

apparatus in opposition to the workers, must of necessity not only maintain the inequality of the various occupational groups arising thru the division of labor, but even for a time increasingly promote it. This safety measure is the more necessary--even though not always possible--the more the governing authority becomes centralized.

### III

Marx and Engels themselves were of middle-class origin; and the same holds of the founders of the extra-marxist labor movement. It was only in course of the growth of the socialist labor movement that more and more labor leaders arose from the ranks of the proletariat. Still it was always the intelligenzia which was regarded as the ideological exponent of Socialism, among the Socialists as later also among the Bolsheviks. As they saw it, members of the well-to-do, educated classes arrived at the insight that true social progress was to be sought in the labor movement, and they put themselves at its service. This recognition on their part--the "revolutionary consciousness"--they then carried over onto the masses. These latter took up with the ideas which had been popularized for them, a matter which was the easier as reality furnished continuous confirmation of the correctness of the socialist theories. Slowly but surely, the socialist ideology was thus disseminated, and it seemed to be only a matter of a relatively brief space of time until the preponderant majority of the population would think, vote and act as socialists. Socialism was just a matter of educating or influencing the masses, a question with which there was practically bound up the conquest of reforms. One bit of ideal and practical socialism after the other was attained, until finally the "truth" would be wholly triumphant.

To this growing Socialism, the growth of the bureaucracy was quite a matter-of-course. The growth of the bureaucracy was also, however, at the same time the increase of its power and sphere of authority over and against the workers. It formed the "State" within the labor movement, rewarded and punished as it saw fit, and from being a "servant" of the organization became its master. The masses existed for the bureaucracy; the workers had merely nurtured for themselves new parasites.

Waclaw Machajski, whose theories are at the basis of Max Nomad's thinking, had quite early recognized in the growing bureaucracy of the labor movement an element hostile to the worker's interests. He realized that the marxian dictum, that the "liberation of the working class can only be its own work", holds literally, that no one either would or could solve their problems

for the workers. This clarity of Machajski's was unfortunately clouded thru the influence which the social-democratic ideas had acquired even in himself. The aspirations and hopes of the labor bureaucracy and of the intellectuals in the movement had thrown him off the track. These latter as well as Machajski himself conceived the course of history, the transition from capitalism to socialism in exactly the same manner. To the reformist bureaucracy, the growth of the social-democratic and trade-union ideology and practice was at the same time the increase of the influence and power of that bureaucracy, from which it concluded that the further development would make a mere child's game of the taking over of the State and the reconstruction of economy; and Machajski fully shared this conception, though, to be sure, with different feelings. What the former yearned for and on which they congratulated themselves, Machajski feared; but both attitudes looked forward to the same development. While to the Social Democracy, furthermore, the social question was solved with the taking over of the governmental authority, to Machajski the class struggle still went on until the attainment of complete economic equality, which, permitting of equal educational possibilities, would give rise to the gradual disappearance of the opposition between workers and intellectuals, and not until that time would a truly socialist society be assured.

The Bolsheviks who were enabled, on the basis of favorable circumstances, to seize the political power in Russia, if not along social-democratic paths, yet with social-democratic ideology, and by whom the state capitalism which alone is possible there is passed off first as a transitional stage to socialism and today as completed socialism, seemed to Machajski and his followers to furnish the most magnificent confirmation of the correctness of their doctrine. Of course, they were then obliged to assert, in common with the Bolsheviks, that the Russian state capitalism was actually in conformity with Socialism as conceived by the Marxists. They had to support the bolshevist falsification in order to find their own argument confirmed. Just as Machajski's ideas arose from the pretensions of the social-reformist bureaucracy, so the "concrete" demonstration of their correctness was based on the acceptance of the bolshevist (Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin) perversion of Socialism which is identified with state capitalism.

The Russian state capitalism has, however, nothing in common with the marxian "association of free and equal producers". To the Marxist, the "first phase" of Communism is the process of the withering away of the dictatorship of the armed workers and not the extension of the bureaucratic State such as has occurred in Russia.

The first principle of marxian socialism demands the abolition of wage labor. Where wage labor prevails, there prevails exploitation; the one is inconceivable without the other. Reproduction under such conditions can only be the reproduction of exploitation. Russian wage labor, which is being brought to full bloom by the Bolsheviks for the first time and which made it necessary to have recourse to the classifying wage differentiations for the reproduction of the various labor functions, is to Marxism identical with capitalist economy. The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be conceived as a party dictatorship without abandoning Marxism. And in spite of the impossibility of identifying Marxism with russian state capitalism, this impossible equalization is thoroughly involved in Nomad's "factual demonstration".

