

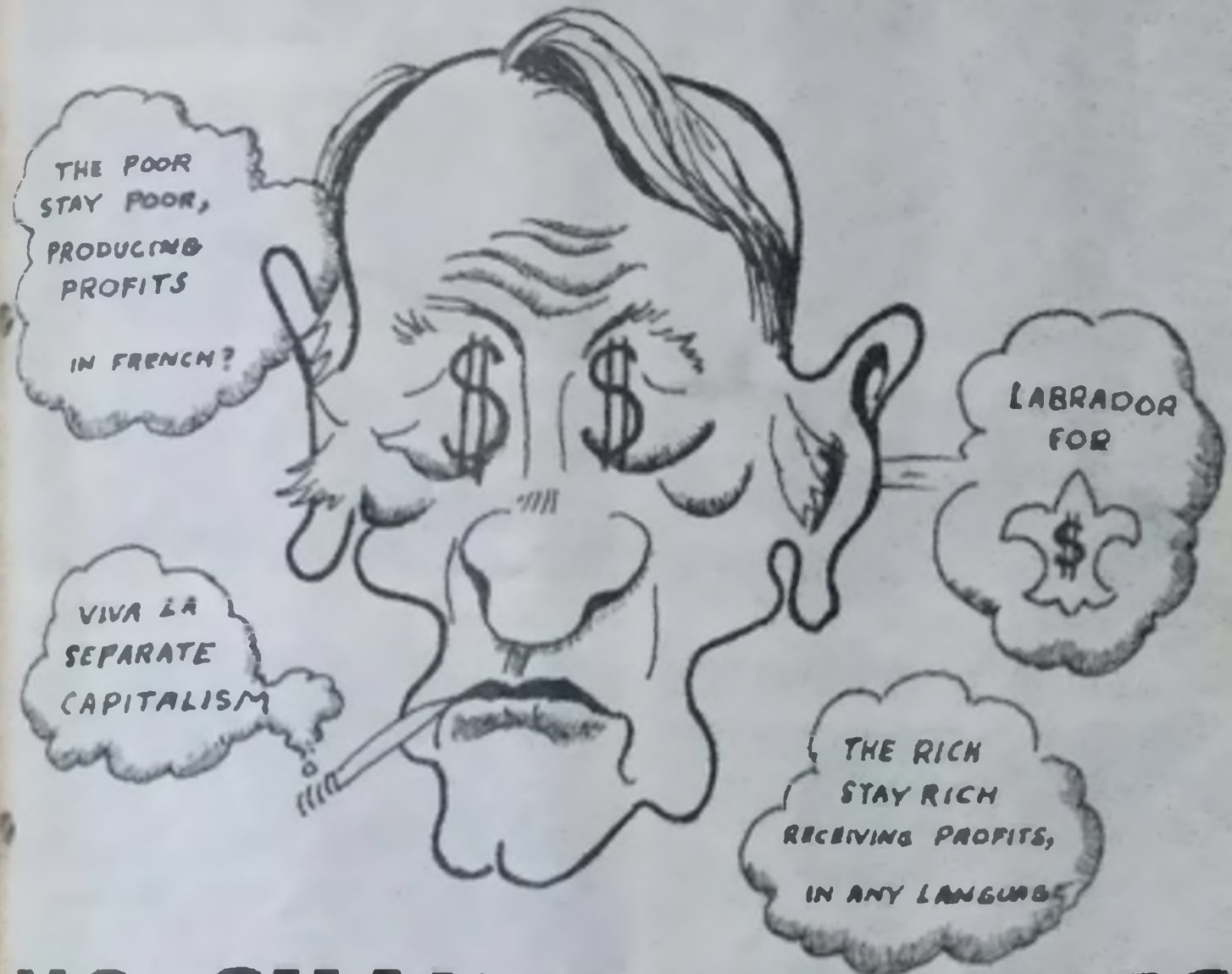
Quarterly journal of the Socialist Party of Canada

FULCRUM

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with a lever long enough and a fulcrum strong enough the world can be moved



NO CHANGE IN QUEBEC

Also in this issue:

Swedish Politics

Trade Unions

Tearing Socialist

Fallen "Socialist" God

French Politics

Christianity or Socialism (series)

SOAPBOX

Reader's turn on the stand

Force for democracy?

I apologize for not renewing my subscription to FUCRUM when it was due, some two months ago. I hereby renew. But I do have a question or two. The Object and Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party of Canada seem to be at odds. The Object states that the aim is common ownership and "democratic control of the means and instruments of producing...wealth..." In the Declaration of Principles, Section 6 speaks of the armed forces, the conquest of which the workers must work towards that they the armed forces, "may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and overthrow of plutocratic privileges," and in Section 8 it says the party seeking to do these things "must be determined to wage war against all other political parties..."

I fail to see how you can honestly speak of democracy and force in the same breath. Believers in democracy do not speak in terms of overthrowing through the use of armed forces and "waging war" or people opposed to their way of thinking. Section 7 says the party seeking to emancipate the workers must be "hostile" to all other parties. In a democracy all parties are hostile to each other except where you have coalitions, so I see no harm in hostility, but coupled with the use of the armed forces to "overthrow" and "wage war" against political opponents, the word "hostile" doesn't fall within the accepted meaning of the word "democratic."

I believe that by the use of the words force, overthrow, hostile and war, socialists are delaying "The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments of producing and distributing wealth..."

Ted Wilson, Thompson, Manitoba

REPLY

Principle No. 6 quite clearly expresses the need for the conquest of, not the "armed forces", but the government of which the armed forces is but a part. This is simply facing the reality that government functions in the interests of the capitalist interests, both externally against competing capitalists and internally against the workers. Clearly, in the advanced nations this state power has been made answerable to parliament.

It is the socialist intention, by electing a majority to parliament, to turn this machinery around and use it to relieve the capitalist class of their ownership of the means of production. It is contended that the material development of

socialist knowledge amongst the working class will pre-empt the need for external use of the armed forces freeing them to hang like the sword of Damocles, hopefully unused, for any capitalist(s) who might be foolhardy enough to attempt violence to thwart the will of a socialist majority. It is ironic that in the previous issue of FUCRUM a Leninist group criticized the Socialist Party for being too soft on this point, but the Leninists are motivated by minority conscious action to implant capitalism in place of feudalism or immature capitalism.

The writer himself concedes a variety of inter-relations of hostility. Socialist hostility to all other political parties arises from the fact that they all support capitalism. So it is then necessary to emphasize this hostility. It means there must be continual opposition to them and no consideration of any such nonsense as "temporary aid," "common front" or "lesser evil" with them. Furthermore, there is an abundance of evidence, even amongst the ones who like to take on the socialist label, that this hostility is quite mutual.

Regarding the last point the capitalist class have a tremendous propaganda power to distort the meaning of any term. Witness what they have done with the words "socialism" and "communist". But for many, if not most, the term "wage war" conveys a different impression than the Socialist intent. Other Socialist writings do elaborate on this but, as our critic indicates, an initial repulsion may prevent a contact from deeper study. Newcomers to the Socialist case are urged to treat the Object and Declaration of Principles as an interrelated whole and not take words out of context and attach isolated meanings to them. The essence of the statement is conscious majority working class political action for establishing a classless democracy. Our Object and Declaration of Principles can mean nothing but non-violent struggle as its methods. Also, some years ago a tacit agreement was reached not to change the wording of the statements except by majority decision of all the Companion Parties of Socialism.

It is good that our reader should question our terminology because we do not encourage the blind belief demanded by other political parties. What we do encourage is a conscious understanding of socialist principles and if you agree with our ideas, even though you doubt our terminology, you would still consider joining the party as we appreciate members with an active concern for the movement.

INFORMATION CENTERS

Socialist Party of Canada
P.O. Box 4240, Stn. A
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3N4

Parti Socialiste du Canada
C.P. 241, Pointe-aux-Érables,
Québec

Socialist Party of Canada
P.O. Box 115
Warrington, Man. R4R 2A1

Socialist Party of Canada
P.O. Box 1011, Stn. A
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2P1

Same Society?

