

✓ the substitution of scientific socialism for utopian socialism 160/5

Marx and Utopia. Party and Class

What ~~generally~~ ^{has been} ~~may~~ ^{is} recognised as the great performance of Marx is the substitution of ~~utopian~~ ^{for} socialism. ~~by~~ ^(scientific socialism). Socialism before his time consisted in phantastic descriptions of an imagined better society, which after Thomas More's brilliant sketch ^{were} ~~was~~ ^{designated} ~~called~~ by the general name of Utopia's. Marx made socialism an object of scientific prediction, as the natural outcome of the process of social development. This prediction was based on his theory summarized, as far as it concerns us here, in the thesis that the history of civilization was a history of class struggles. Social classes are the groups of human society ^{ing} ~~different~~ and opposed ^{through} ~~by~~ ^{ing} ~~their~~ different functions and opposed ^{ing} ~~interests~~ in the process of production. The conflict of these interests affords the main contents of political strife. Thus economy, the economic structure of society, the system of production, ^{constitutes} ~~provides~~ the basis of all political dealings and events. In a still wider philosophical conception, developed in his criticism of Hegelian and post-Hegelian philosophy, called by him Historical Materialism, he proclaimed the economic structure of society the basis of all ideas and ideologies.

This theory explained, for the ~~past~~ history of the last centuries, the rise of capitalism as the dominant economic system and the rise of the bourgeoisie as the ruling class. But at the same time, applied to the present and the future, it enabled him to foresee their decline and downfall. Behind the new proud masters ~~of~~ he detected the proletarian class, product of ~~the~~ capitalist industry, suppressed and detested, ^{and} breaking loose now and then in vain rebellions. These were the first indications of a new class struggle ~~is~~ waged by the working class against the capitalist class, the start of a revolutionary fight of the workers for mastery over the production, which ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ the end will elevate mankind to a higher stage of freedom. In his analysis of capitalism ^{he investigated} ~~its~~ basis and its

product of the industrial revolution, suppressed and detested, breaking loose now and then in vain rebellions. ^{considered as} These rebellions ^{They were the first indications of} were ^{as the first} ~~as the first~~ ^{start} ~~beginnings~~ of a new class struggle, of the working class against the capitalist class, the first ^{which at the end} ~~beginnings~~ of a revolutionary fight of the working class for mastery over production, ~~that~~ ^{which at the end} will bring mankind to a higher stage of freedom. In his analysis of capital, his life-work, he investigated its elements ^{as the} ~~of~~ basis of all its visible phenomena, its progress over the world, its concentration in fewer hands, its accumulation of ^{riches} ~~wealth~~ and misery, its crises, its violence, its wars and its inevitable collapse ~~of~~ when ~~the~~ ^{the} working class driven to revolution ~~by~~ ^{will} ~~conquer~~ ^{conquer} power ~~of~~ over society.

A century has passed since. And now ~~Now~~ we often hear that Marx' prediction has failed. The working class has failed ~~to conquer power and~~ to destroy capitalism and to establish socialism. In the ~~last~~ ^{last part of the 19th century} ~~part of the 19th century~~ ^(developed as the political organisation of the wcl.) Before and about 1900 it looked as if its organisation, the Socialist Party, ~~was~~ ^{was} and in the years after 1900 it seemed to be ^{supremacy for the} well on the way to conquer political power, most decidedly in Germany but also, in less radical forms, in other countries of Western Europe. But then two world wars destroyed all this semblance of power ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~showed~~ ^{revealed} capitalist supremacy ~~as inevitable~~ ^{in glaring terror}. And nowadays the working class lies more strongly fettered than before, ~~and~~ ^{with} socialist freedom ~~is~~ ^{apparently appears as} a distant phantom and socialism ~~is~~ ^{again} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~in olden times~~ ^{in olden times}.