A great number of workers, even without being aware of Machajski's ideas, have thru the force of facts come to somewhat similar conclusions. The new, marxist labor movement which is already taking form and which has broken with the legalism of the former one and with the party ideology, is quite in accord with Machajski and Nomad in judging the role of the previous labor bureaucracy and of the russian state bureaucracy. If refuses, however, to identify the original Marxism, in spite of the contained bourgeois elements, with the state-capitalist dreams of the social-democratic functionaries and liberal intellectuals or with the state-capitalist russian reality. The revolutionary character of Marxism reveals itself more and more in the contemporary declining capitalism in which the revolution becomes the only remaining practically possible task of the proletariat. Though it is theoretically impossible to identify the marxist doctrines with the falsifying interpretations of the social-democratic or bolshevist epigoni of all shades, yet even if such a thing were possible it would still furnish no proof of the correctness of Machajski's position. It would at most compel the present-day revolutionists to extend their fight against reformism and its culmination in state capitalism onto Marx himself.

However, the desire for objectivity, not dogmatic reverence, compels us to come out against Nomad in his present endeavors to trace the reigning epigonity back to Marx himself, and to discover the roots of the ambitions of the bureaucracy and of the technocratically limited intellectuals precisely in Marxism. Still, insofar as concerns the demonstrable factual material produced by Nomad, we applaud him gratefully, even though we explain the material in a different manner and come to other conclusions. We too see in the more or less conscious state-capitalist strivings of the leaders of

the old labor movement and intelligenzia, and likewise of the russian state bureaucracy, new attempts to maintain class rule, attempts which must be combatted by the working class. But, in contrast to Nomad, we see precisely in Marxism the best weapon in the struggle against these tendencies. The fact that reformism and the russian bureaucracy are throwing overboard the last remnants of marxist thinking, even as a complaisant phrase involving no obligation, and that they are training and nursing new ideologies which are plagiarisms of the capitalist ones, should surely in itself suffice to show what a chasm exists between Marxism and the advocates of state capitalism. (1).

The fact that inconsequential marxist phrases, torn from their context, remain incorporated with the russian ideology is no more to be wondered at than the fact that even the Hitler movement was compelled to operate with socialist phrases in order to win a mass basis. When Nomad in his arguments against Marxism refers to the Bolsheviks, he must first demonstrate the identity of Marxism and Bolshevism; a thing, however, which he has not yet done and which, for that matter, is impossible, and becomes constantly more impossible since the Russians are more and more openly abandoning Marxism, even as empty phraseology.

Nomad may have recourse to the argument that he takes as Marxism what today goes by that name. Just as Christianity cannot be defended with a reference to the early Christians of Jesus himself, so likewise we are not in a position, Nomad once argued, to appeal to the original Marxism, to the purity of its youth, to its early promise; the original containing in the bud what today, in the movement calling itself marxist, has come to full bloom. Apart from the circumstance that the analogy itself is a bit lame, even its acceptance does not dispense with the necessity of demonstrating that Marxism actually and of necessity finds its limit in the present-day pseudo-marxist movement and its state-capitalist aspirations. In order to combat Marxism, Nomad must also attack that marxist current which, like himself, is out

(1). In an article in Scribner's Magazine (June 1934) Nomad mentions the "state-capitalist" plans of Bismarck and states that Bismarck sought to assure himself of Marx's aid in the matter. But this can hardly be alleged as proof of the compatibility of Marxism with state capitalism, even supposing that Bismarck had actually entered into such relations with Marx. As a matter of fact, the whole story is groundless; Bismarck never turned to Marx in this connection, but conducted an inconsequential correspondence with Lasalle, whose opportunism, as is well known, always met with Marx's severest condemnation.

in opposition to bureaucracies and state capitalism and which stands for complete economic equality without delay and without for that reason being in opposition to the marxist doctrine. That, however, he has not yet done, for in fact he needs a corrupted Marxism for his own argument. All that Nomad has so far used as a basis for his critical consideration of Marxism are, insofar as it has had reference to Marx himself, superseded or false utterance of Marx with reference to long-forgotten situations and which by this time are of no significance whatsoever. Marxism itself, however,--that is, the materialist dialectic, the doctrine of value and surplus value, the theory of accumulation, historical materialism, the social average labor hour as the socialist unit of reckoning, etc.--all that has never been touched upon by the "Marx-critic" - Nomad.

