility of a ruling class. Only the proletariat is capable of creating a strong and respected state, because it has a programme, communism, which finds its necessary premises and ~~præd~~ preconditions in the phase of development reached by capitalism in the imperialist war of 1914-18. Only the proletariat, in creating a new organ of public authority, the soviet system, can impose a dynamic and fluid form on the incandescent social mass and restore order to the general development of the productive forces. It is natural and historically explicable that it is precisely in such a period that the problem of forming a communist party arises, a communist party which is the expression of the proletarian vanguard which has a precise consciousness of its historical mission, which will found the new order, which will be the initiator and protagonist of a new and original period in history.

Nor can the traditional political party of the Italian working class, the Socialist Party, escape the process of the decomposition of all forms of association, which is characteristic of the period we are passing through. The colossal historical error of the men who, from the outbreak of the world war to the present, have controlled the governing organs of our association, has been the belief that they could preserve the old structure of the party from its inner dissolution. In truth, the Italian Socialist Party, in its traditions, in the

historical origins of the various currents which constitute it, in the pact of alliance, explicit or tacit with the CGL (a pact which in congresses, councils, every deliberative assembly, gives an unjustifiable power and influence to trade union officials), in the limitless autonomy conceded to the parliamentary group (which also gives to the deputies, in congresses, councils, and in discussions of the greatest significance, a power and an influence similar to that of the union officials and equally without justification) the Italian Socialist Party differs in nothing from the English Labour Party and is revolutionary only in the general assertions of its programme. It is a conglomeration of parties. It moves and can only move lazily and late. It runs the permanent risk of becoming an easy conquest for adventurers, careerists, ambitious men without political seriousness and capacity. Because of its heterogeneous character, because of the numberless weaknesses in its structure, worn down and sabotaged by servants-turned-masters, it is never in a state to assume the weight and the responsibility for the initiatives and the revolutionary actions which the incessant pressure of events thrusts upon it. Hence the historical paradox that in Italy, it is the masses which drive on and 'educate' the party of the working class and not the party which guides and educates the masses.

The Socialist Party calls itself the defender of Marxism. The party should therefore have in this doctrine a compass to guide it through the confusion of events, it should possess that capacity for historical foresight which characterises intelligent partisans of the Marxist dialectic; it should have a general plan of action, based on this historical foresight, and it should be in a position to direct clear and precise orders to the working class in struggle. On the contrary, the Socialist Party, defender of Marxism in Italy, is, like the popular party, like the party of the most backward classes of the Italian population, inert before all the pressures of the masses; it moves, it splits, when the masses are moved and split. In truth, this socialist party, which proclaims itself the guide and teacher of the masses is nothing but a poor notary who registers operations carried out spontaneously by the masses. This poor socialist party which proclaims itself the leader of the working class, is nothing but the baggage train of the proletarian army.

This strange behaviour by the Socialist Party, this bizarre condition of the political party of the working class has not yet caused a catastrophe because in the midst of the working class, in the urban sections of the party, in the unions, the factories, the villages, there are energetic groups of communists, conscious of their historical duty, energetic and shrewd in action, capable of guiding and educating local masses of the proletariat. It is because there already exists in potential, in the heart of the Socialist Party, a communist party which needs only an open organisation, centralisation and its own discipline, to grow rapidly and to win over and renew the mass membership of the party of the working class, to give a new direction to the CGL and the co-operative movement.

At this moment, after the struggle of the metal workers and before the congress in which the party must adopt a serious and precise attitude to the Communist International, the problem is precisely that of organising and centralising the already existing and operative communist forces. Day by day, with devastating speed, the Socialist Party disintegrates and collapses. Its tendencies, in a very short space of time, have acquired a new character. Confronted with responsibility for historical action and the obligations assumed in the adherence to the communist International, men and groups are thrown into disorder. Centrist and opportunist equivocation has captured a part of the leadership, has sown disturbance and confusion in the sections. The duty of communists, in this general ebb of consciousness, of faith and of will, in this storm of vileness, cowardice and defeatism, is to come together in strong groups, to rally to each other, to stand ready for the battle orders which will come. Sincere and disinterested communists, on the basis of the theses approved by the 2nd Congress of the IIIrd International, on the basis of loyal discipline to the supreme authority of the world workers' movement, must do the work necessary, so that in the shortest possible time, the communist fraction of the Italian Socialist Party is constituted, that fraction which, for the good name of the Italian proletariat, must at the congress of Florence become, in name and in fact, the Italian communist party, section of the IIIrd International; so that the communist fraction builds itself an organic and strongly centralised directive apparatus, with its own organisations in every sector in which it works, joins the working class in struggle with a complex of services and instruments for control, for action, for propaganda, which will enable it to function and grow from this moment as a real party. The communists who, with their energy and initiative, saved the working class from disaster during the struggle in the engineering industry, must follow their attitudes and action through to the conclusions implicit in them. They must save the primordial structure of the party of the working class (and rebuild it) and give to the Italian proletariat that communist party which will be capable of organising the workers' state and creating the conditions for the advent of communist society.

Comments on the Method of Marx's Capital and its Importance
for Contemporary Marxist Scholarship

- by Roman Rosdolsky

(1) The organizers of this colloquium wisely chose to sum up its major theme in the one brief sentence: The critique of political economy today. In so doing they have obviously attempted to express two things. First, in Capital Marx was not merely concerned with a critique of this or that national economic theorem or school, indeed, not even with a critique of what he was accustomed to characterizing as "bourgeois economy". Rather, he aimed at the critique of political economy in toto. That is to say, Marx was concerned with the critique of a science of social relations of production, which "are always tied to things and appear as things," and which, for that reason, are and must remain caught within the categories of "reification". Second, it seems to me that through the choice of this topic, the attempt was made to express the continued immediacy of Marx's dialectical method of investigation even after a hundred years. From this point of view, this economic work can rightly be seen as the "critique of political economy today."

It is obvious from the above, that we consider the method of Capital to be the most valuable and lasting element of his whole economic edifice, and for that reason, see as the central task of Marxist scholarship today, the study and application of this method.

(2) There is hardly an aspect of Marx's theory which has been treated more negligently than the method of Capital. By this we do not mean in any way to belittle the theoretical achievements of former Marxists. Here we might include not only such gifted or original Marxist thinkers as R. Luxemburg, V. Lenin and M. Trotsky, but we could also point to Hilferding's classic, *Das Finanzkapital* or to the brilliant economic analyses of Otto Bauer. Nevertheless, many Marxist theoreticians must be subjected to the same criticisms that Marx himself levelled at classical political economy, when he accused it of "brutal interest in content (Stoff)" and a "lack of interest in grasping the differences in the form of economic relations."

Of course there are good reasons for this neglect of method. It was understandable as long as socialist theoreticians saw their main task as popularizing the Marxist theory of value and surplus value. (In this regard K. Kautsky rendered invaluable services. How many thousands of Marxists first began to read and understand the first volume of Capital as a result of his book *K. Marx' ökonomische Lehren* (The Economic Teachings of Karl Marx).) Admittedly, a certain levelling resulted from this popularization, particularly insofar as people restricted themselves to the first volume of Capital, making it more difficult to grasp the total context of Marx's work and its methodological presuppositions. But even more ominous for Marxist theory was the fact that the supremacy of reformism within the Second International led increasingly to the abandonment of the dialectical view of totality in favor of blatant empiricism. This was all the more disastrous, since most Marxist theoreticians of that era were oriented towards positivism or neo-Kantianism, and therefore had lost sight of Marx's theoretical starting point. Hegel's thought, Small wonder then that the original purpose of Marx's critique of political economy was lost and that this critique itself was increasingly understood in the sense of a mechanistic-naturalistic individual science. Precisely for this reason we find numerous parallels between Marxist economic interpretations of that time and the teachings of Ricardo or even Say: we see this in the question of the role of use value in the economy, in theories of value and money and in the crisis theory.

The interpretations of the second volume of Capital are perhaps the best examples in this regard. Although this volume is equal to the first in its dialectical subtlety and conceptual clarity, and may even surpass it, it was rarely read and still less understood by educated Marxists. To be sure, Kautsky treated this volume briefly in the *Neue Zeit* of 1885 in which he discussed in three pages the essential third section of Volume II (the reproduction process of total social capital), while dispensing with the famous schema of expanded reproduction with two short lines: "the accumulation of surplus value and the expansion of the production process result in further complications." This represents literally everything written about the second volume of Capital in German during the succeeding two decades. The first work to direct the attention of social democratic theorists, such as Hilferding and Bauer, to the third section, and in particular to the reproduction schema of Volume II was written by the Russian revisionist Tugan Baranowsky and appeared in 1903.

These authors were primarily concerned with providing proof, with the help of the schema, that capitalism was not threatened by economic collapse, and that the crises of overproduction were to be understood as mere crises of disproportionality. Thus we have a very obvious neo-harmonious interpretation attributable to the fact that the above authors have refused to abstract schema of the second volume with concrete capitalist reality. As a result they failed to understand that these schema represent only one phase, albeit extremely important, of Marx's investigation of the accumulation process, and for that reason had to be expanded in Marx's theory of capitalist crisis and collapse. Precisely for this reason we find numerous parallel

between the Soviet interpretation of the 1920s meant a radical break with the method of Marx's economic method. Of particular significance in this regard were the outstanding contributions of E. Preobrazhensky as well as the methodological investigations of I.I. Rubin and his school. Nevertheless, this promising development was crudely interrupted a decade later, and what followed was for social and political reasons which we need not describe so crude and mindless, that the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s can now be described as a dead and barren time for Marxist economic theory.

Only in the last few years, mainly in Western Europe, have the beginnings of a new interpretation of Capital emerged, which I am happy to say, return to its methodological and philosophical premises. Fortunately Marx scholars today can rely on the recently published Grundrisse, which opens the door to Marx's economic laboratory and lays bare all the subtleties and hidden paths of his methodology. Here we are reminded of Lenin's "aphorism" of 1915: "It is impossible to completely understand Marx's Capital, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the whole of Hegel's logic. Consequently, half a century later, none of the Marxists have understood Marx."

I have no idea how many Marxists have seriously considered Lenin's remark and how many have followed his advice, yet I am now of the opinion that the appearance of the Grundrisse has perhaps eliminated the necessity to bite into this bitter fruit and "thoroughly study the whole of Hegel's logic" in order to understand Marx's Capital. The same results can be achieved more directly through the study of the Grundrisse itself. It is precisely the Grundrisse which demonstrates the extent to which the construction of Capital is dialectical to its very core, and indicates the decisive role Marx attributed to the categories of method derived from Hegel. These categories include: the relationship between content and form, essence and appearance, the general, the particular and the individual; between immediacy and mediation, between difference, opposition and contradiction, etc. Not being a professional philosopher, I shall not pressure to speak exhaustively on this subject. Instead I will limit myself to what should be apparent to a layman studying the Grundrisse - in the hope that my occasionally false conclusions will be corrected by those who are more competent.

(3) First, let us consider an obvious problem concerning the relation between the logical and the historical modes of perception in Marx's work.

The "historicism" of Marx's Capital has been stressed so often and in such an insipid way, that any reader first taking up the Grundrisse is struck by the fact that this work seems to be merely a "dialectic of concepts" in which economic categories take on a life of their own, separating and merging in true Hegelian fashion. It is evident from a notation in the Grundrisse that Marx himself anticipated just such a misinterpretation. Speaking about the development of the concept of value and money, he says, "later it will be necessary... to correct the idealistic manner of presentation which gives the impression that this is only concerned with conceptual formations and their dialectic." In another passage, Marx enlarges upon what seemed at first only a conceptual deduction of the relations of capital, by noting that a long historical development and many economic transformations were required in order for capital to confront labor as a commodity in the market. Marx concludes: "This point clearly reveals how the dialectical form of presentation is correct only if it knows its limitations." If in spite of this Marx gives preference in his economic work to logical development, he does so only insofar as it offers in his eyes "the key to the understanding of historical development".

reality then, Marx's logical mode of conceptualizing the economy, as Engels says, is ultimately a historical one, stripped of its historical form and disturbing elements." It provides therefore - albeit abstractly - a mirror image of the real historical process. "a corrected mirror image, but corrected according to principles (Gesetze) which permit us to grasp the real historical processes so that every epoch can be viewed at the developmental point of its full maturity, at the moment of its classical perfection."