~~What~~ What has failed is the doctrine of the Socialist Party as an instrument for liberation of the working class. ^{useful} It was ^{so that they could} an instrument for asserting the workers their place in the capitalist society, ^{the socialist programme was} ~~to~~ ^{they wanted reforms, civil rights, franchise, to build up their unions.} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~maintain~~ ^{maintain} themselves against the depressing power of capital. Marx never identified the working class with the socialist party; ^{even} ~~the~~ ^{Social Democracy} name ~~did not~~ ^{always} come from him (he spoke of communism) but from Lassalle. Marx' theory did not ~~deal~~ ^{deal} with parties but with classes; ~~and~~ ^{his} prediction does not speak of ~~the~~ ^{socialist} conquest of political power by a party, but of conquest of economic and social mastery ^{by} ~~of~~ the working class. But to give them a background of possibility, to give enthusiasm and confidence, the vision of ^{another future than capitalism, gave inspiration} ~~had to be added~~.

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This does not mean that the fervent ^{of the workers} political party-activity (was a mistake. It was an inevitable, necessary form of ~~action~~ action against the heavy pressure of ^{rising} capitalism [—]).

The past hundred years were the century of the socialist parties, first (during the second half of the 19th century) in rising influence and power, ^{(But} then (after 1900) declining ^{by reformism}, ~~and~~ transforming themselves into middle class parties ruling for capitalism, or ^{as the so-called communist party} (as in Russia) growing into a state bureaucracy enslaving and exploiting the working class. Where ~~new~~ new socialist parties were formed to uphold the revolutionary traditions and aims they remained insignificant little groups.

This development ^{was not a chance-happening. We have to recognise} has a deeper meaning. Socialist parties taking the lead of the working class, aspiring at political power to ^{abolish capitalism and to} introduce socialism, ^{must be seen as} were the first primitive form of proletarian class struggle; at a time when the ^{just awakening} working class ^{was} not yet able to take its fight for liberation entirely into its own hands.

^{Its fight was a fight through leaders.} The workers, surely, had their part in the task; they had to vote socialists into the ^{in special cases} parliaments, and sometimes ~~that~~ at the call of the party, ^{through} mass-actions ^{had} to break the resistance of the ruling class. But then, ^{Once political power was conquered,} the constructive work, the new organization of production on a socialist basis ^{should be,} legislative, ^{new} the work of the government, the socialist rulers, ^{parliamentarians} and officials; ^{the workers had to obey the leaders,} the basic idea is that the new world of socialism ^{must} develop through continual ^{progressive} reforms of capitalism. The outcome is a reformed modernized ^{repres. by soc. minister} capitalism ^{hovering above the masses} (more powerfully than ever before. This made easy by socialism defined as ~~top~~ ^{whole social} planned production.

It is quite natural that in ^{the present} period of ^{heavy} world-transformations ^{propaganda are made} groups arise ^{come forward} that ^{proposing} try to establish ^a new and better party, a really revolutionary party, based on true ^{scientific, i.e.} Marxian principles and ^{strictly} ~~and~~ cutting off all reformist tendencies; ^a ~~not too~~ large party of selected, honest, devoted, ^{and} capable leaders, ^{to} directing the ^{rebellious but} (unintelligent masses. ^{Natural because history shows that} First guided by tradition (showing admirable examples of successful ~~group~~ action in the past. And then guided by the superiority feeling of intellectuals ^{convinced} knowing that for the heavy task of defeating capitalism a deep insight and knowledge of social conditions will be necessary, which is inaccessible to the ^{workers'} masses.

There is a difficulty. There are already, in different countries, half a dozen of groups ~~all~~ all pretending that they are the true Marxian revolutionaries. Who shall decide between them? And ^{what,} when the C.P. bigger than all of them, comes forward and ^{brushes them all aside saying, that it is} ~~says they are~~ the true genuine Marxian Party?

