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ABOUT THE DISCUSSION BULLETIN

The Discussion Bulletin is affiliated with the Industrial Union Caucus in Education (IUCE). It serves as the financially and politically independent forum of a relatively unknown sector of political thought that places the great divide in the "left," not between Anarchists and Marxists but between capitalism's statist leaning of vanguardists and social democrats and the real revolutionaries of our era: the non-market, anti-statist, libertarian socialists. They are organized in small groups of syndicalists, communist anarchists, libertarian municipalists, world socialists, socialist industrial unionists, council communists, and Left Communists. The perspective of these groups with their rejection of capitalism's wage, market, and money system as well as capitalist politics and unionism constitutes the only real alternative to capitalism in both its market and statist phases.

In the DB the often antagonistic groups that make up this sector can debate and discuss the issues that divide them, gain some understanding of their history and future possibilities and begin a process, we hope, of at least limited cooperation.

The pages of the DB are open to anyone in this political sector, the only limitation being that submissions be typewritten, single-spaced, and copy ready. We do no editing here. As to content, we assume that submissions will be relevant to the purpose of the DB and will avoid personal attacks.

Subscription Information:
The Discussion Bulletin is published bi-monthly. Prices below are in U.S. currency.
U.S.: Individual Subscription $3; Library $6
Non-U.S.: Surface Mail Individual sub $5; Library $10
         Air Mail Individual sub $10; Library $15
Back Issues: Nos. 1-8 $2 each, Nos. 9+ $1 each plus postage.

Expiration: The last issue of your subscription is indicated by the number on your address label. When your sub expires, we highlight it to remind you.

Sample Copies: A sample copy is sent on request. We mail copies not used to fill subscriptions to people on our extended mailing list.
(Note: Paresh Cattopadhyay, longtime DB subscriber, read his essay below at a recent conference in Paris celebrating the 150th anniversary of the publication of the Communist Manifesto. In it he examines the Manifesto and other later works for Marx's ideas about 1) the nature of the new society and 2) how it will be realized. I doubt if many readers will question the general "elements" of the new communist society as the author sees them in Marx's writing. Unfortunately the clarity with which Marx could envisage the new society from the perspective of 1848-1883 could not extend to the "conditions for its realization." Marx's idea of a "period of revolutionary transformation" during which the development of the means of production and the resulting growth in the numbers and potential strength of the proletariat take place under a "dictatorship of the proletariat" has been superseded by events. In the 115 years since Marx's death the working class has developed the means of production to the point where we can abolish poverty and want at the wave of our hand. The proletariat now amounts to 90 percent of the population. Also, during this period our class has been witness to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as it has worked itself out in the the old Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and elsewhere. Contrary to Marx's view 150 years ago and the author's view now, the revolution will be a "momentary event." --Frank Girard)

THE PLACE OF THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO IN THE ELABORATION OF THE MARXIAN IDEA OF THE POST-CAPITALIST SOCIETY

In this paper post-capitalist society signifies what Marx calls a "Society of free and associated producers" also, indifferently, "communism" or "socialism based on the "associated mode of production." This union of free individuals," the crowning point of the self-emancipation of the immediate producers, where individuals are subject neither to personal dependence, as in pre-capitalism, nor to material dependence, as in commodity-capitalist society, excludes, by definition, state, private ownership of the conditions of production, commodity production and wage labour. The manifesto indicates, in a condensed and concise fashion, the essential elements of the envisaged new society as well as the objective and the subjective conditions of its realization.

The new society is an "association" -- the whole production being in the of the "associated individuals" -- where the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all. The "communist mode of production and appropriation" is based on the specific production relations. Once the domination of the accumulated or dead labour over the living labour is turned upside down, the accumulated labour becomes a means of enlarging, enriching and advancing the life of the labourers. commodity production ceases to exist, the money form and the capital form of the product of labour disappear and wage labour vanishes along with capital. The ownership relations of the new society correspond to these new relations of production. Capital is transformed into collective property, class property in the means of production disappears yielding place to social appropriation. However, this social appropriation does not affect the personal appropriation of the products of labour with a view to the reproduction of the immediate life.

As regards the conditions of realising the post-capitalist society, the Manifesto asserts that the proletarian revolution, indispensable for establishing the
communist mode of production and appropriation, presupposes the existence of a
developed and advanced proletariat and material conditions adequate for the
emancipation of the proletariat. Now, these conditions are the product of the bourgeois
epoch. The bourgeoisie has destroyed the pre-capitalist relations of production based on
personal dependence of the individual. It has equally destroyed the old local and national
autarchy and put universal exchange in their place. At the same time the bourgeoisie cannot
exist without continuously revolutionizing the material productive forces. The
bourgeoisie is the unconscious carrier of industry whose own product is precisely the
proletariat, the "grave diggers" of capital. The power of organisation of the proletariat
marches hand in hand with industry's development. Simultaneously the bourgeoisie is
forced to bring the elements of its own culture to the proletariat thereby furnishing the
latter with arms against itself.

The proletariat, the historical agent of the communist revolution, is the only
class facing the bourgeoisie which is truly revolutionary. Constituting the immense
majority of the capitalist society, having no property and no country, the proletariat is the
universal class which carries the future in its hands. Consequently the revolution led by
the proletariat is the most radical which not only abolishes its own mode of
appropriation but also all previous modes of appropriation, which implies not only the self-
emancipation of the proletariat but also the emancipation of the whole humanity mediated
by the communist revolution. This revolution is not at all a momentary event. It is a
whole process of development of which the rise to power of the proletariat -- the
"conquest of democracy" -- constitutes the "first step." But in course of development of
this revolution public power loses its political character along with the increasing
disappearance of class antagonism and of classes themselves. At the end of this
trajectory the old society with its classes disappears yielding place to a free association
of individuals.

These ideas of the Manifesto Marx elaborates in his different texts both preceding and
posterior to this composition. This can be conveniently discussed under two headings:
1) communist revolution and its conditions and (2) nature of the communist (socialist)
society.