Hello! I read your newspaper ... and I'd like to educate myself further by seeking for:

SOCIALISM, UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC, Engels	\$1.00
MAN-POWER AND CAPITAL, Marx	1.00
VALUE, PRICE AND PROFIT, Marx	.75
COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, Marx	.75
	\$4.00

May I also recommend that you read "THE SAME SOCIETY" by Erich Fromm, in which the author reaches similar conclusions to your own except he is a lot more critical of the "contradictions" and fallacies inherent in Marx's writings, e.g. referring to page 213 where he states that Marx was "disappointed and discouraged, sensing the failure of his revolutionary hopes" and the "failure to pay enough attention to the powers of ideas in their theory of historical materialism."

His view is similar to your own on many points: (1) The democratic approach. (2) The non-existence of socialism in the Soviet Union and China, outside of the very narrowest economic definitions that we have been taught in school but also seem to attack the strict economic point of view of many Marxists to the neglect of the spiritual and social MAN. (Read especially his opinion of this on page 228). Please Reply.

MARK CRAWFORD, Williams Lake

REPLY:

We are not aware of major fallacies or contradictions in Marx's writings. But he seems to have been over-optimistic about the speed of the workers in absorbing Socialist/Communist ideas. If "inherent" means basic or major, then the SPC could oppose Fromm on this point. Marx's general analysis of capitalism is regarded as being factual today; the system being still with us, fundamentally unchanged and materially and historically over-ripe for the change to common ownership, world-wide. He was a scientist, not a crystal ball gazer and neither he nor crystal ball gazers could predict the world capitalist "strategies" of reforms to the system under the guise of "Socialism," nor the Bolshevik-Leninist damage to the workers' learning processes that have taken place since his time.

We know of no public (capitalist) school that has taught Marxism's "narrowest economic definitions" (how many are there?). As their curriculum, they invariably teach state ownership as being Socialism, and falsify, obscure, or never mention Marx's economic analysis of this system. They are impelled to because the "educational" system is under the dictates of the owning class in all countries.

We know of no Marxists who stress "the strict economic point of view ... to the neglect of the spiritual and social MAN," if by "spiritual" you

exclude religion and other "non-material" ideas. The economic base of any system could be separated from its superstructure. The base determines the superstructure. So it would be impossible for Socialism to exist in Russia or China without the "narrowest economic definition" with the institutions of state capitalism existing on top. Marx was early concerned with human slavery and it is his early philosophical writings that seem to have attracted Fromm. Marx's subsequent delving into the excavation of capitalism, revealing the cause of the slavery, and his Materialist Conception of History exposing the oppressions of capitalism do not seem to have attracted Eric Fromm very much. Which is probably why Fromm was little concerned with, or ignored Marx's solution to the problems of the world's workers. And here the concept "workers" is stressed, not "MEN." While Socialist society will also enable the former capitalist class to live like human beings, the present useful class, acting politically in favor of its material interests for a sane society where all humans will be free to live full lives.

Recommended material on this subject in Communist Party journals are: "Fromm's Same Society" (WESTERN SOCIALIST, 44/58); "Marx's Conception of Socialism," and "Where do We Go From Alienation?" (SOCIALIST STANDARD, Dec./73 and Jan./74 respectively); "Workers on Bikes," and "Socialism and Religion in Australia," (SOCIALIST STANDARD, May/June, and July/Aug./76 respectively.)

Intolerance

Intolerance is a charge often laid on Socialists. It is said Socialists are not prepared to find excuses for anyone or anything. If our detractors mean that we are intolerant of society, they are correct, but they usually mean more. They go on to say that this intolerance of society manifests itself in every personal action. To an extent this is also true, for a Socialist rarely lets an occurrence pass without applying to it his Socialist reasoning. Thus it follows that a Socialist must place a different construction from the ordinary man on the things that occur in every day life. For example, a man may object to a strike because of a personal discomfort the strike may cause. On the other hand, a Socialist, who may also be adversely affected by the strike, with his understanding of the workings of society will take a different attitude.

Since there are but a few Socialists, it follows that Socialist ideas are unpopular. And since there is little that happens today that a class-conscious Socialist can approve, he is treated by his fellow workers with the epithet "intolerant". But surely all the obstacles the Socialists place in the road of working class advancement, the mud and slime thrown at progressive thinkers, and the attempts of ridicule and harassment

Rene's First Broken Promises

When the world's workers have finally come of age the proletarian electorate will vote for the same things as those workers who are members of the Socialist Parties. There will be no misinterpretation of ideas or vagueness between one and the other as persists in leftist reform parties.

Therefore, the familiar process of a new leftist Premier of a province or country warning faithful party followers at a party convention or executive meeting that, "sorry, but there are some parts of our election platform we just cannot carry out you know, because we are now elected to represent all the people." And, as the story goes, the party members comprise a tiny fraction of the whole electorate. For those party members who inconveniently point out that there is no difference between what we want and what the majority voted for, the new in-office Messiah can fall back on the excuse that there are large, other party minorities who voted against, and their wishes too must be respected.

This is an old story with provincial OCF/NDP premiers trying to rationalize inaction on some of the capitalist patchwork they were elected on, because of other priorities of running capitalism. It is being repeated a scant three weeks after polling day by one Rene Levesque, leader of the victorious Parti Quebecois.

Intolerance

Thrust at Socialists would indicate that the capitalist class is also intolerant. In fact Socialists and capitalists are intolerant of each other. This leaves only the worker who is not class-conscious tolerant. But where does this tolerance leave him?

It makes him accept his wage-slavery, degradation and insecurity with little more than a murmur. It reconciles him to war, slugs and starvation. It blinds him to his environment and muffles even his own cries of help. It keeps him docile and willing to produce wealth that he doesn't own and his master keeps; stultifies his imagination of what life should be like, and stifles his desire to improve his condition.

It is only intolerance that will serve the turn of the working class. Until the working class decide upon intolerance they will not better their condition. When they do achieve intolerance they will not be far from achieving their emancipation.

Brian Woolcock

Leftist parties swim in a sea of reform — capitalist ideology. The Parti Quebecois does too but its notable appeal was for Quebec provincial independence from the rest of the country. There is nothing in the P.Q. platform to suggest the fact that present world society is class divided between owners and non-owners of the means of life. Or that this fact is the cause of the poverty and drudgery of Quebec workers, as with all wage-slaves. Even if the goal of independence is reached the workers of Quebec will discover they own no country or province, and that having their own language is as much glittering tinsel as unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation or state ownership was proved to be. The minority class of people who own the means of life will still do so, and no change for the workers will have taken place. The years of P.Q. lies, including the big one of nationalism (used by ruling class parties everywhere) will soon bear their bitter fruit. And Monsieur Levesque has recently begun to prepare his blind followers for the blows that are coming.

Six days before the annual commercial debauchery commemorating a mythical religious figure was to be observed, the local Daily Colonist quoted Levesque and revealed that he and Jesus Christ have a lot in common. On Dec. 19th it headlined -

"Be Patient, Levesque Tells P.Q."

He warned P.Q. militants "...not to be too impatient for change." He must have been re-sounding speeches by Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, Ed Schreyer, Alan Blakemore and Dave Barrett.

He said, "he understands the impatience of party militants who have long waited for a change." (If they were militant why were they waiting?) Contradictions have little effect on class unconscious workers of the left or right. Because without apparent adverse effect, he told the top P.Q. council members a few sentences later "to avoid falling into the trap of being 'talkers' rather than 'doers.'" In leftist jargon "talking" means doing nothing, while blind political action is the ultimate in correctness.

He said future relations between the P.Q. and the government are in "a delicate state," but on the other hand the party must not "dictate the way in which the administration will act," since elected members must represent "all the people and not just the party." Amen.

The misled members of the P.Q., and camp following Maoists, Trotskyists, NDP'ers and Communists, take note. All these false fronts are variations in the tune the workers are expected to dance to — capitalism as usual. The blind alley leads to disillusionment and despair.

The following capsule description of the political parties that contested the last Swedish election appeared in *VAJFERTIALISM*, produced by a small group of Anarchists in that country. It was originally published under the title, "From Right To Left, The Circle is Closed." This English translation reveals the capitalist-reformist nature of all Swedish Parties.

The Swedish Election

THE MODERATES (Conservative Party) - Marginal - and other taxes:

Taxes - and especially marginal taxes - are one of the central questions in the propaganda of the Moderates.