It is well known that in contrast to the classics, Marx's entire theoretical work was directed towards "discovering the specific principles which govern the birth, the existence, the development and the death of a given social organism and its supersession by another higher one." How then can theory attain knowledge of specific principles which are themselves only historical in nature? And how can these principles be brought into harmony with general economic determinants which are applicable in all social epochs? Since "all epochs of production have certain characteristics in common," "it can be said that in all epochs, the subject, humanity, and the object, nature, are one and the same." By concentrating on these common determinants nothing could be easier than "dissolving all historical differences into general human laws." But if, for example, "the most highly developed languages are determinants in common with the least developed, then it is precisely its development that distinguishes it from the general and common." In exactly the same way, economic theory must investigate the developmental laws of the capitalist epoch, and that recognition "of the unity" of common determinants this epoch shares with earlier ones will not make us forget "their essential differences."

What constitutes development in the economic sphere? Precisely its specific-historical character: "As long as the labor process," we read in Capital, "is only a mere process between persons and nature, its simple elements remain common to all social forms of development." But every particular historical stage of this process further develops its material foundations and social forms." And precisely these social forms, in contrast to the naturally given "content," are what is important: it is just these forms which distinguish individual socio-economic epochs from one another. Thus it is clear, that in all class societies the surplus product is produced directly by the producers is appropriated by the ruling class. But what constitutes the difference between various economic epochs is whether this occurs in the form of slave labor, serfdom or wage labor. (This is a fact that most recent Anglo-Saxon Marxist literature seems to neglect when, in its analysis of monopoly capitalism, it ignores the concept of surplus value and attempts to replace it with a general concept of surplus product.)

The significance of the form-content problem is not limited to distinguishing between individual economic epochs. What Marx is really dealing with in his investigation of the capitalist economy are not things, but rather social processes appearing in a thing like shell. However, processes can only be investigated if the central focus is directed toward the changing forms of the objects under investigation. In this sense Marx's economy is nothing more than a history of forms which are successively taken up and cast aside by "ever proceeding capital" in its development through various phases. For this reason it is easy to understand the great significance Marx attributed to the methodological form-content problem, particularly in his economics, and why he criticized the classic economists from this standpoint. Since the classics considered the specific forms of production and distribution as unchangeable and natural, and since their starting point presupposed these principles, they could only view the forms of bourgeois production as phenomena which did not compass production content, i.e., the production of use values or goods. Furthermore, they were convinced of the necessary merging (Zusammenfallen) of "forms" and "content." In contrast, according to Marx's dialectical conception, the respective content and the forms to which it gives birth find themselves in constant interchange and struggle. As a result, form is stripped away and content is transformed. If, however, form is viewed as something peripheral, exterior to content, then one must either neglect form (like the classical economists), sacrifice it to content or attempt to absolutize this form. The Soviet economists serve as an example of the latter. Proceeding from the condition that any future society will still need to distribute the quantum of social labor at its disposal and measure it in labor-time expended, they draw the conclusion that value as an economic category will continue to prevail under socialism. In other words, they deduce from the "suprahistorical" basis by

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which value is determined, a suprahistorical character inherent in the value-form itself.

We have already established that Marx's economics is concerned above all with the social forms of production and distribution. In saying this we in no way exhaust the methodology of Capital. Obviously distinctions must be made between what is essential and inessential, between fundamental forms and mere "forms of appearance." "All science," says Marx, "would be superfluous if apparent form were directly identical with essence." Since this is not the case, scientific scholarship must never limit itself simply to "grasping appearances on the surface." Rather it must penetrate further, from the mere "apparent forms" to the "inner essence," to the hidden "structural core" of economic processes. Only in this way can it locate the "principle of appearance" and grasp this appearance as necessary.

Naturally this penetration to the inner essence of economic processes presupposes the discovery of those "mediations" which connect this essence with the appearances on the surface and in which the rationally ordered inter-connection of all social life is expressed. In this sense Lassalle's characterization of Hegelian philosophy as a "conceptual system of mediations" is valid for Marx's economic system as well. The difference, to be sure, is that Marx's "system of mediations" is not content with mere concepts, but is directed towards grasping the totality of the empirical world.

Here we arrive at the fundamental distinction for Marxist economics between "capital in general" and "many capitals."

Upto now very little consideration has been given to the high level of conceptual abstraction in Marx's Capital. Many objections by academic critics of Marx could have been avoided had there been clear understanding on this point. In truth, only a few critics of Marx have understood that the underlying assumption found in the first two volumes of this work, namely that commodities are exchanged at their value, is of purely methodological character, and is not intended to express anything about concrete reality. (The so-called Bortkiewicz-problem that has even confused a few Marxists, also belongs in this category.) But these are trivial objections which result from misunderstanding the structure of Marx's work. In the first two volumes, Marx intentionally ignores such issues as the average rate of profit, production prices which deviate from values, etc.--these volumes deal exclusively with "capital in general."

But what is really meant by the concept "capital in general?" As a start we should consider the answer contained in a letter from Marx to Kugelmann. Here this concept was interpreted in such a way as to exclude consideration of competing capitals. Competition, it says in the Grundrisse, is "the relation of capital to itself as another capital, i.e., to conduct of capital as capital." Only through this relationship "is that which corresponds to the concept of capital posited as an external necessity for the individual capital." Conceptually, therefore, competition is "nothing but the inner nature of capital...appearing and realized as the interaction of many capitals." which "force the inherent determinants of capital upon one another and upon themselves." As such, competition is "the essential driving force of the bourgeois economy" even if it doesn't create its principles, but only realizes them, even if it does not explain them, but only makes them visible. Therefore nothing could be worse than to confuse a thorough investigation of these principles with an analysis of competition or an analysis of the credit relationships which presuppose competition, etc. (despite the fact that in competition everything necessarily presents itself in inverted form). In order to investigate the inherent laws of capital in its pure form it is necessary to abstract from competition and its accompanying appearances and to start from "capital as such" or "capital in general." "The intrusion of many capitals," The Grundrisse continues, "must not disturb the perception of the problem. The relationship of the many can only be explained after that which they have in common, namely being capital, is perceived."

1. Karl Marx, Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of the Political Economy (New York, 1973), pp. 650-651. Although no quotations were cited in the published text, we have included a few citations to English editions where it seemed helpful.--Eds.

What then, are the characteristics shared by all capitals? Obviously those which are only valid for capital and not for other forms of wealth. Capital distinguishes itself from mere value or money, first of all, by the fact that it is "surplus-reproducing value," and that a specific, historically determined social relationship lies at the base of it- the wage labor relationship. To be sure, in the concrete world of economics "much is subsumed under capital that doesn't appear to belong there according to its concept." But in all such cases it is a question of merely secondary phenomena that must be put aside for the moment. For in the investigation of "capital in general" we are "still concerned neither with a particular form of capital, nor with an individual capital as distinct from other individual capitals. We are present at the process of its becoming. This dialectical process of its becoming is only the ideal expression of the real movement, through which capital comes into being. The later relations are to be regarded as developments coming out of this germ."²

"The exact development of the concept of capital," Marx emphasizes in this context, "is necessary, since it is the fundamental concept of modern economics, just as capital itself, whose abstract, reflected image is its concept, is the foundation of bourgeois society. The sharp formulation of the basic presuppositions of the relation must bring out all the contradictions of bourgeois production, as well as the boundary where it drives beyond itself."³

The goal for the abstraction of "capital in general" is to pursue the "life history" of capital in all its phases. Thus, the analysis must begin with the investigation of the production process of capital. It must show how money goes "beyond its simple determination as money" and becomes capital - by producing surplus value through the consumption of human labor - and how, finally, the production of surplus value, for its part, leads to the reproduction of capital and to the relations of capital. But all this can be developed without having to consider the presence of several capitals and the difference between them. If we are to understand "the basic presupposition of capital relations - the relation of capital to work and the role of surplus value as the driving force of capitalist production - then we cannot start with "many capitals," but rather with the capital, that is, with "the capital of the entire society," with "capital in general". Only in this way is the real development of the concept of capital possible.

However, the life history of capital is not limited to the immediate production process. In order for capital to renew itself, the product of capital, including the surplus product, must be transformed into money. In this way the production process phase is completed by the circulation process. The movement of capital thus becomes a cycle, in which new forms (fixed and circulating capital) augment it, forms which are derived from temporary determinations of capital, but which harden into particular modes of existence. These forms are also to be grasped as distinctions within the abstraction of "capital in general," since they "characterize every kind of capital" and therefore have to be understood "without regard for the interaction of many capitals."

On the other hand, the progression of these various phases of circulation by means of capital now appears as a limitation on its production; circulation simply costs time, and during this time, capital cannot produce surplus value. Its realization depends not only on the length of time in which capital produces values, but just as much on the rate of circulation in which these values are realized. Accordingly, surplus value is now "no longer measured by its essential measure, namely the relationship of surplus value to necessary labor, "but rather, by the volume of capital itself: "a capital of a particular value produces in a particular time-span a particular surplus value." Surplus value thus finally assumes the form of the rate of profit. However, according to the Grundrisse, this consideration "belongs only to the consideration of many capitals and thus does not emerge at this point," since the creation of the average rate of profit and the corresponding transformation of value into production prices presupposes completion. The latter, however, remains excluded from the investigation of "capital in general."

² Ibid., p. 310.

³ Ibid., p. 331.

(4) Enough said concerning the construction of Marx's work as this plan is presented in the Grundrisse. What Marx sketched there in 1857 is also basically the program of his final work. For just as in the Grundrisse, Volumes I and II of Capital are also limited, in Marx's own words, merely to the "abstract view of the phenomenon of capital formation," i.e., they are confined to the analysis of the process of circulation and reproduction "in its fundamental form" - to the consideration of "capital in general." The actual methodological difference begins only with Volume III. As is well known, this volume was intended to investigate those formations of capital which "gradually approach the form...in which they themselves appear on the surface of society, in the action of different capitals vis-a-vis one another in competition, and in the normal consciousness of the producers." At this point the investigation of "capital in general" is left behind. As Marx himself repeatedly emphasizes in Volume III, he is initially concerned only with the investigation "of the inner organization of the capitalist mode of production in its average cross section." The actual theory of competition lies "outside the plan of this work" and belongs to its "eventual continuation." Thus it says in one of the final chapters of Volume III: "In our description of how production relations are converted into entities and rendered independent in relation to the agents of production, we leave aside the manner in which the interrelations, due to the world-market, its conjunctures, movements of market-prices, periods of credit, industrial and commercial cycles, alternations of prosperity and crisis, appear to them as overwhelming natural laws that irresistibly enforce their will over them, and confront them as blind necessity"⁴ (*italics added*).

Here Marx himself lays out the problems that he reserves for "the eventual continuation" of his work and which for that reason are treated in Capital only in a fragmentary way and only as necessitated by the treatment of other issues. We see the most important of these problems as being: the investigation of the world-market, the problems of economic crises and the problem of "the real movement of market-prices" (which Marx, in another passage, explicitly relegated to a "special investigation of competition"). Unfortunately these methodological suggestions were never heeded by later Marxist scholarship. As a result many scholars found themselves in an unfortunate situation similar to that of orthodox Ricardians of the nineteenth century. These theorists sought to apply directly the correct, yet abstract teachings of their master, devoid of any mediations, to the phenomena of the world of appearances - which *prima facie* seemed to contradict them. In so doing they either attempted arbitrarily to subsume these phenomena under a general principle or they simply denied their existence. The same is true *mutatis mutandis* for many Marxists, who, for example, ignore the problem of the "real movement of market-price" or who attempt to find in Marx's Capital the complete and final solution to the crisis problem. They simply forgot, that also in Marx's work - as he himself said of Ricardo - theory must work itself out of the wealth of its living substratum, out of those very appearances which seem to contradict it. Furthermore, theory cannot be applied to real developments in a state of constant flux without the necessary mediations.

