

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM

BY ANTON PANNEKOEK

(Translated by Richard Perin)

1. THE SOCIAL IDEAL

When we read the books of the official professors of social science on the subject of Socialism and Anarchism, we are astonished to find how little the sociologists, even those friendly to us, understand of the great scientific revolution which Engels called the Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science, a revolution now more than half a century old.

Scientific Socialism, as established by Marx and Engels, combined into a harmonious unity two things which from the bourgeois point of view appeared to be irreconcilable opposites: on the one hand dispassionate objectivity, science indifferent to ideals, and on the other hand the passionately sought subjective ideal of a better society. Those who do not take the point of view of scientific Socialism believe that an ideal, that is to say, something which we desire, can never be a subject matter of science, and that, conversely, passionate desire must be a hindrance to objective truth. To the alleged objective science of society they give the name of sociology; and the sterility, the lack of results which is everywhere in evidence in the countless books of these "sociologists," furnishes the best refutation of their contention that social truth is born of dry book-learning, rather than of participation in the social struggles. A social ideal, on the contrary, they know only as Utopianism—as the conception and propoganda of a better or best social system—which has nothing to do with the science of society, even though its advocates maintain that they are able to prove "scientifically" the excellence of their new system.

Scientific Socialism has overcome this contradiction through the discovery of the economic basis of social evolution. It has taught us that with the continuous improvement in the technical methods of labor and the social organs and organizations necessary to their operation, the entire social order undergoes an uninterrupted transformation, including the opinions and ideals of mankind. Man must continually adapt his ideas and opinions of possible and desirable institutions and organizations, to the progress of the productive forces; in other words, he follows ever new social ideals. Therefore, such a social ideal does not signify the construction of a faultless social system, but it is a mental picture of a subsequent, more highly developed social system, in which the disadvantages of the preceding system have been overcome, and which is adapted to that development of the forces of production which has just been attained. Since everything which man does must first exist in his mind as purpose and will, therefore every

new social order, before it becomes a reality, must first exist as a more or less adequate, conscious ideal.

Thus in the youth of capitalism, when the new inventions of the steam engine by James Watt and the spinning machine by Arkwright opened up boundless possibilities to industrial development, the natural social ideal was: unconfined freedom of private production and of competition, the sweeping away of all feudal and guild obstacles. So now, when capitalistic appropriation stands in the way of the full employment and development of the forces of production, when the gigantic establishments and trusts have shown the possibility of a well-devised organization of labor, the natural social ideal is: the socialization of the means of production. And this social ideal forms the chief demand in the programs of the Socialist parties of all countries.

Consequently, if we Socialists are asked: "What order of society do you recommend as the best?" we answer: "None at all." We do not extol any system of society as the most perfect or the only good one, in comparison with which all others are objectionable. Various social orders are necessary, hence advantageous, according to the height of technical and economic development; upon a certain plane of development, an order, which previously was necessary, becomes injurious and unbearable, as is now the case with capitalism. Hence all our struggling and striving is now directed toward the next step, and toward the removal of the obstacles which stand in the way of the acquisition by society of the means of production. These obstacles are mainly two: the political supremacy of the capitalists and the defective organization and discipline of the working class; therefore, our most immediate aims are the organization and training of the workers and, by means of these, the conquest of political power.

Consequently, we are by no means of the opinion that after this victory and with the commencement of the nationalization of the great industries, the ideal of the best of all worlds will have been attained. On the contrary, it is our conviction that this new condition—like its predecessor, capitalism—is only a link in a continuous chain of development. Our program naturally contains nothing in regard to the further phases; our practical task is merely the realization of our present social ideal, that is, the displacement of capitalism by the social order which naturally follows it. We must leave it to the members of the society of the future to raise the banner of new social ideals to correspond to the new needs that will arise.

This does not mean that the subsequent forms of development do not interest us and that we therefore need not concern ourselves about them. It simply means that it would be absurd for us to put our views in regard to future orders of society into the form of demands the realization of which should determine our practical line of action. On the contrary, since it tends to clarify

our views and opinions, it may be of value in our present struggle to attempt to forecast the various future phases of social development by means of our historic-materialistic method.