(1) The communist (proletarian) revolution, far from being a simple seizure of power by the
proletariat, is a secular process. In his famous 1859 "Preface" Marx speaks
of the "beginning" of an "epoch of social revolution." The period of transition between
the capitalist society of free and associated producers is included within this
revolutionary process which Marx calls, in the *Gothakritik*, the "period of revolutionary
transformation" during which the capitalist society is revolutionized towards communism.
During this whole period the immediate producers remain proletarians (whence the
"dictatorship of the proletariat") and, as Marx insists in his critique of Bakunin, the "old
organization of society does not yet disappear" (1874-75). Marx affirms the same idea in
his address to the international on the Paris Commune. "The working classes know that
the superseding of the economical conditions of the slavery of labour by the conditions
of free and associated labour can only be a progressive work of the time" ("First
The communist revolution has a universal character. This is because the proletariat, having no property and no country, is the expression of the dissolution of all classes and all nationalities. Moreover, because of the universal development of the productive forces (under capitalism) and the "world historical" extension of capital — appearing as a power alien to the proletariat — the proletariat's subjectivism is universal. The proletariat can exist only as a world historical (weltgeschichtlich) force, in the same way as communism can exist only as a world historical reality. Another fundamental aspect of the universal character of the communist revolution is that the emancipation of the proletariat, the result of the communist revolution, does not mean that the emancipation is limited to the proletariat. It is universal, human (German Ideology; "Considerants" 1880).

As a consistent materialist Marx insists that it is capital which creates the material conditions of the proletarian (human) emancipation. In his different texts Marx returns again and again to one of the main themes of the Manifesto, namely, that the great revolutions effected by the bourgeoisie in the material productive forces along with the development of the "greatest productive force," the proletariat, the "revolutionary class" ("Anti-Proudhon" 1847), are the indispensable conditions of the emancipation of the proletariat. In this we see a veritable demonstration of the "dialectic of negativity" which Marx discerns in Hegel's Phenomenology.

In an earlier text addressed to the workers Marx had clearly underlined that without the big industry, free competition, the world market and the corresponding means of production there would be no material resources for the emancipation of the proletariat and the creation of the new society ("Arbeitsloseh" 1847). This idea is pursued in later texts. Thus Marx writes that capital, by its unceasing pretention to universal form of wealth, pushed labour beyond the limits of the latter's needs and thereby creates the material elements of the development of a rich individuality (MS. 1857-58). In the same way, to the extent that it is capital's disciplining constraint which forces the great mass of society to create surplus labour beyond its own immediate needs, capital creates culture and fulfills a social-historical function (MS. 1861-63). Marx in fact praises the "scientific honesty" of Ricardo against the "sentimentalists" like Sismondi for Ricardo's insistence on the necessity of production for production's sake inasmuch as this latter signifies the development of the human productive forces, that is, the development of the wealth of human nature as an end in itself (als Selbstzweck). In this connection Marx observes that this development, though affected at the cost of the majority of individuals and even of the entire classes, ends by smashing the antagonism (diesen Antagonismus durcnbricht) (Theories of Surplus Value II). Marx underlines that this type of development, namely "the development of the general humanity at the cost of the greatest waste of the development of the individual "takes place in the epochs preceding "the socialist constitution of (hu)mankind" (MS 1861-63), that is — in the language of 1859 "Preface" — in the
"pre-history of human society." The domination of the worker by the capitalist, by violence and against the majority — writes Marx in another manuscript of the sixties — contributes to the "unlimited (rucksichtslosen) reckless) productivity of social labour" which alone can create the material basis of a free human society (Resultate). and in a letter: "The big industry is not only the mother of antagonism, but is also the creator of the material and intellectual conditions necessary for resolving this antagonism" (to Kugelmann 17.3.68). As Marx writes in Capital I: "In history as in nature putrefaction is the laboratory of life." In his last programmatic composition addressed to the French working class Marx wrote that the material and intellectual elements of the collective form of the means of production are constituted by the development of the capitalist class itself ("Considerants" 1 880).

We arrive now at the nature of the of the new society,' as envisaged by Marx. Communism is the real reappropriation of the human essence by the human and for the human, a complete return of the individual to oneself as a social and human being, a return which is realized while conserving all the wealth of the preceding development. The entire movement of history is the real process of its birth, it is also the movement of its own becoming understood and conceived as such (die begriffene und gewusste Bewegung seines Werdens) (MS. 1844).

Freed from material and personal dependence, the members of the new society, freely associated and masters of their own social movement, are universally developed individuals whose social relations are subject to their own collective control as personal and common relations (MS 1857-58; Capital I). Replacing the "false community" which confronted the individuals as an autonomous power in the "pre-history of human society," there arises in the Association the "true community" whose members are universally developed "social individuals" (Exzerpthefta 1844, MS. 1857-58).

Corresponding to the new associated mode of production there is now a new mode of appropriation. After the demise of class property — that is, "private property" in its fundamental sense — there appears the social appropriation of the means of production. Let us add that the (workers') state property over the means of production is not yet the social appropriation over the means of production While it is possible to abolish individual or corporate private property juridically, it is impossible to "abolish" juridically class property, which continues to exist till the possessing classes disappear. A mode production (appropriation) cannot be decreed away (wegdekretieren) (Capital I). It is only at the end of the "period of revolutionary transformation," when the associated mode of production has replaced the old mode of production, when political power has ceased to exist, that private property in the fundamental sense of class property disappeared yielding place to the collective appropriation by whole society. It is in this sense that the Manifesto speaks of the "abolition of class property" (Aufhören des Klasseneigenthums). The same idea reappears in Marx's address on the commune, contrary to all the earlier forms of appropriation, where the latter's character was limited, the collective appropriation by the producers has a total character inasmuch as the
dispossession of the producers in capitalism is total, and, secondly, the development of the productive forces under capitalism has attained a universal character such that they can only be appropriated globally by the entire society (MS. 1844; German Ideology: MS 1857-58; MS. 1861-63).

