

for individual consumption in a Communist society is that, whatever truth may once have adhered to such a judgement in the era of *manual book-keeping and physical accounting methods*, today, in the era of computerised recording and storage techniques, such purely pragmatic criticisms simply no longer apply. There is today no longer any need whatever for any manually or even mechanically prepared "Certificate" as such to be issued; all the information required can now be stored in a central computer and accessed at any one of thousands of terminals by means of a small magnetic strip affixed to a plastic card similar to the contemporary Banker's Card. The holder of that card, on whose magnetic strip the individual producer-consumer's Personal Control Number is recorded, having collected his chosen items of personal consumption from the Community Store, simply presses the relevant Product Codes, the relevant labour-hour values of which are stored in the memory of the central computer at the Centre of Social Book-keeping, into a machine and then inserts his card into the slot provided, whereupon the total of Labour-Hour Units represented by those codes is deducted from the individual producer's personal "account" at the Centre for Social Book-keeping. As the productivity of labour rises - and this it would do many times more rapidly than under capitalist economic laws, since all the myriad sections of the bourgeoisie or petite-bourgeoisie with a claim upon and drawing from the total stock of surplus value, and hence with a more or less marked or powerful vested interest in ensuring that a rising productivity of labour is used overwhelmingly in order to increase the rate of profit for the capitalist rather than to increase the real wages accruing to the worker-producers would have been eliminated - the Labour Hour Unit "value" of each use-value would be continually reduced. With progressive reductions in such unit "values", the day would inevitably dawn for each use-value in turn when its unit "value" becomes too small as to be worth recording for purposes of distribution for personal consumption in the form of Labour-hour Units per individual

item or group of items (10's, 100's, dozens, etc.). That particular use-value would then receive its passport to undertake the journey from the Lower to the Higher Stage of Communism by being made freely available for personal consumption, without the quanta of Labour-hour Units consumed in its production and distribution being affixed to it for purposes of the normative regulation of consumption.

In course of time, it would become altogether unnecessary to distribute use-values destined for individual consumption by allocating Labour-hour Units to individual producer-consumers on the basis of the number of labour-hours each has contributed; or else such a record would be retained only for those use-values embodying highly complex technology, such as high-fidelity amplifiers or precision cameras, for the production of which a relatively large - though, of course, with a progressively rising productivity of labour, like that of all other use-values also continually falling - outlay of Labour-hour Units would be required. On this aspect of the transition from the Lower to the Higher Stages of Communism some difference of view still exists amongst Council Communists, some of whom believe that it will always be impossible to distribute precision microscopes or high-resolution lenses on the same basis as loaves of bread or sacks of potatoes. However this question might ultimately be resolved by those worker-producers and their Councils whom history ultimately charges with finding the solution to this problem - and, of course, it is simply not possible to propose in advance solutions to every problem of the transition to Communism - in course of time the Labour Certificate would either become altogether redundant for purposes of allocating units of entitlement in distribution for personal consumption, or else its use would become restricted by some suitable method to the above-mentioned types of use-values. This would then mark the end of the last vestiges of bourgeois - or would it be proletarian? - right.



However this might be, the Communist society at both its Higher and its Lower Stages will need to know both the quality and the quantity of economic resources previously consumed in the sphere of either production or distribution, in order that it might then also know the quality and quantity of those resources it needs to replace. That this is so, irrespective of the mode of distribution for individual consumption, is self-evident since, for instance, it will at any given moment in history always be irrational for society to produce more or less than that which it actually needs of any particular resource, whether this be in the sphere of production (accumulation) or distribution. Thus the Average Social Hour of Labour would continue to function as the fundamental unit of economic regulation in the Higher Stage also. It would, however, no longer exercise any function of *control*, since the latter is associated solely with the *socially* - though not *individually* - coercive, class-determined conditions pertaining to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, i.e., to the socio-economic needs of the Lower Stage of Communism. With the attainment of the objective and subjective preconditions for the transition to the Higher Stage, when, as Marx puts it, "...all the springs of productive wealth flow more abundantly...", the sphere of application of the Average Social Hour of Labour would become restricted - with the sole possible exception noted above - to the estimation of economic resources consumed as a result of distribution for purposes either of *Communist Accumulation*, in which case the relevant entries in the system of social book-keeping would appear under one of the three headings of fixed means of production (P), circulating means of production (C) or labour (L); or else of *Communist Distribution*, in which case they would appear under the heading of labour (L) alone. In the system of Communist production and distribution as a whole, this would serve the purpose solely that society might know, on the one hand the quality and quantity of resources previously consumed in the course of previous production and distribution, resources which it

obviously needs to replace in accordance with a plan of either simple or extended reproduction, that is to say as part of a policy of accumulation intended either to maintain the apparatus of production and distribution as a whole, or any sector thereof, at its existing level or to expand its capacity to any degree decided by the Congress of Workers' Councils; and, on the other, the quality and quantity of use-values distributed for purposes of individual consumption - now, of course, effected as a *social service* and appearing in the system of social book-keeping under the heading, no longer of *distribution for individual consumption* in the form of Labour Certificates - which, indeed, would no longer exist - but of *social distribution* for purposes of individual consumption, which would then be effected in exactly the same way as distribution of means of production is effected - that is to say, as a *public service*.

#### The Method by which the Minotaur of Value must be Slain

The foundation of all value-based forms of production, their social precondition, is *wage-labour*. The abolition of wage-labour and the wages system is therefore *the first demand* of the proletarian revolution, along with the conversion of private and state forms of property in means of production and distribution into means of production and distribution *held in common*. Here it is essential that this latter not be confused with *state nationalisation*, which is not equivalent to economic resources held in common, as Marx envisaged it, but to *state property* in them. In "Soviet" society, private property in means of production and distribution in its capitalistic form as property of individual units of capital, as property of the capitalist class held by individual members or groups of members of that class, was indeed abolished and replaced by state property in means of production and distribution. Since state ownership represents no more than a higher and yet



more antagonistic form of alienative property in social resources, however, no social basis for the abolition of wage-labour was created in the "Soviet" Union, and as a consequence its continuance has been a permanent feature of "Soviet" society throughout its history.

The economic character of wage-labour in "Soviet" society differs, however, in certain fundamental respects from capitalist wage-labour. Under capitalism, labour-power is a commodity, and hence the wage paid to the worker by the capitalist is equivalent to its *price* - the price of the commodity labour-power. As with the prices of commodities in general, the price of the commodity labour-power, the wage, is regulated by the *law of value* - that is to say, its price reflects fundamentally the value of those essential goods and services needed to maintain in life the worker and any dependents he may have and to enable reproduction of the next generation of wage-workers to take place. Apart from subjective factors at work in society at large, such as action by the trades unions to maintain wage-rates at a level *higher* than that which would otherwise prevail, or state legislation to "peg" wages at a level *lower* than that at which the market, if left to its proper regulative function, would fix them at, this fundamental determinant is then modified in an upwards or a downwards direction by forces operating at the level of the market *per se*, such as changes in either the productivity or the intensity of labour, which then also modify such surface factors as the *price* of labour-power, the wage, and the level of market demand for it.

Under State Socialism, this *objective* economic system of exploitation does not operate. Because, under this system, commodities, commodity production, the law of value and the market *have all been abolished* - except, in the case of "Soviet" society, in a special form operating through an equally specialised mechanism in the sphere of agriculture - wage rates are *not* first determined objectively by the law of value and then modified upwards or downwards in the market according to supply and demand and the fluctuations

in the class struggle. On the contrary, *they are fixed by subjective bureaucratic decision*, whereupon their relative *immobility* is given the *force of law*. Thus use-value production may have replaced value production, but only in a new antagonistic form in which there is no objective mechanism through which wage-rates may be regulated. Indeed, the same is true of the prices placed upon use-values generally within the overall framework of the "prices policy" decided upon quite arbitrarily in accordance with purely pragmatic criteria by the party and state administrative bureaucrats. As a consequence, as "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" makes amply clear, those party and state bureaucrats have effectively arrogated to themselves the exclusive dictatorial right of decision on all economic parameters and all aspects of economic life, and thus in very truth hold in their hands the power of life and death over the whole working community.

The abolition of wage-labour is, therefore, the first precondition for the destruction of both capitalist and state-socialist production relations and their replacement by Communist relations - *but it is not the only one*. If wage-labour forms the heart of capitalist alienation, the *source* at which value and surplus value are generated, its head, *its brain and nervous system*, is *money*. It is through the mechanism of money that the distribution, under capitalism, of surplus value - which of itself has no tangible substance, no physical reality, being itself no more than *abstract labour time* - is realised as *profit* and distributed amongst the various sections and groups of the capitalist class, just as it is also through the medium of money that necessary value is realised as wages and distributed to the workers. To destroy the one, wage-labour, without the other, money, is to court the failure of the working class to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Lower Stage of Communism and to risk the imposition of State Socialism. Thus the Minotaur of Value must be struck simultaneously through its



heart, which is wage-labour, and through its head, which contains its directing brain and nervous system, *money*. Otherwise, the in any case virtually superhuman obstacles to be overcome in the successful construction of the edifice of Communism may well prove insuperable and the historical *cul-de-sac* of State Socialism inevitable, as it did in the ill-fated "Soviet" Union.

### The Negative Example of Communism represented by "Soviet" State Socialism

Over the decades since Leninism first usurped the role of Marxism within the revolutionary proletarian movement and then proceeded to subvert that movement internationally into a mere political and ideological mouthpiece for "Soviet" State Socialism, the theoretical concept of Communism originally elaborated by Marx in the "Critique of the Gotha Programme", together with the theory of the transition from capitalism to Communism over two stages, a Lower and a Higher, in the course of which the principle "From Each according to his Ability, to Each according to his *Work*" progressively gives place to the principle "From Each according to his Ability, to Each according to his *Need*" has been suitably vulgarised in order to adapt it to the economic structure of "Soviet" State Socialism, in which, contrary to the principled structure of a Communist society set forth, in however sketchy a form, by Marx in the "Critique of the Gotha Programme", wage-labour is retained as the fundamental pivot of the entire economic system and money similarly continues to circulate as the universal medium of exchange. Indeed, the former of these two interlinked principles is the only fragment of Marx's text to have survived in a distorted form in the list of "preferred reading" of the "Soviet" party ideologues. In particular, the need to anchor the economic regulation and control of a Communist society firmly upon the measurement of the socially necessary labour-time embodied, on the one hand in

the use-values produced and on the other in the periods of labour contributed by the individual worker-producers - the latter retaining its validity only during the period of the Lower Stage of Communism - as this was first conceived by Marx in the above work, has been totally lost sight of. So also has the work of Jan Appel and his group of proletarian theoreticians of the economics of Communism, in which the general theoretical guidelines given us by Marx are elaborated into a full analytical survey of the economic foundations of Communism and the above generalised definition of labour-time as the basis of economic regulation in a Communist society is given its precise form in the Average Social Hour of Labour along with the definition of the two most essential revolutionary purposes that unit was intended to fulfil: to establish a clear and open relationship of the producers towards both the labour process and the product of their labour; and to anchor unshakeably and irremovably into place the economic foundations of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat - an aim it achieves by compelling all, under pain of exclusion from the ranks of the productive contributors to the wealth of society and irrespective of their former class status, to join and participate in the Communist system of production and distribution.

A shabby device resorted to over the decades by the "theoretical" sycophants of the "Soviet" party and state bureaucracy as a means of degrading and glossing over the vital significance attaching to the unit of the Average Social Hour of Labour in acting as the economic foundation for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and hence for the entire process of transition from capitalism to Communism, has been that of crudely equating the principle of "To Each according to his *Work*" with the payment of more or less widely differentiated wage-scales in remuneration for differing forms of labour. In this way, an attempt was, and still is, made to invoke the authority of Marx himself and of the "Critique of the Gotha Programme" in particular



on behalf of a "principle" of "communist" economy and the transitional forms associated therewith - transitional in this case, of course, only avowedly to Communism and actually to State Socialism - in which, firstly, *an implicit justification is provided for the retention of money as a universal medium of exchange*; and secondly, that the wage-labour which those money-relations make possible are deployed with the utmost effect - against, it must be recalled, a general economic background in which the average productivity of labour is relatively low - in order that the most effective form of whip may be applied in the interests of "Soviet" primitive accumulation as a means to spur the workers, particularly the productive workers, on to ever higher levels of labour *intensity* as a form of compensation for the generally prevailing low level of labour *productivity*. In point of fact, these scales have become progressively ever more sharply and widely differentiated as the contradiction lying at the heart of "Soviet" society, that between the party-cum-state bureaucracy and the productive, distributive and administrative workers, has become ever more intense.