^{It is an illusion to think that} A socialist party, whatever its program and tactics, cannot be ~~could~~ can be an instrument for liberation of the working class. ^{For two connected reasons.} (acknowledged aims) ^{for as to} its program ^{for the future;} ~~it will intend to~~ establish a socialist government, directing production through state officials; ^{in place of the old ones} this means that new masters (will rule the workers and their work; and a ruling class

by necessity becomes an exploiting class. ^{as to its way of fighting capitalism} And then ~~Secondly because~~ its ideas for the future society correspond to their practical behaviour to day ^{it takes} they are

the leaders in it ^{finds its function in} directing the ~~present~~ class-struggle of the working class according to its ideas, formulating the programs, giving out the catch-words, calling up to actions. This ^{however,} finds its limitations not in the narrow possibilities of a responsible board of leaders, and cannot bring into action the boundless ^{ever again stirred up by} possibilities of a fighting class ^(which draws its force from out the depths of society).

Such ~~case~~ showed itself e.g. in 1907 ^{in Germany} (in the campaign for extension of the franchise for the Prussian diet; a first mass-demonstration of the workers, taking place against ^{the police} prohibition) ^{made such an impression} succeeded so well, that it was not ^(repeated or continued) repeated in bigger actions; the party leaders feared that in a more violent collision with state power their organisations could be

damaged or destroyed. Something analogous occurred in ~~England~~ ^{where they} in the big strike 1927, where the three largest trade-unions ^{took up a strong fight for better working conditions;} proclaimed a universal strike; when the state authorities mobilized all ^{their} forces the union leaders lost their stomach and called off the

strike to the great disappointment of the workers. Surely it was not only the fear of the leaders ^{the effects of} for a collision of their earthenware pot with the government's iron pot; they ^{too surely} were frightened ^{by the strong impact of the masses} by the strong impact of the ~~masses~~ workers' ^{masses} threatening their own ^(feelings of) instinctive

of leadership. ^{so it appears that} A socialist party, however ^{and conducted} skilfully constructed, cannot destroy ^{because it cannot mobilize all the powers hidden in the class;} cap. power and annihilate ^{potentially} capitalism (neither can Trade-unionism); ^{it can be done} only the working class, ^{itself, develops all} using its ^{capacities} ~~entire~~ force, ^{potentialities}

can do that. where party leaders are restrained by their responsibilities ^{persistence} only the class can have the ~~tenacity~~ because they ever anew are stirred up by capitalist pressure.

due to the mis-identification of party rule and workers' mastery, became visible, e.g. when 1918 in Germany the ^{Dominating} socialist party could ^{immediately set to work to} ~~not~~ only restore the political power of the capitalist owners of the shops and the machines. England ^(too) (under a Labour government) ^{may serve as an instance} show how ~~the~~ socialist party rule without mastery of the workers ^{to the essential task of the fight, work, class} is still to make themselves masters of the ^{rise of the} ~~proletariat~~ in the shops secures capitalist exploitation. Just as the bourgeoisie consisted since the power of the state tries to preclude it ^{they will have to crush it to power. Party victory} in a series of political ~~revolutions~~ ^{revolutions} and economic transformations extending over many centuries, ^{so} the rise of the working class will ^{historical} be a process of economic and political fights combined, in different ^{successive} progressive forms. ^{Thus} What appeared to ~~the~~ ^{some socialists} present generation as a decline of ~~socialism~~ ^{or collapse of socialism after} 1900, now presents itself as the close of its first phase, ^{that chiefly was} the defense against the crushing impact of private capitalism, in order to ^{ascertain} ~~assure~~ its existence within it. When ^{in the near coming times it will have to rebel} ~~rebell~~ against the heavier pressure of a ^{more powerful} ~~more powerful~~ State capitalism ^{power} ~~will~~ ^{socialist movement} ~~will~~ ^{develop} ~~use to~~ new forms of fight, stronger in aims and methods. In ^{its there} spontaneous big actions and massal strikes ^{the workers} ~~the~~ ^{to make them} cannot ^{avoid} ~~omit~~ to take possession of the shops as centres of resistance; and when State organs try to turn them out, they must try to paralyse the action of these organs and State machinery itself.