High marginal taxes set up wage increases, cause price increases and leads to stagnated production and increased unemployment, they argue in their propaganda pamphlet, "Straight Answers from the Moderates."

On the other hand low marginal taxes would lead to real wage increases, lower price increases (or none at all), increased production and reduced unemployment. That is what the Moderates argue.

All this is nonsense. Taxes are not, never have been and never will be the workers' problem. Tax policies are about which section of the capitalist class who shall pay for the upkeep of its own state machinery.

In the end it is the capitalist class that pays all taxes. Even when it seems as if workers do pay taxes, e.g. in the form of income tax, the cost falls on the capitalists.

As Friedrich Engels wrote in 1872, "What the workers pay in taxes, in the end, included in the cost of producing labour power and must therefore be compensated by the capitalist" (The Housing Question.)

The Moderates too know this, after all. Lowered marginal taxes shall give the wage earners "...a real increase in their buying power with lower wage increases than otherwise..." (our italics), they say in their Straight Answers. Exactly: lower wage increases than otherwise.

One only has to look back in time to see how false their arguments are. Not very long ago both total taxes and marginal taxes were much lower than today. Was the workers real wages high then? Did prices not rise? Did capitalism not go through its periodical crises with stagnated or falling production and increased unemployment?

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Vanguard Books
1207 Granville St.

The Nordic
146 E. Hastings St.

Of course it did. The Moderates are open defenders of capitalism - and inevitably it leads them to make stupid and badly founded excuses for what a system based on one class exploitation of another can't be defeated with leftist arguments.

THE CENTER PARTY - Decentralization?

The Center Party is the biggest of the openly capitalist parties in Sweden and through "decentralization" they hope to make capitalism a humane system for everyone.

According to the Center Party it is "the social democratic government's policy of centralization" that causes most of today's problems. Through decentralization (on the other hand)

Political and economic power will be spread out; All will get the right to work. Equality will be created. But neither a centralized nor a decentralized capitalism is in the interest of the working class. "Right to work" is a paraphrase of "right to employment" and the very system of wage labour precludes any such right. Labour power is bought and sold as long as profit prospects are good and is not bought when they cease to be good.

Those buying it are the capitalist class and those selling it are the working class. It is in this basic inequality that capitalism is based, one class owns the means of living and another does not. This basic inequality also precludes equality within other fields of society.

"Decentralization" is in fact a reflection of the interests of the small capitalists as against the big ones. But the working class has an interest in taking sides between different sections of the capitalist class.

It is not true that "centralization" is caused by government policies. A government can work for or against centralization - but it can't reverse the trend towards centralization which is built into capitalism.

Capitalism is a commodity society. Many capitalists compete about a limited market. The winners in this competition are those producing cheapest. Big capitals producing with the most modern and efficient productive methods beat smaller ones.

Centralization within other fields of society - e.g. politics - are a reflection and consequence

of this economic centralization. The Center Party can do nothing to stop it.

THE PEOPLES PARTY (Liberal): No freedom

"Social reforms without socialism" is the main slogan used by the Liberal Party in this election. "Without socialism" was not necessary because the social reforms preclude socialism.

Reforms are capitalism's adaption to economic development. They are not introduced because of general humanitarian reasons but for practical ones. But there are differences between political parties as to what is practical.

When the Liberal Party says, "without socialism" they mean without extensive state interference and state control. The disunity between them and the social democrats is only a disunity about what is best for capitalism.

The Liberal Party pictures itself as a party of freedom. But their "freedom" is only the freedom to buy and sell, with day care centres, in order that both parents shall be able to wage labour - "freedom" for men and women to wage labour on equal terms - and the freedom of the capitalists to exploit the workers.

The "freedom" of the Liberal Party is a freedom within the general non freedom of capitalism. Real freedom can come first when the means of production are the common property of the whole of society and each man, woman and child has free access to the proceeds of production.

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS - What security?

Don't vote away your security" is a social democratic slogan in this election campaign. The security they are talking about is the "security" we have today: to work eight hours a day for the minority that owns the means of production (they call it right to work) and be able to get unemployment pay when you have become unemployed, the security to live on a meagre pension when you have become too old or worn out to be profitable any longer, to get a rent subsidy when your rent is too high for your low wage etc.

This "security" is a result of social reforms and there is nothing especially social democratic about it. Similar reforms have been passed by most developed capitalist countries and the reason for these is that they correspond to the needs of a developed capitalism.

Many reforms are intended to keep down the wages bill for the capitalists; they are there instead of wages, not as an addition to them. Why shall, for example, the capitalist pay wages to workers without children corresponding to the cost for a whole family, when he can pay children allowances through the state to a selection and keep wages down in this way?

Other reforms, e.g. in the field of education, have similar purposes. A modern capitalism can't

function with an illiterate working class: it needs educated and specialised workers.

The social democrats often picture themselves as the party of social reform par excellence. It is therefore somewhat ironic that in this election campaign they blame the other parties for wanting too many reforms. The "extravagancy" of the "bourgeois" parties will bring about an economic catastrophe they say: increased deficit in the balance of payments, increased foreign debts, a "hot" wage bargaining period later this autumn.

But the economy they are talking about is capitalism and the deficit in the balance of payments is the capitalists'. It is not the workers, but the capitalists who get foreign debts. It is not the workers who import and export: they sell their labour power.

Whether the social democrats remain in government or are changed for an openly capitalist government, capitalism will remain and with it the thousands of problems that it creates.

LEFT PARTY COMMUNISTS (VPK)

The Left Party Communists are "the party of socialism in Sweden", they say in their Election Manifesto. This is of course not true. VPK is one of several parties standing for state capitalism.

VPK used to be the direct voice of the Soviet Union in Sweden. Today, at the same time as they still claim there is "socialism" in Russia, they prefer not to talk about the Soviet Union and can sometimes even criticise certain aspects of that country.

Today VPK stresses that their "socialism" (state capitalism) will be a very special Swedish variety of "socialism." The wage slaves in "Swedish socialism" will, for example, be allowed to organise in trade unions and use the strike as a weapon in the wage struggle.

This shows how little VPK understands socialism. There will be no trade unions in a socialist society - not because they are banned (or turned into state organs) as in the Soviet Union, but because the need for trade unions disappears when the wages system is abolished.

For VPK the road to state capitalism goes over a long list of social reforms. They are either carefully worked out to suit the needs of present day capitalism or are quite impossible to realize - and in socialism they would have no meaning whatsoever.

Vague formulations fill their program: "an effective price stop", "justice for pensionery", "a just taxation policy" and a whole list of nationalisations: private timber companies, ironworks, shipyards and private business banks.

"Justice" is what all political parties claim to stand for and it will still not be achieved through wage labour for the state.

SKP - SWEDEN'S COMMUNIST PARTY

The Maoist Sweden's Communist Party is China's Swedish agency. The only constant factor in the policy of SKP is that it always reflects changes in the Chinese domestic and foreign policy - and that policy is the policy of the Chinese capitalist class.

Today there is a conflict between on the one hand China and on the other hand USA and Soviet Union. Therefore a "Front against the super powers" becomes one of the most important questions for SKP in this year's election.

It has also now led them back to the position of the Swedish capitalist class of defending "national independence." It has even gone so far that they now speak of strengthening Sweden's military power.

The "fatherland" that SKP defends does not belong to the workers but to the capitalists. Nations are capitalist units and have no place in socialism. There can be no "Swedish socialism" because a large part of the means of production for Sweden are not within the borders of the country.

When SKP talks about "socialism" they mean, in fact, state capitalism à la China, which can, of course, be established in one country.

KAP - COMMUNIST WORKERS' LEAGUE

The Trotskyite Communist Workers League is one of the smallest parties in this election.

For KAP "struggle" is a kind of metaphysical force with whose aid capitalism can be made to work in a way that is foreign to its own nature. "Struggle" shall for example give: Guaranteed and increased real wages; An effective price stop; A distribution of all available work through a general shortening of working hours without a wage cut.

It never demands anything that transcends the wage labour and capital realisation - the very axis around which capitalism turns. All their demands breathe confusion as to the basic nature of capitalism.