The situation of Marxist theory has become particularly critical since the last world war with the profound upheavals undergone by western capitalism and with the necessity of also analysing the new social structures which have emerged in the East. Once again, to quote Marx, theory "must work its way up through the rich soil of contradictions," if it expects to do justice to concrete reality and the new situations which it presents to us today. And our theory can do it, if it distances itself from dogmatism of any kind, and if it learns to apply the infinitely fruitful method of Capital correctly, i.e., if it is able to discover those mediations which connect the abstract theorems of this work with the concrete reality of today. Precisely that, it seems to us, is the central task of contemporary Marxist economics. If our contribution has helped in any way to bring to consciousness this theoretical task, then its purpose has been fulfilled.

Translated by David Bathrick and Anson Rabinbach

⁴ Karl Marx, Capital, 3 (Moscow, 1966), p.831.

(translated from Aufsätze zur Krisentheorie Frankfurt 1971 pp.45 - 74,
originally published in Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung 1932.)

I. CONCRETE REALITY AS OBJECT AND GOAL OF MARXIAN COGNITION.

ALL SCIENCE sets itself the task of investigating and understanding the concretely given totality of phenomena, their inner connection and their alterations. The special difficulty of this task lies in the fact that the phenomena do not immediately coincide with the essence of things. Investigation of this essence forms the presupposition of the process by which we cognize the world of appearances. But if, in contrast to Vulgar Economy, Marx sought to grasp the 'hidden essence' and 'inner connection' of economic reality, this does not mean that the concrete appearances were of no interest to him. On the contrary, only appearances are ever immediately given to consciousness, from which it follows that only through an analysis of appearances is it possible to penetrate to their underlying, essential 'kernel'.

However, concrete appearances matter to Marx not simply because they form the point of departure and the means by which we cognize the 'real movement', but also because they themselves form, in the final analysis, that which Marx seeks to cognize and explain in a coherent manner. Marx never confines himself purely to an investigation of 'the essence' - disregarding phenomena totally. Rather, cognition of the essential has the function of enabling us to grasp the concrete appearances. Consequently, Marx concerns himself with finding the 'law of the phenomena', or the law that governs them, and the 'law of their variation'.

For Marx phenomena are incomprehensible and 'prima facie absurd' only when taken in themselves, without any connection with their 'underlying essential aspects'. But it would be a fatal mistake if, in contrast to Vulgar Economy, economic science remained stuck, in the course of its analysis, in the 'essential aspects' discovered by it, without finding the road back from them to the concrete phenomena which it must elucidate. In other words, without reconstructing the several mediations between Essence and its Appearance-forms! Therefore Marx precisely sees in the path from the Abstract to the Concrete the 'obviously scientifically correct method'. Along this path 'the abstract determinations lead towards a reproduction of the concrete byway of thought', because 'the method of rising from the Abstract to the Concrete is only the way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproduces it as the concrete in the mind' (Grundrisse, 'Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy'?)

In a concrete example Marx shows that it is not sufficient to refer the values created in industrial production back to the general law that 'the values of commodities are determined by the labour-time contained in them'. For the empirical processes in the sphere of circulation, eg, the direct and perceptible influence of merchant's capital on commodity-prices, exhibit 'phenomena which, without a careful analysis of the connecting links, appear to point to a purely arbitrary determination of prices', so that the illusion arises that 'the circulation-process as such determines the prices of commodities, within certain limits, independently of the process of production' (Cap.3 p.307), or of labour-time. To expose the purely illusory character of this appearance and to restore the 'internal connection' between the phenomenon and its 'real process' - a 'very complicated and detailed task' - science must 'resolve the visible, merely apparent movement into the real, inner movement' (Cap.3 p.307), 'just as the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies are not intelligible to any but him who is acquainted with their real motions, motions which are not directly given to sense-perception' (Cap.1 p.316).

Thus the decisively important task of scientific enquiry lies in finding the 'mediations' or 'intermediary links' that lead from the essential aspects to the concrete phenomena. Without these links theory, which grasps those essential aspects, would simply stand in contradiction with concrete reality. Marx is thus justified in deriding those 'theorists' who get lost in constructions that are remote from reality. Only, 'the Pulgarmob has therefore concluded that theoretical truths are abstractions which are at variance with reality' (Theories 2 p.437).

As I have already shown¹, this rule of method finds its specific resonance in the very construction of Marx's Capital and in the 'procedure of approximation' (das Annäherungsverfahren) applied there, especially in the construction of the Reproduction Schemas, which forms the most striking expression of that procedure. In Capital the 'journey' from the Concrete to the Abstract is undertaken behind a series of simplifying assumptions. Marx abstracts from the given appearances, the concrete, individualised forms in which surplus-value appears in the circulation-sphere (as profit of enterprise, interest, commercial profit, etc) and then the whole analysis of Vols. 1 and 2 concentrates on Value and Surplus-Value as a whole, on their creation and on their quantitative variations in the process of production and accumulation. In this way Marx eliminates the 'mere semblances that appertain to the process of circulation' (Cap.1, p.583). In Vols.1 and 2 he attempts to investigate the creation of surplus-value as the basic aspect of the entire economic process. Subsequently it becomes important to establish the 'internal connection' between the essential relations revealed there in that enquiry and their forms of appearance. This, as Marx expressly tells us, forms the task and content of Vol.3, which relates these aspects and relations to the empirically-given forms of surplus-value, in other words, seeks to 'locate and to describe the concrete forms that grow out of the movement of capital as a whole. In their actual movement capitals confront each other in such concrete forms' (Cap.3, p.25).

Here, in Vol.3, the simplifying assumptions that Marx made earlier (eg, the sale of commodities at their value, disregard for the sphere of circulation and of competition, examination of surplus-value in its totality without regard for its individualised forms, etc) are consciously abandoned and thereafter, in this second stage in the approximation-process, the mediations that were earlier ignored are consciously introduced and the concrete forms of profit that directly confront us in reality (groundrent, interest, commercial profit, etc) become the object of investigation. This brings the circle of Marx's analysis to a close (Erst dadurch wird der Kreis der Marxschen Analyse geschlossen) and finally shows that the labour theory of value is not one of those purely abstract constructions remote from reality, but forms, rather, the law of the phenomenon, ie, the foundation that allows us to elucidate the real appearances. This rule of method is formulated by Marx with unmistakeable clarity when he writes, 'In Bks.1 and 2 we dealt only with the value of commodities'. 'Now (ie, in Bk.3, HG) the price of production of commodities has been developed as a converted form of value' (Cap.3, p.161). 'The forms of capital developed in this book approach step by step the form which they assume on the surface of society, in the action of different capitals on one another, in competition, and in the normal consciousness of the agents of production themselves' (Cap.3 p.25).

II. THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE VALUE - SCHEMA AND REALITY.

The conception I have outlined of thought aiming at the reproduction of concrete reality clarifies the function of the Reproduction Schema within Marx's method of investigation. The Schema has no claim to being, on its own, a picture of capitalism as it functions in reality, it is simply a stage in the approximation-process. As such the Schema is integrally bound up with the simplifying assumptions that underlie it as well as with the modifications introduced subsequently by way of greater concretisation. From a scientific point of view none of these three levels makes any sense taken by itself, without the other two, and each forms at best a stage in the process of cognition, the initial stages in the process of approaching reality by degrees.

Once we are clear about the nature of Marx's Reproduction Schemas and realize that they are simply a logical instrument (nur ein Hilfsmittel unseres Denkens) and not a copy of actual processes, then it is impossible to have any doubt

at all about the character of the individual elements that compose the Schema - values, surplus-values, and different rates of profit in the individual spheres of production. As I have shown elsewhere, Surplus-Value is a real magnitude. This holds, however, only for the total society, at which level values and prices, therefore surplus-value and profit, are quantitatively identical magnitudes. The matter is quite different when we consider individual spheres of production. Within these, in capitalism as it really operates, we encounter not values, but prices of production that diverge quantitatively from values, and not quantities of surplus-value but quantities of profit. In short, from a quantitative point of view, the values and surplus-values that figure in the Reproduction Diagrams are in no sense categories of reality (Wirklichkeitskategorien), they are not immediately given in the world of bourgeois society as it really operates, they are, rather, assumptions that Marx selects at his own discretion, methodological simplifications that initially stand in conflict with reality. Take the values first. Is it still necessary to recall that in Marx the sale of commodities at their value is merely a tentative theoretical assumption and that Marx nowhere and never supposed that this assumption actually corresponded to reality? Thus in Vol.1 he expressly writes, 'Here also we assume that the capitalist sells his commodities at their value', or 'We assume that commodities are sold at their value'. In Vol.2 the purely theoretical character of this assumption is again drawn out when Marx writes 'In Bk.1...it was presupposed that the capitalist sells his products at value' (Cap.2, p.357). But Marx ~~nowhere~~ says that this assumption bears any correspondence to reality. On the contrary, he says the very opposite, viz., that in making such an assumption we are at several removes from reality and prima facie in contradiction with it. With unusual lucidity he says, already in Vol.1, that the assumption of commodities exchanging at value is valid only for the 'normal state' assumed by him in theory, i.e., 'provided the phenomenon occurs in its purity'. 'In its pure form the circulation process necessitates the exchange of equivalents, but in reality processes do not unfold in their pure form' (Cap.1 /Fowkes/ p.262). Here also the 'pure' process is counterposed to reality. Commodities exchange at value only in the former, not in the latter. In a letter to Kugelmann dated 11/7/68 Marx castigates, with his characteristic sarcasm, the bourgeois economists' persistent confusion of theoretical assumption with experience. 'The vulgar economist has not the faintest idea that the actual day-to-day relations of exchange are not immediately identical with the magnitudes of value' (Selected Correspondence p.252).

In innumerable other places, throughout the three volumes and in Theories Marx continues to repeat that in reality commodities do not exchange at their value, but at prices of production that must, 'for most commodities, deviate from their values' (Theories, 3 p.82). That is exactly why he polemicizes against Ricardo's assertion that commodities sell at their values. 'That is his first false presupposition...Commodities exchange at value purely by assumption' (Theories 2 p.). And against Smith, 'Indeed, as I shall show later, even the average price of commodities is always different from their values' (Theories 1, p.95).

Whatever is true of value in this respect, is likewise true of surplus-value. In the Reproduction Diagrams we encounter specific quantities of surplus-value, in reality we do not. For surplus-value is something 'invisible', whereas in capitalism as it operates in reality we encounter directly only the different forms of profit, such as profit of enterprise, interest, commercial profit, and ground-rent. The surplus-values associated with the different spheres of production in the Diagrams are therefore purely provisional assumptions, with no correspondence to reality. The same holds, finally, for the rates of profit of the Diagrams. In the Reproduction Schema, given its base in values, and its assumption that commodities exchange at value, different rates of profit must necessarily prevail in the individual departments. In contrast to this, the experience of a competitive capitalist system shows that in reality there prevails a tendency towards the equalisation of the different rates of profit of the individual spheres into a general, average rate of profit which is already presupposed in the very notion of prices of production. 'The existence and very notion of 'prices of production' and of the general rate of profit that they presuppose rest on the fact that individual commodities are not sold at value' (Cap.3, p.). Conversely, 'the mere existence of a general rate of profit necessitates prices of production that deviate from values' (Theories, 2, p.176).

It follows that, since the Reproduction Diagrams comprise only values, surplus-values and individual rates of profit, initially they stand in conflict with reality. The purely theoretical, provisional character of the Diagrams and especially of their underlying assumption that commodities exchange at value, should be obvious. Real processes unfold in a manner quite different from that described in the Schema. Nor are the deviations of a purely contingent or accidental character, such as any scientific enquiry could justifiably disregard. Rather, the real course of Reproduction is basically quite different from that described in the Schema. The deviations of prices from values that occur in reality are in no sense purely accidental oscillations, as with the fluctuations of market-prices. The factual process of transformation of values into prices of production 'creates persistent deviations from values' (Theories, 2, p.). In the Diagrams the individual spheres realize the quantities of surplus-value created by them. In reality the matter is different, for in the long term they realize not their own respective quantities of surplus-value, but the average profits according and these are quantitatively quite different magnitudes from the former. 'Each capital strives, regardless of the surplus-value produced by them, to realize the average profit, rather than their own surplus value, through the price of their commodity' (Cap.3, p.171).