Two great problems stand before the working class, the organisation of production and the organisation of their fight. It is true that ~~Practically~~ the two tasks coalesce, because organisation of production can ^{only} start only after ~~first~~ ^{concurrent} ^{contemporary} successes in fight, and success in fight is only fixed by organisation of production. But they have to be treated separately in order to understand their character as two different proceedings.

When the commanding capitalist ^{or his managed} - or at least his commanding power - has been expelled, ~~for~~ the organisation of production in the shop is the task of the workers, i.e. of ~~all~~ the entire personnel that ^{took part in the} ~~participated~~ productive work, manual workers, technicians, scientists, with the exclusion of all ~~unprofitable~~ ^{unprofitable} profit interests. They had run the shop ~~before~~ ^{even} before, they can run it, ^{subsequently} ^{there after} better, afterwards. The organisation of the ^{Though now on entirely new basis, self-rule in equality, it will give no difficulty.}

[Replacement of the existing government by a government of socialists is not the liberation of the working class. Surely, by a ^{shrewd} ~~fine~~ play of words, it may be argued that the Party represents and embodies the class, and that a government ~~not~~ based on a majority vote is identical with self-rule of the people. In reality party rule is the rule of a new minority of party officials and politicians over the working masses. We may ~~be~~ ^{take it for} ~~sure~~ sure that the English workers of to day feel this intuitively, though they are not yet able to break through the network of organisation statutes and political slogans in which they are captured. They are not capable to break through it because ^{as yet} ~~yet~~ they do not have a clear conception of meaning and essence of their deepest ideals, of freedom and mastery over production.]

II.

From the surface phenomena of political program and strife we have to turn to the depths of society, the economic structure, the economic functions and struggle of the class. Economic power, power over the production apparatus is the ^{foundation} ~~base~~ of political power, ^{which is} its executive agency. ~~Under~~ Under private capitalism the capitalist is owner and has the disposal of the production apparatus; so he is master politically; and the workers can ~~only~~ by stubborn ^{fight} defend their life conditions only. Under state capitalism State power, i.e. the ^{body of} rulers and officials have the disposal of the production apparatus and have the command over its use and over the workers using it. Under common ownership the disposal of the workers themselves over the production apparatus ^(will be) is the basis of their ^{social and political} freedom.

~~We~~ ^{We} often ^{read} ~~say~~ that ^{there is a} ~~the~~ fundamental difference between the rise of the bourgeoisie in the past and the rise of the working class in the future ^{in that} ~~is that~~ the bourgeoisie could win political dominance because, and after, it had acquired economic dominance, whereas, conversely, the working class will acquire economic dominance because, and after, it ~~will~~ have won political dominance. The ^{fallacy} ~~error~~ of this judgment

separate shops into ~~an~~ ^{an} entirety of social production, formerly the ~~product~~ result of capitalist profit-manipulations, ~~which~~ ^{must} be established now by common planning, ~~under common responsibility~~. It is clear that for production under such entirely new principles new forms of ^{administration,} (regulation and decision will be needed, that ^{we} cannot ^{make out, ascertain, establish or even} think out beforehand; they will be established ^{by the workers} (according to practical necessities when the need presents itself; we can only surmise something of their general character. When a collectivity too large to gather in one assembly has to discuss and decide ^{on} its work, it does so by means of delegates, sent out and returning ^{and reporting} (as messengers of the opinions and will of the ^{separate} groups. For such delegates the name workers' councils has come into use. ~~The name~~ ~~Council organisation does not mean a special previously devised form of organisation but~~ It means that all ^{initiative and all} ~~discussion and~~ decision ~~rests~~ rests in the hands of the ^{working communities, the members of the personnel} workers (themselves).