2. THE FUTURE STATE.

The substitution of Socialism for capitalism will not be a single, world-convulsing act, but a process of gradual change, however rapid as compared with the present time.¹ The nationalization of the great industries and trusts will effect no fundamental change in capitalism, for certain industries are even now nationalized; the fundamental change will lie only in the fact that the power of the state will be at the disposal of the working class. The great contrast between the new proletarian supremacy and the former capitalist supremacy will manifest itself immediately, not in a deliberate revolution of the mode of production, but in vast cultural measures—promotion of education, care of the public health, aid for poverty and suffering—by which the new society must make up for the neglects of capitalism. Although we are unable to say to what extent private production will at once be replaced by social production—certainly not completely—yet it is certain that the vigorously executed measures for the promotion of the welfare of great masses of the people will form the basis of the new economic development. Kautsky has already shown how the simplest, most necessary and, to every worker, immediately urgent measure for the checking of poverty, namely, bounteous provision by the state for the unemployed, strikes at the very roots of capitalism; it will be one of the most effective levers for putting a speedy end to private production undertaken for the sake of profit.

When private production is then, for the greater part, replaced by social production, there will nevertheless be little change apparent in the method of production, except that in place of many producers and employers there will be but one; hence the expressions and forms originating in the production of commodities will continue to exist. To the products there will be attributed a certain *value* for which they are sold; the participants in production will be paid a *wage* for the labor-power they have expended in the service of society—to be sure, the value of labor-power will be rated far higher than now—and perhaps this wage will be calculated to vary according to performance and supposed service. The division of that portion of the social products intended for individual consumption will, at this stage of development, be effected by their purchase from society by means of the wage which society pays to its members for their labor. Hence private property will still play an important role; disparities in this form of property

¹This theory of transformation has been set forth at length by Karl Kautsky in the second part of "The Social Revolution."

will exist; money will be used for the payment of wages, and for buying and selling among the still existent private producers. However completely the abolition of poverty may change the aspect of society, production will at first be but little altered in its superficial aspect by the overthrow of capitalism. Nevertheless this aspect will be deceptive. Even in production the basic difference will be enormous; it will no longer be a means for the creation of surplus value, and it will no longer be left to the hazards of private undertakings, but it will be directed toward the satisfaction of needs as its immediate aim, and hence will be controlled with conscious foresight.

This stage of social development cannot endure; it will gradually undermine itself. Internal contradictions will even in the future be levers of social evolution; to be sure, they cannot, as under capitalism, manifest themselves in a class struggle, for the classes will have vanished; the contradictions will become perceptible in the form of inadequacies, and will furnish the inducement for their removal by means of conscious modification of the foundations of society. Here the contradiction consists in this, that value is a quality of products which originates in private production, and hence vanishes when private production ceases to exist. In a society of commodity-producers value expresses the social character of their private labors; it is in their common quality as values that the products of these private labors announce themselves to be qualitatively similar to each other and to incorporate within themselves social, abstract labor. That the private persons are participants in a social labor-process, becomes apparent only in the quality of value that is common to their products; hence in the inverted form of a quality of things. In the act of exchange the producers and the products meet; there the social character of their private labors comes to light; there value is formed, or more correctly, there it passes from an abstract, conceptual existence into reality. "It is only in exchange that the products of labor receive a socially equal existence as values which is distinguished from their naturally different existences as use-values" (Marx, "Capital," I).

When the social character of labor is immediately apparent to everyone, it need not be embodied in the fanciful form of an objective quality of the product. With the disappearance of private labors, which formerly constituted value through their equalization in exchange, value itself will vanish. It may for a time lead a traditional existence: the impossibility of determining it practically when it has lost its real existence will put an end to the order of society in which it played the chief rôle in the distribution of the means of consumption. When a generation shall have passed after the first abolition of capitalist poverty and new generations have been born which only know it from hearsay, men will gradually cease to comprehend the capitalistic idea of paying wages for

work done. With the universalizing of that scientific and technical education which under capitalism is the monopoly of privileged classes and is used by them to extort higher payment for their labor power, the differences in wages will disappear. With the memory of capitalistic inequality will also disappear the feeling that a man who accomplishes more than another should receive more. Moreover, how would the measure of performance be determined, except in entirely similar labors? Therefore some other rule for the distribution of articles of consumption will have to be sought for.