'It appears therefore as if the theory of value is in this case incompatible with the real process, incompatible with the factual appearances of production, and that for this reason the attempt to comprehend those appearances should be abandoned' (Cap.3, p.151).

III. PRICE OF PRODUCTION AND THE GENERAL RATE OF PROFIT AS "REGULATORS" OF CAPITALIST PRODUCTION.

To understand the mechanism of a capitalist economy it is not enough, however, simply to limit oneself to the assertion that the Value Schema that underlies the reproduction-process, in Marx, and the categories of surplus-value and individual rates of profit included in it do not correspond to reality. We have to pose the further question - which categories are, in that case, appropriate to capitalism in its real functioning and which are decisively important for understanding the 'actual movement' of capitalist production? Marx's answer is well known. The answer is contained in Vol.3. The objective centre of gravity around which the daily fluctuations of market-prices occur, consists of the empirically given prices of production and not of the values postulated in theory. For the concrete movements of capital the really important element is not the individual rate of profit that we find in the Diagrams but the general, average rate of profit.

'On the other hand,' Marx says, 'there is no doubt that (apart from unessential, incidental, mutually compensating distinctions) different average rates of profit in the different branches of production do not exist and could not exist in reality without abolishing the entire system of capitalist production' (Cap.3, p.151). Of the general rate of profit he says, it 'is the driving power behind capitalist production' (Cap.3 p.254). This average profit is in general 'to be taken as regulator of production, which is its role in the bourgeois mode of production' (Cap.3, p.). It is the 'law that regulates...bourgeois society' (Cap.3, p.). On the same grounds Marx regards it as the 'fundamental law of capitalist competition, the law which regulates the general rate of profit and the so-called prices of production determined by it' (Cap.3, p.37). Finally, about equalisation, Marx says that 'the movement of equalisation (is the foundation on which the entire mechanism of capitalist production rests' (Cap.3, p.). For not values but prices of production are 'the regulating average market-prices', i.e., they form the basis around which the daily oscillations of market-prices take place. 'Market prices rise above and fall below these regulating prices of production' (Cap.3, p.839), 'because not values but prices of production that differ from values in the individual spheres of production form the regulating average prices' (Cap.3, p.).

'Regulating average prices' means, however, that in the long run the price of production and not value forms the condition on which reproduction depends, as Marx himself says in so many words - the price of production 'is really what ...Ricardo calls price of production or cost of production and the Physiocrats call prix necessaire, because in the long run it forms a precondition (Bedingung)

of supply, of the reproduction of commodities in all individual spheres of production' (Cap. 3, p.194).

Moreover, the practical importance and significance of the General Rate of Profit is drawn out even more sharply when we consider that it is the basis for the community of economic class-interests of the entrepreneurs. In other terms, if commodities sold at value, each entrepreneur would be interested only in the exploitation of the workers employed by himself and his profits would be identical, quantitatively, with the surplus-value produced by 'his' workers. It is only the transformation of surplus-value into average profit that ensures that 'each individual capitalist, like the entire community of capitalists, participates in the exploitation of the class as a whole by capital as a whole and in the specific degree of this exploitation, not simply out of general class sympathy but for direct, economic reasons, in the sense that,....the average rate of profit depends on the degree of exploitation of the class as a whole by capital as a whole' (Cap.3, p.193).

As long as we remain confined to a Value Schema where commodities sell at their value and where, for that reason, different rates of profit prevail in the individual spheres, then neither competition nor the regulating prices of production that emerge out of it can be taken into account and the average rate of profit, which precisely forms the 'driving force' on which the 'entire mechanism of capitalist production is founded', is then completely lost sight of!

Now, because such a Value Schema tells us and can tell us nothing at all about prices of production and the average profit as a whole, it is obvious that it can throw even less light on the individualised forms of profit that stem from the division of surplus-value. On its basis alone we cannot 'describe the concrete forms...which grow out of the movement of capital as a whole'. The existence of such profit-forms is incompatible with the Value Schema and therefore cannot initially be elucidated from the standpoint of the value theory that underlies it.

In other words, the Value Schema concerns productive capital pure and simple, or capital which participates in the production of value and surplus-value, and not money-capital and merchant's capital, or capital functioning in the circulation-sphere. As long as industrial producers sell their commodities at value, i.e. at value-prices that are quantitatively identical with values (the situation assumed in the Schema), the existence of commercial profit, and consequently of the profit that accrues to merchant's capital - a form of capital with no direct role in production - becomes an insoluble mystery. 'Prima facie a pure and independent commercial profit seems impossible so long as products are sold at their value' (Cap.3, p.324). 'The rules concerning the formation of value, profit, etc, deduced from the study of industrial capital do not extend directly to merchant's capital' (Cap.3, p.319). In fact, so long as we stay within the framework of a value-investigation, a large and important part of the phenomena of capitalist reality must remain impossible to explain. This refers, of course, to the profits of mercantile capital, especially in its international profile, i.e. to the phenomena of world trade and of the world market.

Yet even the conversion of values, or value-prices, into prices of production and the equalisation of individual rates of profit into a general rate of profit would not be enough to explain the existence of a commercial profit. For so far the problem of a general rate of profit and of the transformation of values into production prices would still centre on productive capital alone, i.e. on capital that participates directly in the production of surplus-value. Consequently, at this level the equalisation process would form only 'the first examination of the general rate of profit'. As such it would not have established the 'perfected form' of the latter (Cap.3, p.332). It would continue to exclude commercial capital, which takes no part in the actual creation of surplus-value. Thus in order to explain the existence of a commercial profit, a further stage in the process of approximation is necessary, one which 'supplements' the initially sketched conception of the equalisation-process by taking into consideration 'the participation of merchant's capital in this equalisation' (Cap. ibid.). Only at this stage do we attain to the 'complete form' of the general rate of profit. For at this stage prices of production acquire a 'tighter definition' (Cap.3 p.281) and become

modified into 'mercantile prices' (Cap.3, p.307), so that the initial average rate of profit now appears 'in narrower limits' than before (Cap.3, p.332). In short, if the concrete, empirically given form of commercial profit is to be understood, then the Value Schema must first undergo a whole series of modifications by the rule of approximation. Under the assumptions appropriate to the Schema, i.e., short of discovering the intermediate stages that lead from 'value prices', through 'prices of production' to the appearance-form of 'mercantile prices', the existence of commercial profit would be neither possible nor conceivable.

To this we should add the further circumstance that the whole course of the accumulation-process described in the Value Schema is largely modified by the existence of commercial profit, i.e., by the conversion of values into prices of production or mercantile prices. For it should be immediately evident that that portion of the surplus-value represented in the Schema that accrues to commercial capital as its profit and that is accumulated in the sphere of circulation (in the form of the office-buildings of commercial firms, office-equipment, working capital, etc) represents a 'deduction from the profit of industrial capital' (Cap.3 p.281). Commercial profits 'reduce pro tanto the dimensions in which the advanced capital functions productively' (Cap.2, p.136). As far as concerns the future, this specific portion of surplus-value withdraws from the accumulation of productive capital and no longer participates in the further creation of surplus-value, even if it partakes in the distribution of profit. Through both these facts - on the one hand, through a contraction of the active element, on the other, through an expansion of the passive element - the tempo of accumulation of industrial capital slackens proportionately. 'The larger merchant's capital in proportion to industrial capital, the smaller the rate of industrial profit' (Cap.3, p.281). At the same time, it is obvious that due to the existence of commercial profit a portion of surplus-value - from Luxemburg's point of view a part of the 'unsaleable residue of surplus-value' - is displaced from the sphere of production into that of circulation. The transformation of values into prices of production and mercantile prices will necessarily disrupt all the proportionalities established in the Value Schema.

These remarks on Commercial Capital apply word for word, and on the same grounds, to money-capital and bank-capital. These likewise function exclusively in the sphere of circulation, and although they partake in the distribution of surplus-value, do not participate in its production. If commodities sold at value, i.e., if industrialists retained the whole of the surplus-value produced by them individually, then 'on this assumption...Bank Capital would be impossible', for it would make no profit.

Finally, on the basis of the Value Schema alone not only can there be no interest but the very movement of the Rate of Interest also becomes totally problematic. 'The rate of interest is related to the rate of profit in a manner similar to the relation of a market-price of a commodity to its value. In so far as the rate of interest is determined by the rate of profit, this is always the general rate of profit and not the specific rates of profit prevailing in particular branches of production'. 'Indeed, in the average rate of interest the general rate of profit reappears as an empirical given fact' (Cap.3, p.357f). 'In this sense' Marx writes elsewhere, 'it may be said that interest is regulated...through the general rate of profit' (Cap.3, p.353). A Value Schema with its individual rates of profit and its total surplus-value can elucidate neither the possibility of interest nor its fluctuations. It follows that Bank-Capital and Finance Capital are likewise impossible to explain, when these precisely constitute the concrete forms of capital whose emergence according to Hilferding, bear the deepest significance for the more recent development of capitalism.

The same holds for Ground Rent, in its modern, capitalist form, or in the form in which 'it exists only in a society whose basis is the capitalist mode of production'. It is impossible to explain its existence within a Value Schema, i.e., on the assumption that commodities exchange at their value.

From the argument so far it should be obvious that as far as concerns an understanding of the concrete trajectory of the capitalist process of production the immediately important and basic categories are not those implicit in the Reproduction Diagrams (Value, Surplus Value, Individual Rates of Profit) but categories not comprised in the Diagrams (Prices of Production, Profit and its Individualised Forms and the General Average Rate of Profit).

The latter must become of first importance in any direct understanding of bourgeois production in its concrete profile, precisely because Average Profit is the 'regulator' and 'driving force' of such production and because the whole motion of capital is founded on the equalisation of individual rates of profit.

Once this is clear, it is also clear that a Value Schema from which all these real categories are absent, categories on which the real motion of capital is founded, may allow us to grasp the historical tendencies of development of capital, or the 'general law of capitalist accumulation', in the form in which Marx presents this already in Vol. I, but cannot possibly enable us to reproduce in thought the concrete forms of motion of capital. That is precisely why the various conclusions drawn straight from the Value Schema regarding proportionality or disproportionality are not convincing and are at best premature.

(To be Concluded.) Sections IV to VI of Grossmann's essay will be reproduced in Issue No. Two of the Bulletin later this year. The translation programme of the Bulletin, includes the following hitherto untranslated texts:

- (1) Henryk Grossmann, "Gold Production in the Reproduction Schemas of Marx and Rosa Luxemburg",
- (2) Alfred Sohn-Rethel, "The Class Structure of German Fascism",
- (3) I.I. Rubin, "Abstract Labour and Value in the Marxian System"
- (4) Amadeo Bordiga, articles from II Soviet dealing with the factory councils.

The translation and reproduction programme of the Bulletin, is specifically designed to assist the work and discussions that comrades are either engaged in or propose to undertake in future, and as such their suggestions are not only welcome but absolutely essential for its general success.)

Marx's early drafts for his critique of political economy indicate that he intended to write a separate book on 'Wage-labour'; in the final version, however, this category is taken up in the volumes on Capital. Undoubtedly this is a consequence of the restructuring of his work which took place as his conception of it became clearer; yet in the integration into the main body of his work on Capital, the category 'wage-labour' suffers considerably. Marx's treatment of it is marked by ambiguities and inconsistencies which are not characteristic of his work as a whole. This is all the more serious because wage-labour, or labour-power which is sold as a commodity, is the commodity of capitalist production, that on which the whole of capitalist commodity production rests. As Marx himself puts it, 'When we look at the process of capitalist production as a whole and not merely at the immediate production of commodities, we find that although the sale and purchase of labour-power...is entirely separate from the immediate production process, and indeed precedes it, it yet forms the absolute foundation of capitalist production and is an integral moment within it.' (Capital Volume I, Pelikan Edition, p.1005) A further development of Marx's work in this direction thus becomes a vital necessity for Marxists today.