In addition to their simultaneous role as a spur to increased exploitation, the adoption of widely differing scales of remuneration has also been used in order to justify the payment of exorbitant salaries and other emoluments to the senior and most privileged ranks of the "Soviet" bureaucracy. When it is considered that, already by 1956, these income differentials had reached the dizzy height of 90-1 - in other words, that the highest-paid officials of the bureaucracy were in receipt of incomes *90 times greater* than that of the lowest-paid workers, a computation which in fact includes at its upper levels only the graded salary scales of the categorised senior officials, and which therefore *excludes* almost all of the top leadership in both party and state - then the urgent need felt by the leaders of the "Soviet" hierarchy and of the "International Communist Movement" both to discourage any too close a look

by its citizens and members at what Marx really had to say in the pages of the "Critique of the Gotha Programme" and to bury under a blanket of silence the very existence of "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" becomes understandable enough !

As the work of Jan Appel and his team of proletarian theoreticians of the transition to Communism incontrovertibly demonstrates, it has been precisely *the absence of an objective unit of economic regulation and control* and its replacement by norms of economic "regulation" in which the primary role has been played by a system of objectively arbitrary decrees enacted and implemented through the medium of a wages and prices policy by a purely subjectively motivated administrative bureaucracy which has been the primary cause of the degeneration of "Soviet" society into the condition of highly planned social chaos in which it has existed since its birth, and which has now reached a level of intensity such as is forcing "Soviet" State Socialism back into the fold of capitalist economy. Always recognising the objective prematurity of the social and class terrain of Russian Tsarist society to bring forth a proletariat either sufficiently numerous or influential as to have been capable of seizing the reins of control over the revolutionary process and so of transforming the anti-tsarist Russian Revolution from a bourgeois-type revolution into a proletarian-communist one, the most fundamental subjective factor in that degeneration has been the destruction, right at the birth of "Soviet" State Socialism in 1920-21, of the independent organs of power of the potential dictatorship of the Russian proletariat, the Workers' Councils, at the hands of the Bolshevik Party. It has been this, more than any other single factor, which has contributed towards the growth of "Soviet" State Socialism into perhaps the most gigantic apparatus of tyranny and coercion the world has yet seen.

What this serves to emphasise and to bring once again to the forefront of our attention is the



point, reiterated with emphasis over and again in the pages of "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" as also in this Postscript, that the primary requirement of the newly-founded Communist society resides, as *its first principle*, not so much in the mode of distribution of that part of the total social product destined for the satisfaction of individual needs and wants, as, far more, in *the establishment of a clear and open relationship of the producers towards both the labour process itself and the product of labour.*

Here it must be recognised that the means of individual consumption will in any case always consist in part of those objectively indispensable natural requirements which make up the *life-necessities* of the new Communist consumers, that part of their total life requirements which are objectively given in and by Nature; and in part of that which those new consumers, both collectively and as individuals, *subjectively desire* for the cultural and/or intellectual enrichment or refinement of their lives, i.e., of their conscious and self-conscious *wants* as members of the new classless society. As the powers of the new Communist Man's command over the forces of nature continually deepen and expand and the springs of social wealth accordingly flow ever more abundantly, *the dividing-line separating the conditions of scientific or artistic creativity in labour under which these two broad categories of human needs are produced will become ever thinner and more hazy*, until finally it will disappear altogether. Expressed in more empirical terms, the differences in the mode of labour under which, on the one hand, a pane of glass or a bag of mild steel nuts and bolts and, on the other, a high-fidelity loudspeaker or, in the field of artistic "production", a piece of theatrical drama or a symphonic masterpiece, are respectively produced will grow ever more closely into coincidence, partly as a consequence of the growth in the productivity of labour reaching such a point in its development that the production of nuts and

bolts requires no exertion of direct human labour whatsoever - a level virtually achieved already under capitalism - and as a consequence the realisation of a truly "free", because fully creative, labour, in the sense that the last vestiges of a compulsively imposed *intensity* of labour will have disappeared, can then unfold to the full. Productivity itself will then become a characteristic of production adhering solely to the role of machines and other objective means of production.

This will then constitute the point in the development of Communism when the subjective and the objective factors in production and the labour process which betoken the maturing of conditions heralding the onset of the transition from the Lower to the Higher Stage, conditions which are equivalent to *the degree of preparedness and maturity of the newly-emerged creative producer typical of Communist society to apply in social and individual life the norms of social morality and personal ethics appropriate to the onset of conditions of full material freedom in both production and consumption, in both labour and the enjoyment of the fruits of labour*, will also have reached their full fruition. This will then indicate the readiness of the new Communist Humanity to embark on the last stage of the journey from the realm of Necessity to that Freedom.

Thus the problem appearing first on the Agenda of questions requiring resolution before the construction of the edifice of Communism can be taken fully in hand is that which relates to the firm establishment of that first principle of Communist relations; and this, as we have seen, relates not to the sphere of distribution for individual consumption - this, indeed, comes as the final cornerstone to be laid in place as *the act of completion* of the edifice of Communism - *but to that of production.* Hence it is this most fundamental aspect of any system of economy, but



one which the conditions of Communist society elevate to the level of prime determinant, which of necessity must occupy the first place in the process through which the classless relations of Communism, free of all forms of social inequality, exploitation and alienation, can grow in strength and organically consolidate themselves.

Whereas the essential exploitative basis of capitalist relations lies concealed behind the commodity character of wage-labour, the primary aspect of Communist relations is to bring the relationship of the producer towards the labour process and the product of labour out into the clear light thrown upon it by the act of conscious control by the producers themselves over the productive apparatus - the exact and diametrical opposite of the equivalent relationship under capitalism, in which the productive apparatus dominates the producers. The immediate consequence of this is that all producers are enabled to participate as equals - that is to say, as individual producers *each one of which holds and disposes of equal powers of control over the system of production* - in the determination of all parameters of the economic development of society.

Here the cardinal point to be driven home is that the accession to power of the Bolshevik Party in Russia and the founding of the "Soviet" Union may have abolished private ownership of and control over the means of production and the labour process, *but it did not result in the abolition of wage-labour*, which continued to hold sway in the economy, as it does to this day, in the form of the relationship of the worker-producer towards - no longer the private capitalist, for private capital as such has been abolished - but *the central state apparatus*. As a consequence of this, exploitation, alienation and the subordination of the producer to the productive apparatus, now in the hands of an all-powerful state, all continue - only now, this takes place within the framework of a new, non-capitalist, economic system, that of State

Socialism, and with social consequences just as inimical to every aspect of human creativity and the free expression of both human talents and needs as those which capitalism also evinces.

Historically conditioned as it has been by the Tsarist system, its contradictory amalgam of elements deriving from an unstable equilibrium between feudalism and oriental despotism, its immature, virtually mediaeval social and class relations and the hopelessly inadequate level of capitalist development, almost exclusively imported from Western Europe, then prevalent in Russia, and in that objective historical sense rendering the transition to State Socialism more or less inevitable, the primary and most far-reaching result of the birth of this misbegotten monster has been the cheating of the Russian workers of their rightful revolutionary heritage: *the accession to control over the means of social production and distribution*. It has been this which has led inevitably to the failure to establish and consolidate the Communist system in its essential inceptive form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat based upon the application of the Average Social Hour of Labour to the sphere of distribution for personal consumption as well as to that of production. In the place of the achievement of the preconditions for Communism through the victory of the worker-producers organised in their Councils, the world saw the birth of administrative-bureaucratic State Socialism, a form of society based on state ownership of all instruments of production and distribution, one in which all economic regulation is according to subjective administrative norms determined by and exercised through a stratum of privileged bureaucrats organised in a dictatorial party - the dictatorship, not of the proletariat, but of an all-seeing and all-controlling political party over the proletariat, the dictatorship of the so-called "vanguard party" of leninist Bolshevism.

"Scientific truth", wrote Marx, "is always paradox, if judged by everyday experience, which



catches only the delusive appearance of things". Had he lived some 40-50 years later, how easily he could have been alluding to the contradiction between the "delusive appearance" of the Russian Revolution as a proletarian revolution and its actual content as a revolution of the broad bourgeois type; or, indeed, to that between the intended outcome of Soviet society as the first instance in history of a victorious Communist society based upon the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and its realised outcome as State Socialism based upon the dictatorial rule of a privileged administrative-bureaucratic elite !

For the past 72 years, the world has judged the "Soviet" Union by its "delusive appearance", and has assumed it to be the first example in human history of a Communist society. Needless to say, it has been not only the interests of the classical "old guard" Bolshevik intelligentsia and later that of the upstart "dirty-necked officialdom", the spawn of Lenin's New Economic Policy on whose behalf Stalin built the present monstrous Party and State bureaucracy, which have been served by this myth; of far greater significance than this has been the fact that the interests of world capitalism have also been served, in the most crucial sense that the workers of the world have suffered to have had held before their eyes a monstrous tyranny which, by posing as Communism, has effectively banished from their consciousness any awareness of the possibility of a rational, humane society, and above all one free of class exploitation and all forms of social antagonism. Thus a dual deception of global dimensions and of unprecedented historic significance has been foisted on the world and then kept alive by a massive apparatus of political manipulation utilising the most unbridled ideological demagoguery. Through this manipulation, on the one hand the most highly organised and ruthlessly integrated apparatus of state tyranny the world has ever seen has been able to pass itself off to the working people of the world as a Socialist or Communist society; and on the other, the party-cum-state bureaucracy has

been given a sanction to erect all the appurtenances of unbridled power that it has needed in order to maintain its rule - and all in the name of Communism !

Marx's concept of Communism was the *negation* of the state, its *supersession* through the Association of Free and Equal Producers, and the inestimable revolutionary and historical significance attaching to the work of Jan Appel and his team of revolutionary proletarian theoreticians of Communism lies in the fact that they have taken the sketchy notes contained in the "Critique of the Gotha Programme", pregnant with an incisive generalised content though these be, which was virtually all that Karl Marx had left us of his thoughts on the question of the transition to Communism, and elaborated them into a profoundly insightful and comprehensive *scientific guide to the construction of Communism*, one which at one and the same time gives to the future world of triumphant labour gathering its strength for the herculean task of transforming the old, class-ridden world of poverty, exploitation, war and the despoliation of nature into the world of full material and spiritual freedom a scientific guide, not only for the economic construction of Communism, but also, as its direct outcome, for the final withering away of that anachronistic excrescence, the distilled embodiment and concentration of all social alienation, the state.

As for that false start on the long, hard road to Communism represented by the "Soviet" Union, that vast graveyard of the revolutionary hopes and aspirations of millions upon millions of Communists the world over the primary success of which has resided in the fact that it has "discovered" a new and yet more burdensome form of wage-labour even than that of capitalist wage-labour, this most grievous of all "false starts" began by proclaiming itself to be "the State of the Workers" and ended by becoming the state under whose iron fist millions of working people were led into the slave-camps of Kamchatka and the Gulag Archipelago.



Were he alive today, Marx, in the view he would take of the "Soviet" Union, would doubtless be strongly reminded of that other of his well-known dicta: "...in their appearance, things often represent themselves in an inverted form...". For that which now "represents itself" as Communism constitutes *the highest and most antagonistic zenith in the development of the state yet known to man*, just as the attempt on the part of the "Soviet" party-cum-state bureaucracy to palm that state off as Communism represents the greatest confidence trick in history!