As regards the exchange relations of the new society, both the material exchanges (Stoffwechsel) of human beings with nature and the social exchanges among individuals – which are independent of any specific mode of production – continue to operate in the Association. Nevertheless, there are qualitative changes. As regards the first type of exchange, the associated producers regulate rationally their material exchanges with nature spending minimum force and in the conditions most worthy of and most conforming to their human nature (Capital III). As to the second type, in the associated mode of production where the labour of the individual is posited from the start as social labour, the product of ceases to take commodity form, this form of "all-sided alienation." The old society's exchange of products taking the form of exchange values yields place to the "free exchanges of activities" among the social individuals, determined uniquely by needs and collective ends (Contribution 1859; MS. 1857-58). Naturally, in the new society the allocation of resources among the different productive branches as well as distribution of products among social individuals cease to be mediated by the commodity from the product of labour. In a word, "within the cooperative society based the collective ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products" (Gothakritik).

We thus conclude that the essential ideas concerning the society of free and associated producers the post-capitalist society as well as the conditions of its realisation, elaborated by Marx in his writings of different periods, are already found in the Manifesto in a condensed form.

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(from p. 2)

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

With DB90 we wind up fifteen years of publication. It has turned out to be much more of a project than I had expected back in 1983. What I can’t figure out is how it managed to get published regularly without missing an issue during those years when I was working full time. This issue starts with a couple of essays, both by Canadian writers, on the 150th anniversary of the publication of Marx and Engels’ Communist Manifesto. Paresh Chattopadhyay, it seems to me, makes the mistake of viewing the Manifesto as a guide to current revolutionary practice rather than the historical document it is. (See the details of the criticism in the introductory note.) Alan Sanderson, whose essay was published in the May-June, 1998 De Leonist Review (PO Box 944, Station F, Toronto, Canada M4Y 2N9) examines the reaction of today’s bourgeoisie to the Manifesto and the “specter that haunts.”

Next Collectivities answers the questions I raised in DB89 about their booklet Marx’s Critique of Political Economy, and I respond briefly to their answer. The following article is also a response to a critical review in DB89 of their book, this one from the Socialist Standard.

(to p. 10)
"A SPECTRE is haunting Europe— the spectre of Communism." — Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in The Communist Manifesto, 1848.

The 150th anniversary of the publication of The Communist Manifesto is not passing entirely unobserved by the mass media. On the contrary, the event was given special attention by the national AM radio network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This in a program aired on February 28 in which hostess Barbara Budd interviewed one Martin Jacques, former editor of Marxism Today, now writer and broadcaster in London.

Why this attention? Hadn't the spectre of Communism, fearful as it was to the bourgeoisie in the political turmoil in and around 1848, become all but exercised soon thereafter by the discovery of gold in California and the advent of general prosperity? So it seemed. However, it soon became clear that the spectre was destined to reappear again and again! For as The Manifesto so brilliantly analyzed the case:

"For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society."

But back to the CBC. Everyone north of the Canada-U.S. border should know that the "publicly owned" CBC is not controlled by the public but by the capitalist-serving State. Which is to say that the CBC is not politically neutral, that in keeping with the privately owned mass media its handling of social issues is "politically correct" by being capitalist oriented.

So here, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of The Communist Manifesto, the CBC could choose to either (1)— Help consign this "horrid" document to limbo by completely ignoring it, or (2)— Mount a formidable attack against the thing by bearing false witness. The CBC chose the latter course.

But the proof of a pudding is in the eating, therefore let us sample the caliber of the CBC's anti-Marxist performance:

In her opening gambit, after observing that "It's been a rocky road for Communism since 1848," Ms. Budd asks her "Marxist" guest: "Mr. Jacques, is the spectre of Communism now finally extinguished, do you think, 150 years after it began?" To which Jacques replies: "Yes, I think the notion of Communism as some kind of apocalyptic change which is based on a totally different system, is dead," and with these words sets the stage for another airing of "the mother of all twists"—the propagation of false Communism as the genuine article, a stratagem long employed by the defenders of Capitalism (as well as by their former USSR counterparts) in order to "educate" and placate a dissatisfied working class.

Thus we have Budd questioning Jacques as to what Marx "would have made of the way things turned out in the countries where Communism did
take hold[1], was imposed[1], and the way it enslaved[1] people." And we have Jacques referring to the recent fall of these communist caricatures as "the death of Communism in 1989"! That is, the Communism of The Communist Manifesto is here identified as the "Communism"(!) that was administered under the auspices of the erstwhile "Communist" parties—a "Communism" that had indeed "enslaved the people." That is, the bureaucratic state despotism of the latter, that paraded under the communist label, is here substituted for its very antithesis—the Communism of the Manifesto, a Communism whose concept is the emancipation of society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.

Here, too, it must be emphasized that at no time did Lenin himself claim that Communism had been, or was about to be, established in Russia! Quoting Arnold Petersen from his work, Marxism versus Soviet Despotism:

"Having gained power, Lenin and his fellow Bolsheviks began their real struggle. To the trained Marxist it was clear at the outset that it was impossible to establish Socialism in a country as backward as Russia. Lenin realized fully that this would be impossible without social revolutions in the important Western capitalist countries. In an address delivered before the 10th Congress of the Communist Party, March 15, 1921, he said:

"In a country where the majority of the population is composed of small farmers, a Socialist revolution must pass through a number of transitional stages which would be altogether unnecessary in the highly developed capitalist countries, where the majority of the population is made up of hired workers in industry and in agriculture...In Russia matters are different. Here we have a minority of industrial workers and an overwhelming majority of small farms. This distinction we have emphasized in a number of books, in all our speeches and in our press."

At the same time it should also be stressed that whereas Socialists use the terms Socialism and Communism to mean exactly the same thing, Lenin inexplicably authored the un-Marxian invention that Socialism was but a "phase" in the transition from Capitalism to Communism! Thus as Petersen noted: "Aside from having served anti-Marxist purposes for the Russian bureaucratic despot [who seized power following Lenin's death], the Lenin fraud has given incalculable aid to the exploiters of labor by furnishing them with the opportunity to point to the barbarous practices in [the former] Soviet Russia and satellite countries, and to say to their own exploited workers: 'Look--there is your Socialism--and how do you like it?' In this, as in other respects, the Stalinist swindlers have proved themselves stout allies of Western capitalism, thereby unquestionably having helped to prolong class rule everywhere." (Ibid.)