Marx defines labour-power, or labour-capacity, as 'the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use-value of any kind.' (Cap.I p.270) The capitalist mode of production is characterised by the existence of the direct producers as a class dispossessed of all means of production and subsistence, and therefore compelled to sell their labour-power in order to live. Labour-power therefore becomes a commodity which is sold on the market, and, 'like all other commodities it has a value.' (Cap.I p.274) Its value is determined, 'as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this specific article. In so far as it has value, it represents no more than a definite quantity of the average social labour objectified in it.' (p.274) Here is a clear and unambiguous definition. Labour-power is a commodity, it is produced and reproduced as a commodity, and its value is determined, 'like the value of any other commodity, by the quantity of average social labour objectified in it. Not only labour-power, but 'the real producer' in whom this labour-power is embodied, play the role of 'mere means of production' of material wealth, which is an end in itself. (p.1037) For capital, therefore, 'the maintenance and increase of labour-power appear...merely as the reproduction and extension of its own conditions of reproduction and accumulation.' (p.1052) According to this conception, not only means of production which are consumed in the process of production of commodities, but means of subsistence which are consumed in the process of production of labour-power are 'productively consumed' (p.1045, emphasis added) because their product's value re-enters the social process of capitalist production. Hence it is possible 'to condemn the manufacture of luxury goods from the standpoint of capitalist production' itself if it detracts from the production of 'means of subsistence or production' in sufficient quantities for the extended reproduction of capital. (p.1046, emphasis added).

Running alongside this conception, however, is another which is quite different. In clear contradiction to the notion that the reproduction of labour-power is the production of a commodity which is consumed in capitalist production, Marx writes that 'in fact, of course, the worker must sustain his capacity for work with the aid of means of subsistence, but this, his private consumption, which is at the same time the reproduction of his labour-power, falls outside the process of producing commodities.' (p.1004). This is in accordance with the idea, more explicit elsewhere, that 'the product of individual consumption is the consumer himself; the result of productive consumption is a product distinct from the consumer.' (Cap.I p.290) Such a distinction, which distinctly implies that individual consumption is not productive, therefore unproductive, is incapable of characterising the consumption which produces the commodity labour-power, which on the one hand is embodied in the consumers themselves, so that its reproduction is inseparable from that of the consumers, but is nonetheless also a product distinct from the consumers in that it is alienable, it can be sold by the consumers as a commodity without their having to sell themselves. A more serious defect of this definition is that it distinguishes productive and unproductive consumption purely on the basis of

of the material form of the product (i.e. living individual on one side, dead product on the other) and not on the basis of its economic function. The fact that in all cases consumption of means of subsistence leads to the reproduction of a living individual leads him here (though not in the passage quoted earlier) to overlook the fact that in some cases this living individual is from the standpoint of capital nothing but a means of production, while in other cases this is not so. This is strikingly brought out in the following passage: 'The variable capital is resolved into revenue, firstly wages, secondly profit. If therefore capital is conceived as something contrasted with revenue, the constant capital appears to be capital in the strict sense: the part of the total product that belongs to production and enters into the costs of production without being individually consumed by anyone (with the exception of draught cattle).' (T.S.V. Part I, Moscow edition, p.219) Here the non-human form of the draught cattle alerts him to the fact that although their individual consumption results only in their own reproduction and not in any other dead product, this product nevertheless 'belongs to production'; while the human form of the labourers conceals the fact that the product of their individual consumption, human labour-power, equally 'belongs to production' - where would production be, after all, without it?

It is not accidental that in equating the individual consumption of the labourer with the unproductive consumption of the non-labouring classes, Marx also equates the income of the labourer with the income of these classes by subsuming both under the category of 'revenue'. This identification is particularly clear when he writes that 'the whole amount of the annual product is therefore divided into two parts: one part is consumed as revenue; the other part replaces in kind the constant capital consumed.' (T.S.V. I p.230) This is in marked contrast with his later work, where revenue is strictly a fund for the consumption of the capitalists and their ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ hangers-on, and thus part of the surplus-value appropriated from the workers, while the wages of the workers is part of the value created by themselves and variable capital, the capital laid out in purchasing labour-power, is capital 'in the strict sense' just as much as constant capital. He points out that if ~~we~~ examine the consumption of the working class on a social scale, the illusion disappears that in engaging in their own consumption workers are merely pleasing themselves. For 'by converting part of his capital into labour-power, the capitalist valorises the value of his entire capital. He kills two birds with one stone. He profits not only by what he receives from the worker, but also by what he gives him. The capital given in return for labour-power is converted into means of subsistence which have to be consumed to reproduce the muscles, nerves, bones and brains of existing workers, and to bring new workers into existence. Within the limits of what is absolutely necessary, therefore, the individual consumption of the working class is the reconversion of the means of subsistence given by capital in return for labour-power into fresh labour-power which capital is then again able to exploit. It is the production and reproduction of the capitalist's most indispensable means of production: the worker. The individual consumption of the worker, whether it occurs inside or outside the workshop, inside or outside the labour-process, remains an aspect of the production and reproduction of capital.' (Cap.I p.717-718)

We must conclude, then, that individual and productive consumption cannot be mutually exclusive, as Marx sometimes implies, but rather that the individual consumption of the working class is, from the standpoint of bourgeois society, productive consumption, 'since it is the production of a force which produces wealth for other people'. (p.719) In other words, it is productive of labour-power; a commodity which is sold to the capitalist, enters the ^{capitalist} labour-process, and is the only source of surplus value and therefore of capital. This conception of the individual consumption of the working class, which fits in with the entire framework of Capital, is conceptually clearly separable from the alternative conception of it as the unproductive expenditure of revenue, although in Marx the two conceptions are so closely inter-twined that he sometimes contradicts himself in the space of a single sentence, as when he says of the means of subsistence consumed by the labourer that 'this quantity of commodities has been consumed unproductively, except inasmuch as it preserves the efficacy

of his labour-power, an instrument indispensable to the capitalist.' (Cap. II, Moscow edition, p.312) Which is to say: it is individual consumption of revenue: therefore it is unproductive; however, it produces an essential means of production for the capitalist: therefore it is productive. The confusion between individual consumption and unproductive consumption is here very clear. Once it is established that the individual consumption of the working class is in fact the process of production of the commodity labour-power, that the labour necessary for the production of this commodity is an aliquot part of the total labour of society, and that the value of this commodity is determined by the quantity of average social labour objectified in it, it then becomes possible to examine in greater detail the production process of this commodity, both as a labour-process and as a process of production of value. This we will now do.

'Given the existence of the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance...But in the course of this activity, i.e. labour, a definite quantity of human muscle, nerve, brain, etc. is expended, and these things have to be replaced...His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a working individual. His natural needs, such as food, clothing, fuel and housing vary according to the climatic and other physical peculiarities of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary requirements, as also the manner in which they are satisfied, are themselves the products of history, and depend therefore to a great extent on the level of civilization attained by a country; in particular they depend on the conditions in which, and consequently on the habits and expectations with which, the class of free workers has been formed...The labour-power withdrawn from the market by wear and tear, and by death, must be continually replaced by, at the very least, an equal amount of fresh labour-power. Hence the sum of means of subsistence necessary for the production of labour-power must include the means necessary for the worker's replacements, i.e. his children...In order to modify the general nature of the human organism in such a way that it acquires skill and dexterity in a given branch of industry, and becomes labour-power of a developed and specific kind, a special education or training is needed...The expenses of this education (exceedingly small in the case of ordinary labour-power), form a part of the total value spent in producing it.' (Cap. I p.275-6) This is the most complete definition of the elements entering into the determination of the value of labour-power in Marx's work. We see from this that the average social labour objectified in it includes labour expended on: (1) keeping the labourers alive; (2) replacing any energy or tissues used up in the course of their work and supplying the needs which have historically come to be regarded as essential even if they surpass the bare physical necessities; (3) reproducing the labourers through the upbringing of a new generation of labourers; and (4) educating and training the labourers. Thus if the price of labour-power or the wage is to be equal to its value, then two conditions must be satisfied. Firstly, the labourers must expend in labour no more energy or tissues than can be replaced in the time at their disposal for rest and recreation. This implies a normal working day of reasonable length, for, as the labourer might say to the capitalist, 'by an unlimited extension of the working day, you may in one day use up a quantity of labour-power greater than I can restore in three...You pay me for one day's labour-power, while you use three days of it. That is against our contract and the laws of commodity exchange. I therefore demand a ~~xxxxxx~~ working day of normal length, and I demand it without any appeal to your heart, for in money matters sentiment is out of place...I demand a normal working day because, like every other seller, I demand the value of my commodity.' (Cap. I p.343) Overwork, the using up of more labour-power in a day than can be replaced in a day, will inevitably result in the reproduction of labour-power in a crippled state and ultimately premature death, and is thus one form of the payment of labour-power below its value. Secondly, the amount of the wage must at least be sufficient to purchase all the commodities, material goods as well as services, necessary to reproduce labour-power in a healthy and unimpaired condition. If the historically developed situation is such that more than this biological minimum is regarded as being essential for a normal life; and moreover education and certain skills are necessary, then the wage must be sufficient to purchase these also.

Of all these elements of the value of labour-power, the most obvious is the value of the commodities which are necessary for the subsistence of the individual worker. In fact, this element is so obvious that at times Marx even considers it possible to reduce the whole of the value of labour-power to this, as when he says that 'the ultimate or minimum limit of the value of labour-power is formed by the value of the commodities which have to be supplied every day to the bearer of labour-power, the man, so that he can renew his life-process.' (Cap.I p.276) But a little thought shows that should the value of labour-power ever fall to this level, it will not be reproduced 'in a crippled state', (p.277), but rather will not be reproduced at all beyond a certain point in time. For if the value of labour-power (and not merely its price in individual cases) falls to a level such that only the subsistence of those who are actually working is provided for, then the workers will not be able to have children, and once they die there will be no one to replace them. It is evident that the value of labour-power can never fall to this level; the rock-bottom minimum is that level at which the worker's family, the unit of production of labour-power, can subsist. Marx recognises this elsewhere when he says * that 'the exchange-value of labour-power is paid for when the price paid is that of the means of subsistence that is customarily held to be essential in a given state of society to enable the worker to exert his labour-power with the necessary degree of strength, health, vitality, etc. and to perpetuate himself by producing replacements for himself.' (Cap.I p.1067) In other words, what is sold by the worker is not his labour-power as an individual, but the labour-power of the household, the unit of reproduction of labour-power; and what is sold by the aggregate of wage-labourers is not simply their own labour-power but that of the wage-labouring class as a whole, including that of children as yet too young to work. At any given time, the value of labour-power must include the value of means of subsistence for those who are not actually wage-labourers as yet; this is a necessary consequence of the fact that this particular commodity requires the expenditure of many years of labour-time on its production before it is brought to market.