### The Destructive Heritage of State Socialism and its Ideological Excrescence, Leninist Bolshevism

As a study of the classic work of Jan Appel and his team of proletarian revolutionary theoreticians so clearly shows, Communist relations in both production and distribution, the latter effected through the much-maligned Labour Certificates, are characterised by the fact that they are wholly impersonal and objective in their mode of operation, and hence fully amenable as an instrument of impartial and non-manipulative economic regulation, thereby realising a form of control which is totally free of any class-inspired motivation directed towards the establishment and consolidation of any new form of alienative society based upon exploitative class relations, on the basis of which a new oppressor class could draw its social power. On the contrary, its sole aim would be that of establishing, amongst the proletarians, an equal measure of distribution and of excluding from control over the economy the representatives of the former exploiting and oppressing class.

As is reported in Appendix I of "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution", premature attempts were made to apply norms of uncompensated individual consumption in respect of staple goods and services to over 50 millions of the population in Central Russia in the

early period of the "Soviet" Union, between 1919-21. No attempt was made by the Bolshevik Party to combine the measures implemented with any mode of social regulation based upon the Average Social Hour of Labour, and the conditions thus resulting were equivalent to an attempt to apply the norm of free distribution for individual consumption, such as would have been appropriate in the Higher Stage of Communism, in a situation of revolutionary social upheaval, with its inevitable attendant phenomena of economic disruption, scarcity, disease and famine. In these circumstances, which amount objectively, if not intentionally, to an attempt to discredit the Communist mode of production before the eyes of the very class, the industrial proletariat, whose most fundamental class interests the alleged victory of the proletarian revolution was intended to serve by putting it into effect, it was hardly surprising if this was one of those features in the immediate post-revolutionary situation in the infant "Soviet" Republic which objectively assisted the professional intelligentsia organised in the Bolshevik Party to obtain just the sanctions it needed through which to gain a position of decisive command over the young Soviet economy and, in particular, from which to discredit all notion of true proletarian-based Communism in the minds of working people. The deeply deceptive and demagogic Bolshevik propaganda was able to characterise demands for realisation of the Communist economy and for the introduction of autonomous workers' control as "utopian phantasy", as "anarchism" or "syndicalism", the allowing of a measure of power to which "at the insistence of misguided workers under the influence of 'anarchistic intellectuals'" had allegedly already caused the working population at large so much unnecessary hardship in the form of shortages of staple life necessities, and would allegedly cause even more if allowed any further rein.

From the initial bridgehead gained from a myriad of demagogic manoeuvres fundamentally similar to that described above, the professional intelligentsia organised in the Bolshevik Party and disguised as "the vanguard of the revolutionary



proletariat" went on to establish that all-pervasive bureaucratic stranglehold which was later to blossom into the full panoply of oppression through the vast apparatus of social surveillance and ideological manipulation exercised through the "Soviet" state. In this way was erected an hierarchical party structure which acted as the mechanism through which, at every level, dictatorial powers over the state apparatus, itself of gargantuan proportions, was effected and its attendant social privileges and sinecurial favours distributed. As for that state apparatus itself, it was built up until it formed both an integral engine of exploitation of vast scope and complexity and the protective cover safeguarding the privileges and measureless administrative power of those top party and state bureaucrats who both profited from it and whose hands controlled it. If we, proletarian revolutionaries working and struggling in the period of capitalism's advanced decline, fail to heed the clear warnings uttered by the two most developed proletarian classes the world has yet seen, the German and the Russian - the former alone having been sufficiently developed intellectually and culturally as to have been able to express its experiences in written form and to theorise them, the latter having no more than its bitter history, so replete with unconscionable and seemingly endless sufferings, to pass on to us - which alone were possessed of the necessary knowledge and insight, gained of their experience in mounting the two most powerful and consciously developed proletarian revolutionary movements to have occurred so far in human history - then will not the coming, and hopefully yet more powerful and broadly based, proletarian revolutions in the developed centres of world capitalism, the first objective preconditions for which are even now germinating in the seedbed of capitalism's protracted and increasingly irreconcilable world crisis, be not to an even greater degree threatened with a similar negation?

Within the whole problematic of the revolutionary transition to Communism and the

establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, that concept which stands as the opposite to that of the Marxist perspective of the "Society of Free and Equal Producers", at whatever stage of its development this may at any given moment be seen to stand, is the concept, together with its ensuing historical perspective, of "the workers' state" - that most self-contradictory of concepts - headed and guided by the "proletarian" party of the new type", the "vanguard" party conceived by classical Leninism as the "embodied consciousness" of the proletarian dictatorship, but decked out in new and demagogically more appealing populist disguises. It is this latter perspective which history has shown to lead, whatever may have been the intentions of its original author, V.I. Lenin, to the loss by the producers of their hard-won control over the instruments of production and hence over the proceeds of their labour, and so to the hegemony over the workers of a caste of privileged managers, administrators and party ideologues and manipulators. In the "First Land of Socialism", this culminated, after the last vestiges of proletarian power had been extirpated amidst the fortifications of Kronstadt and countless hundreds of thousands more had perished in the forced labour camps first established, not under Stalin's infamous rule, but under that of the "Man of Light", V.I. Lenin, in what was arguably and today most certainly has become the most highly organised, entrenched and socially pitiless tyranny the world has ever known!

It remains a hard-won truth, confirmed by every experience gained to date in the twin arenas of the two most developed proletarian revolutionary movements to have arisen in history up to the present time, the German and the Russian, that, should the revolutionary workers permit the proletarian revolution, their one historic act of self-liberation which their conscious class resolve, their strategic insight and clear vision of the classless Communist future will have brought to fruition after centuries of unspeakable suffering, social misery and waste of untold millions of once potentially creative lives ground down in the treadmill of immiserated labour, to be misused as an arena for implementing a



pragmatically based programme the twin pillars of which turn out to be state nationalisation and a money-based prices policy, and which ultimately reveals itself to be an ideologically concealed disguise for the imposition of a new and yet more oppressive exploitative system under the control of a new exploitatively motivated class formation organised as a state bureaucracy - then such a final negative turn will surely relegate - not, of course, for ever, but at least for the foreseeable future - every possibility of a victorious proletarian revolution in the developed heartlands of world capitalism to history's gallery of lost hopes and false starts, exactly as in the now familiar case of the Russian Revolution and its abortive experiment in State Socialism. The dawn of Social Man's liberation from the shackles of class-divided society, the long-awaited sunrise of Communism, would then suffer yet another postponement. History, however, and indeed the very continuance of social life on this planet, no longer has any time left in hand permitting it to tolerate any repetition of the disastrous Bolshevik concept of a "socialist" society attained through a combination of state nationalisation, the purely administrative manipulation of economic categories and processes at the hands of a vast army of bureaucrats whose upper echelons are privileged to a degree equal to that afforded by capitalist forms of exploitation, and a method of compensation for the economic deficiencies of the "classical" empirical method of mechanical administration characteristic of State Socialism through the condemnation of tens of millions of workers to the pragmatically doubtless more "manageable" condition of direct slavery. This counterfeit "socialism" now finds itself, wherever it has been established in Eastern Europe and Asia, embroiled in irresolvable contradictions which are rapidly driving it back into the arms of a gleeful world capitalism.

#### The Potential Foundations of State Socialism in the Contemporary Capitalist World

Although the emergence of a state socialist

mode of production in Russia was the product of a quite definite concatenation of historically determined social conditions which may be summed up as the combined result of the peculiarities of Tsarism as a political and state system and the socio-economic backwardness of Russia, the incipient tendency towards a state socialist form of society is not confined solely to the precise and limited conditions prevalent in Tsarist Russia after World War I. On the contrary, although by no means inevitable - and even in the most developed example provided by history up to the present, that of its emergence from out of the contradictions underlying Tsarist society in the form of the "Soviet" Union, although it may have been the most likely outcome in the then prevailing special conditions, even there its successful birth was not inevitable, since history never presents its complex dialectical alternatives in the form of hard and fast inevitabilities - the emergence of state socialist alternatives to the victory of the proletariat in a Communist revolution and the replacement of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat by the minority class rule of a new administrative-bureaucratic class are today by no means impossible as the result of the subversion of one or more of the future proletarian revolutions in the developed capitalist lands which lie just around history's next corner, and should not for that reason be discounted.

Quite the contrary, in fact. In every developed capitalist terrain today, including that of the United States of America, there exist significant political forces representing the interests of a state-sponsored professional administrative intelligentsia, a stratum of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie which the intensifying crisis of capitalism is increasingly, and in the case of Britain even rapidly, transforming into an oppressed social formation of a quasi-class nature. Here in Britain, that incipient state socialist stratum of the professional intelligentsia is represented politically by the left wing of the Labour Party,



and has its theoretical centre in the various Trotskyist groups, particularly the Militant Tendency, which is organised primarily within the Labour Party. The fact that the Trotskyist sects still to this day cling to their irrational and anachronistic theory of a "deformed workers' state", and that none of them have succeeded in unearthing the *real* "secret" of the party and state dictatorship in the "Soviet" Union - one which, as we have seen, resides and exerts its baleful influence at the most profound social level, at that of the administrative-bureaucratic economic foundations of "Soviet" society, devoid as these are of any objective norm of economic regulation and control such as would have been fulfilled by the Average Social Hour of Labour had the Russian proletariat been strong or mature enough to apply it - is itself alone sufficient to force them spontaneously into the role of ideological and political motivator of what, if it should ever arise, would be tantamount to an extension of the era of class-divided society to include that of a new antagonistic mode of production, State Socialism, which would then interpose itself historically between capitalism and Communism. Instead of sliding back into the arms of an overjoyed world capitalism, as it is doing in the present historical situation, "Soviet" State Socialism would then acquire the status of historical prototype and forerunner of this new exploitative and class-divided social formation. The political force, as yet but embryonically developed, which will be most likely to be best adapted to fulfil the role of ideological midwife assisting at the birth of the new exploitative form of society in its empirical-administrative form, State Socialism, from out of the revolutionary situations likely to arise in the developed capitalist lands in the no longer so distant future is that contemporary "left" brand of Social Democracy which we term Trotskyism or Neo-trotskyism.

At the same time as corporately organised capital seeks to win an extension of its

blood-soaked life through measures to offset its dwindling economic arena of profit-generation and accumulation by the only means still open to it, i.e., on the foundations of a social base made stronger and more diversified by the thatcherite programme consisting partly of extensions to the quantitative base of the profit-generating system and partly of measures to increase as far as is tactically possible the average rate of profit by intensifying qualitatively the rate of absolute capital turnover, its former servant, the new state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie, is thus taking the first tentative steps within the left-wing of the Labour Party and the trotskyist organisations to assert its class hegemony in place of that of its former master, Social Capital, and to usurp from the proletariat, as did its Russian predecessor of an earlier and less advanced epoch, the leading role in the coming revolutionary war against the latter's long-established rule. In this bid for social hegemony, the new state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie seeks to avail itself of a suitably vulgarised and distorted "marxism", a central role in which is of course still played by the old leninist ideology of the "vanguard party" which allegedly will "inject revolutionary consciousness" into a proletariat still allegedly confined in its thinking to trade-unionist forms of consciousness and hence incapable of carrying through the revolution without the "assistance" of the petit-bourgeois "Bearers of Light" and "Men of Steel". In reality, of course, the only truly revolutionary class in capitalist society whose victory would alone be objectively capable of displacing all forms of class rule and of establishing the Communist society is and remains the proletariat, the class of propertyless wage-workers, for it is they alone who, today as in previous epochs, have "nothing to lose but their chains" and a whole new world of real freedom, founded upon the material basis of their liberation from wage-slavery and the winning of the long-sought-after goal of free, unalienated labour, to win.