*

But what, after all, is the kernel, the essence, of the immortal Communist Manifesto that Capitalists recognize as true and therefore recoil from with such horror? What IS the spectre that impels capitalist mouthpieces to rival yesterday's "Stalinist swindlers" in their falsification of Communism/Socialism? It is summed up in a closing passage
of the Manifesto’s Part I—Bourgeois and Proletarians, thus:

“The modern labourer...instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.”

Does anyone doubt the relevance of this passage to the desperate, life-threatening condition in which society now finds itself? Or doubt, accordingly, that far from being "dead," the spectre of Communism today haunts the capitalist class the world over?  

(from p. 7)  

— Alan Sanderson

Jon Bekken writes asking for a more evenhanded application of the DB’s policy on verbal abuse. The actual statement regarding content on page 2 says only that “...we assume that submissions will be relevant to the purpose of the DB and will avoid personal attacks.” In my experience maintaining a reasonable level of civility in a publication dedicated to critical commentary has a lot in common with maintaining decorum in a high school classroom. A few years ago I made the big mistake of censoring the sexual and scatological portions of otherwise interesting letters written by a couple of writers who decided to use the DB to carry on a slugging match. Doing so didn’t help my reputation or that of the DB. More recently I have simply refused to publish a couple of what I thought were uncivil letters. The result in a couple of cases was the loss of a couple of subscribers whose articles and letters I really prized. There seems to be a general feeling, which I sometimes share, that an article or letter offers an opportunity to take a shot at someone or something that happens to be on the writer’s mind. I think that was the case with Bob Rossi’s DB89 letter and Jon’s response here, for that matter. I’ll try to do better in the future.

The comment in “About This Issue” regarding Monroe Prussack’s DB89 letter said, “Monroe Prussack’s letter applauding the De Leonist Society of Canada for opening his eyes to the possibility of reforming our way to socialism may not go over very well with that group.” Neil C. seems to have concluded that Prussack was accurately expressing the DLSC’s views on reaching socialism. Next the DLSC expresses its outrage at Prussack’s letter in a detailed refutation.

Derek Devine takes issue with my characterization of Libertarian Labor Notes as “the theoretical journal of the IWW.” I stand corrected. It isn’t officially connected with the IWW, but it seems to me that to assert that the IWW is not anarcho-syndicalist flies in the face of history. The 1908 split in which the revolutionary industrial unionists/ political syndicalists of the Socialist Labor Party were forced to leave was engineered by anarchists whose influence in the IWW has never declined to my knowledge.

A DB reader suggested that Alan Bradshaw’s article on taxation in the New Unionist was much superior to my efforts to clarify the matter in DB89. I agree, hence its reprinting here. Robert Zani comments on several matters in DB89 and raises some interesting points on religion and the progress (or
REFLECTING FURTHER ON “REFLECTIONS...”

In DB-89 (May-June, 98), Frank Girard has raised some pertinent questions in his write-up “Reflecting on Reflections on Marx's Critique of Political Economy.” Here we take up some of the questions for a wider discussion.

I. Of merchants and usurers prior to wage-slavery in production

We found some interesting passages in different books which illustrate vividly what we have tried to develop in Reflections. We share some of these passages with you. (Emphasis ours)

“... the exchange of commodities dates from time before all written history, which in Egypt goes back to at least 2000 BC, and perhaps 5000 BC, and in Babylonia to 4000 BC, perhaps 6000 BC, ...” (F. Engels, supplement to Capital, vol. III, page 900).

“1601- sea weary sailors from England landed on Table Bay, then known as Saldania to recuperate. “Saldanians... were as yet shy of European visitors and were easily kept at a distance. Additionally there was problem of communication. The natives spoke through the throat and ‘clocked with their tongues in such sort that in... seven weeks... the sharpest wit amongst us could not learn one word of their language’. Lancaster (commander of the first fleet), rising to the occasion in a way that no gentleman would have contemplated, spoke to them in cattels language. Thus, wishing to buy sheep, he said bash and ‘for oxen and kine “moath”, which language the people understood very well without any interpreter. Soon droves of livestock were converging on the camp and changing hands at rates, which the English found frankly laughable. A piece of old iron, rowlock-size, bought a sheep, and two pieces bought an ox “full as bigge as ours and very fat.” (J. Keay, The Honourable Company — a history of the English East India Company”, p.15).

“Since at least Roman times the traffic in exotic condiments from east to west had sustained the most extensive and profitable trading network the world had yet seen. The buds of the dainty clove tree, the berries of the ivy-like pepper vine, and of course the kernel and membrane of the nutmeg had been ideal cargoes. ... Shipped to the Asian mainland in junk, prahu and dhows, they were re-packed as camel and donkey loads for the long overland journey to the Levant, and then reshipped across the Mediterranean to the European markets. ... What were basic culinary ingredients in south Asia had become exotic luxuries by the time they reached the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. They were the precious metals of the vegetable kingdom... Control of this lucrative trade rested traditionally with the Chinese and Malays in the East, with the Indians and Arabs in its middle reaches, and with the Levantines and Venetians in the West. But around the year 1500 other interested parties had appeared on the scene. It was to reroute the spice trade ... and their own considerable profit that European seafarers from Spain and Portugal first ventured on the world’s oceans.” (J. Keay, “The Honourable Company”, p.5-6).