Firstly, then, the value of the necessary means of ~~xx~~ subsistence for the working class family enters into the total value of labour-power, or in other words the social labour-time embodied in these is part of the social labour-time embodied in the commodity labour-power. But at no time in the history of capitalism has this amount of labour-time alone been sufficient for the reappearance day after day and generation after generation of labour-power on the market. Food which is bought has to be cooked before it can be consumed, dwellings have to be cleaned in order to be habitable, clothes have to be washed and mended (and sometimes made), children have to be cared for and taught, etc. etc. That is to say, the reproduction of labour-power requires the expenditure of a considerable amount of additional necessary labour-time over and above the labour-time embodied in material means of subsistence. This additional necessary labour-time has to be supplied in the form of services, and very rarely is it the case that these services are available as commodities. Does it constitute part of the social labour objectified in the commodity labour-power? Marx's attitude to this question is ambiguous, to say the least. Where these services take the form of commodities, he is prepared to accept that they add to the value of labour-power. 'As to the purchase of such services as those which train labour-power, maintain or modify it, etc., in a word, give it a specialized form or even only maintain it,' he writes, 'thus for example the schoolmaster's service, in so far as it is "industrially necessary" or useful; the doctor's service, in so far as he maintains health and so conserves the source of all values, labour-power itself - these are services which yield in return "a vendible commodity, etc.", namely labour-power itself, into whose costs of production or reproduction these services enter.' (T.S.V. I p.167) Again, 'what the labourer... pays out for education is devilishly little, but when he does, his payments are productive, for education produces labour-power.' (p.210) Here 'productive' is clearly being used in the sense of being productive of value which is embodied in a commodity, and we will for convenience accept this usage. However, as Marx points out himself, most of these services which are necessary for the reproduction of labour-power are not bought as commodities but are supplied directly by the working class itself. Does the labour-time spent on these services contribute to the value of labour-power? Marx distinctly implies that they do not. He says,

for example, that 'there are very few unproductive labours or services left on which the labourer's wages are spent, especially as he himself provides his costs of consumption (cooking, keeping his house clean, generally even repairs).' (T.S.V.I p.210) The term 'costs of consumption' which he coins here would be unnecessary unless he considered these costs to be something different from the 'costs of production or reproduction' constituted by the doctor's and school-teacher's services. The same conception of these costs is present in the following passage: 'The largest part of society, that is to say the working class, must incidentally perform this kind of labour for itself; but it is only able to perform it when it has laboured "productively". It can only cook meat for itself when it has produced a wage with which to pay for the meat; and it can only keep its furniture and dwellings clean, it can only polish its boots, when it has produced the value of furniture, house-rent and boots. To this class of productive labourers itself, therefore, the labour which they perform themselves appears as "unproductive labour". This unproductive labour never enables them to repeat the same unproductive labour a second time unless they have previously laboured productively.' (T.S.V.I p.166) The argument is similar to that in the earlier passage. In contrast to the payments for education and medical attention, which are productive of value and enter into the costs of production of labour-power, the expenditure of labour on cooking, cleaning, sewing and repairs is unproductive of value and presumably does not enter into the costs of production of labour-power. From the argument here it is not clear whether this is because (1) these services by their nature cannot be productive of value: this is implied by the use of the term 'costs of consumption'; or because (2) they are supplied by the working class itself, whereas if they were bought with their wages they would be productive of value. Let us examine these one by one.

(1) In criticising Smith for identifying productive labour with labour which produces a material product, Marx makes it clear that the form of the commodity, whether it is a service or a material use-value, does not determine the character of the labour which produces it. He remarks that 'even though capital has conquered material production, and so by and large home industry has disappeared, and the industry of the small craftsman who makes use-values directly for the consumer at his home - even then, Adam Smith knows quite well, a seamstress whom I get to come to my house to sew shirts, or workmen who repair furniture, or the servant who scrubs and cleans the house, etc., or the cook who gives meat and other things their palatable form, fix their labour in a thing and in fact increase the value of these things in exactly the same way as the seamstress who sews in a factory, the engineer who repairs a machine, the labourers who clean the machine, or the cook who cooks in a hotel as the wage-labourer of a capitalist.' (T.S.V.I p.164, emphasis added) Evidently, then, sewing, repairing, cleaning, cooking, cannot by their nature be unproductive of value, whether they take place in the factory or in the house of the consumer of these services. Therefore the term 'costs of consumption' which implies that they belong within the process of individual consumption is totally misleading; they are 'costs of consumption' only in the banal sense that every process of production of an article of consumption in some way prepares it for consumption. I.e. the reaping, threshing, milling and baking of grain are in this sense 'costs of consumption', likewise the picking, cleaning, spinning and weaving of cotton, and so on. Clearly, this is a strange way in which to conceive of these processes, which should rather be seen, and are seen by Marx, as processes of production of articles of consumption. Sewing, repairing, cooking and cleaning are likewise processes of production which result in a use-value, and, in a commodity-producing society, a value. In fact, when we examine the production of the commodity labour-power as a labour-process, it is clear that means of production (raw food, fuel, brooms and mops, needle and thread, etc.) are converted into the form of the product (labour-power) precisely through the labour-process which takes place in the home of the working class family and whose components are cooking, cleaning, washing, sewing, knitting, mending, child-care and so on. If we examine it as a process of production of value, then the living labour performed in the final process of production is no less part of the total social labour objectified in ~~it~~ the labour-power than the labour which has previously been objectified in means of production of labour-power.

(2) Thus we have already disposed of the argument that these processes of

of production do not add to the value of the product simply because they are performed by the working class itself. This would be like saying that the products of any petty commodity-producing households - handloom weavers, for example - incorporate only the value of the means of production such as yarn and loom, while the actual labour of weaving adds no value to the product because it is performed by the weavers themselves - a proposition which obviously contradicts Marx's whole theory of value. If we now look more carefully at the passage where Marx says that the ~~the~~ working class can cook, etc. only after it has obtained a wage, we can detect an inversion. If we generalise this proposition to all commodities, it would state that until a commodity has been sold, it cannot be produced. Now, it perfectly true that having once been produced, commodity must be sold in order that the elements of production be replaced and the process of production occur again. But it should be obvious that it cannot in the first place be sold unless it has already been produced. This is especially true of labour-power, which cannot be sold unless many hundreds of hours of labour-time have already been spent on its production. As Marx himself remarks in another context, 'its value, like that of every other commodity, is already determined before it enters into circulation, for a definite quantity of social labour has been spent on the production of the labour-power.' (Cap. I p. 277) And again, 'Its exchange-value, like that of every other commodity, is determined before it goes into circulation, since it is sold as a capacity, a power, and a specific amount of labour-time was required to produce this capacity, this power.' (p. 1086) We can ask, then, why it is that this domestic labour, which, it is true, is not directly productive of surplus value, should be treated by Marx as though it is not productive of value at all; and why he should at times treat the process of production of labour-power, which, it is true, is not the production of commodity-capital, as though it were not the production of a commodity at all. It is possible that the answer lies in some lingering fetishism of the wage-form. If it were his labour that was being sold, there would be no anomaly in saying that obtaining a wage is a precondition of preparing ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ means of subsistence for consumption, since labour, unlike labour-power, is not 'a capacity, a power', and no labour-time is required for its production. This lingering fetishism would also account for the idea sometimes expressed by Marx that the labourer sells his labour-power only. The visible transaction is certainly the sale of something that is his, and the sale of the labour-power of the entire family lies concealed beneath this appearance-form.

To establish that the value of labour-power incorporates the labour performed in the home may not appear to be very important. Yet it considerably alters the way in which the value of labour-power is calculated. Marx divides the factory working day into a period of necessary labour in which value equivalent to the wage is produced by the workers, and a period of surplus labour in which surplus-value is produced. In accordance with the assumption that the commodity labour-power exchanges at approximately its value, he assumes also that in the necessary labour-time value equivalent to the value of labour-power is produced. If this is the case, the labourer must in the necessary labour-time produce ~~xxxxx~~ not only value equivalent to subsistence costs incurred in money, but also in addition value equivalent to the labour expended in the home, and must be calculated on a household and not an individual basis. In other words, household labour must be seen as part of the total social labour-time engaged in the reproduction of society through its contribution to the production of labour-power. This is not immediately apparent because here again we come up against the fetishism of money and especially of the wage-form which hides the intrinsic unity of ~~necessary~~ labour performed in the factory and ~~necessary~~ labour performed in the home. In the case of a natural household economy it is obvious that work done in the field, the workshop and the home are part of a single process of reproducing the household. Where simple commodity production is concerned the unity is less apparent, because the labour-time spent in producing commodities for sale is divided from the time spent in producing use-values for household consumption. But it is still not difficult to penetrate the secret that the labour spent in producing commodities is, when seen on a social scale, only part of the social labour performed to provide for the reproduction of the sum total of commodity-producing households. Capitalism, however, erects a Chinese wall between work

performed in the workshop or factory, which becomes part of the life-process of an alien being, capital, and work performed in the home; thereby obscuring both the social character of domestic labour as merely 'an aspect of the production and reproduction of capital', labour-time spent in producing a product for consumption by capital, and the fact that however contingent the use-values in which the labour performed in any given workplace is embodied, the total labour of the working class must produce means of production and consumption necessary for the reproduction of society. From this point of view, then, the full value of labour-power is realised only when the working class family obtains a collective wage with which it can purchase means of subsistence necessary for a normal standard of living without collectively having to work a greater number of hours a day than normal. The former, it has already been pointed out, contains a historical and moral element; likewise the latter: 'The working day does have a maximum limit. It cannot be prolonged beyond a certain point. This maximum limit is conditioned by two things. First by the physical limits to labour-power. Within the 24 hours of the natural day a man can expend only a certain quantity of his vital force.. During part of the day the vital force must rest, sleep; during another part the man has to satisfy other physical needs, to feed, wash and clothe himself. Besides these purely physical limitations, the extension of the working day encounters moral obstacles. The worker needs time in which to satisfy his intellectual and social requirements, and the extent and number of these requirements is conditioned by the general level of civilization. The length of the working day therefore fluctuates within boundaries both physical and social.' (Cap.I p.341) All this is equally true of women and applies with even greater force to children, whose normal development requires more time for rest and the free exercise of physical and mental capacities than that of adults. Thus realization of the full value of labour-power implies much more than that the labourers should be able to maintain themselves and produce children who will constitute the future labour-force. It implies also that the collective wage of the working class family should be sufficient to maintain it at a standard of life which is socially considered to be normal, which may be much higher than the biological minimum. Moreover it implies that the total number of hours of work per day for the family should not exceed the amount socially accepted as normal. This total number of hours per day, however it is distributed as ~~xx~~ between different members of the family, includes both domestic labour and wage-labour performed in the factory. In modern times the normal working day is considered to be such that children should not have to work at all, while older adolescents and adults should not work more than eight hours a day. Since domestic labour contributes to the value of labour-power, only if it is included in the calculation of hours of work can labour-power be considered to be sold at its value. If wage-labour alone fills up eight hours of each adult's day, labour-power is being sold below its value; and if wage-labour and domestic labour together constitute more than an eight-hour working day for any adult, then labour-power is still being sold below its value.

At any given level of the social productivity of labour, the mass of surplus value can be expanded either (1) by reducing the necessary labour performed in the factory while keeping the factory working day constant; (2) by extending the factory working day; or (3) by intensifying the work performed in the factory, a case which need not here be considered. (1) When the necessary labour-time is reduced below the time in which value equivalent to the value of labour-power is produced, the immediate result is a reduction in the use-values which can be purchased and hence a fall in the standard of living. However, the necessary labour-time can be considerably reduced without producing a drastic fall in the standard of living simply by increasing the domestic labour-time engaged in the production of labour-power. If the wage is not sufficient to buy cooked or processed food, it will be bought raw and cooked at home; if it is not sufficient to buy laundering services, clothes will be washed at home; if tailoring services or ready-made clothes cannot be afforded, clothes will be stitched at home; if flour or bread is too

expensive, grain may be bought, cleaned and sometimes even ground at home, at the cost of a tremendous amount of time and effort. In this way it is possible to push the price of labour-power far below its value; where part of the food for domestic consumption is produced by the household on a small plot, it is possible to push it down still further. This is, however, compensated by a greater amount of time expended on domestic labour. In terms of social averages, the extra time expended at home may be equivalent to the reduction achieved in the necessary labour-time in the factory, but in absolute terms the extra time in the home is much greater because of the primitiveness of the domestic labour-process. Thus the real mechanism by which this reduction of the ^{price} ~~value~~ of labour-power below its value is achieved is by an extension of the household working day far beyond the normal length. However, since the extra working time occurs in the home and not in the factory under the direct supervision of the capitalist, it is seldom perceived as such. (2) On the other side, extension of the surplus-labour performed under the direct control of the capitalist is best considered from the standpoint of the entire working-class family. The total amount of surplus labour-time appropriated from them can be increased not only by increasing the working time of an individual member, but by increasing the number of family members engaged in wage-labour to include, e.g., ~~women~~ women and children. Here again the price of labour-power is reduced below its value, not through a reduction of the use-values consumed by the family, but by an extension of the number of hours of wage-labour it is compelled to perform per day.