Possibly, for lack of something better, recourse will be had to the idea that everybody is entitled to the same amount. However, the development of the productive forces will soon lead to another standard. One of the first and most obvious consequences of the abolition of capitalism will be a tremendous development, to an extent now hardly conceivable, of natural science and its technical applications. The universality of scientific education will augment the now small group of natural scientists and inventors by countless numbers of powerful, creative minds. Nowadays this group works only for the profit of the capitalists and to satisfy the thirst for knowledge of a small guild of scholars; in addition, it is demoralized by avarice and place-hunting, as well as hampered by worry and disappointment. Under Socialism the natural scientists and inventors will be sustained by the ennobling consciousness that all their researches and discoveries will redound to the immediate benefit of the community. Then the knowledge of the forces of nature and their technical application will receive an impetus never possible before; the productivity of labor will increase enormously, and the drudgery of the individual will be considerably lightened. The means of life will thus be produced in such abundance that it will no longer be necessary to use painful exactness in apportioning to each his rightful share. Where unlimited abundance reigns, each can take as much as he needs without arousing the jealousy of others. On the other hand, the knowledge that there is always enough will restrain each one from taking more than he actually needs, whether to hoard it or to waste it, both of which would be equally without purpose. The only measure at this stage of social development for the division of the means of consumption will, therefore, be the necessity of the individual. It is obvious that under these circumstances, where each takes what he needs from the social store, the idea of private property, even in means of consumption, will gradually disappear.

This immense increase in the productivity of labor, as a result of the advance in science and education, can commence only when the Socialist order shall have prevailed for some time; for the increase itself will be a consequence of the cultural measures of the new society. Therefore, in the beginning the superiority of Socialist production over capitalist production will have to be

based upon entirely different factors. All these factors will be directed toward an effective economical and carefully planned system of production and the avoidance of all useless waste of material and labor-power, in one word, *organization*. We often conceive the aim of our present struggle to be the organization of scattered, wasteful and anarchic production, and this is to be accomplished by the state as soon as we shall have seized it. The proletariat, then, needs the power of the state to force its will upon the classes it has conquered, to advance education, culture and instruction by vast measures, and in addition to organize the process of social production. Old political institutions will be remoulded into new organs, which will play a part in the management of production; hence they will receive an entirely new significance, while the old forms and names will remain unaltered. Thus the political structure will also be altered but little in its superficial aspect, but greatly in reality. The nature of the State will undergo such a basic transformation that Engels could say with justice: The state will die. Instead of an institution for the oppression of one class by the other it becomes a corporate body with purely economic functions. In accordance with this combination of political form and economic substance, the working regulations will have the form and force of laws.

(To be concluded.)

THE MAN OF THE IRON JAW

BY J. WILLIAM LLOYD.

Roosevelt the Candidate was the cynosure of all eyes. Roosevelt the Beaten is still not forgotten. This is a man who cannot be forgotten nor ignored.

Let us be just. The Man of the Iron Jaw is a wonderful personality. He has that peculiarly dynamic quality which all possess who do not attempt to be consistent, but who, like animals and thunder-clouds, express freely the stress of the moment.

Life is paradoxical, and the Man of the Iron Jaw is like life. Life, today, is in the mood of the Social Conscience, and Roosevelt, the Nietzschean, bidding in supreme egotism for the niche of the Superman, suddenly finds himself caught and twisted by the invisible Composite Will to serve its ends. Do you not see? Roosevelt the egoist has to work altruist; Roosevelt the Anti-Socialist has to be the step-ladder whereby Socialism may mount and enter the second story windows of a bourgeoisie too contented to look out and see it in the street.

Roosevelt is no coward. It was a brave man who could stand up after receiving an assassin's bullet and address an audience. Ay, a brave but a boastful one. For it was a fool act, the act of a neurotic egotist, hungry for