Today, all available evidence clearly indicates that, in present-day conditions as previously in the case of the historically premature forerunners of the proletarian revolution represented by the proletarian contingents within the German and Russian Revolutions which grew out of World War I, the more dangerous, because concealed, counter-revolutionary threat to the proletarian revolutions of the future will emanate, after the destruction of the main capitalist class enemy, not only or even mainly from the remnants of the capitalist class itself, *but from the former decades-long servants of that class, the former maintenance engineers of capitalism, the new state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie.* This new upstart challenger for the crown of dominant social force in a new class-determined social mode of production is even now in process of formation from out of the contradictions arising out of the growing isolation of Social Capital and the consequent need of the latter to bolster its weakening sources of economic power by creating a substantial intermediate stratum whose primary task lies in the continual refurbishment of the social fabric of capitalism. As, however, the founts of surplus value tend increasingly to prove unequal to the task of counteracting the historically endemic tendency for the rate of profit to fall, Social Capital finds itself unable to discharge adequately its obligations towards this state-sponsored petite bourgeoisie. This then undergoes a progressive radicalisation of its outlook, culminating in the dawning awareness of its interest in taking over from Social Capital the very socio-political machinery of state which it labours so mightily to maintain against so increasingly inadequate a reward, and in utilising that machinery as a means for maintaining its own rule in place of that of a now increasingly parasitic capitalist class.

In witnessing the emergence of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie as a new oppressed class, we are, however, not witnessing some kind of immaculate conception in which a new class formation gradually crystallises from out of

the debris of a disintegrating and unstable capitalism as a single, unified, unpolarised and monolithic social entity which slowly gains in size and influence until it suddenly finds itself large and powerful enough to "overwhelm" the power of Social Capital and replace it as dominant controlling class. On the contrary, what we are observing is nothing less than the birth of an *entire new potential mode of production*, State Socialism, the fundamental economic form of which is *state nationalisation*. From the very moment of its birth, the new state-sponsored petite bourgeoisie which is at one and the same time the founder of this new mode of social production and its most characteristic social product, *itself undergoes a process of class differentiation and polarisation* in the course of its development from a mere stratum of a class which has already arisen under capitalism into a new class formation in its own right. At the level of its higher echelons, this new class-in-the-becoming is composed of such influential strata as the senior civil service, the higher-paid local authority officials, the strata of senior scientific and technological personnel and the middle to higher levels of the state bureaucracy itself; whilst at its lower levels it consists of the poorly-paid - even sometimes poverty-stricken - junior civil servants, teachers, local authority employees, state or local authority utility workers, and so on. All that had been lacking in order to set into motion a polarisation of this uneasy but until recently more or less homogeneous stratum into two antagonistic wings, the embryo of a future division into a new and yet more antagonistic dominant ruling class, a future *state bourgeoisie*, and a new exploited and oppressed class, a future *state proletariat*, was a polarisation brought about by a change in the fundamental balance of class forces in British capitalist society.

That polarisation is now increasingly intensifying and accelerating as a result of the growing crisis of British and world capitalism and the widespread measures of denationalisation and intensification of exploitation put into effect by



the Thatcher Government with the ostensible purpose of offsetting it. Thus the very measures taken by Social Capital to alleviate its *immediate* crisis situation end in contributing towards generating that selfsame new alienative and exploitative class force which at some point in the future might be destined to destroy it and replace the power of Social Capital with the power of Administrative-Bureaucratic State Manipulation. Should this occur, it will have been because the *ultimate* revolutionary class force destined to dissolve class-divided society for ever, the class of the builders of Communism, the modern proletariat, the class of worker-producers by hand and brain, is still too weakly developed as to be aware of its historic class mission as the architect of Communism, and so fails to prevent the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie from usurping its own inceptive leading role in the Communist revolution, thereby negatively transforming that revolution from a Communist into a state-socialist one.

One result of the thatcherite programme of widespread denationalisation has been that a smaller mass of state-deployed surplus value remains for distribution amongst an ever-growing army of the state bureaucracy. This has for some years now been reflected in a marked tendency towards a revolutionisation of class feeling and militancy amongst the newly-proletarianised intellectual workers, formerly students, whilst among the higher echelons there has been an equally clearly discernible tendency to form a centre of politico-ideological influence and to use this in order to win over further new class supporters.

Whilst, clearly, neither the higher nor the lower echelons of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie fulfil any generative value or surplus value producing function in capitalist society - indeed, both are *consumers* of the surplus value generated through the exploitation of the value-productive sections of the working class - whilst the salaries paid to the higher-paid echelons represent payments out of total

surplus value similar to those paid to top state and company officials - i.e., from the point of view of the capitalist class they represent disbursements of surplus value *within the bourgeois class as a whole* - the wages paid to the lower-paid levels have long since taken on the character of *state-deployed variable capital*. Although no surplus value is generated by the labour of this petit-bourgeois-becoming-proletarian stratum, precisely on that account Social Capital and its state have a strong interest in seeing to it that the total amount paid out in wages to its state-employed administrative officials is low enough to ensure that a significant *value-saving* effect is achieved, i.e., that the exploitation of their labour-power produces appreciable quantities of what we may term *negative surplus value* which then acts so as to reduce commensurately the quantities of *positive* surplus value generated by the labour of the productive, surplus value generating sections of the working class paid out by the state in the form of their wages.

In this way, in the present situation and at the present stage of development reached objectively in the accretion of the world capitalist crisis, the interests of the *positive* surplus value producing industrial and commercial proletariat and those of the *negative* surplus value producing and positive surplus value consuming sections of the total working class are brought into coincidence. Both sell their labour-power, both are exploited by Social Capital. The only difference between them is that the labour-power of the one produces positive surplus value, whilst that of the other saves on the amounts of the *total* positive surplus value in the hands of the capitalist state needing to be expended in the form of wages for the lower-paid sections of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie, the potential future state proletariat in process of formation. This may therefore be termed a form of *negative surplus value*.



In making a class analysis of capitalist society on the eve of the proletarian revolution, should this at present only potential tendency towards the formation of a new class-divided mode of production, State Socialism, and its social and class base formed out of the polarisation of the present state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie into the two poles represented respectively by an exploitative *state bourgeoisie* and an exploited *state proletariat* prove to have become the dominant one and to have developed towards its fruition in an apparently growing ability of the newly-formed state bourgeoisie, the former top echelons of the state-sponsored petite bourgeoisie, to seize the reigns of leadership in the maturing revolution out of the hands of the revolutionary proletariat, care will need to be taken to ensure that a fundamental class distinction is made between this state proletariat, which today already exists as the lower echelons of the state-sponsored petite bourgeoisie and which in a future revolutionary situation will constitute one of the most important sections of the revolutionary class forces, and the higher echelons of the present state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie which, though possibly still active on the revolutionary side of the class divide, will represent the main danger of a state-socialist usurpation of power. Should this potential danger show any signs of becoming a real one, a fierce and determined struggle on every front - political, organisational and theoretical - will need to be waged by all revolutionary proletarian class fighters and by all Marxists to expose and isolate this dangerous threat to the hegemony of the proletariat in the - potentially Communist - revolution.

As for the top echelons of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie, this increasingly projects a perspective for taking over the administration of the "maintenance works of capitalism", and with it that of the whole of society, which it comes to consider it might just as well operate on its own behalf as on that of an increasingly parasitic capitalist class. Already the demographic outlines of the growing contradiction between the

present incumbent of the state power, Social Capital, and the new challenger for state power, the embryo administrative-bureaucratic state bourgeoisie, can be seen in the antagonism between the Thatcher-dominated central state machine and the left-labour dominated local authority administrations and their leading bureaucrats in such large urban administrative conglomerates as Liverpool, Birmingham and, of course, London, where the chief political organ of the Labour Left, the Greater London Council, was disbanded in 1986 from under the very feet of its occupying bureaucracy through legislation enacted by the Thatcher Govt.

It is the higher echelons of this new state-sponsored petite bourgeoisie which eventually comes to perceive in the proletarian revolution the vehicle offering it the opportunity, hitherto denied it by history, of asserting its social hegemony *in the name of the very proletariat whose Dictatorship, cuckoo-like, it seeks to displace* and whose role, true to its characteristics as a vacillating intermediate class, it proceeds to usurp after concealing its true class character and socio-historical antecedents behind the deceptive facade of the "vanguard party of the revolutionary proletariat".

Though still very much at an embryonic stage of its development, it is this new potential class formation which is nevertheless growing in size and social influence alongside a capitalist class which seeks to an ever greater degree to strengthen its rule through new and unprecedented corporate organs of state power as the means wherewith to compensate for its growing intrinsic weakness and historical redundancy, in the organisation and maintenance of which ever larger numbers of state-sponsored petit-bourgeois officials and administrators are required, but for whose remuneration Social Capital has at its disposal a stock of total surplus value upon which, on account of the historically endemic tendency for the rate of profit per cycle of investment to fall, ever larger claims have to be made for the fundamental purpose of capital renewal and accumulation. As a



result of even tentatively implementing measures designed effectively to offset this tendentially falling rate of profit per circuit of capital by resort to the method of accelerating the rate of absolute capital turnover through increases obtained in the intensity of labour, Social Capital then finds itself confronted with ever greater difficulties on account of the dissolving effect wrought upon the productive infrastructure of capitalism as a consequence of the resulting massive increases in the scale and intensity of the class struggle engendered by those measures themselves. From this dilemma there is no escape within the framework of a parliamentary-democratic superstructure, and for the task of laying the politico-ideological foundations of a fascist-type dictatorship suitably adapted to contemporary conditions, which are very different from those of the '20's and '30's, the Lords of Social Capital may now very well have left themselves insufficient time. The upper echelons of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie, on the other hand, find themselves in a situation of well-nigh perfect tactical concealment as a result of their social position *within* the framework of the state, as distinct, superficially, from the class framework of Social Capital.

Subjectively, the widespread and deep-seated demoralisation prevalent everywhere within the old Social Democratic or reformist labour movements of the developed capitalist lands may be seen as a premonition of the threatening onset of this new and most concentrated form of alienated social relations. In this as in other aspects of the crisis of capitalism and the growth of the forces ultimately destined to destroy it and to construct the Communist society, time is certainly not on the side of the proletarian revolution! Indeed, never before has the task of restoring to its rightful place the true revolutionary heritage of Marxism, the most significant amongst the essential subjective preconditions for the victory of the proletariat in the Communist revolution at the very heart of which lies the proclamation of the Society

of Free and Equal Producers, been confronted with greater dangers at the same time as it possesses the greatest urgency yet known in its history.

### The Danger to the Realisation of the Communist Tasks of the Proletarian Revolution represented by Syndicalism and Anarcho-syndicalism

Under the conditions prevailing in the developed capitalist lands at the present historical juncture, however, the threat of a partially or wholly aborted proletarian revolution arising from the failure of the proletarian class forces to establish the Communist mode of production does not emanate solely from the capitalist class and its state or from the top echelons of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie as a consequence of the coming to fruition of the perspective of social development towards State Socialism outlined above. There exists, in fact, yet another, a third, counter-revolutionary threat, *this time an unconscious one emanating from within the ranks of the proletarian class itself.*

For many decades there has existed within the class camp of the potentially revolutionary proletariat a framework of ideological and political concepts which, objectively viewed, represents a kind of *proletarian ideology* which has arisen as a spontaneous reflex in thought of the class struggle, a class struggle which the proletariat more often than not is compelled to wage without conscious knowledge of the scope and significance of its actual class interests in that struggle or of the organising role of leadership within it, a struggle which it is generally compelled to delegate to a stratum of professional trades union and reformist political leaders who are thereby afforded the power to make tactical use of the day-to-day class struggle in such a way as to derive advantage for themselves by manipulating both the terms and conditions of the settlement reached so as to make effective compromises between



Social Capital and the workers whose interests they are supposed to be representing, but whom they generally succeed in manipulating into accepting those compromise settlements.

Known as *Syndicalism* or, in its extreme anti-intellectual form, *Anarcho-Syndicalism*, this tendency forms an objectively genuinely class-motivated revolutionary sector within the proletariat the subjective aim of which is the destruction of the power of Social Capital. It does not, however, recognise either Marxism as the science of the proletarian revolution, its theory and practice, or the Communist system of production and distribution as its outcome, the specifically proletarian form of social organisation destined to constitute the first classless and non-antagonistic mode of social production in history the establishment of which constitutes the proletarian revolution's primary and most fundamental content and historical purpose. Confusing Marxism - and who, after more than 70 years of the false example offered by Bolshevism, could too sharply blame them! - with the ideology of the "Soviet" professional intelligentsia, "Marxism-Leninism", this tendency consequently opposes all consciously enacted measures to implement either the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in which it sees an elaborate disguise under cover of which a new class-based tyranny would be imposed, or the Communist economy based upon the Average Social Hour of Labour as the universal unit of economic regulation and control.