But to come back to the problem actually under discussion: Nomad sees in the intellectuals a third social stratum which has special class interests and is in a position to develop an appropriate class consciousness. By the side of the opposition which has arisen thru the previous development of the productive forces, the opposition between Capital and Labor, and which can be overcome only in the classless society, we have here a new historical possibility: the rule of the intellectuals, or "capitalism without capitalists", to quote the title of one of Nomad's magazine articles. The capitalist system, however, is characterized, among other things, by the fact that it cannot be consciously directed by society or even by a certain class; that, rather, the exchange relation of commodity and surplus value production determines all social motion without regard to the will of human beings. It is not the capitalist who controls the laws of the market, but the actions of the capitalists as well as of the other classes are forced upon them by those laws. However, there is no need here for going further into these complications; it suffices to emphasize that just as Capital is incapable of governing its own movement, and just as the movement of the proletariat is dependent on factors which the proletariat itself does not determine, so likewise the intellectuals are not in a position consciously to conduct a policy by which they are aided in acquiring social mastery. Their ambitions are of no importance. The matter to be investigated is: whether the social development is driving in the direction of these ambitions. Such an investigation, however, has not been presented by Nomad, who has still contented himself with the mere assertion.

The class struggle is no more an expression of conscious class action than is the capitalist monopoly, but a necessary result of the economic development and of its re-

flection in the political life. If "extra-human" factors determine the movement of society, so also they determine that of the class struggles and revolutions within this society. The matter to be investigated therefore is: whether the compulsory movement of the middle class and intellectuals can at all come about in the direction feared by Nomad. Apart from the russian example, there is as yet no case and no country in which a political bureaucracy, with the conquest of political power, ruled society also economically. The matter to be investigated is: whether the russian special case is possibly susceptible of being generalized. What has hitherto come about, however, in the middle class and among the intellectuals (2) outside of Russia, was merely a sharpened competitive struggle of the various organizational talents, parasites and political grocer boys for the maintenance of their positions. Not being in the same measure as the proletariat compelled to solidarity, more thrown upon the resource of developing their personal flexibility in the struggle for a livelihood, they have fewer possibilities of coming out as a class than have either the workers or monopolized Capital. The leaning on this or that class, according to the situation of the moment, and if possible under the personal sway of some individual,--that is most in accord with their direct interests. They are compelled to change their horses frequently, until they have realized that as a matter of fact they have nothing to do but ride. Hence the double-facedness of this group: it can go along with Stalin and also with Mussolini. It can drink a toast to the world revolution, and also for the king of England. But one thing it cannot do: it cannot proceed independently--it cannot do Nomad the pleasure of finding his predictions confirmed.

#### IV

It is interesting to note that Nomad does not clearly delimit his concept of the intellectuals. Frequently he speaks of the middle class in general, then again of the intellectual professions, at another time of these latter in connection with the state bureaucracy, and

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(2) The "white-collar slaves" receiving starvation wages and brought together in enormous offices, frequently together with the industrial workers, are by no means regardless of what they may think of themselves, to be entered in the group of Nomad's intellectuals. They are proletarians in white shirts, like the tool makers or mechanics; for the white shirt of these latter also does not free them from the stigma of the worker, though they frequently have higher incomes and better schooling than the great mass of the white-collar proletarians.

then again of the administrative and technical officials holding important posts in the productive process. This conceptual elasticity of Nomad's has furnished good ground for one of his critics to remark that "the dictatorship of the intellectuals is as unthinkable as the dictatorship of the traveling salesmen" (3).

From the very beginning of capitalism, according to Nomad, there developed the independent strivings of the intellectuals. In the poverty which accompanied the early years of the rise of capitalism and which also struck and radicalized the intellectuals, their aims were somewhat identical with those of the proletariat. But with the growth of their social influence, their interests soon broke away from those of the workers, until we find them with the present-day presumption of being able to rule society (4). Here, then, Nomad is speaking of those elements of the middle class which are engaged in the intellectual professions, and moreover of only an infinitesimal minority, that is, of that part of the intellectuals which concerns itself with social problems and of which, again, only a ridiculously small minority developed in the way that Nomad ascribes to the entire intellectual stratum.

The majority of the intellectuals has always gone along with Capital and still today goes along with the ruling class. It works for this latter in the same sense that the workers do. The middle class itself--among which are to be counted, in addition to the better paid elements in industry and trade, also the still remaining autonomous professions, the independent merchants, a part of the coupon-clippers, the peasants, etc.--was never in a position to bind up its interests with those of the proletariat, in spite of the fact that it was slowly squeezed out by the capitalist development. Furthermore, the broad mass of the middle class stands on no higher level intellectually than the present-day working class. The circumstances that, seen from the revolutionary standpoint, on the basis of the general economic-political backwardness, there have been political joinings of forces between petty-bourgeois and workers does not affect the fact that a real union of interests was and is precluded, since the workers as the "heir" of Capital are as a class neither interested in nor capable of postponing their "inheritance" thru the support of the middle class. This latter finds itself today in an accelerated process of decline; it cannot reestablish

(3) Jerome, in "The Communist", April 1933.