“... the genesis of British Empire”, 1603, merchants from England land on “Pulo Run in the Banda islands at the eastern end of Indonesian Archipelago... For the nutmegs (i.e. the kernels inside the stones of the tree’s peach-like fruit) and for the mace (the membrane which surrounds the stone) those first visitors in 1603 would willingly have sailed round the world several times. Nowhere else on the globe did the trees flourish and so nowhere else was their fruit so cheap. In the minuscule Banda islands of Run, Ai, Lonthor and Neira ten pounds of nutmeg cost less than half a penny and ten pounds of mace less than five pence. Yet in Europe the same quantities could be sold for respectively 1.60 and 16, a tidy appreciation of approximately 52,000 per cent.” (J. Keay, “The Honourable Company”, p.3-4, emphasis ours).
"... a kilo of pepper, worth one or two grams of silver at the point of production in the Indies, would fetch 10 to 14 grams in Alexandria, 14 to 18 in Venice, and 20 to 30 in the consumer countries of Europe." (F. Braudel, "Civilisation & Capitalism", II, p. 405). "... China did not give a monetary value to gold, but exported it to anyone who wanted to exchange it for silver at exceptionally low rates. The Portuguese in the sixteenth century, were the first Europeans to realize and take advantage of this extraordinary preference of the Chinese for Silver. In 1633, a Portuguese writer was still confidently saying Como os chinos sentia pra a, em montões trouxeram fazendo, when the Chinese sold silver, they will bring mountains of merchandise." (F. Braudel, Civilization & Capitalism, II, p. 198).

"At the end of the sixteenth century a Spanish piece of eight was worth 320 reis in Portugal, 480 in India. At the end of the seventeenth century a bolt of muslin cost 3 reals in the mill at Le Mans, 6 in Spain, 12 in America... In Ancient Rome, Pliny the elder reported that Indian products like pepper and spices were sold at a hundred times their original price." (F. Braudel, "Civilization & Capitalism", II, p. 168).

"... The merchant of the Middle ages was by no means an individualist; he was essentially an association like all his contemporaries. The mark association, grown out of primitive communism, prevailed in the countryside. Each peasant originally had an equal share, with equal pieces of land of each quality, and a corresponding, equal share in the rights of the mark. After the mark had become a closed association and no new hides were allocated any longer, sub-division of the hides occurred through inheritance, etc., with corresponding sub-divisions of the common rights in the mark; but the full hide remained the unit, so that there were half, quarter and eighth-hides with half, quarter and eighth-rights in the mark. All later productive associations, particularly the guilds in the cities, whose statutes were nothing but the application of the mark constitution to a craft privilege instead of to a restricted area of land, followed the pattern of the mark association. The central point of the whole organisation was the equal participation of every member in the privileges and produce assured to the guild, as is strikingly expressed in the 1527 license of the Elberfeld and Barmen yam trade. (Thun : Industrie am Niederhne, Vol. II, p. 164 ff.) The same holds true of the mine guilds, where each share participated equally and was also divisible, together with its rights and obligations, like the hide of the mark member. And the same holds good in no less degree of the merchant companies, which initiated overseas trade...." (F. Engels, supplement to Capital vol. III, page 900-901).

"Even by then (1621) the Company's (English East India Company's) permanent London staff consisted only of the secretary, a beadle, a book-keeper-cum-accountant, a cashier, a solicitor and a ships husband (who organized the provisioning, loading and unloading of fleets)." (J. Keen, "The Honourable Company", p.28).

Early 19th century northern India, "... the basis of mercantile society was the family 'firm', its credit (saikh) and the totality of its relations with gods and men, creditors and debtors. The firm was not seen as something separate from the family... Like the peasant family farm, the merchant family business was a 'special kind of economic enterprise and one in which mercantile decisions were constantly taken with a view to their wider implications for the life of the family as a social group. ... As in the peasant family, for instance, family members, servants and agents were rarely paid in cash wage; instead they had rights and obligations within the family economy." (C.A. Bayly, "Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars - North Indian society in the age of British expansion 1770-1870", p.375-376).

We all know that at the beginnings of society products are consumed by the producers themselves, and that these producers are spontaneously organised in more or less communistic communities; that the exchange of the surplus of these products with strangers,
which ushers in the conversion of products into commodities, is of a later date; that it takes place at first only between individual communities of different tribes, but later also prevails within the community, and contribute considerably to the latter’s dissolution into bigger or smaller family groups. But even after this dissolution the exchanging family heads remain working peasants, who produce almost all they require with the aid of their families on their own farmsteads, and get only a slight portion of the required necessities from the outside in exchange for surplus-products of their own. The family is engaged not only in agriculture and livestock raising, it also works their products up into finished articles of consumption; now and then it even does its own milling with the hand-mill; it bakes bread, spins, dyes, weaves, flax and wool, tans leather; builds and repairs wooden buildings, makes tools and utensils, and not infrequently does joinery and blacksmithing, so that the family or family group is in the whole self sufficient. The little that such a family had to obtain by barter or buy from outsiders, even up to the beginning of the 19th century in Germany, consisted principally of the objects of handicraft production, that is, such things the nature of whose manufacture was by no means unknown to the peasant, and which he did not produce himself only because he lacked the raw material or because the purchased article was much better or very much cheaper. Hence the peasant of the Middle Ages knew fairly accurately the labour-time required for the manufacture of the articles obtained by him in barter. The smith and the cart-wright of the village worked under his eyes; likewise the tailor and shoemaker, who in my youth still paid their visits to our Rhine peasants, one after another, turning the home-made materials into shoes and clothing.” (F.Engels, supplement to Capital vol.III, page 897).

“.... it is quite appropriate to regard the values of commodities as not only theoretically but also historically prior to the prices of production. This applies to conditions in which the labourer owns his means of production, and this is the condition of the landowning farmer living off his own labour and the craftsman, in the ancient as well as the modern world. This agrees also with the view we expressed previously, that the evolution of products into commodities arises through exchange between different communities, not between the members of the same community. It holds not only for this primitive condition, but also for subsequent conditions, based on slavery and serfdom, and for the guild organisation of handicrafts... ” (K. Marx, Capital, Vol. III, Chapter. 10, p.177).