Whereas the organisation of production ^{by the workers,} (is a thing of the future — only imperfect glimpses and attempts could be seen ^{during} ~~in~~ ~~the~~ revolutionary events — the organisation of their ~~struggle~~ fight is a thing of the present. Against the strong pressure upon their working and living conditions, exerted by the ^{regulations by the} (combined ~~regulating~~ power of capitalists, State organs and Trade Union leaders, they resist by means of wild strikes. Sometimes such explosions lead to attempts of the Unions to take the lead

[The most immediate and most genuine form of fight of the workers is the strike, the refusal to work. Here they are acting themselves, ^{according to} ~~by~~ their own spontaneous impulse and their own deliberate decision. ^{As to} In the ~~present fight~~ ^{metaphorically} parliamentary struggle of a socialist party it is only symbolically that ^{it may be called} one can say that it is a working class fight; it is their ~~chosen~~ ^{this is all their "fighting"} political leaders that fight, The workers have only to cast a ballot, in secret; ^{in it} There is no risk; no self-sacrifice is needed. In the strike however, they take the risks themselves, and only by developing a strong ^{unity} ~~solidarity~~ these risks can be alleviated. Thus solidarity grows as a new

class-character; only by this growth the working class acquires the capability of winning and exerting power over society. Whereas ^{by} taking part in the party fight ^{and social} ^{of the workers} ^{establishing organization} ^{moulds their inner character and} ^{may increase knowledge of political (relations)} it is the direct action ^(in strikes) that ^{transforms} ^{the} ^{workers} ^{into} ^{new men} ^{needed for a new world}.

This holds still more for modern times where they stand over against the combined ^{force} power of big capitalist concerns, ^{and} the State ^{power} ^{organ's} and the Trade Union leaders.

Against ^{upon} ^{the} ^{conditions} of work and life. Modern development of capitalism, notwithstanding the ^{and increasing} progress of productivity of labour, presses ever more heavily. The old forms of resistance, ^{parliamentary opposition and} ^{small official strikes} led by Trade Unions ^{these now} ^{ever more} become inefficient. Wildcat strikes flame up, ^{ever} again, spontaneously. They indicate

that the workers, instinctively, develop ^{are} ^{new} and stronger forms of fight; the unofficial ^{extends themselves and} ^{shop occupation adds to the forms of combat.} "wild" strike is their first weapon. To be ^{the action} ^{efficient} ^{these} ^{must} ^{become} ^{massal} ^{actions}. When ^{involve ever wider masses.}

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State power tries to beat them down ^{the action} ^{must} ^{expand} ^{into} ^{universal} ^{political} ^{the hostile} ^{massal} ^{strikes} of a political character, trying to paralyse ^{that} State power. In this

way, in a series of future struggles, of which we cannot now foresee the details, the entire working class of the world will become involved in the process of annihilating capitalist ^{and state} ^{power}, ^{and} the liberation of mankind from exploitation.

The organs by means of which it establishes its unity of purpose and action, at first simple strike committees, gradually ^{with bigger tasks} ^{extending} ^{their functions}, ^{then} ^{some form of} ^{develop} into workers' councils. ^{for} ^{organizing} ^{social} ^{production}.

(In this way ^{rise} ^{considered} ^{the} ^{emancipation} ^{of the} ^{working} ^{class} ^{to} ^{freedom} ^{and} ^{social} ^{mastery} appears as a great historical process ^{occupying} ^{the} ^{next} ^{future}). It will be intermingled with the great contests ^{and world-wars} ^{old and new} of the huge ^{capitalist} ^{powers}, ^{which} ^{sometimes} ^{stimulated} ^{and} ^{sometimes} ^{also} ^{as the} ^{sole} ^{efficient} ^{peace} ^{powers} ^{themselves} ^{are} ^{actively} ^{which} ^{are} ^{repressed} by them. Then we see that ^{to have been} ^{only} ^a ^{first} ^{preliminary} ^{of the classes} ^{preparatory} ^{skirmish} and that our task does not consist in reviving former ^{and} ^{obsolete} forms of fight such as party-movement but in studying the new ^{aspects} ^{phenomena} of class-fight.