When KAP wants a price stop, together with increased wages, they overlook the fact that wages are also prices: the price of labour power. Price stops are never effective under capitalism and wages never guaranteed - and in socialism there will be neither a price nor a wages system. Unemployment is inbuilt in capitalism and no amount of struggle or militancy can make it work in any other way. What is available employment is decided by production - and market conditions in capitalism - in booms there is plenty of it, in slumps there is little.

When KAP mentions the possibility of a society without wages, prices, profits and money - socialism. A vote for KAP can only lead to continued confusion and disappointment.

The Trade Union

In this and other countries, statements have been made by our political opponents to the effect that the Socialist Party, ignoring the necessity for economic action, concentrates solely upon political action. Nothing could be further from the truth.

There are two phases of the class struggle: economic and political. On the economic, or industrial, field the workers are organized in Trade Unions to enable them to collectively resist the attacks of the master class upon their wages and working conditions. The existence of these Unions have been, and still are, vitally necessary, though, no matter how strenuous their efforts be, the condition of the working class tends to steadily grow worse. The possession of the means of production by the master class places an enormous advantage on their side. When a strike is declared, the workers, more often than not, are starved into submission and forced back on the owners' terms. The struggle is very unequal.

Numerous well-meaning individuals advocate the organization of all workers into one big Union on the industrial field as the means of successfully combating the onslaughts of Capital, and of securing for the working class a much higher standard of living. But would it?

We will not have advanced far on the road to industrial unity unless we see that the most we can do under these conditions is to resist attacks on our already poor standard of living. The fact is forgotten that education must precede organization, not follow it. Formal unity is useless. When the working class becomes sufficiently intelligent to organize, on these lines, they will also realize the futility of fighting merely the effects of capitalism, they will organize to abolish the whole rotten system altogether. But that does not mean that the working class should abandon the struggle as hopeless and become apathetic. Far from it.

At this stage we cannot do better than quote the historic words used by Karl Marx, when in 1865 he addressed the General International Congress of Workmen in connection with this same subject: "Such being the tendency of things in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital and abandon their attempts making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation ... At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class might not exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not

with the causing of these effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerrilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the material conditions and social forms necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!", they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword: "ABOLITION OF THE WAGES SYSTEM!"

The Socialist Party, knowing that the condition of the working class cannot be bettered to any appreciable extent by means of Trade Union action, much less can we free ourselves from exploitation, points out that the only way out of the morass lies in the taking over of the machinery of production and distribution by the working class and running it for the common good. And since the machines of production and distribution are protected by the working class and

running it for the common good. And since the machines of production and distribution are protected by the armed forces of the State, the police, army, navy and air force, we recognize that in order that we may successfully accomplish our object we must first gain control of these units.

We must first gain political power. We organize in the Socialist Party with the object of propagating Socialism, in order that when the majority agree with us we may send delegates to Parliament, having been elected on a Socialist platform and having a mandate for Socialism.

But as long as the necessity of Trade Union exists our members inside their Trade Union carry on the struggle, and we advise the workers to get into their respective unions, and assist in the everyday struggle against the ever worsening conditions of the working class existence. Industrial action will safeguard our wages and conditions, to a degree, but it is only on the political field that we can finally free ourselves from exploitation and bring into being a system of society where goods will be produced for the common use and not for the profit of the few — the Socialist Commonwealth.

Visiting Speakers

Occasionally the Socialist Party of Canada is fortunate in having a touring speaker from its Companion Party, the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Being a larger organization than the Canadian party the SPGB has more able writers and speakers. This in addition to the novelty aspect the capitalist media attaches to visitors from another continent or the other side of the world enable the SPC to use these visitors to spread Socialist ideas more widely than usual via radio, TV, in newspapers and through the holding of indoor meetings.

The first of these visitors was Jim D'Arcy in 1958. He spoke at indoor meetings in Winnipeg, Victoria and at two meetings in Vancouver. The first of these, in the former Moose Hall was probably the largest indoor meeting the Party has ever had. During this meeting, the Trotskyist wing of the OCF was severely mauled. The second meeting was held in the Stanley Park OCF Club hall on Robson street, at which the Trots were planning to exact revenge by not allowing Comrade D'Arcy a rebuttal to their arguments — in true Bolshevik style. Their ploy did not come off and they were unacceptably demolished.

Next came the late Gilbert McLatchie, or "Gilmac" as he signed his articles in the "Socialist Standard" for half a century. Gilmac's first visit was instrumental in getting Victoria local reorganized.



Harry Young at University of Victoria

Gilmac journeyed here again in 1961 during which he spoke in the usual centers where locals or groups existed. In addition, meetings were arranged for him on Vancouver Island at Nanaimo and Alberni. The efforts of these Comrades were a stimulus to the Party's continuous activity to expose the 57 varieties of pretenders to Social-

was not to explain the real thing. They, except for non-masquerade type (Woodell) and occasionally from the SPC, who occasionally visited North America, there was a drought of this kind of activity for several years.

Last fall however, the movement in Canada was again grateful to have two British activists in the form of Harry Young and Steve Ross tour the U.S. and Canada. Harry's qualifications are unique in that the first part of his adult life was spent in Russia as a member of the executive of the International Youth secretariat of the Communist Party. He had been national organizer of the Young Communist League of Great Britain up to about 1922. He became acquainted with most of the prominent Bolsheviks, including Stalin, Trotsky, Bukharin and Zinoviev, and was present at Lenin's last meeting. He was a fellow student of Mo Chi Min at the Dynamo sports club. At the time of Trotsky's expulsion, Disillusionment was getting strong and he went back to England. To use his words from a short auto-biography in the Socialist Standard:

When the Spanish Civil War started, Harry Pollitt asked me to go and see him; "Would I proceed to Spain immediately as interpreter to the British battalion of the International Brigade? It damned me that all those in opposition to the CP's Central Committee were being cleared off to Spain, like my bosom pal Wally Tapnell who was shot in Galicia. It was to be a political execution. This was the end. To Hell with you!"

Here was Harry Young a bit of living history who not only saw at first hand the failure of Lenin's naive attempt to impose Socialism/Communism from above upon 15 million non-Socialist, illiterate peasants, but who had later come to the knowledge normal to all Socialists that this contradicts Marx's Materialist Conception of History which concludes that Socialism can only come about when the material conditions make it possible, i.e. a class conscious, majority working class in conditions of advanced industrial capitalism and the franchise. It was hoped that Harry's historical questions would stimulate more interest from the business media than they did. Nevertheless, open line radio shows were arranged for him at Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver, as well as a TV interview in the latter city. A TV interview was filmed in Victoria, but scrapped by the station. A series of five 15 minute radio interviews were taped and aired for five days on Victoria's only AM station.

In Victoria, indoor meetings were arranged with Capstan Community College, University of Victoria, Esquimalt High School, Victoria Labor Council and a meeting was sponsored by Victoria Local of the Party. An indoor meeting was arranged at Vancouver Community College (said to be the biggest and best of the tour). Two other university meetings were arranged at the University of Winnipeg and Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Quebec. News-

paper interviews were obtained with two facilities, a weekly and a 24-hourly, the 24-hourly one not being published. A short and partly inaccurate report was printed in the University of Victoria's student paper on the meeting there.

The SPC's attempt at educating the working class a bit by the method of newspaper reports of meetings or interviews with a speaker are fraught with both opposition from the capitalist sponsored press and a general ignorance of Socialism. For instance, one report called the Marxism of the SPC a "brand" of Marxism, but was nearly factual in saying that this —

... envisions a peaceful transformation of societies and teaches that terrorism is contrary to Marxist ideology.

The same paper defined Russian society as "Russian style capitalism," as though this was a fact while Harry's description of it being "state capitalism" was presented as being a mere personal opinion. The caption to a photo of Harry and Steve (Steve did a great job in arranging travel and meeting details) was a factual quote —

The only way Socialism will be established is when the majority understands it. You can't force people.

A daily paper misquoted Harry as being a "purist" then said factually,

He believes the only salvation for the world is a classless, wageless, moneyless society. That's what Marx espoused. Nothing less will do.

Of course, those workers who call themselves "Socialist" but who do not advocate the above goal are not pure Socialists. They are not Socialists at all.