(4) Nomad, "Rebels and Renegades", Conclusion.

itself either under Fascism or under Bolshevism (5). And the undeniable fact that the middle class is going under compels Nomad not to ascribe to it as a whole, but only to a part, the intellectuals,--or as it is also commonly expressed today, the "new middle class",--the design and possibility of acquiring the social mastery in the wake of capitalism. Machajski's concept of the intellectuals which contrasted all intellectual work with manual, and in its practical application related exclusively to the state bureaucracy, is here, by Nomad, after the fashion of the social-democratic and technocratic mode of thought, related mainly to the intellectuals engaged in the process of production, the managers, engineers and technicians, to whom the innumerable more or less privileged intellectual salaried employees are subordinated.

Nomad thinks of these persons as the new rising bourgeoisie. Their occupancy of the industrial "command posts" is conceived as representing economic power; and, in fact, the at present particularly favorable treatment of the Russian "specialists" seems to demonstrate that the functions of these intellectuals in the labor process carry with them certain privileges. At any rate, it was not until quite late that this group of intellectuals acquired in Russia that esteem which it now enjoys. At the beginning of the Russian Revolution, they were still by no means "Friends of the New Russia", but in part were combated most bloodily together with the bourgeoisie. Nor in the fascist countries either, in spite of its occupying all the important technical posts, has the material and social situation of this stratum of intellectuals, or of the intellectuals in general, been improved, but rather worsened. The intellectuals as a compact group were not to be had either for the fascist or for the bolshevist overturn; they were neither the initiators nor the beneficiaries of these movements. It was monopoly capitalism itself and the great middle-class stupidity that helped fascism to power, just as it was the needs of the great masses of peasants that enabled the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. The Russian intellectuals are dominated by the Russian bureaucracy just as in other countries they are dominated by Capital. They can live under either set of conditions

(5) Millions of the middle class have been completely proletarianized by the present crisis. Quite in contradiction to the superficial cry about the increased importance of the "new middle class", this new middle class is itself no more than an indication of the general pauperization. The same laws by which the "new middle class" was created are now engaged in destroying it and thereby also its importance. By way of illustration of this tendency, reference may be made to L. Corey's "The Crisis of the Middle Class."

only by hiring themselves out. No trace of a rule by intellectuals is discoverable under either system. The intellectuals are nowhere identical with the State.

In his book entitled "Rebels and Renegades", Nomad speaks of the "unmistakable purpose" of the fascist intellectuals: "to gain as much power as possible, both by helping the capitalists to cow the workers, and occasionally also by forcing the capitalists to make concessions to other classes of the population" (page 404). Here, then, he is speaking exclusively of the fascist state bureaucracy, which rules over the intellectuals and if necessary suppresses them just as it does the workers, and both in the interest and at the order of monopoly capital. And it appears that Nomad regards this state bureaucracy as standing "above the classes" as otherwise of course it could hardly force Capital to make concessions. Whether such a thing, however, is at all objectively possible, not to mention the fact that nothing of the sort has so far happened, is a question which Nomad leaves unexamined; here again he is content with the mere assertion. If the second part of this fascist tactic, as Nomad sees it, were practically possible, Fascism would never have come to power. It was precisely the impossibility of further capitalist concessions to the other strata of the population which compelled the capitalists to set up and support a bureaucratic dictatorship which stands at their exclusive disposal. Objectively, Fascism can only suppress the workers and also the middle class; it is not in a position to turn against Capital as well. It is accordingly also incapable of safeguarding the interests of the intellectuals or of being an expression of intellectualist rule. This state bureaucracy is something quite different from the "new social stratum" of managers, organizers, technicians, etc., of which Nomad speaks and which, as he sees it, are becoming the masters of society thru taking over gradually all functions of a technical and commercial sort which originally were performed by the capitalists themselves. (6).