Thus at a given level of labour productivity, surplus value can be increased by (1) reduction of the quantity of use-values consumed by the working class; (2) extension of the domestic labour-time it must employ in order to reproduce its labour-power; and (3) extension of the surplus labour-time appropriated from it in the factory. The individual capital, on which the laws of capitalist accumulation act as external compulsion, strives to achieve all three, thus pushing down wages to the equivalent of the price of the minimum quantum of use-values that have to be purchased. The labourers, on the other side, have no means of resisting this pressure so long as there is free competition amongst them for the sale of their labour-power on the market. Thus as a result of the operation of the laws of capitalist production, wages would tend to fluctuate around the average aggregate price of the minimum means of subsistence that have to be purchased on the market, and not, as Marx assumed, around the value of labour-power. Fluctuations of supply and demand would lead wages to deviate above or below this average aggregate price, but these deviations would mutually balance one another. Why does this persistent, and not merely accidental, deviation of the price of labour-power from its value occur? The same problem in fact confronts us if we examine the prices of all other commodities produced in a capitalist society. If we begin with the assumption that prices gravitate towards values, we have to conclude that commodities produced by capitals of varying organic compositions must achieve correspondingly different rates of profit. This, however, is contradicted by the existence of a general rate of profit. It is the initial assumption which has to be dropped when we come to a more concrete examination of capitalist society, where products exchange not at their value but approximately at their prices of production. As Marx points out, 'For prices at which commodities are exchanged to approximately correspond to their values, nothing more is necessary than (1) for the exchange of the various commodities to cease being purely accidental or only occasional; (2) so far as direct exchange of commodities is concerned, for these commodities to be produced on both sides in approximately sufficient quantities to meet mutual requirements.. and (3) so far as selling is concerned, for no natural or artificial monopoly to enable either of the contracting sides to sell commodities above their value or to compel them to undersell... The exchange of commodities at their values, or approximately at their values, thus requires a much lower stage than their exchange at their prices of production, which requires a definite level of capitalist development.' (Cap. III, Moscow edition, p. 174-5, 174) Thus as the capitalist production of commodities comes to displace simple commodity production, products come to be sold at around their prices of production rather than around their values. But labour-power defies all the rules. On the one hand it is only when the capitalist production of commodities has reached a definite level of

development that it is widely produced as a commodity at all; on the other, even at this stage it is produced as a simple commodity and not as a capitalist commodity. In other words, it is a simple commodity produced in a world of capitalist commodities; what, then, constitutes the centre towards which its market-price gravitates? Not its value, since commodities no longer exchange at their values. Nor its price of production, since it is not produced capitalistically and its producers do not demand profit at the average rate. Rather, its price gravitates spontaneously towards the average aggregate price of the commodities that enter into its production. It is important to emphasise that in a society where commodities in general do not exchange at approximately their values, there would be no possible mechanism whereby the price of one isolated commodity, namely labour-power, could fluctuate around its value. Marx does not point this out because he commits a forced abstraction in making a transition straight from the value of labour-power to its price in Volume I itself throughout which he maintains the assumption that all commodities sell at value. Having done this, he forgets that this mode of determination of price is possible only on the assumption that all commodities sell at value, and thinks that he has established the centre of gravity of the market-price of labour-power for a capitalist society as such. Hence when he begins to approach the surface of bourgeois society in Volume III, and shows that capitalistically produced commodities have market-prices which fluctuate around prices of production and not values, he fails to carry out a similar transformation on the price of labour-power and assumes that it still continues to gravitate towards value. Thus: 'If supply and demand coincide, the market-price of commodities corresponds to their price of production, i.e. their price then appears to be regulated by the immanent laws of capitalist production, independently of competition, since the fluctuations of supply and demand explain nothing but deviations of market-prices from prices of production. .. The same applies to wages. If supply and demand coincide, they neutralize each other's effect, and wages equal the value of labour-power.' (Cap. III p.349) As a result of this mistaken assumption, he is unable adequately to explain the real historical necessity of trade unions. If it were merely a matter of fluctuations of supply and demand causing temporary deviations of wages above and below the value of labour-power, the immanent laws of capitalist production would by themselves ensure that labour-power in the long run would be sold at its value. It is, on the contrary, the immanent tendency of capitalist production to push wages below the value of labour-power that compels the working class to struggle and combine merely in order to realise the value of its labour-power, and the organisations historically thrown up in the course of this struggle are the trade unions. In fact, it is the struggle of the working class through the trade unions to increase the use-values obtainable with the wage and to reduce the length of the working day that tends to push wages up towards the value of labour-power. The failure or success of this struggle, however, depends on historical circumstances outside its control.

Finally, the state. As embodiment of the general interest of bourgeois society, it attempts to ensure optimum conditions for the accumulation of capital. Unlike, however, the individual capitalist, whose watchword is 'Après moi le deluge!' and who takes no account of the cost to society so long as his own profit is increased, the state must, in the interest of the whole capitalist class, limit the extent of exploitation of labour-power within boundaries which allow of its unimpaired reproduction. It is this function of the state which accounts, for example, for the passing of the English Factory Acts of the mid-nineteenth century. 'These laws curb capital's drive towards a limitless draining away of labour-power by forcibly limiting the working day on the authority of the state, but a state ruled by capitalist and landlord. Apart from the daily more threatening advance of the working-class movement, the limiting of factory labour was dictated by the same necessity as forced the manuring of English fields with guano. The same blind desire for profit that in the one case exhausted the soil had in the other case seized hold of the vital force of the nation at its roots.' (Cap. I p.348) In this instance, the blind desire for profits of the individual capitalists threatens to annihilate the very source of its profits by over-working the proletariat to such an extent that it is unable to reproduce itself. The workers, struggling for their own existence, 'put their heads together and, as

a class, compel the passing of a law, an all-powerful social barrier by which they can be prevented from selling themselves and their families into slavery and death by voluntary contract with capital.' (Cap.I p.416) And this law, paradoxically, is enacted in the wider interests of the capitalists themselves who individually fight against it tooth and nail. The purpose of this example is merely to indicate the complexity of the interaction between capitalists, wage-labourers and bourgeois state which occurs during the process of the historical development of the class of wage-labourers. This historical development results, on the one hand, in an alteration of the conditions in which labour-power is produced, sold and consumed, on the other, in the expansion of the proletariat into a truly world-historical force, and these two aspects are inter-related. A more detailed investigation into the various aspects of this development and their inter-relations is a necessity if the various forms of organisation and struggle historically thrown up by the working class are sought to be understood, and if a deeper understanding of the present stage of the class struggle is to be obtained.

PLEA FOR INDUSTRIAL TRUCE : AN ANTI-WORKING CLASS MOVE

by a Bombay trade unionist.

The Union Labour Minister Shri Ravindra Varma's move for "a national industrial truce pending the formulation of a policy on incomes, wages and prices," deserves to be firmly resisted by the working class precisely in view of the government's intention to curtail agitation at a time when the employers in collusion with the bureaucracy and the legal system suppress the democratic assertions of the working class to secure their legitimate rights.

The plea raised by the Union Labour Minister in this context was very similar to that of his predecessors in the previous government that "some discredited politicians are trying to foment labour trouble."

Labour Minister's silence :

He was conveniently silent on the illegal closures, suspension of operations, lock outs etc. freely used by the employers to intimidate the workers. Probably, these are not serious matters deserving his attention. However, the workers should not resort to their democratic rights for resisting the anti-labour policies of the employers. The employers in this country get freedom to attack workers by all means. They can recruit goondas, raise private armies, engage police, utilise state machinery etc. against the workers. The government policies all along have been heavily weighted against the working people. In spite of these, the government will be happy if the workers do not resist all these attacks. Some of the glaring incidents in the labour front are indeed shocking to many.

There was a wanton firing on coal miners in Madhya Pradesh in which ten workers were killed.

A worker was murdered in police custody in Faridabad.

Four workers were killed in a police firing in Bokaro.

The armed "security guards" of Harig India, a machine tool factory in Mohan Nagar, near Ghaziabad, opened fire on the workers on 7th. Sept. 1977 in which two persons died and 76 were injured.

In Ghaziabad, the employers have built up a private army of "security guards" to terrorise the workers. Managed by a few ex-army hands, there are about half a dozen of "security guard" agencies working in this region. At present 2,500 security staff are working in the district. These "security guards" are being engaged to attack the workers and their militant organisations. The employers have resorted to murky methods and goondaism in industrial relations in this region.

The employers in the Bombay-Thane region are resorting to all anti-labour tactics including the injunctions even prohibit demonstrations, morchas, gate meetings, display of flags and placards, etc. All these agitational forms are guaranteed as fundamental rights under the Constitution. The workers even have a legal right to picket. Nonetheless, the courts were generous enough to employers when it was pleaded on behalf of the employers that such acts are a 'nuisance' and an 'inconvenience' to them. The civil liberties of the working class are always under restrictions due to the oppressive policies of the State or its legal system.

All these happen in this Country at a time when the Union Government takes the credit for having "restored trade union rights of workers".

Income, Wages and Price Policy :

The talk about income and wages policy is not new to this Country. The Congress rulers also talked about it. It is always palatable to the rulers if they can regulate the economy by a policy of income, wages and prices.

The history of such policies in the Western Capitalist World amply proved that such policies neither benefitted the working class nor the economies of those countries.

The Congress rulers even when they talked about evolving income, wages and price policy, their main attention and talk were centred around the disparity in wages, that is disparity between worker and employer. The employers also often talked about this disparity. Shri Naval Tata raised this aspect and initiated a tirade against the trade union movement in his presidential address to the Employers

THE NEW WORKING CLASS AND NEW FORMS OF STRUGGLE IN PUNE

The recent strike wave in Pune is important in the following respects: (1) It highlights the political contradiction implicit in the present phase of development in India; (2) it expresses the tendential development of the class struggle in India; (3) it grows out of the peculiar nature of industrial development in the last eighteen years; (4) it offers clues at least for the beginning of the formulation of perspectives; (5) the expression of the collective will of the workers takes a different form from that in normal struggles.

It appears that after the failure of the railway strike the activity of the working class is now again on the upswing. Specifically Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Pune, Bombay-Thane-Belapur and the Delhi area show a spurt in workers' activity. Thus the struggles in Pune are not an isolated phenomenon but express more general social developments.

(1) Integration into World Capitalism and Formation of a New Working Class in India

Under colonial rule, the formation of the working class in India was closely bound up with primitive accumulation and the export requirements of the imperialist state. The growth of the textile and jute industries occurred from 1850 right upto the First World War, while engineering, steel and cement grew after 1900. Industrial growth occurred largely through the production of absolute surplus value. The trade unions also grew after 1920 mainly in order to prevent the lengthening of the working day.

The period around 1960 saw structural shifts in industrial development in India, with the emergence of industry based on a high technological composition and with a high ratio of fixed capital, as well as a drive towards foreign collaborations. The sharp break of the new industrial structure from the old resulted in the formation of a new working class marked by differentiation among the labourers according to different sophisticated grades, qualities and skills. Simultaneously there occurred a rapid growth of production for the world market which compelled the bourgeoisie to gear the productivity of labour to international standards. Rationalization and mechanization of the labour-process became the intense need of Indian capital. The same economic compulsions forced capital to organize the labour-process with stricter discipline.

(2) Industrial Developments in Pune

As industrial development and the formation and growth of the working class in Pune occurred precisely in the period after 1960, the shift manifests itself here in the sharpest form. Prior to this period, the industrial sector in Pune was restricted to factories like the Raja Bahadur Mill near Pimpri and a few ammunition factories. Hence industrial development in Pune has been largely of the new type. The bulk is constituted by engineering and chemical industries which have developed in the last two decades with high technology and an advanced labour-process. Thus while regions like Bombay show a complex coexistence of all historical stages of development in industry, industry in Pune is of a far more homogeneous character.