Another daily titled its report factually: "Communism yes, Guns no," and accurately quoted Harry as saying "It (Socialism) can only come by majority understanding," and elaborated:

However intelligent the leaders may be however devoted the revolutionaries may be, socialism cannot be imposed on the majority by the minority.

It then, contradicted this idea by calling Harry the "head" of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Harry sent a reply denying he was a head or leader, saying his party was democratic with a class-conscious membership that had no need of leaders to tell them where to go. His letter was apparently not published.

The following titles were used at meetings: Where Lenin Went Wrong, The Tragedy of Trotsky, Dictatorship or Democracy?, and Why I left the Communist Party.

It is hoped that this type of helpful activity from the Communist Party in Britain begun by D'Arcy and Gilman and re-emerged by Young and Ross will be continued in the future.

Book Review

Six writers who embraced the Soviet Union with their hearts only to reject it with their heads.

The God That Failed

Socialists must often wonder why "Communist" Party members exhibit such strange mental disorders. Do they gravitate to the "Communist" Party because they are damaged or is it a characteristic infected from the Party? Or perhaps the malaise depends upon the individual? The answer can be found in the testimony of the writers in **THE GOD THAT FAILED** (Doubleday Books, edited by Richard Crossman.)

Another Koestler probably best conveys how the "Communist" Party brainwashes its own members with "repetitiveness of diction, the catechism technique of asking a rhetorical question and repeating the full question in the answer ... Two hours of this dialectical tom-tom and you didn't know whether you were a boy or a girl, and you were ready to believe either as soon as the rejected alternative appeared in inverted commas. You were also ready to believe that Socialists were: (a) your main enemies; (b) your natural allies; that socialist and capitalist countries: (a) could live peacefully side by side, and (b) could not live peacefully side by side; and when Engels had written that Socialism in One Country was impossible, he had meant the exact opposite." You further learned to prove by the method of chain-deduction, that anybody who disagreed with you was an agent of Fascism, because (a) by his disagreeing with your line he endangered unity of the Party; (b) by endangering the unity of the Party he improved the chances of a Fascist victory; hence (c) he acted as an agent of Fascism even if subjectively he happened to have his kidneys smashed to a pulp by the Fascists in Dachau. Generally speaking words like "agent of", "Democracy," "Freedom," etc. meant something quite different in Party usage from what they meant in general usage; and as furthermore, even their Party meaning changed ... like the croquet game of the Queen of Hearts in which the hoops moved about the field and the balls were live hedgehogs." Koestler relates how writers who reported favorably upon the Soviet Union were paid thousands of roubles over and over, from city to city, for the rights to the same mediocre short story and repeated advances on the same book, that may or may not some day be written, and then may or may not be published could run into a small fortune of 40 to 80 thousand roubles. This was at a time when the average Russian was earning about 130 roubles a month and some were literally starving to death.

"Communists", to this day, will condemn these

writers as "Fascist infiltrators," "hopeless revisionists," "turncoats," or some other such Bolshi defamations. But as each of these noteworthy writers troop through their adduced testimony a clear genuineness of concern for mankind can be detected - a kind of genuineness that cannot be faked. It is sad to witness the great hopes and faith in the Soviet Union ultimately crushed in disillusionment in each and every one of them. But the disillusionment was caused, not as Koestler alleges because "... a polluted civilization pollutes its own revolutionary offspring ..." but because they allowed themselves to be illusioned in the first place. They entered the field not as scientific socialists but as religious followers. As such they were easy victims to the numerous Bolshevik fallacies - that a democratic society can be achieved by undemocratic means; that dictatorship can be in the interests of the working class; that a society can come about before its necessary material foundation has come into existence; and all the consequent subterfuges and treacheries against the working class. The book will no doubt be perverted by some as "proof" that attempts at socialism will always fail. But the failure arose not because too many bad cooks made bad soup. There were plenty of bad cooks, of course, but, in any event, the scarcity of materials to put into the pot could have made little difference in the result. The Nobel Prize-winner, Andre Gide, comes close to a materialist understanding, "I blame the Soviet Union not for having failed to achieve more - I see now that nothing better could have been accomplished in that time the country had started from too low - what I complain of is the extent of their bluff ..." Gide also blames the world "Communist" parties for lying and duping the workers. But, like the others he fails to see the source of his own failure. He recognizes that Russia has established capitalism (Gide erroneously says reestablished) but in spite of his earlier statement he doesn't seem to know why. He considers it an "honest revolution" that foundered on "treacherous quicksand". How a revolution of mindlessly religious followers led by treacherous liars and murderers can be considered honest, Gide fails to say. He also failed to learn that the failure did not arise from choosing "poor" gods but from choosing gods at all. Freedom cannot arise from enslaving one mind to leaders but only from a majority knowing what freedom is and the knowledge and determination to get it.

French Communist Party and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

"The dictatorship of the proletariat", which is an obscure phrase attributed to Marx which was discussed so widely in the press and on the television at the time of the 22nd Congress of the CP in February and which the PCP plans to remove from its statute. It was indeed a phrase used by Marx but never with the meaning the PCP has given it. Marx always insisted that Socialism could only be established by political action; in other words, that in order to establish Socialism the working class should gain control of the machinery of government and use it to force the capitalist class to give up its ownership of the means of production. In his private letters and notes Marx sometimes referred to this use of political power by the working class to abolish capitalism as the "dictatorship of the proletariat".

These two words were introduced into modern political terminology at the time of the French Revolution, the leaders and thinkers of which modelled themselves on the Ancient Roman Republic. The Jacobins were in favour of a "dictatorship" by a minority of revolutionaries to crush the resistance of the nobility. The term proletarian came into use to describe ordinary people, poor people ...

In spite of some of the ideological shortcomings of the writers this book is a valuable capsule of history of a brief period in the Soviet Union world "Communist" parties, and Europe during the depression and the rise of Hitler. It is another very valid indictment against the so-called Communist Parties. In so diverting and disillusioning so many "new society" hopefuls they have proven themselves the greatest enemies of the working class and, ironically enough, an intellectual stumbling block serving only to prolong the capitalist system. But it is not sufficient for socialists to merely criticize their enemies. They must also continuously look for positive directions. All these writers were revolted by the conditions of capitalism and wanted something different. They were, in part at least, potential revolutionary socialists. Perhaps their idealism and religious fervor was too much an obstacle to make them receptive to scientific socialist approach, but if just one of them could have had their idealism tempered with socialist knowledge he would have made a valuable asset to the movement. However, the conditions of capitalism that so revolted these writers still exists. Its decay will again mushroom forth such people. When these socialists should be doing everything they can to educate them the rest of the way.

Larry Tidner

Marx, however, used the word proletariat in a more precise fashion not to mean just poor people generally but only those who worked for wages, i.e. the working class. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" was thus, for him, the exercise of political power by the working class. This Marx equated with a complete political democracy in which the working class — the majority in capitalist society — would rule. His references to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" all show that he understood it to be the exercise of political power by the working class within a democratic framework.

The S.P.C. and the Companion Parties have never used that phrase in everyday propaganda. Not because socialists do not agree with Marx that the working class should take democratic political action to establish Socialism, but because the phrase is obscure and misleading. The Companion Parties always prefer to express the same concept by phrases like "the capture of political power" and "the conquest of powers of government" which are more easily understandable.

In speaking of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" rather than simply of a "revolutionary dictatorship", Marx made a decisive break with the Jacobin tradition. The idea of "dictatorship" was given a democratic content since the plenary political power it implied was to be exercised by the majority class in society and not by some revolutionary minority.

By the turn of the 20th century Jacobin ideas had almost died out in France but were enjoying a revival in Russia. Lenin was in favour of the Russian Social Democrats being organized as a "vanguard party" whose task would be to lead workers, peasants and oppressed nationalities of Russia against the Tsarist regime. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was carried out in just this way and resulted in the establishment, not of Marx's "dictatorship of the proletariat" but, in the revolutionary dictatorship of the Bolshevik Party. Since the economic and political conditions of Russia did not permit the establishment of socialism the Bolsheviks had no choice but to develop capitalism in Russia (largely in the form of "state capitalism", as Lenin himself described it). But since capitalism cannot be run in the interests of the working class, the Bolshevik dictatorship soon became a dictatorship not just against the nobility, the capitalists and richer peasants but also a dictatorship over the working class. The trade unions were taken over by the government; strikes were banned; protests were suppressed and protestors sent to labour camps.