Our Explanation

Since socially necessary labour required for the production of a thing was greatly different in different areas of the globe due to historical and natural reasons, long distance trade became important for it promised huge profits in the realm of circulation. The role of merchants acquired great social significance. Long distance trade came into existence in different parts of the globe, traversing seas and lands. The mobility of diverse groups of merchants originating from different parts of the globe (Canton, Banlam, Nagasaki, Surat, Machhilkpatnam, Basra, Jutfa, Constantinople, Alexandria, Venice, Genoa, Seville, Bordeaux, London, Antwerp, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Muscovy, Rio de Janiero, Mexico city etc.) made long standing and isolated accumulated labour globally mobile. This facilitated the concentration and accumulation of global accumulated labour. With it increased the number of cosmopolitan centres throughout the world. This process enhanced and sustained the tendency of production for exchange. The jumps and transitory stages of the development of production for exchange can be sketched as: a) Shifting markets tending towards stationary and permanent. b) Increasing frequency, numbers and magnitude of fairs. (a) and (b) were supervised by the natural economy state officials. c) Travelling salesmen increase in numbers and develop intensive trade thus bringing vast amounts of goods in the sphere of exchange. d) Development of warehouses — it sustained a continuous production for exchange, which got a filip. e) Factories - profit is from process of production. Till warehouses (d) accumulation of money wealth was by and large from circulation. With, (e) the accumulation of accumulated labour takes place from the production process by and
With accumulated labour in money form bringing in greater returns, accumulated labour in other forms was pushed towards transforming itself into money form. When in numberable producers produce for the market, social distribution of labour takes place through the operation of the law of values. The new value produced is divided into different parts: i) For material well being of producers and for increasing productivity. ii) To the landowner as rent (in the form of kind or money). The rents may be differential rents due to differences in productivity of different pieces of land; and absolute rent which is due to ownership right of the non-producer. iii) Taxes to the state - in kind or money. iv) Merchants margins. v) Interest to the usurer/bank/state. The returns on the loans that the usurer/bank/state received before the emergence of wage-labour based commodity production were a part of the produce extracted from peasants and artisans taken directly or through diverse means. (In wage-labour based production for the market, these returns are a part of the surplus-value extracted.)

Accumulated labour in money form sought diverse arenas for profitable returns which included trade, state loans, real estate, buying state office, stock speculation, crafts production etc. Out of these trade, real estate, land and state loans were traditional arenas of operation. a) Trade: the profit from circulation could only be significant as long as isolation was significant. Through monopolies in trade this isolation was tried to be artificially maintained but this did not succeed. With the development of regular trade and increasing number of competitors, profits from trade declined significantly during 18th century. Need for money to seek channels other than trade for profitable returns increased. b) State loans have been another arena for low but secure returns for money investments. At any time there are limits to investment in state loans. c) Real estate was never central for money investment. d) Buying office/tax-farming was another significant arena for money investment that arose in the 16th-17th century. This was a subset of state taxation and so money investments for profitable returns were limited by the extent of state taxation. e) Land, as an arena for money investment was more for social status than returns. f) Money investment in the arena of craft production was an emerging trend. It took the form of advance payment and handing out of raw materials. This led to the increasing dependence of artisans on merchants. This increasingly undermined the guild system.

This dependence of artisans on merchants created conditions whereby significant numbers of craftsmen were herded under one roof to work under the supervision of merchants. These were factories. Production for exchange by wage-workers emerged. The mobility and concentration of accumulated labour on a world scale led to the development of a new unevenness in distribution and concentration of accumulated labour which was greatly accentuated by political and other factors [geographical, war results etc.]. The presence of merchants from London in both the East and West Indies trade together with their increasing political supremacy in these regions led to an unprecedented concentration of accumulated labour under the control of merchants in London.

The concentration of large amounts of accumulated labour in the hands of merchants seeking avenues for profit earning and emergence of co-operative labour as wage-labour in production for exchange created conditions for the development of qualitatively new productive forces for a quantum leap in surplus extraction from labourers. England in the 18th century had become the most appropriate place where trial and error could play to realise the potential for the development of the new technologies of extraction network. Mechanical power - machine - industrial revolution: this established production for exchange by wage-labour. The establishment and its spread throughout the world were analogous to the emergence of class society in one place and its spread, but on a far greater scale.

II. Average Rate of Profit & the Tendency of the Average
? Focussing on the present, what do we face: Limited companies and corporations whose major source of funds is loans from financial institutions, and the other source of their funds is shares. The major holders of the shares and stocks of companies are other companies. Thousands of individuals hold minor stakes in the shares & stocks of a company.

Analyses of balance-sheets of companies show:
- More than 50% of the surplus-produce (surplus-value) is taken by state apparatuses as excise and other taxes.
- More than 15% of the surplus-produce (surplus-value) is taken by loan-providing institutions as interest payments.
- Around 15% of the surplus-produce (surplus-value) is taken as cuts and commissions by management personnel and state officials which do not figure in legal accounting.
- What remains of the surplus-produce (surplus-value) is called profit of the company and a part of this is given dividend to the share-holding institutions and individuals. The company retains the rest of the profit as reserves.

Given the fact that an overwhelming part of the surplus produce (surplus-value) is appropriated as taxes, interests and cuts & commissions, any attempt at comprehending the scale of surplus-value extracted from profits shown in company balance sheets is a comical exercise.

? Major determinants of the flows of investments today are:
- Regimes of state taxation
  - Interest rates
  - Exchange rates of currencies
  - Wage-workers resistance

in this scenario any attempt at comprehending distribution-redistribution of capital from average rate of profit of companies is a farcical exercise.

? The viability & non-viability of a company, of a state apparatus is determined by the level of taxation, interest rate, exchange rate of currency, rate of cuts & commissions, and the arena of state expenditure.

Given this scenario where rate of profit is constituted by 5 to 10 percent of the surplus produce (surplus-value), the tendency of this profit cannot help in understanding the present reality. Rather focussing on the tendency of this 5-10% of surplus-value creates a haze that hinders wage-workers resistances.

Managements theoretical grounding for attacks on wage-workers is premised on 5 to 10 percent of the surplus-value called profit. The rant is that to keep the company viable the profitability has to maintained. On this question of viability of a company 90% of the surplus-value as taxes, interests and cuts & commissions is abstracted off. Retrenchment, wage-cuts, intensification, sharp increase in workload and other givebacks are legitimised. When simultaneous attacks of this sort are taking place in a large number of companies or resistances-discontent of wage-workers mount in large areas, mismanagement at company and state apparatuses level is brought to the fore to camouflage systemic crisis.