Perhaps the major work seeking to provide Syndicalism with some kind of theoretical base is the book by Otto Leichter, "Die Wirtschaftsrechnung in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft" ("Economic Regulation and Control in a Socialist Society"). Since, as the extensive critical references to this work made in "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" irrefutably demonstrate, the proposals put forward by this tendency in Leichter's work and elsewhere are based either upon a prices policy or the introduction of

subjective norms of control effected through administrative agencies, objectively they represent measures one outcome of which would be to provide a justification in both theory and practice for the assumption of economic control by a privileged administrative bureaucracy - the precise opposite of Syndicalism's intentions and, in fact the very realisation of its quite justified fears! Their other outcome, the result of the introduction of a prices policy in place of the application of the Average Social Hour of Labour as the universal unit of economic regulation and control, would, of course, be *the retention of money as a medium of exchange*, a measure which would render impossible the development of a truly free society of freely associating producers and the growth of classless Communist economic relations. Since, as "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" also convincingly shows and the experience of both the young Russian and Hungarian Soviet Republics amply confirms, the introduction of such measures would lead inevitably to economic and social chaos on a grand scale, the unavoidable further consequence of their introduction would be either the full counter-revolutionary restoration of capitalism or, at best, the unwitting furnishing of all the pretexts and objective preconditions necessary for the old professional intelligentsia of capitalism, what we have termed the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie whose political influence would still be considerable and whose organisations of ideological influence would still in all likelihood be retained in some form during and just after the revolution, to impose their rule through a system of State Socialism, and so to rob the workers of the means to establish the Communist system based upon a direct and open relationship of the producers towards the labour process and the product of their labour and founded upon the Average Social Hour of Labour as the objective unit of economic regulation and control. These proposals, taken either jointly or separately, would therefore, for all their fine revolutionary intentions, result in the handing over of control over the new post-revolutionary society to the enemies of proletarian freedom, a freedom which is



organically bound up with and dependent upon the successful implementation of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the process of construction of the Association of Free and Equal Producers. In themselves, these may be viewed as the final realisation of the strategic course of the proletarian revolution, the primary stage of which began with the first breaches made in the power of Social Capital achieved through the establishment of the first bases of proletarian control over industry and the economic resources of society, and the final stage of which ended with the destruction of the capitalist state apparatus.

The idea-content and programme put forward by Syndicalism and Anarcho-syndicalism therefore constitute a dangerous long-term threat to the victorious outcome of the proletarian revolution and to the consolidation of the future Dictatorship of the Proletariat, one which, whilst spontaneously and inadvertently offering objective assistance to the top echelons of the state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie in their task of subverting the Communist revolution of the proletariat into its own state-socialist form of revolution led by a "vanguard party of the working class", itself represents all the more insidious a peril than any originating with the petite-bourgeoisie or its leading stratum in the professional intelligentsia precisely on account of its origins *within the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat itself.*

This objective assessment having been pronounced, a judgement of Syndicalism and Anarcho-syndicalism as the spontaneous ideology of a proletariat which finds itself still at that stage of its growth at which class struggle within the confines of capitalist relations and the institutionalised forms which those relations impose forms the furthestmost boundaries of its understanding, a stage in the development of its consciousness of itself as a class and of the historical mission it is called upon by history to fulfil at which its revolutionary world-view is still but at an embryonic stage of its development

- all these undoubtedly true objective judgements should never be so onesidedly interpreted as to permit them to blind revolutionary Marxists to the further truth that Syndicalism - it is now fitting that the petit-bourgeois element contributed by anarchism be excluded from our assessment - represents a genuinely revolutionary tendency within those levels of consciousness within the potentially revolutionary proletariat at which awareness of a simple truth is as yet lacking: *that to acquire the power to destroy the class enemy a complete mastery of the objective laws of social development which have summoned him forth in the first place must be acquired, and that that mastery can come only from scientific Marxism.* Of all the tendencies within the class camp of the revolutionary proletariat, it is towards the syndicalists that it is most imperative that Marxists exert their utmost efforts at instilling a scientific understanding of the objective laws of social development in general and of the proletarian revolution and its outcome, Communism, in particular.

In its relation to the broad working class movement, therefore, Syndicalism stands as the spontaneous opposite in consciousness of reformism and economism, the embryonic stage in the development of a revolutionary proletarian consciousness which is characterised by the fact that it has not yet achieved the qualitative synthesis of petit-bourgeois reformism and petit-bourgeois revolutionism through which Marxism overcomes both. Accordingly, it represents the ideology of that section of the working class, and in particular of the working youth, which has not yet made the science of social history in general and of the proletarian revolution in particular its own class weapon, and so has not yet found itself in and through a revolutionary praxis which reflects the liberating fusion of scientific theory with a class practice the fundamental task of which is to achieve the progressive transformation of class struggle within the confines of capitalist



relations into revolutionary struggle for the destruction of the power of Social Capital and the establishment of the Communist society. Marxists striving to win understanding of the now desperate necessity for mankind to achieve the establishment of a Communist society before the rule of Social Capital, prolonged as it already is beyond that which is historically viable, succeeds in transforming the world of Nature and Human Society into a band of radioactive asteroids revolving around the Sun in an orbit placed between the planets Venus and Mars, and to win support for the concept that the only social force capable of carrying through that revolutionary transition is the modern proletariat, the workers by hand and brain, amongst the ranks of the advanced levels of consciousness within the proletariat itself, should never forget that *theory which is truly scientific grows, and can only grow, out of practice, as the generalisation of that practice in terms of abstract principle.*

Thus it is to the working out of a programme for linking the short-term requirements and exigencies of the day-to-day class struggle with the requirements of a longer-term - but not too long! - revolutionary strategy, a strategy for the growth of the proletarian revolutionary forces, the subjective instrument in the Communist Revolution, as well as towards the elaboration of an overall objective strategy for the carrying through of the proletarian revolution in the conditions of advanced capitalism, that Marxists should now be bending their every effort. Within the contemporary situation in which the development of the class struggle in the advanced capitalist lands finds itself - one in which the enlightening, clarifying and defining role potentially to be contributed by Marxism has been virtually completely absent as a result of over 70-years of subversion of Marxism by its petit-bourgeois, "left" social-democratic conterfeit, Leninism - and in particular in respect of the strategically vital task of developing *new forms of class struggle which will adequately reflect and serve the*

*intensified level of class contradictions soon to arise as the coming revolutionary crises within capitalism and the capitalist-inspired reformist labour movements begin to mature, it is true to say that some of the best innovatory work in class organisation has been initiated by the Syndicalist movement.*

In the meantime it must be recognised that, in these conditions, it is small wonder that so many intellectually and culturally deprived Syndicalists, who have hitherto known no opportunity to develop a revolutionary praxis of their own, should have come to believe that the praxis of the proletarian revolution consists of little more than a few stealthy sallies into Mayfair at dead of night to break a few shop windows or to throw petrol bombs through the windows of a few plutocratic dwellings! When, in contradistinction to this, it is borne in mind, for instance, that vast areas of the industrial heartlands of Britain now lie derelict and silent as a result of the closure of thousands upon thousands of industrial establishments simply because the technological level of their equipment could no longer generate profit at a high enough temporal rate, it must be recognised that a valuable opportunity to establish a highly appropriate training-school for these highly militantly motivated but theoretically and strategically untutored young proletarian class fighters has been missed - a training ground of inestimable potential value in the qualitative extension of class struggle to include occupation of such abandoned industrial assets for the purpose of beginning the task of deploying them to the economic benefit of the workers themselves and of so inculcating the first rudimentary experience of economic control by the workers themselves and of the first foundations in production of the Communist economy, the positive and creative alternative to capitalist wage-slavery. The record shows that not a single one of the various Leninist, Neo-leninist or Trotskyist parties or organisations had the perspicacity or foresight to



put forward any proposals of this kind, proposals which Social Capital would have been tactically ill disposed to resist, since the capitalists themselves had abandoned those industries and left them desolate !

As matters stand, it can hardly be expected that the inexperienced proletariat and young workers of today would have acquired out of thin air an understanding, never mind a mastery, of the praxis of the proletarian revolution in circumstances in which such Marxism as has been present has itself been vitiated and rendered worthless through the ascendent influence of Leninism and Trotskyism, the ideological expressions of an actual or potential State Socialism.

A common error into which many honest Syndicalists fall who are either too intellectually lazy or too preoccupied with their own all-consuming inferiority complexes as to be either capable or sufficiently concerned to look into social phenomena any more deeply than at the most superficial level of fleeting surface impressions, is to assume that, if labour-time is taken as the basis of economic regulation and control in a Communist society, this must of necessity have as its unavoidable consequence the operation of a "law of value" under Communism also, with all its attendant negative features, such as wage-labour, exploitation, the alienation of the producers from both the labour process and the product of their labour and the accumulation of social misery, in much the same way as these form necessary and unavoidable features of capitalism. As a result, these gullible victims of an inverted view of social development and revolutionary change are made to feel indignant at the very thought of any worker's labour being measured by such a unit as the Average Social Hour of Labour, their especial hatred being, of course, reserved for the application of the Average Social Hour of Labour to the sphere of distribution for individual consumption through the medium of the much-maligned Labour Certificate.

What these Comrades forget - or, perhaps, have never known - is that the measurement of *labour-time* as such only becomes the measurement of the value of labour-time under the specific conditions of private or state ownership of the means of production and distribution, in which the producers are divorced from any and all control over both the labour process and the product of their labour. Under those conditions, and under no other, does labour-time as such become the measure of the value generated by labour-time, a value which then assumes the character of *surplus value* and which, upon assuming its flesh-and-blood form of *money*, becomes objectivised or reified in its realised form of *profit*.

Having thus established the proletarian *bona fides* of the Average Social Hour of Labour, it can be more readily understood that it is one of the salient merits of the work "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" to have revealed that, in the conditions of an emergent Communist society as it is likely to be born out of the chaos and collapse almost certain to attend the demise of capitalism, the implementation of the system of economic regulation and control based upon the Average Social Hour of Labour and its application, at least in the initial period represented by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, to the sphere of distribution for personal consumption as well as to that of production and reproduction becomes the chief, if not the sole, guarantee safeguarding the infant Communist society against both the twin dangers which beset it: firstly, that a caste of bureaucratic managers and administrators might succeed in wresting control over production and distribution into its hands and so rob a young and inexperienced proletariat of its right of control over the economy, as exercised by the Workers' Councils and implemented through the unit of that control, the Average Social Hour of Labour; and secondly, that backward proletarian elements might themselves frustrate the implementation of that control, and through that the successful construction of the Communist



economy. The inevitable outcome of their own failure to perceive the outlines of the new economy of use-value production and its new laws of motion would be the usurpation of power by the professional intelligentsia and the substitution of a money-based bureaucratic-administrative society, State Socialism, for the fully free and unalienated conditions of Communism which will arise on the basis of the collective power of the free and freely associating producers in implementing the Average Social Hour of Labour as the universal unit of economic regulation and control.