Unfortunately, this was not evident to a section of the war-weary and discontented working class of Western Europe. To them, Russia was what it

proclaimed itself: a "workers republic" which showed the way for the workers of other countries. The Bolshevik government exploited this sympathy to split the Social Democratic Parties in the West and set up "Communist" parties based on Bolshevik ideology.

In France, in 1920, a majority of the delegates to the Social Democrats' Congress at Tours voted to go over to Bolshevism and set up the Parti Communiste Français. The new PCP was committed to Bolshevik ideology, including the idea that it, as the alleged "vanguard of the working class," would exercise a revolutionary dictatorship. By a strange irony of history, the Jacobin idea of minority dictatorship, which had been rejected by Marx and which had almost died out in France, was reintroduced there by way of backward Russia. This time, however, it was called the "dictatorship of the proletariat." It was with this Jacobin, Leninist sense that the phrase was introduced into the statute of the PCP.

The PCP has changed since 1920 in that it now no longer believes in armed insurrection as the way to power (which never was a practical proposition anyway) and has instead returned to the gradualist reformism of Social Democracy. This change dates from the middle 1830's when, on orders from Moscow (following the signing of the 1935 Franco-Soviet Defense Pact), the PCP decided to beat the patriotic drum. The enemy was no longer seen as the capitalist class as such but as a small minority of anti-patriotic, pro-fascist politicians and capitalists against whom the people of France should unite. The present strategy of the PCP is a variation on this theme, with the "big monopolies" as the enemy to be isolated.

According to current PCP ideology, the present stage of capitalism is "state monopolist capitalism" where political power is in the hands of a tiny minority of big monopolists. The strategy of the PCP is to try to overcome these monopolists by organizing "les classes non-monopolistes" (workers, peasants, small and medium business, etc.) into a "Union du peuple de France." As Secretary-General, Georges Marchais, expressed it at the 22nd Congress in February: "We want to unite all the living forces of the nation against the barons of big capital: we want a Union of the French People!"

The purpose of this patriotic Union is, first to limit and then, to break the power of the monopolies so opening the way to what Marchais in his closing words to the Congress called -- in an obnoxiousness against all the internationalist principles of Marxist socialism -- "Socialism to the colors of France."

It is not difficult to see why a commitment, if only on paper, to the dictatorship of the Communist Party is an embarrassment. The "classes non-monopolistes" and "the living forces of the nation" could never be persuaded to vote for such a programme; the desired anti-monopolist elector-

al majority would never be achieved and the PCP would be doomed to remain a permanent opposition party. Let there be no mistake about it: the present tactics of the PCP are dictated by pure electoral opportunism.

It is not the general policy of seeking to win control of political power by democratic means -- the ballot box that socialists criticise. This is the only practical way of establishing socialism in today's social and political conditions, and has always been socialist policy (even at the time the PCP was advocating armed insurrection.) What socialists criticise is the reformism and electoral opportunism. For, in order to establish socialism, it is not sufficient that a party calling itself socialist wins an electoral majority; what is important is that this electoral majority should be a majority for socialism, won on the socialist programme of establishing the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production. The PCP has adopted the old, failed Social Democratic policy of trying to win an electoral majority on appeals to nationalism and promises of reforms of capitalism.

This strategy may well be successful in the sense of achieving PCP Ministers in a future government but it won't be successful in the sense of improving the lot of the working class. For the PCP would be participating in the government of capitalism. Elected on a non-socialist patriotic and reformist programme, a left-wing government in France would have no alternative but to continue with capitalism. Certainly, a few more elements of state capitalism (nationalisation) could be introduced, but it makes little difference to the working class whether their employer is a big monopoly or an even bigger monopoly (the State.)

Capitalism can never be run in the interest of the working class for the simple reason that it is based on their exploitation. Under capitalist working-class consumption has to be limited to provide capital for profitable investment. This is the case in state capitalist Russia just as much as in any openly capitalist country, and it would be the case in France under a leftwing government with PCP participation. As a result, sooner or later such a government would come into conflict with the working class: wage demands would have to be resisted; strike actions condemned; appeals for austerity made (the PCP, of course, has already had experience of doing this from the period 1945-47 when it participated in the government of post-war French capitalism.) The PCP's patriotic rhetoric could well be useful here: as well as the big monopolists, striking workers could be, and no doubt would be, denounced as "Unpatriotic" and "anti-national."

The PCP is not, and never has been, a socialist party. It was founded as a Bolshevik vanguard and had become a Social Democratic reformist party, but its aim has remained unchanged: national state capitalism not world socialism. Translated from SOCIALISME MONDIAL, No. 6.

In The News

Of Parasites and Starvation

Appeals have flooded the country from CARE, Save The Children Fund and from the Unitarian Service Committee, begging for donations for needy people in the "third" world.

Not all needy people are saved, as is well known from periodic reports about the number who die directly from starvation around the world. The number of deaths seems to oscillate around an average of a 100,000 per day, men, women and children, who are testimony to that part of the world population that is surplus to the exploitative needs of capital.

In this vein, Dr. George Wald Higgins Prof. of Biology of Harvard University said on starvation, "...increasing numbers of persons have become not only unemployed but superfluous. There is no need for them in the free market economy. They are wanted neither as workers or customers. Their existence is a burden, an embarrassment. It would be a relief if they vanished, parents and children" (Tokyo speech, Aug. 2/74.)

The fact of world capitalism's restrictions on food production, determined by market demand, does not faze these organizations. A recent radio ad for one of them, the USC, went as far as to use Canadian farmers' production cutbacks of wheat (because of falling prices) as an added incentive for potential donors.

Food production under capitalism poses no problem at all, when the economic wind brings the smell of profits, but only to the extent that profits are promising. For instance, western investors are being invited to grab a piece of the part of Saudi Arabia's \$142 billion 5 year plan that is to be allocated to food production. (Western Producer, April 27/76 from the Christian Science Monitor.) The Saudi's oil based economy is going to need more adequately fed workers to produce profits for their local and international entrepreneurs. In this respect, the process of converting desert bedouins or tribesmen into wage-slave creators of surplus value is concealed as much as possible. The words of one of the preceding organizations, CARE, in its appeal were quite vague. To help the destitute "... to lift themselves from poverty and ill health to a hopeful prospect for the future." (Emphasis added.)

Current world institutions only feed and raise those children in whom there is a profitable future — for the owners of the means of life of course. Rent, interest and dividends come from unpaid labor, that surplus that workers produce above the cost of reproducing their energies. Here the words of the CARE organization were inappropriate as it included in its appeal the need to "... build safe water systems which help eliminate energy-sapping parasites and diseases."

Apparently the two-legged, energy-sapping para-



Mountain of "Surplus" Sugar Beets Near Turin, Alta. Nov. 1976

sites who consume dividends and receive interest payments, do not like competition from their insectivorous and viral counterparts. And if they can finance these business rehabilitation programs from the threadbare pockets of the workers instead of deductions from their own profits they have won another point in the continuous class struggle, between the two classes over division of the wealth produced by just one of them.

Two faces of the N.D.P.

Dave Barrett, B.C. NDP leader, was reported to have said (Victoria Times, Dec. 11) that various Christmas charities and institutions should be abolished. He told the Maritime School of Social Workers in Halifax that:

The capitalist system which social workers are content to work within, is the root of social problems because its goal is acquisition of goods.

Except for misrepresenting the system's goal, he made a Socialist statement. The actual goal of capitalism is accumulation of, or expansion of capital.

But after blaming social problems on capitalism, he revealed that he was not going to be caught advocating Socialism. He said: "If corporations paid their fair share of taxes, workers would not have to 'kick in for charity.'" Socialist society would have nothing to do with corporations or taxes. If all private charities expired, and all doles were paid by the "executive committee of the capitalist class" (the state) capitalism would remain, unchanged as far as its victims were concerned.

Of course, while out of office, Dave and his NDP deem it necessary to mouth semi-Socialist ideas occasionally. When in office however, the shoe is on the other foot. Not only do they preserve capitalism, but they openly say so.