In Nomad's writings, the bureaucratic apparatus appears as an instrument of intellectualist rule. Such a situation, however, does not exist either in Russia or under Fascism or in the American "New Deal". One must surely have an enormous fantasy in order to see in the silly antics of the "new dealers" anything more than demagoguery in the interest of the ruling monopoly capital; or to conclude from the higher wages of the Russian intellectuals that they have the disposal over Stalin's apparatus; or

(6) Cf. Nomad's article "Capitalism Without Capitalists", in Scribner's Magazine, June 1934, page 408.

from the state aid for German dentists to infer that the fascist apparatus is the vale of the intellectuals; or to find in Mussolini's African enterprise the boldness of the professors and the inventive spirit of the engineers.

Like Hilferding and Lenin, who were too much inclined to regard the process of capital concentration as an actual process of socialization, in spite of the fact that it is not until after the proletarian revolution that the process of concentration is capable of economically realizing the socialization which has taken place, so also Nomad sees this process of concentration even today as actual socialization. As a matter of fact, so long as the capital relation exists, this process of concentration, being determined by the need for profit and accumulation, can only increase the capitalist contradictions. The more the control over economy is centralized, the more is the economy convulsed, the more must the exploitation be intensified and the greater must become the revolutionary ferment. Hilferding's idea that Capital is tending in the direction of a "general cartel", Lenin's conception of a socialism organized after the model of the German postal system, is also at the basis of Nomad's illusion of the intellectualist economy. A capitalist economy concentrated in the state bureaucracy is only monopoly capitalism carried to the extreme. There is no capitalism without capitalists, as conceived by Nomad. There is no fascist country without capitalists; and the Russian bureaucracy is at the same time the Russian capitalist class, since it fulfills the capitalist functions. These bureaucrats are the exploiters of the labor of the Russian proletarians and intellectuals. If today they determine the high salaries of the Russian specialists, so they also have the power and are later compelled to lower these salaries again. Even if one is not able to demonstrate to them "in black and white" that these or those means of production belong to them, still as a bureaucracy they have the collective right of disposal over those means. If they have the control over production, so also over the manner of distribution of that portion of the surplus value which is not consumed by the necessary rate of accumulation.

Centralistic control of the means of production is capitalist control. The means of production in the hands of the producers, by which the technically necessary centralism is not precluded but rendered imperative, -- that is Communism. So long, under modern conditions, as a special group of people has the sole right of disposal over production, this special group must be rated as capitalist. In Russia, this special group is not the intellectuals, but the state bureaucracy, which of course also embraces intellectuals. But even the highest

russian planning commission is subordinate to the state bureaucracy.

The one thing left to Nomad in order to rescue his thesis of the intellectualist economy would be the complete identification of the intellectuals with the state bureaucracy. Such a procedure, however, would be equivalent to a confusion of concepts and of realities. Even though the state bureaucracy is largely recruited from the middle classes or from feudal remnants (in Russia, in part also from upstart workers, and to a less extent in fascist countries), still in private-capitalist countries it exercises the power only for the ruling capitalist strata. It cannot by way of reforms become an autonomous, socially determining power, since such reforms would be identical with the destruction of Capital. If it wants to become autonomous, it can do this at best only as in Russia, along revolutionary paths. The existence of the present-day russian bureaucracy presupposed the expropriation of the former capitalists. The expropriation of Capital in backward countries can lead, within the framework of world capitalism, only to state capitalism. In highly developed capitalist countries, however, any revolution is of necessity a worker's revolution. It can not find its limits in state capitalism, since this is incapable of setting aside even temporarily the causes by which the revolution was brought about. If the workers have rebelled against capitalism, so they must also of necessity rebel against the state capitalism which likewise is incapable of improving their situation.

The revolution of the workers is of necessity the permanent revolution until every capitalistic relation is set aside. It is only in the wake of a workers' revolution that a complete state capitalism in highly developed countries is conceivable; but this apparent possibility is at the same time precluded because for such countries it would be equivalent to a step backward which is bound to make of any attempt at state capitalism a quickly passing adventure. Since here the complete state capitalism is objectively not possible, any fascist revolution is bound to stop with the complete subordination of the State to the interests of monopoly capital. The next step, the expropriation of capital, is fatal also to any other form of capitalistic exploitation. The State as State, not the intellectualist State, has today in capitalist countries the political instruments of power in its hands. The State has more economic authority, more influence upon the economy in fascist than in democratic countries, because in the fascist countries monopoly capital was compelled to proceed more aggressively against all other capitals and strata of the population in order to maintain the capitalist system at all. Here, Capital and State tend more and more to merge with each other; that

is, Capital directs the State just as it does its own office employees. It is only in Russia that the State is the owner of the means of production; but here also--to repeat--there is no more trace of intellectualist domination than in the capitalist countries.