Perhaps, for that very reason above all others, the greatest achievement of the work "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" lies in the fact that it outlines in clear and comprehensible language, for the guidance of future generations of proletarian revolutionaries, a system in which, the spheres of both production and distribution having been brought under the control of the Average Social Hour of Labour, control over the economic system cannot be used as the lever enabling any alien class to seize the economic foundations of power in society out of the hands of the proletariat, so serving to pave the way towards a system of State Socialism which would impose new and even more burdensome forms of exploitation upon the backs of the workers. In the conditions of emergence of the infant proletarian dictatorship, in which material deprivation will likely reach hitherto unheard of levels and hunger, disease and homelessness, together with their attendant scourges of urban violence, pillage and unreasoning brutality, whipped on by a by then desperate and hence ferocious counter-revolution, will as likely as not stalk the land, *it will be precisely in the sphere of distribution, and particularly in that sector of it concerned with personal or individual consumption, that the weakest link in the mechanism of control in process of construction by the young proletarian dictatorship over the economic process will lie.* For that very reason, the potential managerial-bureaucratic elements still lurking in the wings of the new society and represented by the

residual professional petit-bourgeois strata inherited from capitalism will seek, at that early stage in the construction of the first rudimentary foundations of the Communist economy and system of production relations, to find an opportunity to impose their alien and external authority. Accordingly, it will form perhaps the most significant of all the tasks confronting Marxists in the coming proletarian revolution to provide clear and timely warning of this most insidious of all counter-revolutionary dangers, if necessary against the diversionary strictures offered by the Syndicalists themselves.

#### The Strategic Implications for the Communist Revolution of Capitalism's new form of Dual Crisis

In the course of the previous decade, the major developed capitalist lands, including Britain, began to embark upon their respective programmes of modernisation and renewal of their industrial and manufacturing bases, in order to equip them with the new micro-electronic control technology which was then, for the first time, becoming available in a suitable form for mass application and which has since brought about a minor revolution in the technological foundations of contemporary capitalism. As a result of this, tremendous increases were secured in both the productivity and the intensity of labour, so that the rate of accumulation, which up till then, and particularly since the long post-World War II boom finally faltered and came to an end during the mid-'60's, had been languishing in stagnation and threatening to precipitate a major recession, was able to move forward again.

At first, the economic advantages underlying the new conditions of industrial investment for those industries and branches of production in which the new technology could find application appeared impressive: a significant increase in both the per-cycle rate of profit and in the rate of absolute capital turnover were both achieved. As usual, the price to be paid, at least in this



initial period, was not at the cost of Social Capital at all - as, indeed, the results of technological advance rarely have been in the past - but at that of the working class, the human element in production. This manifested itself in the fact that, with the application of the new automated control techniques to industry after industry, a *narrowing down of the social base of employment* to a degree never previously experienced began to make itself felt with surprising rapidity. Establishments which previously employed thousands now found that only hundreds were required, those previously employing hundreds only tens. Coincident with this was the onset of unprofitable conditions for thousands upon thousands of industrial establishments, which led to the destruction of entire branches of production and finally entire industries. Inevitably, as the "technological revolution" gained more and more leeway, the reserve army of labour began to swell to unheard-of proportions, until it embraced several millions, finally settling down at a point around the mid-'80's at a figure somewhere between 3.5 and 4.5 millions (real figures). This then signified the ignominious end of even the last vestiges of "full employment" and "welfare politics", and there began to appear in the infrastructure of capitalism such hitherto unexperienced strains and stresses as threatened to disrupt its entire fabric. The essential nodal point of those contradictions lay in the tendency for the new conditions of production arising from the new technology to cause a *polarised dual crisis in the conditions of life and labour for the millions of the working class*, a crisis which is the reflex of the dual crisis which those selfsame contradictions have engendered for Social Capital: on the one hand, in the sphere of the production process itself, the new technology creates conditions in which fewer and fewer workers create a relatively increasing mass of surplus value; whilst in society at large, those selfsame conditions are responsible for precipitating ever-greater numbers of formerly productively employed workers into the ranks of the Reserve Army of Labour. In short: the mass of productively

engaged value and surplus value-producing workers becomes smaller and smaller whilst at the same time the numbers of the workless grows larger and larger.

As we have seen, the response to this threatening instability quite spontaneously thrown up by Social Capital was Thatcherism. Along with the quantitative extension and qualitative intensification of the conditions for profit-making and capital accumulation, we have witnessed the beginning of the end of the "Welfare State" and the hatching of plans to replace it with a repressive corporate structure in which the State, enhanced with new central powers, will dominate and control every parameter of social life and economic movement on behalf of the longer-term interests of Social Capital. Even now, plans are being drawn up by the Thatcherite General Staff to split the working class clean down the middle through the introduction of measures designed to force all unemployed workers to participate in what is euphemistically termed "community work". Designed to act as a form of "Labour Front" through which wage-rates would be significantly cut and cheap unorganised labour provided to enable Social Capital to raise significantly the average rate of profit, the scheme at present in preparation envisages the herding of the workless and the destitute, whose numbers are certain to increase dramatically over the intervening one or two decades, into what is effectively an *Army of Forced Labour*, the descendant of National Socialism's *Arbeitsdienst*, whilst in those branches of production and with those forms of labour for which a demand would still exist a ruthless and unrelenting control over both the conditions of work and the level of remuneration will be maintained, with wages "pegged" against productivity and intensity by arrangement between the new corporate "labour front" unions and the State.

Against this new and yet more repressive corporate framework of state control, the new class



force represented by the - itself rapidly polarising - state-sponsored petite-bourgeoisie will struggle to impose its own forms of corporate control. These, however, will differ from those of an embattled Social Capital by having a social and institutional base much more closely keyed in with the life and organisational forms of the working class, the labour movement, onto which a pseudo-marxist political front of ideological deception and political manipulation can be expected to be grafted. In this respect at least, the future State Socialism of the developed lands, assuming it is ever born, will betray its close affinity with both of its two historical forerunners, the prototype models provided by State Socialism in the "Soviet" Union and - an anti-marxist mask replacing the pseudo-marxist one - the West European Fascism of the inter-war period.

However, the negative effects arising from the application of the new technology are not restricted solely to the working class. For some years now evidence has gathered pointing to the fact that the quantitative aggregate of the value-generating potential inherent to the newly modernised industrial and manufacturing base, impressive though this be in terms of its qualitative economic performance expressed as a percentage increase in the rate of absolute profitability as compared with the situation in respect of the old technology some 30 years ago, in respect of its quantitative aspect, its mass profit yield - the factor of practical operative significance for Social Capital - it is nevertheless seen to be inadequate to fuel the colossal surplus value-consuming superstructure which has been reared upon it, including as this does the greatly inflated state expenditures on such schemes for social amelioration of the effects of capitalism's growing crisis as unemployment, homelessness, urban decay, industrial pollution, drug abuse... the list is almost endless - and this is so despite the appreciable extensions to the

quantitative ground-base of profit-making resulting from the programme of "privatisation" of formerly nationalised industries undertaken with such energy and persistence by the Thatcher Government.

The net outcome of these new and heightened forms of social contradiction is to be found in the growth of a *new form of capitalist crisis*, one whose power to dissolve the social fabric of capitalism is greater than any previously witnessed. This crisis is in fact a dual one, since its antagonistic effects impinge upon the operational surface of capitalist society in two ways, one of which affects the mode of deployment of capital in the production process itself, the other the social base of employment of living labour at any given moment active in the economy.

As regards the first of these, the contradiction for Social Capital at the fundamental level of value-generation itself arises from the fact that, although the new technology acts so as to intensify the rate of absolute capital turnover and, through that, has the effect of accelerating the velocity of accumulation, *all evidence gathered to date strongly indicates that the degree to which this is achieved is nevertheless inadequate to offset the simultaneous and opposite tendency for the intrinsic per-cycle rate of profit to fall*. The result of this is a *progressive anaemia* in the rate of profit-generation which is starving industrial capital of its life blood, whilst simultaneously the same factors which account for an increase in the temporal rate of profit which is nevertheless inadequate either to offset the simultaneous fall in the per-cycle rate or to support the swollen non-productive overheads engendered by the socially ameliorative needs of the system, *which in fact tend to grow at a faster rate than that of the economy's value-generative potentialities*, are also responsible for a *progressive and continuous narrowing down of the social base of employment* on which that average rate of profit is operating, and for the amelioration of whose ever-intensifying social antagonisms ever larger sums of state money in the form of unemployment and social security



payments require to be disbursed - the realised form of state-deployed surplus-value the generative founts of which themselves become ever less productive as the very social and class contradictions the state-deployed methods of social reform are supposed to ameliorate, but which increasingly fail to do so either adequately or at all, nevertheless continue to intensify faster than all efforts to dampen them down.

Thus a condition of more or less serious instability in the infrastructure of capitalism begins to make its dissolving effects felt - an instability the broad source of which lies in a growing disequilibrium between its value-generative economic base and its value-consuming social superstructure. This disequilibrium is characterised by a situation in which the faster the measures to raise profitability are put into effect, the greater are the debilitating, instability-promoting consequences arising from the resultant narrowing down of the social base of employment and consequent raising of the scale of unemployment to which those self-same measures - so beneficial in their immediate effects for Social Capital, so injurious in their only slightly longer term effects upon the conditions of life and labour of the worker-producers - also and simultaneously give rise. In short, the more Social Capital applies measures to raise both the per-cycle and the temporal rates of profit, in order thereby to restore the conditions for a - from its point of view - healthy rate of accumulation, the more does it simultaneously - and, indeed, quite unwittingly - provoke the conditions for rising unemployment and - seen now from the opposite viewpoint of the living wage-worker - other misery-promoting social evils. And, conversely to this, the more the State of Social Capital then takes measures, usually enacted through the latter's Left Wing, the Labour Party and constitutional Labour Movement, to ameliorate those evils, most notably by means of an increased expenditure of state monies in the promotion of either state or local authority employment schemes, (public works, etc.), or purchase by the state of

unprofitable industrial establishments merely in order to maintain the employment opportunities associated with them, and so on, all of which measures are wholly non-productive of surplus value and profit, the more are the fundamental economic interests of Social Capital attacked from the rear, so to speak, through the steady accretion of likewise debilitating increases in inflation and other manifestations of economic disequilibrium.

From this potentially destructive see-saw there is no escape for Social Capital. Objectively considered, therefore, the scene is set for the growth of intensifying class struggle the like of which the history of capitalism, so bestrewn with the litter of past class engagements, has never before experienced. To prepare for this, Social Capital has enacted certain preparatory measures the end aim of which is to erect the corporate state structure described above. What contrary and opposed measures, then, are the most advanced representatives of the workers taking to forewarn the rest of their class of the bloody engagements which lie ahead?

To this most pertinent of all preparatory strategic questions, the answer is that the dead hand of Leninism, Neo-leninism and Trotskyism is jointly and severally seeing to it that *nothing effective whatever is being done to prepare the proletariat, here in Britain or elsewhere in Europe and the world, for the discharge of its great revolutionary tasks*. Sunk in a deep apathy which is itself the result of their own only half-conscious - and, of course, wholly unadmitted and self-denied - realisation of the fact that the analysis and historical perspectives put forward by classical Leninism three-quarters of a century ago have not in truth proved valid and can lead to *no positive revolutionary outcome for the proletarian cause*, they prefer to avoid their revolutionary responsibilities by hiding their heads behind their now moth-eaten Leninist dogmas than to take a fresh look at the science of historical development in general and the proletarian revolution in particular, a science which was founded by Karl



Marx and Friedrich Engels, but whose most worthy disciples and successors were to be found, not in the Kremlin or even in the vulgar, stucco-laden palaces inherited from Tsarism which the suborned Third International chose to occupy, but far more on the barricades of Wedding and Neukölln or on the blood-bedecked escarpments of Kronstadt. Thanks to these hard-headed careerists but soggy-brained pseudo-revolutionaries, absolutely nothing has been done either to develop the Marxist theory of accumulation and crisis so as to take account of the all-significant contributions offered by temporality theory, nor to begin the crucial task of elaborating a dynamic, class-based strategy of the proletarian revolution valid for the social and class conditions prevailing in the advanced capitalist lands.

In order, therefore, to begin the task of examining, in however brief, fleeting and inadequate a form, the theoretical and strategic necessities of the proletarian revolution in the conditions of a mature capitalist social and class environment, as well as in memory of the brave, and as yet wholly unsung, proletarian fighters who fell in the two most developed proletarian revolutionary movements world history has yet seen, we will bring this Postscript to a fitting conclusion with an examination of some of the most fundamental elements in world outlook and method which must of necessity underlie such a strategy if it is to create the objective framework of revolutionary force within which working humanity can move forward to victory in the Communist Revolution.