Systemic crisis is reflected in the exponential increase in expenses on control mechanisms at enterprise, state apparatus and global levels. Massive increases in supervisors, managers, security personnel, police, army, prisons, surveillance gadgetry etc. is a reflection not of the strength of the system but rather its increasing fragility. Instead of gaining strength through accumulation the system is forced to consume more and more for mere survival.
Marx’s concept of average rate of profit was premised on the capitalists that are individual owners of production enterprises employing wage-labourers. For Marx, the abolition of private property, i.e., the expropriation of capitalists was what was desired. Tendency of the rate of profit (as defined by Marx, by abstracting off of joint stock companies) to fall posed objective limits to the survival of capitalists. So for Marx, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall was the law. Marx himself included increase of stock capital as counteracting influences to this law. Therefore, to extend Marx’s concept of average rate of profit and its tendency to the present where stock companies are overwhelmingly pre-eminent is a ridiculous exercise.

If one wants to extend Marx’s critique of political economy using concepts of average rate of profit and its tendency to present day reality then one has to take into account the excluded 90% of the surplus-value (in the form of taxes, interests, cuts & commissions beside taking into consideration the mobility of accumulated labour across the globe at electronic speed). If anything meaningful emerges, from such an exercise, to comprehend the present day reality and aid wage-workers resistances, then it is welcome. However, if such an exercise does not take globe as its arena from the beginning but rather circumscribes itself by boundaries of some state than it cannot have any meaning.

III. a. On the role of state apparatuses

For Marx the divisions of surplus-value are profit, interest and rent. But as mentioned above today’s reality is different. In comprehending the divisions of surplus-value one needs to be much more rigorous.

State apparatuses play a pre-eminent role in the process of surplus extraction. By training, disciplining, keeping labourers exploitable (statutory norms for working hours and wages, safety measures, health care etc.) and providing organs of threat, state apparatuses play a major role in the functioning of production enterprises.

State apparatuses appropriate more than fifty percent of the produce. Through differential taxation, state apparatuses play a decisive role in the position of different branches of production. Some are aided and some hindered depending upon the threats it perceives from its subjects and competing state apparatuses. In the light of the above, we feel that abstracting off the role of state apparatuses in the functioning of production enterprises is not a valid abstraction.

III. b. On other modes of commodity production

Value of labour-power, that is, wages were assumed by Marx to be providing for the maintenance and reproduction of wage-workers. This assumption was not valid even for nineteenth century England because a significant cost of the maintenance & reproduction of wage-workers was met by artisans and peasants with whom wage-workers had close family links. (see, E.P. Thompson’s - ‘The Making of the English Working Class’.)

The value of labour-power and wages are two different things and a conceptual differentiation is necessary for clarity.

More important is that abstracting off of other modes of commodity production does not facilitate the comprehension of extended reproduction, i.e., the dynamics of capital. Rather, it hinders this comprehension.

IV. Regarding extended reproduction

Production for exchange is taking place in two forms:
Simple commodity production (SCP), i.e., production for exchange based on personal and family labour using means of production under one's own control.

Capitalist commodity production (CCP), i.e., production for exchange based on wage-labour.

Wage labour-based production is predominant but hundreds of millions also are engaged in simple commodity production today.

Commodity exchange takes place around the law of value and it is immaterial whether a commodity has been produced utilising wage-labour or personal & family labour.

In this scenario, the problem of extended reproduction deals with the process of accumulation of capitalist commodity production. The premises for analysing this extended reproduction are:
- Total global produce of capitalist commodity production is the basis of analyses
- Representatives of capital cannot consume total global surplus-value
- A part of the total global surplus-value must be utilised for enlarging reproduction to create more surplus-value
- All exchanges revolve around the law of value.

Immediate implication of the formulation is:
- Solutions of extended reproduction cannot be even formulated at the level of an enterprise or a state boundary.

If the production begins with $C + v$, and the total global produce of capitalist commodity production is seen as $c + v + s$ in value terms, where $c$ is the totality of the means of production consumed globally in production; $v$ is the global sum of wages paid to wage-workers and $s$ is the global surplus-value. There is an effective demand within CCP for values equal to $c + v + s$ that portion of $s$ that is consumed. But that portion of global surplus-value $s$, which is to be accumulated, does not have an effective demand within CCP. If the whole of $s$ is to be consumed, that is reproduction is to be at the same level as previous production, then there is sufficient demand within CCP. The problem is not of market as such but of market for that portion of global surplus-value that is to be accumulated. In reality, the market is not just the market constituted by CCP but there are hundreds of millions of peasants and artisans engaged in simple commodity production. Capitalist commodity production and simple commodity production constitute the total global market. It is the exchange between CCP and SCP which provides the demand for that portion of surplus-value which is to be accumulated. Assuming a closed capitalist system all the state apparatuses together derive their purchasing power from $v$ or $s$, i.e., they do not constitute any new demand. However in reality state apparatuses tax peasants and artisans too. This portion of state taxes does constitute a demand that facilitates enlarged reproduction of capital.

Collectivities, June 98 / Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, N.I.T. Faridabad 121 001, India
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A Reply to “Reflecting Further…”

Reading Collectivities book Reflections on Marx’s Critique of Political Economy raised several questions in my mind about Marxism and some of the details of Collectivities’ critique. My article in DB89 expressed these questions and also some critical comments on the book as a whole.

Now to “Reflecting Further...” The wealth of quotation Collectivities provides in the opening pages of the article is interesting, but I can’t see how it nor Part I of “Our Explanation” speaks to the question I raised in response to Collectivities’ assertion that “...before the advent of wage-labour based production for the market, merchants realized a profit on their capital without the use of wage labor.” (DB89, p.5). My question, a few lines down, was “Doesn’t the profit yielded by mercantile activity involve the use of wage labor?”—most especially in transport but also in accounting and the thousand and one tasks involved in running a merchandising operation?

I would have been completely satisfied with Collectivities’ comment on the tendency of the rate of profit to fall had I not read Fred Mosely’s The Falling rate of Profit in the Postwar United States Economy, which I recommend to Collectivities and to anyone else interested in the matter.