The only assertion that Nomad is justified in making on this point is that the russian state bureaucracy rules in Russia. What he might consider is this: whether similar conditions may take form in other countries; that is, whether bolshevist revolutions are possible in industrially developed countries, or whether the truth is not rather that here the last possible capitalist modification has been accomplished with fascist monopoly capitalism.

It is commonly assumed that the backwardness of Russia is responsible for the difficulties and the round-about course of its "socialism". We assert that by virtue of these difficulties and this backwardness socialism within the framework of world capitalism is quite precluded, and that a leap from semi-feudal conditions into socialism is possible only under world-revolutionary conditions.

Still, we assert at the same time that it is precisely the backwardness of the russian economy which is the secret of the bolshevist success and of the carrying thru of the russian state capitalism, that without this backwardness neither would have been possible.

The state-capitalist chatter of Bismarck's to which Nomad has referred, the state-capitalist foundations of Turkey, the state-capitalist tendencies coming to light more clearly in Italy than in Germany, the bolshevist character of the chinese revolution,--these things speak a clear language. They denote, that is, that a capitalist development in backward countries within the existing imperialistic milieu is possible only as a hot-house growth, that it cannot take the "normal" course of capitalist development. A national capitalist unfoldment more or less independent of international monopolist-imperialistic capital is possible only with the greatest attainable concentration and centralization of all economic and political instruments of power: the thing that for "normal" capitalist development appears as a result is here a necessary presupposition. If the greatest possible concentration of capitals and the unification of imperialistic endeavor is a necessary matter-of-course for all capitalist countries within the framework of international competition, it must today be much more necessary for those backward countries struggling much harder for their existence. If Russia, for example, did not wish to share the fate of the semi-colonies, if it wanted to become a world power on its own account, or

even to assure its independence, it was not free to take the normal path of capitalist development. Russian capitalism in that case could not, like the English, German or American capitalism, whose development extended over centuries or several generations, arrive at concentration by way of competition, but was obliged to overleap by political means the *laissez-faire* period. Not only was Russia obliged to do this, but was also able to do so, because she was able to begin with those productive methods with which the progressive unfoldment of capital in highly developed countries had ended.

When the Bolsheviks came to power, they had no intention of expropriating industrial capital. They demanded no more than control of production. By way of credit control, foreign trade monopoly, transport monopoly, etc., they thought they could direct the capitalist movement by means of the state authority. The expropriation of the capitalists by the workers without the consent of the Bolsheviks, the resistance of the capitalists speculating upon a defeat of the Bolsheviks, forced the party to take up the nationalization of all industry. The state, i.e., the bureaucracy of the Bolshevik Party, thus became the total capitalist. The slow disruption of all extra-bureaucratic centers of power, of the open and concealed capitalist opposition and the emasculation of the Soviets soon provided it with the possibility of fulfilling the capitalistic functions as well as those of suppression. Practically, however, this was possible only because of the relative weakness of Capital, and hence of the proletariat, as well as the backwardness of the peasant masses who were not in a position themselves to represent their interests permanently through taking over the powers of government. The Bolsheviks maintained themselves in power by means of a systematic playing off of the workers' interests against those of the peasants, and vice versa. The weakness of all the various classes enabled and rendered necessary a governing bureaucracy which, thru skillful tacking and balancing of the various interests, could make itself more and more autonomous. The repetition of this process in other countries presupposes similar situations, which, however, are not present in any capitalistically developed country.

The Russian "neo-feudal" situation is bound up with backward conditions, and as a matter of fact it is only in backward countries that similar endeavors are present, while in highly developed countries the Bolshevik influence has slowly receded and is today almost completely eliminated. If, as Nomad fears, the Russian example should be repeated in capitalist countries, an historical retrogression would have to be possible. And it is

probably for this reason that Nomad says, in the previously mentioned article in Scribner's, that state capitalism "may be brought into existence in the wake of a fascist victory accompanied by a cultural plunge into the dark ages" (p. 441). Apart from the fancifulness of the idea that no other than the intellectuals should lead us into cultural barbarism, i.e., into a state of affairs which necessarily makes the intellectuals superfluous, the fate of state-capitalist "dreamers" like Schleicher and Roehm in Germany has surely shown that neither the German capitalists nor the German intellectuals are inclined or in a position to turn history backward and bring about a state-capitalist economy. State capitalism is not an indication of new capitalist life, but a sign of its weakness. These tendencies stand at the beginning and at the end of capitalism, at the two weak points of its development. State capitalism is not a higher stage of the capitalist expansion, but only one of the many manifestations of capitalism, which in all its manifestations must go under. For all these manifestations contain in themselves the contradiction between productive forces and production relations.