Some instances of this are as follows: as quoted in the Victoria Times, Nov. 22/76, with an elec-

total victory after years of struggle since 1933 as the CCF, the NDP leader said -

Till the capitalists they can relax.

In the same paper, same year (Nov. 2nd, he told a B.C. Chamber of Commerce group -

(It's business as usual).

Furthermore, his attorney-general, Alex MacDonald said in Sept. 25/74, in the same paper -

Socialism is not our objective.

With Barrett being a former social worker himself he could be said to be ideally suited to running capitalism with more promises of crumbs, misrepresented as Socialism, than the center or right parties. Indeed, the CCF/NDP's 1933 Regina Manifesto is nothing more than a program of sops to the workers to keep them barely healthy enough and barely docile enough to produce profits. Such openly pro-capitalist statements, as above, were made from 2 to 4 years ago and the workers' memories are expected to be short enough that these are forgotten now and NDP membership rolls across the province have been increasing.

To help keep the workers bewildered, some conservative stalwarts in the media, controlled as it is by the class of capital owners, co-operate with the NDP. Instance: two days after Barrett's charity gem, Robert Siddall, chairman of the United Way Appeal said:

People can't wait for his (Barrett's) utopia.

Utopia? He defined his conception of utopia by challenging Barrett to come up with a way of living for such a society. In other words utopia (which Socialists do not advocate) would be capitalism without private charities for its victims, only the state variety, which is the same as the NDP's misconception of Socialism.

Both faces of the NDP are phony, e.g., the in office and the out of office masks. As the workers gradually understand more about the nature of capitalism, they will reject the political bedtime stories and Santa Claus tales of the leftist rightist charlatans and embark on a new era of establishing not an impossible Utopia, but a money-less, wage-less system of - "from each according to ability, to each according to needs."

Doctors of the World, United for Profits

The radio ad was explicit, something like "3 billion dollars a year lost through auto accidents," and 444 million dollars lost through smoking etc" And "these tragedies affect only you, your doctor can do nothing about them, only you can change your habits for longer life. This ad was paid for by the doctors in your community."

Meanwhile back in Nov 5/75 the Conservative Daily Colonist reported from the Christian Science Monitor, that "Productivity in companies that encourage their workers to stop smoking has increased. Employers help their employees get rid of a bad

habit and score on the business ledger as well. Minimally healthy workers are good for profits, aside from the fact that it is the pressures of capitalism that drive workers into smoking initially. Now to auto accidents and capitalism. A May 3/76 Vancouver Sun report from Washington says: "Seatbelts save lives, money, report to U.S. Congress says. 'When the lives are those of workers, in whom the capitalist class as a whole have invested money in food, shelter, clothing, education, etc., the bosses cannot be blamed for wanting to save money. But the system that sole aim is to make profit cannot do this and also avoid auto accidents. Doctors of the world? It is time they investigated the workings of the system that frustrates them, and united with the rest of the workers for Socialism.'

Economic Council of Canada—Yes, but no

The rich in Canada are getting richer and the poor are getting a smaller slice of the national income according to the Economic Council of Canada's annual review (Victoria Times, Dec. 21/76.) In 1965 the top one-fifth of the population were getting 9 times as much as the bottom fifth. By 1975 that top fifth had improved its income position to 11 times greater than the bottom fifth. The Council cited increased unemployment among the young and an increased proportion of old age pensioners as factors responsible for the "shift toward economic inequality." This can only mean that in '65, when the top fifth were 9 times better off, society was equalitarian. Ten years later, with the privileged class 11 times better off in income, society is still in a "shift toward" inequality but still has not arrived at such an undesirable state.

Apparently not all the capitalist politicians are operating in official parties. Some are propagandising in the Economic Council of Canada.

Adulterated bread—pure profits

In the latest edition of The Commonwealth, prairie voice of the DNP, the Yorkton-Melville NDP MP has disclosed that a subsidiary of the giant International Telephone and Telegraphs is marketing a bread containing 7.5 per cent woodpulp.

Known as Fresh Horizons, the bread is sold in the U.S. as having 30 per cent less calories and 400 per cent more fibre. Food adulteration has existed as long as capitalism, while profits have remained pure.

Mr. Nystrum, the NDP'er in question said his constituents in Yorkton-Melville were looking at their wheat fields "and wondering what is happening to humanity." They should look at themselves and wonder why their wheat production is governed by dollar signs in their eyes. Granaries and elevators are overloaded while farmers can only sell according to quota, so as not to depress prices, while 10,000 children die of hunger daily.

This wages, prices, profits world system continues because the majority supports it, including

christianity and socialism

Belief in God

MOST RELIGIONS including Christianity, rest on five fundamentals:—

1. Belief in a God or in gods
2. Belief in Holy books
3. Belief in Miracles
4. Belief in After-Life
5. Belief in Prayer.

Belief in God is certainly the most important principle since if there is no God there would be nobody to inspire the men who wrote the holy books. Miracles would not occur, in the absence of anybody to make them happen. After-life would be out of the question, and prayer would be a waste of time with nobody to listen to nor answer them. There would be neither rewards to anticipate nor punishments to fear. Clearly then, if there is no God, the whole fabric of religion falls to the ground.

Many Socialists consider that since there is no proof of God's existence, it is pointless to indulge in religious and biblical criticism. First prove your God exists and we can then deal with the other paraphernalia of religion. Hence it is that socialists have had little to do with freethinkers, secularists, rationalists and humanists organisations. The latter have tended to avoid socialists and their discussions because political and economic issues would, they thought, divide their members — there being devout capitalist supporters as well as those who are considered socialists in their ranks.

In Victoria get your — FULCRUM — WESTERN SOCIALIST — SOCIALIST STANDARD at:

Camosun College Bookstore Ye Olde "E" Shoppe
1250 Lansdowne 818 Verdier Ave.

Brentwood Bay

Griffin Books
587 Johnson St.

IN THE NEWS

left-wing parties like the New Democratic Party of Canada. There is nothing wrong with humanity per se, but plenty wrong with people motivated by the laws of a private property society.

And the profit system is safe in NDP hands as the news will testify everyday. The latest example being the news that the NDP's former national shepherd, David Lewis, will be made an Officer of the Order of Canada, the second highest award given. The share and bondholding owners of this country must be grateful for his services in further confusing the working class into thinking that state ownership and state charity have something to do with solving proletarian problems. Thereby leaving the owners of the means of life as undisputed rulers. J.G.J.

The arguments for God (or the existence of gods) which have so far been offered, seem to fall into the following five categories:—

1. The Prime mover or First Cause
2. The Universality of belief in God
3. The Moral or Ethical argument
4. The Design in Nature
5. The Gaps in Science

There are those who affirm God's existence on the ground that there must be a beginning to the universe, to life and to Man. Of course, there either was or was not a beginning. But those who hold theistic views find it difficult to explain the origin of God. The almighty, they affirm, has always existed, which contradicts their argument that everything had a beginning, and upon this their whole case rests.

Philosophical materialists have consistently claimed that matter and energy have always existed (in some form or other), and always will exist, because you can neither make nor destroy matter. There is no problem in explaining how something that always existed came into being. We therefore can dispense with God as the "Prime Mover".

An enormous amount of harm has been done educationally by implanting the first words in the Bible upon the virgin minds of children. The child thus believes that there must have been a beginning and that God was responsible for it, and that he made everything. Such an erroneous conception may take a life time to eradicate.

The making of something out of nothing is absurd in itself, not even a conjurer can extract a rabbit from an empty bag. The location of this place heaven has defied all mankind to trace. Astronomers have never caught a glimpse of it through their immense optical telescopes, nor received any signals from their radio telescopes. Even the astronauts on their way to the moon kept an eye open for heaven, but did not report having come across any such phenomenon indicating the whereabouts of this paradise in the skies.

It is championed by some theologians that God must exist since belief in him is universal. This seemed true in the Middle Ages when man's knowledge of the world was limited, and vast areas of the Earth's surface were unexplored.

When Australia was first discovered, it was found that the aborigines had no gods, and the same was true of the Tasmanian aborigines (now extinct).