In Pune, industrial production is concentrated in three centres. These are Bhosari, Nagar Road and the area along the Bombay-Pune road covering the Pimpri-Chinchwad area and extending upto Khopoli and onwards. The Bhosari area is a Maharashtra Development Industrial Development Corporation area consisting of small electronic-engineering factories with less than 50 workers per factory. The Nagar Road industrial belt is almost entirely composed of engineering factories, mainly middle-sized with 50 to 1000 workers per factory. These are two more or less homogeneous areas while the Bombay-Pune road area is heterogeneous in nature. It includes the biggest factories with over 1000 workers such as TELCO, Mahindras, and Garware, as well as middle-sized factories like David Brown, Vulcan Laval, etc. Most of the

chemical factories are also situated here. The industrial structure in this entire area developed in organic relationship with that in the Bombay-Thane-Belapur area.

This spurt of industrialisation occurred as a two-fold process of intensification of labour in factories and uprooting of the peasantry from its normal, independent life. The intensification of labour in engineering and other industries proceeds through tying the workers to inhuman machines, controlling the expenditure of labour-time through time-and-motion studies, curtailing free movement in factories, etc. The pressure for intensification is all the greater since it occurs in technological conditions which are more backward than average international ones. These circumstances account for the nature of recent struggles.

(3) Formation of the Working Class

The working class in Pune was formed largely over the last fifteen years during which it has grown numerically from a few thousands to 180,000. Today the industrial working class forms the bulk of the working population in Pune and has acquired its leadership. The working class formed in this recent period is of the new type, often with a high degree of training and skill which is acquired in special institutions which are run by the state or the factories themselves. Average wage levels are around Rs 450, while upper and lower limits to wages are Rs 900 and Rs 250-300 respectively.

In the initial period of the formation of the class, socialist leadership was based among non-industrial employees and controlled a few unions of industrial workers in mills and ammunition factories. But this leadership was replaced by INTUC in the early period of growth of the working class. This phase of unionisation was led by Gandhi in close connection with the government and industrialists like Kirloskar. Chaterji entered the field in 1966 in a big way when militancy began to grow substantially, and there emerged the loose, federative structure of his Pune labour union which was not related to any political party. Later there emerged the unionism of A.D. Bhosle (L.N.P.), possessing essentially the same characteristics as Chaterji's unionism but acquiring a higher form. Chaterji's unions had developed in the Nagar area and Bombay-Pune area while the Bhosari area remained unorganised. In the phase from 1968 onwards the C.P.I., C.P.M. and L.N.P. made a bid to organise the workers, but the first two parties were unable to establish themselves except in a few factories on the Bombay-Pune road. The L.N.P. union grew in the Nagar Road and Bhosari areas mainly by leading the engineering workers from middle-sized and small factories. The militant struggles which formed the basis for this new phase of unionisation in the last twelve years had two important causes:

(1) the new type of industrialisation which was developing in India and necessitated severe disciplinary measures in the factories in order to increase productivity; and (2) the specific social composition of the working class, which was recruited largely from the agricultural areas surrounding Pune where the peasantry was disintegrating with the commercialisation of agriculture. The independence of the lower layers of the peasantry is definitely related to the militancy of workers in Pune.

(4) Emergence of New Forms of Struggle and Political Strikes

The period of the emergency not only brought about political cohesiveness among industrialists, but forced the workers and militants to rethink and evolve new tactics of struggle for self-defence. The formation of 'X' committees or factory committees expresses such a spontaneous development. Throughout this period there was also a significant decline of Chaterji's unionism and a gravitation of workers towards Bhosle's union.

The spontaneous tool-down strike was an important weapon discovered by the workers in the period of the emergency. The changes in the workers' demands during this period are also noticeable. On the issue of the return of C.D.S. a major strike broke out in Globe in July 1976, while in Vulcan Laval strikers demanded suspension of all the supervisors. The latter strike, which continued for seven days, failed, resulting in the dismissal of nineteen workers. The next major strike occurred in Traub India.

The issues were (1) condemnation of atrocities and disciplinary measures on the part of the management; (2) refusal to increase productivity and (3) bonus. The crystallization of the first factory committee occurred during this period. This new body fundamentally differed from a trade union managing committee. It not only had a political orientation, but expressed the workers' urge to defend their labour capacities and their human existence in factory life. This urge differs from pure wage demands. The generalisation of this form of organisation in the later period expresses a long-term tendency towards the questioning of social-political processes on the part of worker militants.

At first, confused attempts to resist the increase in the productivity of labour proceeded through individual, scattered strikes, but they gradually acquired a sharper and clearer character, especially in the period following the lifting of the emergency. Along with demands like increase in wages, bonus, and return of C. D.S. developed the demand for practical freedom in factories. The general strike on 2nd July 1977 in the Bhosari and Nagar Road areas ~~diminished~~ hastened the process of formation of defence organisations. The Nagar Road area dominated by middle-sized factories took over leadership of the struggle and drew behind it the Bhosari industrial estate; workers associated with small capital are naturally unable to lead the struggle on their own. In the Bhosari area, struggles always acquired an unruly and violent character expressing the outburst against small capitalists. On this day the workers erected street barricades and blocked the traffic. There were peculiar reasons for the strike. The workers' opposition to the stricter discipline necessitated by a continuous labour-process and intensification of work through sophisticated techniques and methods acquired a collective character.

Leadership was provided exclusively by factory militants, and these struggles marked a great rise in the self-activity of the workers. Workers were often compelled to raise the struggles above the trade union level and bypass the trade union hierarchy. In this process, militants and workers for the first time acquired a clear image of capitalists as a class distinct from workers. Many strikes broke out after the 2nd July strike which was a prelude to the major strike on 24th and 25th of July. An incident in David Brown sparked off a major struggle in which the workers' physical confrontation with the police resulted in a collective general strike which closed the Bombay-Pune road for more than six hours. This prepared the basis for a general political strike encompassing not only the industrial belts but all middle class organizations around Pune. This occurred on 19th August.

The following examples indicate the nature of the struggles over the past two years:

- (1) June 1975: tool-down strike in B.Bijli, Vulcan Laval and Traub against weekly lay-offs - lasted 35 days.
- (2) December 1975: Daily one-hour tool-down strikes in Wanson and D.B.G. against atrocities of supervisors and attempts to speed up the work process.
- (3) July 1976: In Globe, for return of C.D.S.
- (4) August 1976: In Traub, for return of C.D.S., leading to destruction of the canteen.
- (5) September 1976: In D.B.G. and S.K.F., against continuous labour-process and management attempts to force down the piece-work system.
- (6) January 1977: A four-and-a-half month strike in Traub, for bonus and against atrocities.
- (7) February 1977: In DIMAC, for bonus.
- (8) March 1977: In Exide, for changing working conditions as a worker died in an accident.

Most of these strikes took place instantaneously, without any previous notice as is statutorily demanded. Apart from wage demands, the causes of strikes were related to working conditions, stringent disciplinary measures by management, classifications, output and productivity, the work process, overtime, etc. Their nature has been such that they could not be accommodated within the framework of existing trade union procedures. This can very well explain

the emergence of factory and area committees in Pune. The struggle against the intensification of work spontaneously grows over into a challenge to the authority of capital and state, thus necessarily throwing up new forms of struggle which go far beyond the framework of the old trade unionism. In this process the new forms of organisation and struggle come into direct confrontation with the old trade union structures. This is strikingly illustrated by developments in TELCO, which has a most conservative trade union structure. The trade union's opposition to the strike on the 19th did prevent the majority of workers from participating in the strike. But the success of the strike started a process of rethinking among worker militants which resulted in their gheraoing the trade union leaders and forcing them to resign.

The Bombay-Pune road area is the most decisive belt where the heterogeneous character of industry and the existing trade union structure function as a hindrance to the crystallization and generalization of such committees. A few factories like Kirloskar, TELCO, M Mahindras and Garware preserve a conservative trade union structure even in periods of turmoil. The specificities of Chaterji's union which engulfs most of these big factories are: (1) an anarchistic, loose organisation in which each individual unit is autonomous and which prevents workers from creating defensive organisations like factory committees and area committees; and (2) An individualistic leadership with a chronic petty bourgeois outlook which keeps workers away from politics. However, the strength of Chaterji's union has now declined to 30 to 50 thousand workers.

(5) Political Tendencies in Pune

The major growth of the working class in Pune occurred at a time when the traditional communist parties were already losing ground. Their marginal penetration into the industrial belt in Pune is historically quite significant as it gives a correct picture of political correlations. Equally significant is the dominance of Chaterji's union (now in decline), and Bhosle's L.N.P. union which are not affiliated to the traditional communist parties but have a vague and eclectic political orientation. The L.N.P. has been able to assist the process of building up factory committees and area committees, but is completely incompetent to comprehend political struggles and assist militant workers to arrive at a clear conception of the alien forces confronting them.

The performance of the C.P.I. and C.P.M. has been exceptionally bad. Formed in a period of backward capitalist relations in India, they are unable to relate to the present struggles. The factory committee movement appears as irrelevant to their politics. In the face of the workers' struggle, these parties have taken shelter in completely legalistic procedures. In today's situation in Pune it becomes clear that when workers attempt to define their own democracy, the constitutional democrats, people's democrats and radical democrats find their own versions of democracy disintegrating from within. Their bankruptcy was revealed after the strike of August 19th when a meeting was called by the militant workers' joint action committee on the 22nd. The C.P.I. called for a petition to the government, and the C.P.M. demanded whether the Maharashtra government wanted a restoration of industrial peace in Pune or not. The C.P.I.(ML), which is the best organised political group with a good following among the militants, was caught in the contradiction between its petty bourgeois perspective and the historical logic of an independent class movement. Thus while it could not put forward any alternative to the perspectives of the C.P.I. and C.P.M., it at the same time showed enthusiasm for launching an agitation. In this situation, the proposals of the worker militants were in sharp opposition to those of the communist party leaderships. Their resistance to all reformist procedures and emphasis on the strengthening and developing of factory committees, withdrawal of S.R.P.s from the industrial belts, reinstatement of all workers dismissed because of participation in political strikes and agitations, and so on, made the conflict between the workers' movement and the traditional parties very sharp and clear.

Recent struggles have drawn into political life a layer of militant workers who have been forced to interpret their own situation and forge a picture of class rule and state violence. In the practical confrontation with objective conditions, they are making intense efforts to know the root causes of the struggle and to see its future. The significant growth of the demand for Marxist political literature, bulletins, etc. indicate the entirely new mood of the workers.

(6) Perspectives

The peculiarities of the new phase of the struggle are quite evident. Political leadership is in the hands of militants who come mainly from the middle-sized engineering units. Even industries with independent unions are sharply gravitating towards formulating general demands. Although wage demands do figure as important, many struggles centre around problems like productivity, rhythms of work, and so on, and are directed against the rules and regulations of factory life and disciplinary actions. These ~~struggles~~ struggles clearly indicate that the tendency in this area at least is to question the whole social structure which attempts to absorb the workers' capacities.

Events of the last eighteen months have given rise to a tremendous process of inquiry among workers and especially militants, into relations between trade unions and committees, questions of productivity and methods used to increase it, disciplinary measures in the factories, the necessity of area committees for joint struggle, methods of facing state repression, etc. The development of these initiatives on the part of workers has hardly been given any attention by the political parties.

Meanwhile the Maratha Chambers of Commerce in Pune have given a call to all the trade unions to sit across the table and jointly work out a maximum-minimum unified wage structure related to productivity and skills of the workers. It is apparent that the unions will not be able to fight the proposed social contract, either in Pune or in India as a whole, and hence that opposition to it will necessarily have to take new forms.

In this situation, the political education and theoretical clarity of worker militants are a pressing need. Theoretical-practical experiments of a certain nature for assisting the militants to fight the State's ideology and for developing the scientific capacities of the workers will help them to form a clear picture of the state and classes in India and to see the future of the struggle more clearly. This needs institutions like schools and laboratories in working class areas for interpreting the continuously changing situation. Worker militants confronting the objective conditions are passionately involved in discovering new social mechanisms for fighting the collective resistance of capitalists and state. Revolutionary theory must assist such a process.