#### V.

With the development of the division of labor as a means to, and expression of, the increasing social forces of production, labor was rendered both simpler and more difficult. At the same time that skilled labor was acquiring greater importance in the social process of production, it simplified the labor process as well; and the more concern was devoted to this latter consideration, the greater was the demand for skilled labor. In spite and even because of all the specialization, the importance of skilled labor has increased.

The division of labor as accelerated by capitalism has constantly deepened the cleft between intellectual labor and manual. This contradiction is visible not only in production, but in all the spheres of social life. Intellectual activity learned to overlook the close connection with the practical activity of society; theory and practice, which in reality are inseparable, were looked upon as separate both by theoreticians and practitioners. The intellectuals reproduced themselves as intellectuals, the workers as workers; the apparent autonomy of each group was increasingly recognized as a fact. The thought that there would always be intellectuals appeared quite as obvious as the thought that there must also always be people on hand to do the dirty work.

Practice appears here as a product of theory, tho both can only exist together; and this false appearance en-

abled the theoreticians to regard themselves as the salt of the earth, while they looked upon the workers as constituting nothing more than the material with which they worked. The intellectuals saw themselves as the essential and decisive group of society; a group which, to be sure, was conditioned by Capital, but Capital also appeared to them merely as an intellectual creation.

Capitalism developed the productive forces of society, in enormous measure. This development is the secret of the progress in science and hence also of the increasing importance of the intellectuals. Now that capitalism is in course of stagnation, its science also is bound to stagnate; with the decline of capitalism is bound up also the decline of its science and thereby of its intellectuals. It is only because the development of the productive forces is not dependent on any one particular form of society that the intellectuals as well as science may be said to stand "above the classes". In a new society science loses--and with it the intellectuals lose--those characteristics which were valid only for capitalist society.

One cannot judge from the attitude of the present-day intellectuals as to the attitude of those people by whom the intellectual functions will be performed tomorrow. Nor can the present human egoism, which necessarily has to assert itself individually, be regarded as the manner in which egoism is to be expressed for all eternity; there is also an egoism which can find satisfaction only in work in common. But if the ideological attitude of the present-day intellectuals throws no light on the further development, still a great number of insights can be won thru consideration of their economic necessities and the change of the economic relations themselves.

Within the capitalist decline, a part of the intellectuals also is bound to go under. The competition among them is growing more intense; they are losing the possibility of reproducing themselves; their economic situation grows worse of necessity. The reaction to this state of affair--a reaction strengthened by way of the intensified competitive struggle for the vanishing positions--can only be the overrating of their own importance. One does not shield himself against death by committing suicide, but by the strengthening of his vital energies. The narrower the life of the intellectuals becomes, the more persistently will they attempt to demonstrate to society the necessity of their existence. They have to become reactionary in order to live, and in this way are themselves obliged to contribute to still further undermining the social position which they have hitherto occupied.

If the capitalistic intellectual is not in a position to go forward, because capitalism is going under, so also the intellectuals cease to be the exponents of science. If the proletarian class alone is in a position to drive forward the social forces of production along revolutionary paths, it has thereby also become the bearer of science, and the intellectuals are obliged to operate within the framework of the communist system. With the setting aside of the class relations, there vanish also the sharp distinctions in the evaluation of the various labor functions. The reproduction of the functionally different labor powers is no longer individually determined, but socially.

Without economic equality, there is no communist society. This equality must not only be actually possible, it must also be capable of driving forward the productive forces of society, and until that time communism is quite out of the question. But if communism is bound up with the presence of equality, then it is also beyond doubt that this equality will be actualized; for the social forces of production are impelling to communism, and this impulsion is the historically determining factor.

The distinctions between skilled and simple labor can be abolished or modified only thru improvement of the general labor level. The changeable estimation of the various labor qualifications has obliterated the fact that the distinction between skilled and unskilled labor is growing less sharp. The mass of the workers has become skilled workers, notwithstanding that their labor is rated as primitive; it is miles removed from the primitive labor of the period of manufacture.

Apart from exceptions the number of which is constantly growing less and which socially do not count, the demands placed on that element of the population performing intellectual functions are no higher than those placed on the mass of the workers; they are merely different. The division of labor has also affected in very large measure the intellectual functions, without lowering the level of the intellectuals themselves. Even today the great mass of the intellectuals represents approximately the average intelligence. The fact that in certain industries a single manipulation constitutes the worker's entire activity does not place him outside the society for which the manipulation by no means represents the state of labor technique. The general qualifications have improved and have brought with them an unmistakable tendency to standardization. Still more rapidly than the intellectuals were able to cultivate their special qualities there came about an elevation of training as a whole. This process may be held up temporarily, but after all it is destined again and

again to assert itself. A development in the opposite direction, the permanent proletarian helotism, would preclude the possibility of communism, but then also the possibility of capitalism--in fact, any possibility whatever of social life, since retrogression means death.