#### Conclusion - The Road to Communism

At the present moment in history (Oct. 1989), the world system of State Socialism, which once proudly proclaimed itself to be "The Socialist Camp of Nations" and the future social system of the world, is in process of disintegration. Its senior and founding member, that greatest of all history's anachronisms, the "Soviet" Union, is now so sorely depleted of even its last reserves of social

dynamic that it barely possesses sufficient economic energy to stagger drunkenly across the tenuous line still separating it from full-scale "Western" capitalism, whilst other weaker members of that selfsame once-proud world sector, such as Poland and Hungary, have already crossed that fateful line. Where now the self-confident arrogance of the years of State Socialism's zenith, when a single stroke of Stalin's pen sufficed to send millions to a living death on the Gulag Archipelago, or a ranting Khrushchev could scream at the U.S. Foreign Secretary in the United Nations General Assembly: "We will bury you" ? Now truly has that monster with a weak heart and an even weaker brain which Trotsky, in one of those frequent moments when he forgot even the elementary methodological foundations of Marxism, once dubbed a "deformed workers' state", almost run to the limit that its long-suffering working population can endure, denied as they have been for so long not only the heritage of the Communist Revolution - for that the social conditions prevailing in Tsarist Russia in October 1917 were in any case not mature - but every creative human aspiration. That in their overwhelming majority they can have no clear conception of the Communist future, and instead are pursuing all kinds of bourgeois-democratic and even objectively divisive nationalist aims, is understandable enough when seen against the background of the most fundamental facts of modern Russian history. For when the lid is taken off the modern "Soviet" Union, it is seen to be a melting-pot of emerging and developing nations and peoples whom Bolshevism has effectively denied the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic stage of social development, and whose nationalist and other bourgeois-type aspirations have as a result been kept bottled up in the straitjacket of a false "Socialism" imposed from Moscow in a manner not entirely dissimilar from the "Great Russian" chauvinism of Tsarist days.

Whatever might at any given moment be the degree of discrepancy between the *objective* interests of the working class in any given social terrain and the *subjective* view of those interests



held by a majority of working people, the all-significant truth in *dialectical method* which must be grasped before any fruitful discussion of parameters lying closer to the pragmatic surface of *revolutionary practice as such*, such as the crucial question of the developmental strategy which must underlie the onset and unfolding of the proletarian revolution in the conditions of a developed capitalist social terrain, can be usefully embarked upon is that *the contradictions inherent to the development of capitalism themselves prepare the ground for the onset of the proletarian revolution*.

At any given moment short of the attainment of those revolutionary conditions themselves, of course, the idea-content and subjective norms of practice, including even those of the immediate class struggle, expressed by the working class in its day-to-day social activity will be more or less in contradiction with that longer-term development - indeed, if this were not so, Social Capital would be unable to maintain its power in society for more than a few days or even hours. Of greater fundamental significance by far than this, however, is the truth that, with every hour of every day that passes, the conditions for the generation of surplus value, and ultimately of profit, from the exploitation of labour-power become more difficult and problematic, and hence the accumulation of capital, the *sine qua non* of capitalism's continued existence, becomes ever more intractably contradictory and crisis-prone. As with all development in nature and society, these difficulties and contradictions move and have their being at two organically interconnected and interacting levels of contradiction simultaneously: firstly, at the non-substantive level of value generation, where surplus-value is created; and secondly, at the substantive level of value realisation, where insubstantial surplus-value is transformed into tangible profit. Both of these two contradictory modes of development have been touched upon in the previous section; here the additional point has to be made that the contradictions associated with the level of profit

realisation and accumulation - which is really the level which embraces the reality of capitalism's entire mode of production, since, if accumulation ceases, the entire system runs into crisis and would soon cease to provide altogether the objective conditions for the continuation of social life under the rule of Social Capital and its exploitative mode of production - are also such that what we might term the "overhead running expenses" of the capitalist system, which become more burdensome and intractable as the contradictions inherent to the more fundamental level of surplus value generation become ever more intense and insoluble on account of the need to ameliorate the ever-intensifying social and class antagonisms associated therewith, make ever greater inroads upon an ever-diminishing total of available surplus value from which also the fund for further accumulation must be drawn. Sooner or later, those conditions must emerge in which the demands for non-productive deployment of surplus value for purposes of ameliorative maintenance or reform of the crisis-ridden fabric of capitalism come into conflict with the demands made by the productive base of capitalism, represented by industrial capital, for the withdrawal from the dwindling mass of total available surplus value of such further masses of surplus value as are required for the more fundamental purpose of accumulation, without which the economic heart of capitalism ceases to beat. Given the progressively deteriorating anaemia in the conditions under which value and surplus value are generated, conditions which, at the most fundamental of all economic levels, are simultaneously starving Social Capital of the very source of its life-blood at the very time when, at the superstructural level, the need to maintain those minimum conditions of social stability as the rule of Social Capital requires for the viability of continuing accumulation is also making massive inroads into the total stock of surplus value available for either purpose, the inevitable resort by Social Capital to methods of heightened repression will create such social conditions as will, as the most powerful social imperative of



all, make the need for the proletarian class to embark upon the revolutionary destruction of the power of Social Capital and the construction of the Communist society of rational and creative use-value production a prime necessity for the worker-producers, upon whom the responsibility for the continuation of human society on this planet to an ever greater degree depends. The day when the implementation of that historical responsibility can no longer be postponed is perhaps closer than is generally realised.

It is hoped that, in the not too distant future, a Russian-language edition of "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution" will be circulating within the borders of the "Soviet" Union. It is, hopefully, possible that the effect amongst the working people of the "Socialist Sixth of the World" of having placed before them the structure and mode of operation of a true Communist society, one in which control over all parameters of social life and economic development are in the hands of the worker-producers themselves, might be to unleash the most powerful economic dynamic ever seen in mankind's history, whilst simultaneously the wholly objective mode of operation underlying the Average Social Hour of Labour will come to be understood by the long-suffering worker-producers of the "Soviet" Union as embodying both the objective guarantee that the workers retain control over production and distribution and that the general social conditions enabling a new privileged class of bureaucratic administrators to usurp economic power in society and so impose their stifling bureaucratic control over all aspects of social life, as they did in 1917 in the newly-born "Soviet" Union, can never arise in a social system which is genuinely that of Communism. The influence exerted upon the working class of history's first "false start" upon the road to Communism by the appearance of the most important work on Communism ever to have been written will be awaited with keen interest by revolutionary proletarians in both the developed and the underdeveloped capitalist lands.

Returning, however, to the wider realities of our crisis-stricken world, it will be recognised by all save the most complacent that little time remains to the world's working populations to carry through the revolutionary transformation of the highest form of class-divided society yet to have emerged in history, capitalism, into the classless, socially harmonious and truly creative society of Communism. The truth is that a race is being run in the contemporary world between those social forces representing the old class system, capitalism, which is based upon the alienation and enslavement of creative human labour within the mind-crippling confines of the wage-labour relationship and the ensuing transformation of labour-power into the abstract exploitative social force we call Social Capital - a system which is now in deepest crisis - and the new class forces represented by the producers of all social wealth, the modern Proletariat by Hand and Brain, who alone have no objective interest in preserving the crisis-ridden world of Social Capital which is increasingly imprisoned within its own immobilising and crippling contradictions and fetishes. The compulsive aim of the former contender in that race - albeit one of the inevitable outcome of which it is largely unconscious - is the accumulation of yet more capital in conditions which can lead only to the despoliation of the entire world and the ultimate destruction of all life on this planet; the aim of the latter - of the outcome of which, sadly, it too is as yet also almost completely unconscious - is the creation of those social conditions within which mankind can advance in complete harmony with Nature to new and hitherto unheard-of heights of material abundance, intellectual richness and cultural splendour.

Here it must be noted that the essential content of any revolution is not merely to bring about a change in the political constellation of power within the given social system, but to *destroy* that system root and branch and to replace it with a qualitatively new *mode of production* based upon qualitatively new relations of social



production and distribution. Whilst the conquest of political power forms an essential component stage within the entire revolutionary process, the qualitative changes thus wrought in the institutional, cultural and idea superstructure are prepared for over a whole period during which fundamental changes occur in the material social relations in society, of which the transformation of the relations men enter into with one another in the production of their means of life forms the most fundamental and formative component. Thus the new political system, when it is finally consolidated, is at one and the same time a reflection of the changes already wrought in the economic structure of society over an entire period of economic change - a period which may be relatively long or relatively short, depending upon the relative strengths of the social and class forces involved and the degree of social transformation which the revolution encompasses - and the most concentrated expression of them.

Thus we can distinguish between two closely interconnected yet conceptually distinct forms of the social revolution which also correspond to two distinct stages in its development: the revolution in the fundamental social relations of production and the political revolution which determines which class holds power. Here, a fundamental distinction must be made between the bourgeois revolution, which seeks merely to replace the rule of an old and expended social class by that of another, and the proletarian revolution, which seeks to abolish altogether and for all time the division of society into hostile and antagonistic classes.

Prior, for instance, to the onset of the revolutionary bid by the bourgeoisie or its historical forerunners for political power in society, the essential ground-base for the capitalist system had been prepared over centuries through the gradual development and extension of commodity production, trade and the formation of the class forces corresponding to those material

changes: the class of mercantile traders and bankers of the Middle ages, who gradually coalesced into a bourgeoisie under the impact of industrial development. The *political* revolution, when it came, served primarily the purpose of confirming the bourgeoisie as the new ruling class and placing in its hands the new adjuncts of social force. Being a class-divided society, these of necessity were associated mainly with the process of accession to the central state apparatus through which the controlling authority over the system of economic relations in production and distribution was asserted and social and class contradictions regulated in the interests of the new ruling class. In many respects, it was even possible for the bourgeoisie, newly arisen to power, to take over unaltered the old state *forms* of feudal absolutism, infusing into them a new political *content* through their control of the organs of ideological dissemination.

The proletarian revolution, however, cannot by its very nature proceed in this way. By its very nature it cannot be a mere *political* revolution which changes the surface constellation of power by replacing one dominant exploitative social formation with another higher and yet more antagonistic one, the political outcome of which is the replacement of the old exploiting class by a new one. On the contrary, because capitalism acts in the course of its contradictory development in such a way as to concentrate and simplify the arena of class contradictions to a point at which but two polar classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie, confront each other across a middle ground occupied by an ever-diminishing class of small-scale independent proprietors, the victory of the proletariat, the class of wage-workers who dispose of no independent means of life other than their capacity to labour in exchange for a wage, is *equivalent to the displacement of all class-divided relations altogether* - the qualitative supersession of class society as a whole. From this, a basic structural characterisation of capitalism made by Marxism, several qualitatively new features are



revealed which were unknown in previous revolutionary movements, such as those associated with the revolutionary bourgeoisie, and which are peculiar to the proletarian revolution alone.

Firstly, because it disposes of no independent economic resources which have arisen organically under its control as an intrinsic part of social development, the proletariat is in no position to acquire that control gradually, peacefully and constitutionally within the framework of existing relations. It has to *fight* for those economic resources and that control as an organic part of a single and unitary revolutionary process, a process which is the qualitative outcome of the class struggle it is compelled to wage merely in order to survive. And as it wins them as the outcome of its victory in that revolution, it has to take steps to ensure that it maintains its control over them as a part of its ongoing struggle, and does not permit itself to be persuaded into relinquishing that vital control to any other class purporting to represent its interests. *The gaining of such control constitutes the highest form of class struggle.* In short, unlike all previous social revolutions, in which the new nascent ruling and exploiting class was able to acquire its sources of wealth and its control of economic resources over a whole lengthy historical period, the proletariat is compelled by its very class position as a class without independent resources in means of production and distribution to seize that control forcibly, as a fully conscious revolutionary act. *The acquisition of the economic foundations of the rule of the proletariat, its class dictatorship, the dictatorship of the vast majority comprising what Marx called "civil society", forms the first, and the most vital and basic, component aim of the proletarian revolution.*

To win its first economic bases of power, the revolutionary proletariat cannot simply avail itself of the existing social institutions and use them in ways which correspond with its fundamentally opposite class aims and interests in

the revolution. It must forge wholly new ones, for those aims are qualitatively different from those of the bourgeoisie in its revolutions of nearly 150 years ago. As an organisational form which was the peculiar and special product of the bourgeois revolution, the *political party*, for instance, was formed as an organisational weapon to serve the needs of the rising bourgeoisie, as a means for disseminating its class ideology and world view in society at large, against the established power of feudal absolutism. With the aid of the political party, the bourgeoisie was able to win constitutional bases within the existing absolutist social and political systems, and through them to extend gradually the arena of its economic power also. Above all, the political party was the organisational form through which the nascent bourgeoisie was able to disseminate its ideology of the "free individual conscience" and so to secure its ideological hegemony within the developing revolutionary movement directed against feudal absolutism.