In other parts where primitive people had lived in comparative isolation and not been contaminated by missionaries, many of them lived in godless bliss.

Those who find God in ethical issues claim that because people on the whole strive to do good, and to live decently, that there must be a God regulating their conscience i.e. God is good. But what happens when they do bad things or act against God? Many believers think that they themselves could dispense with God, but he is necessary to keep other people on the path of moral rectitude.

The problem of evil has never been faced by Christians. Either God cannot prevent evil—in which case

he is not all powerful, or he will not prevent evil—in which case he is not all good.

"The Devil rules about three-quarters of the world and has a much larger following than any God ever had," as Mark Twain observed.

Another wit wrote:—

"Wherever God erects a house of prayer
The Devil builds a chapel there;
It will be found upon examination,
That the latter has the greater congregation".

Socialists point out that moral problems are largely the result of the conditions under which people find themselves. A Bishop who was faced with no alternative but to steal some bread or starve, would no doubt steal. After the event, he could pray to God for forgiveness, and hope that he might never find it necessary to steal again. Most people have little more choice than this in what they do, and are far more influenced by economic factors than they appear to realise. Moral and ethical problems are conditioned by the social environment.

The design in nature theory is still a very popular argument for theism. Those who champion it find God in the marvels of nature, the human eye, the beauty of a rose and all that is good in life. They never find God in the tapeworm with its tiny hooks for attaching itself to the lining of the human intestine so that it is not easily washed out of the body.

The tape-worm has some special glands for secreting a fluid which neutralises the gastric juice, and so prevents this parasite from being digested or killed. Did God in his infinite wisdom create this odious creature so that man, his masterpiece should be plagued by such loathsome parasites sucking his very life blood from within?

Those who find God in the healthy and happy child never find God in the child who was born blind, dumb or an imbecile, yet, if he made the one he also made the other. Whoever made health, made disease, the diphtheria bacillus, the cancer tumour and caused plagues. The plankless nature of the universe puts the design argument out of bounds. As Ingersoll wrote: "Nature makes man without purpose and obliterates him without regret." We will now rise and sing the next hymn:—

"All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small;
Typhoid germ and parasites,
The Lord God made them all."

Now the Gaps in Science. Why are there phases of the moon? Why does the sun rise and set? What causes thunder or lightning? Why the tides and whence comes the rainbow? Today we know the answer to all these questions, but primitive man did not know, and many people do not know today because of their lack of knowledge of elementary science. Such questions puzzled primitive people until the priests gave the answer — that "It is God that does it" or "God who controls it", all of which merely meant that these matters were beyond the knowledge of the theologians. No man has seen God, heard his voice or received any message from him, let's be honest about that.

Today we know that the rainbow, for example, has nothing to do with God once flooding the world and then putting a sign in the sky to show that he was sorry that he had done such a wicked and barbarous thing. The rainbow is a pure physical phenomenon and it does not need a supernatural explanation.

There are lots of things about nature which we do not understand, but there is no need to postulate God because of our ignorance. As Chapman Cobbe said, "To many people God is no more than a dustbin for their unsolved problems."

To primitive people storms at sea and pestilence were signs that the gods were angry, but as mankind discovered more and more facts, God has disappeared from the cosmos. With the growth of knowledge God has gracefully retreated. God who once was able to reveal himself at any moment, has now to be searched for, and even some of his most ardent followers are having doubts about his existence.

We have examined the arguments for the existence of God and found that none of them hold water, and we must therefore conclude in the words of Shelley, that "God is an hypothesis, and, as such, stands in need of proof."

Bakunin went further, and said "If God existed it would be necessary to abolish him." On the other hand, if there is a God, he has taken remarkable pains to conceal his existence.

It is nobody's obligation to prove that gods, pink elephants or white crows do not exist. The proof of all these things, like the proof of the Loch Ness monster, flying saucers or the abominable snowman, rests upon the shoulders of those who affirm these phenomena.

There is not a single tangible fact known about God — or the Holy Ghost, no matter what theologians may say; they know no more about these things than the average tom-cat knows about his grand father. See The Golden Bough by Sir James Frazer.

Cause of belief in God

PEOPLE USUALLY believe in gods because of fear or ignorance or a combination of both. It is quite easy to imagine how primitive man feared all the things he could not understand; volcanoes, earthquakes, storms, thunder and lightning, forest fires, plagues and epidemics. None of these could he explain with his limited knowledge.

Death has always puzzled men.* The once animated body, pulsating with life and energy suddenly became cold and still. When pre-historic people lost their friends and happy associations ceased, sometimes very abruptly and without apparent warning, it was impossible to explain these strange happenings, just as it is for a young child to understand that people die.

* Shelley wrote:— "Death is a long sleep, and sleep but a short death." Death is eternal and irreversible sleep where nobody can disturb you; a condition where neither pain nor disease can worry you, where enemies can't harm you and where money matters can't trouble you. This is surely the nearest approach to paradise. Why then fear death "as children fear to go in the dark?"

Then in the night came dreams in which early man found himself again in the company of those who had been buried. What was the explanation of this strange event? Little did he realise, as a child who awakes after a nightmare, that he had been dreaming. Primitive man knew or believed that he had really been fighting enemies or wild animals. What could he possibly conclude when after such a dream he awoke? The idea of another self which directed one's life at night was probably the forerunner of the conception of a soul.

Indigestion as is well known, can cause nightmare, and indigestion probably followed the feasting that all aboriginal races indulged during periods of abundance. When a large animal was killed for food, it had to be eaten while the going was good. It could not keep for long, and the next meal might be a few days away.

The habit of burying the dead is thought to have taken origin in order to prevent the spirits of the dead from haunting the living, although hygienic considerations and the prevention of predatory animals may have been factors. They drove thick sticks into the dead bodies to hold them down (so that they would not roam at night), and piled heaps of heavy stones on them for the same purpose. This is thought to be the origin of the tombstone and the coffin. At a later stage when priests arrived on the scene, they were not slow to capitalise on the apprehensions and dreams of early man—although they could no more explain them than could the rest of the people.

The first gods were images of the dead chiefs, and great warriors. The gods of the black races had short curly hair like those who created them. Tribes with long hair who painted their skins made their gods similar. The gods of the early Chinese were yellow-skinned and slant-eyed. Truly did man create his gods in his own image.

Leaders skilled in tribal magic began the god-making business and became the first priests. It was necessary for them to possess a little knowledge above the average, or to pretend to possess it. "In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is king." No doubt the only knowledge some priests had was that there was prestige and power to be obtained from this occupation.

Savages and primitive people were very credulous. Winwood Reade wrote:—"Doubt is the offspring of knowledge; the savage never doubts." Believing without evidence, or against evidence is the negation of thinking or logic; but the basis of religion. Belief in gods and spirits took its roots in pre-historic tribes because they had no knowledge with which to understand nature or indeed anything else. No wonder Marx said "the criticism of religion is the beginning of all criticism."

Savage tribes created savage gods; the more docile and cultured the tribe, then so were the gods. No god is ever in advance of the nation who created him. The God of the Old Testament is often portrayed as a fierce tyrant—while the God of the New Testament became an all-loving heavenly father. "God improves as man advances." Ingersoll.

"Each tribe has the god it deserves, because gods are always made in the image of those who invent them. Thus the revengeful have an unforgiving god, the stupid a dim god and the well-

intentioned a friendly god. The god of the white men is jealous, platitudinous and supercilious because they are themselves that way. Their heaven is an empty existence in the sky, going on for all eternity without incident, so there will be no decisions for them to make. Thus they expose their essential irresponsibility and the hatred of life." J. Seate.

George Bernard Shaw warned "Beware of the man whose god is in the sky." Incidentally Jehovah himself recognised that he was not the only god when in the first commandment he directed that "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20. 3) If there were no other gods the statement would be meaningless.

Jehovah in recommending himself for acceptance by his subjects admitted that he was a jealous God. One would have thought that a God was quite above having such petty human failures. There then follows (Exodus Ch. 20) a threat in case the statement of jealousy was not sufficient, that the sins of the fathers (in not accepting him or having interest in other gods) will be visited unto the children. No human tyrant in recorded history has ever made such a diabolical threat. See "Causes of Belief in God" by Paul Lafargue

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