The intellectuals have no economic functions. Capitalist economy is not finally subject to human will, but is determined "extra-humanly"; commodity fetishism rules. The intellectuals have only technical and ideological functions to perform for capitalism; their capacities stand in no real connection with the social economy. They have no more to offer communism than have the workers. They know no more about the social laws of motion than do the workers. When they are interested in a social change, they wish to bring it about from the side of consciousness. But there is no social consciousness, and so in their theories they arrive no farther than at state capitalism, which compels to dictatorship over the workers. They want to organize society in the same way that one organizes a factory, a monopoly, a university; that is, in precisely the same manner that organizing is done even today.

Nor do the workers know much more. They need only to know that they themselves are not the masters in the social projects conceived by the intellectuals. If they do not know it, they cannot help learning it; for their material distress, however often they may leave its abolition to others, can never by others be even so much as mitigated. There remains to the workers in the last instance nothing but to take charge, themselves, of the social organization. The thing that to them alone is possible is also at the same time the only way out of poverty and crisis.

The capitalist decline compels capitalistic terrorism. If capital can no longer progressively grow, it is obliged, in order to maintain itself, to proceed to the absolute impoverishment of the great masses of the population, and this makes the permanent terrorism necessary. The terrorism precludes political activity on the part of the less pauperized elements of the population; the future lies in the insurrections of the most impoverished. A great measure of actual poverty leads to spontaneous uprisings, which, by reason of the existing terrorism, can also have only spontaneously formed leaderships. The necessarily spontaneous character of the insurrections as well as their scope, which must be an enormous one in order to make the insurrections at all possible, restrict the participation in them of the intellectuals not yet proletarianized. The revolutionary mass is left to itself.

It can either be defeated in order later to break forth anew, since it can not be exterminated, or it can win the victory over Capital and take possession of the means of production. Under the circumstances described, the workers are assembled in masses only in the industrial enterprises. The industrial enterprise is the

starting point of their insurrections and the natural basis of their dictatorship and efforts at social reorganization. The workers have no interest in inequality; they want no one over themselves, and they have no one under them, for they were the lowest stratum of society. They will be obliged, in the interest of a frictionless process of production subject to their control, to have recourse to equal "remuneration". Unequal "remuneration" is always an indication that the workers themselves do not rule, but are ruled. The workers are the only persons who can take up with this equal remuneration as a social necessity, and they will be obliged to devise economic methods to the end that this equality may be assured. For a communist society, there is only one measure of estimation, the natural one. Just as the machines are looked upon only as machines, as use values, so also must the necessary "measure of value" for the production of use objects be a natural one--the labor time. The social character of labor compels to the acceptance of the average labor time as the computing unit and as the general social measure of value. The social average labor hour precludes economic inequality. There is no communism without such a socially valid measure of value by which the society is impersonally conducted. There is no release from working-class distress without communism. The struggle will be waged until the socialization is actually carried out by way of society. With equal "remuneration" is bound up the social reproduction of labor power. Each form of labor is open to everyone; the particular function which a person performs in the social labor process is henceforth actually just a matter of the person's individual capacity. This fact, entering into the individual's consciousness, is the assurance of a relatively frictionless acceptance of the division of labor. The shortening of labor time, henceforth possible, enables the whole labor problem in general to become one of secondary importance; people will learn to take the performance of their social function as a matter of course in the same way that at the present time they brush their teeth.

But we are not so much interested here in what will be done under the new society; we are here concerned merely with emphasizing that the present-day working class is quite in a position, without and if necessary against the intellectuals, to make their revolution and to build up the new society. This state of things is in itself a sufficient guarantee that the intellectuals, in their

own vital interest, will take their places in the new society and under the conditions of this society. This is not the place for going further into the laws of motion of a communist society; it might be stated, however, that if Nomad had concerned himself more with these laws, he would have realized that the whole problem of the intellectuals is one of subordinate importance,--that the matter of much greater moment is to make it clear to the working class that even today it is in a position to build a real communist society and that any difficulties which may be occasioned by the intellectuals may be dealt with in the framework of the proletarian dictatorship.

- P. M. -

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NOTICE

Max Nomad will reply to this article in the next issue of the Council Correspondence.

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CONTENTS:

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