As we have seen, however, the revolutionary proletariat cannot take this course. Its aim is the abolition of *all* forms of class property in the means of life and *all* class-divided relations. It cannot gradually win bases within the existing system of production relations, which are those of class property in means of production and distribution in either its private or its state form. Its entire situation as a propertyless class compels it to acquire control over the means of production and distribution *by revolutionary force*, as an organic part - indeed, the most fundamental part - of the proletarian revolution itself. Furthermore, it must begin to assert that force with the aim of acquiring the first bases of such control as an aspect of the class struggle - its most strategically vital aspect, in fact - even before the revolution to destroy the political and state power of the bourgeoisie has begun, during the pre-revolutionary preparatory stages of the revolutionary process, which may precede the onset of the revolution itself by several years or more.



By doing this, it ensures *the transformation at the appropriate moment of the stage of heightened class struggle into revolutionary struggle for the control of social life as a whole.*

For the purposes of the proletarian revolution, the most radical form of revolution yet known in all the long history of class struggles and social revolutions, the prevailing institutional forms inherited from the era of the bourgeois revolution are not only quite useless - they constitute a serious danger to the class aims of the proletariat in the revolution, a perilous strategic trap. For they tend to inculcate the dangerous illusion that the proletariat can win bases for its class power within and by means of the existing constitutional superstructure of capitalist society, by winning acceptance for them within the framework of the bourgeois state and its facade of democratic deception, parliament.

The road to power for the proletariat lies well beyond the narrow reaches of the constitutionally confined class relations dictated by the capitalist superstructure itself. To acquire the economic resources it needs to launch its new mode of production, Communism, onto the historical stage, the workers by hand and brain, the creators of all social wealth, must first seize the economic means of wealth-production their own labour has created and begin to use the means of social production for their own class purposes. To do this, the revolutionary class, the proletariat, must adopt new organisational forms organically suited to the exertion of that one form of social control to which the whole of their social experience in capitalist society has moulded and trained them: *the organisation of production and distribution for the creative purposes of social use alone.* The organisational form which has arisen and developed historically within capitalist society, not within the aegis of the bourgeoisie and its state, but within the world of class struggles ceaselessly waged by the proletariat and as their highest product, is *the Workers' Council.*

The essence of the proletarian revolution is the seizure of control over the economic resources of society by the revolutionary proletariat organised in their Councils, culminating in the linking together of those separate productive or distributive units into a social whole to form the *new classless system characteristic of the Association of Free and Equal Producers based upon production for social use, Communism.*

In the course of the long, complex and infinitely difficult task of constructing the Communist system, the proletariat will of course need to resort to force of arms, to military forms of struggle, in defence of the bases of the new mode of production won, and to extend them further. But this military organisation does not comprise a new form of state, because its material social framework, its social base, is not *intrinsically* class-determined, but classless. Only for the external purpose of the revolutionary destruction of the class enemy and his state machinery of repression does it assume a role of social force and violence. Far rather, therefore, is it an *Anti-state*, the prototype of the new social organism which is characterised by *the supersession of the Government of People by the Administration of Things.*

So soon as the Communist system of use-value production embodied in the Lower Stage of Communism through the application of the Average Social Hour of Labour to the spheres of both production and distribution, including distribution for individual consumption, has been established over all or the greater part of the branches of social production, the Communist system of production and distribution can begin to operate. The replacement of the role of money by the Labour-hour Unit is put into effect, and places of work begin to produce on the basis of estimated production times in labour-hours for all use-values produced. Next comes the submission by the separate industrial establishments of the varying values of p, c and l to the Centre for Social Book-keeping, the calculation of their relevant productivities, the



fixing of an Average Productivity Factor for each industrial sector, the comparing of the separate productivities of each establishment within each sector with the relevant Average Productivity Factor and the return to each productive establishment of their relevant variations from average productivity, from which latter the eagerly awaited Factors of Individual Consumption are also calculated. Last comes the computation of appropriate quanta for P, C and L for each branch of production or each industrial sector, on the basis of which the Congress of Workers' Councils can then reach its decisions in regard to the rates of accumulation for each industrial sector of production and the entire economy - even including, possibly, disaccumulation for those branches of production which have become either technologically obsolete or otherwise no longer required - and the calculation of a Total Productivity Factor for the whole Communist economy. The Association of Free and Equal Producers becomes a living and moving reality and, with every increase achieved in the productivity of labour, moves ever closer towards its goal of "From Each according to his Ability, to Each according to his Need".

The road to the victory of the worker-producers in the race against time with the despoilers of Nature would then have been won. In the ugly reality of capitalism today, however, victory in that race depends upon the capacity of the exploited and oppressed class worldwide to organise itself into a revolutionary force, first of all to whittle away and finally eliminate the power of Social Capital through the revolutionary struggle to prepare for the new economy of use-value production against the class which appropriates potentially creative human labour as capital and in so doing condemns the vast majority of the world's population to a lifetime of wage-slavery whilst simultaneously threatening to engulf the world in the destruction of its natural environment. When the enemy of all working humanity and of Nature alike has been relegated to the central place in the gallery of history's past scourges - then and only then will it be possible

for a united and classless humanity to proceed to the construction of the fully developed Communist society, what Marx called its Higher Stage. The road to Communism thus lies through class struggle, and in particular its beginning lies in the transformation of class struggle into revolutionary struggle for the destruction of the power of Social Capital.

In this struggle to mount and carry through the Communist Revolution of the working class, the most significant subjective factor in the realm of *social and class consciousness* which will in large measure determine the quality, effectiveness and, above all the *speed* at which the struggle to launch the proletarian revolution is prosecuted, and upon which in turn will depend the whole aegis of hope for the preservation of any form of social life whatsoever on this planet in the future, not to speak of the revolutionary construction of the Communist society which is the sole ultimate precondition for a richer, more creative life for the vast majority of its population, lies in the *fusion of truly independent class struggle with Marxist revolutionary science*, the twin poles of a proletarian revolutionary praxis the one of which represents its material basis in the experience of autonomous class struggle, the other the conscious generalisation of that experience into scientific theory. Having once thus arisen and in this way brought into being the broad framework of independent struggles within which the proletarians can gain the rich experience they need in order to develop their capacity for autonomous group and individual initiatives and to promote their creative intellectual grasp of the revolutionary process and the entire science of the transition to Communism, in the unfolding of such a process of developing proletarian power the central formative role is played by the Workers' Councils. In their hands, that scientifically founded praxis forms a theoretical armoury illuminating the future progressive transformation of class struggle into *revolutionary class struggle* in one industrial sector after another, in one national terrain after



another, until what was initially a bush-fire becomes a veritable world-wide conflagration. The Twilight of the capitalist Valhalla then begins to be consummated.

Only such a fusion of theory and practice on the foundations of Marxist science can serve as the expression of the raising of class consciousness to the level of *revolutionary* consciousness, and of the coalescence of that heightened consciousness with the new developing forms of class struggle at a higher level to form a *revolutionary class praxis*. In the process through which such a revolutionary praxis is crystallised, the primary role is played by the practice of autonomous class struggle, of which revolutionary theory, Marxism, is the generalised and concentrated theoretical expression. Once conceptualised and formulated - and this, in itself, is a living, creative and ongoing process, the reflex in thought of the objective revolutionary process taking place in society in the sphere of the class struggle itself, for Marx, as he himself recognised, did not write the last word in Marxism - this revolutionary praxis serves to illumine and enrich the mode of development of yet further forms of class struggle and the strategic deployment of revolutionary struggle. Only when this essential subjective stage in the accretion of the elements of the proletarian revolution has been reached can the conditions be generated in which a majority of the proletarian class comes to acquire such a preponderance of weight and power as is required to challenge successfully the accumulated might of the bourgeoisie and its servitors both in and around the central state apparatus.

In the process through which the strategy of the Communist Revolution of the proletariat comes to be theorised and elaborated from out of the experience of the transformation of fragmentary class struggle into united and unified revolutionary struggle, the great reservoir of united revolutionary initiative and resource from which that process will derive its ultimately overwhelming energy and momentum will be the

forging of revolutionary unity between the ever more intensively exploited but numerically ever shrinking productively engaged sections of the proletariat and the numerically ever swelling ranks of the reserve army of labour, the unemployed workers who otherwise would be condemned to languish in an ever more hopeless misery, but whose latent powers to fight for the transformation of the life-conditions of all proletarians into those of the fully creative and harmonious relations of Communism realised through the Association of Free and Equal Producers has been unleashed and inspired through their unity in struggle with their industrially engaged class brothers. Out of these two sections of the revolutionary proletariat is forged a mass Front of Anti-capitalist Struggle, the base of which is formed from out of the unity of the employed and unemployed workers, and at the apex of which will stand the Workers' Councils, representative of both. It is this latter which will form the most fundamental organ of the developing proletarian power and the organisational kernel of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Having assumed control over the entire economic system through the occupation of all establishments in the spheres of production, distribution and administration, the Workers' Councils proceed to implement the first rudimentary foundations of the Communist economic system. In this way is the Dictatorship of the Proletariat realised, and it will be only through the immediate assumption by the Councils of the task of putting into effect the construction of the Communist economic system based upon the Average Social Hour of Labour that it will be possible to maintain that power and prevent its usurpation at the hands of a patiently waiting yet socially still highly motivated professional petite-bourgeoisie.

Through such a mass, class-founded revolutionary strategy, and through that strategy alone, will it prove possible to assemble the means of mass force and coercion embodied in the relentless movement of the proletarian class to assert its hegemony in society as are needed to



transform the once all-powerful fortress represented by the capitalist state apparatus into a beleaguered prison, the strategically confining and immobilising walls of which the now mighty army of the revolutionary proletariat succeeds in encircling and suffocating, finally to bring them crashing down, to crush beneath them for ever the power of Social Capital ! When that day dawns, it will be above all to the work of Jan Appel and his co-theoreticians of the transition to Communism that the triumphant workers of the world will look for guidance in fulfilling their mission as the architects and builders of Communism.

## APPENDIX I

### THE BASIC THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORK "FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNIST PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION"

Supplement to  
"Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and  
Distribution" published by Neue Arbeiterverlag,  
Berlin, 1931

#### The Workers' Councils as Organisational Foundation of Communist Production

In our work "Fundamental Principles of Communist Production and Distribution", the establishment of a Communist society is viewed from a quite different aspect from that which has previously been customary in the working class movement. To a certain degree it was the course of development taken by the Russian Revolution which was the causal premise placing firmly on the agenda the necessity to carry through a closer examination of the problems of Communist economic life. It is only necessary to read the Russian "Factory Decrees" to recognise that the workers there have no influence whatever upon the course of economic life, which inevitably leads to the conclusion that the right of disposal over the productive apparatus lies in the hands of subjectively motivated administrators and managers, and that the workers under Russian state communism have remained *wage workers*. In addition, one would have to be blind not to see that the profit motive is the foundation of Russian production, just as everywhere else in the capitalist world; that production is *not* organised to ensure the satisfaction of the needs of the producers.

A further reason compelling us to make a closer examination of this matter lies in the new situation which has arisen in respect of agrarian production.