It strikes me that Collectivities in Part III gives the state a much more independent role than it actually has. The state acts in response to the wishes of the largest and thus the most influential elements of capital. The government’s decisions are a result of the ongoing struggles within the ruling class, which pays for the costs of the state out of surplus value, as Collectivities observed. As to “Other modes of commodity production” it may be true, as Collectivities’ asserts, that the maintenance of our class by non-wage production “hinders this comprehension” i.e. the understanding of the dynamics of capitalism.

Finally, I can’t see that Part IV of this article answers the questions I raised about the state and especially its military arm—rather than consumers engaged in simple commodity production—being capitalism’s market of last resort.

—Frank Girard

ON SOCIALIST STANDARD’S REVIEW OF “REFLECTIONS ON MARX’S CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY”

Socialist Standard’s review in DB89 makes three claims.

Claim -1. “Marx himself furnished the theoretical disproof of this view that growth in “pure” capitalism would be impossible, in Chapter 49 of Volume Three of Capital”.

Capital, Vol. III, Chapter 49: “Concerning the analysis of the process of production”.

This chapter has absolutely nothing to do with the problem of extended reproduction.

The chapter deals with the apparent problem in the replacement of c in the total social product. The total social product in value terms is $c + v + s$ where ‘c’ is the consumed raw materials + wear and tear of the used means of production, v is total wages and ‘s’ is surplus value ($profit + interest + rent$). The problem addressed is that since all newly added labour (i.e. the new value) is divided into wages, profit, interest and rent (i.e. s + v), there apparently remains no excess social labour for the replacement of consumed constant capital (i.e. c).

And not only this, in this chapter Marx explicitly states: “It is completely irrelevant to the problem to be solved here that a portion of the surplus-value converted into the form of profit and rent is not consumed as revenue, but is accumulated. That portion which is saved up as
an accumulation fund serves to create new, additional capital, but not to replace the old capital, be it the component part of old capital laid out for labour-power or for means of labour. We may therefore assume here, for the sake of simplicity, that the revenue passes wholly into individual consumption." (Capital, Vol.III, Chapter 49, pg.834). That is, simple reproduction is assumed.

Given the content of this chapter it is very very strange that the reviewer of "Socialist Standard" asserts that Marx presented the theoretical disproof to the problem of extended reproduction in Chapter 49, Vol III. Volume I & Volume II do not have any chapter 49, so the mistake could not have been there. There is something definitely amiss.

Claim - 2. There is a practical disproof to the problem of extended reproduction.

The basis of this claim is not clear. However we repeat that, capitalist commodity production as a global whole accumulates as long as there is simple commodity production (non-wage-labour based commodity production). Tens of millions are engaged in simple commodity production today. It is very surprising that innumerable commodity transactions between simple and capitalist commodity productions escapes the reviewer.

Claim - 3. International Perspective has answered comprehensively enough the misreading of Marx in context of the effect of the growth of joint stock companies on the rate of profit.

We wrote to I.P. on 21st February, 98 the following:

"... Regarding Marx: I.P. no 30: 31
You quote Marx on page no. 23 regarding the inclusion of stock capital in the counteracting influences to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall: "Theoretically, they may be included in the calculation, and the result would then be a lower rate of profit then the seemingly existing rate."

Marx's text does not end there - rather it continues further: "seemingly existing rate, which is decisive for the capitalists".

This significant erasure allows you to blunt the sharpness of Marx's concepts & categories and create a theoretical haze using Marx's weight.

..."

I.P. replied on 10th March, 98 the following:

"Comrades, thanks for your email. As soon as I find time, I will carefully go over it so I can reply to it. ..."

FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM, NOT MINDLESS ABUSE

Fellow Workers,

Having at least once had a submission rejected for publication in Discussion Bulletin because FW Girard felt my documented, specific allegations of wrongdoing by members of the Workers Solidarity Alliance constituted "personal attacks," I am somewhat mystified as to why he allows mindless abuse of the sort proffered by Bob Rossi in DB #56. Having dealt with Rossi in the past, and knowing that he feels absolutely no compunction in telling outright lies (in one instance he circulated charges around the world that I was refusing to allow the WSA to attend an IWW convention, even though I had explicitly informed him in writing that WSA would be issued a formal invitation as soon as the venue was finalized), I cannot know what credence to place in any of the claims in his letter -- though I must say that I do not recall the discussion he is responding to in any way resembling his characterization of it.

But that is not the point of this letter. Rather, I wish to suggest that if the Discussion Bulletin wishes to continue to uphold standards of decorum in discussion, letters such as Rossi’s would seem to offer an excellent model of what ought not to be tolerated.

Rossi says “New Democracy[s] … using ‘we’ when discussing working[-]class struggles … rings as hollow as Jon Bekken talking about ‘us working stiffs’ in The Industrial Worker." What he means by this reference I cannot say, since Rossi offers not even a hint as to why he is dragging me into this debate. Perhaps he means to suggest that I am not obliged to work for a living? If he wishes to provide me with the means to retire from wage slavery, I would gladly take him up on the offer.

Similarly, Rossi concludes by criticizing the libertarian left for their “inability to act when even the clumsy IWW manages to put up an activist facade.” Again there is not even the slightest pretense of an argument (or evidence) to back up this characterization. In the last year, the IWW has attempted (with some successes) to organize several workplaces, confronting as we always have the difficulties and potentials of building revolutionary unionism in our daily practice. IWW organizing efforts continue to heat up – most notably in the construction, education, health care, printing, public service, retail distribution and restaurant industries. Many of our fellow workers put their jobs on the line in the class war and have been fired and/or blacklisted for their union activities – as I write battles to reinsate some of those workers are still underway. Wobblies are on the job, on the picket line and in our communities, tackling the hard work of agitation and organizing for our class’ emancipation.

The IWW’s activity is evidenced in our monthly newspaper, the Industrial Worker, in the many organizing drives we have underway at this very moment, and in a membership that has more than doubled in the last three years — even as the AFL-CIO Rossi defends has continued to lose members. (Of course, it will take a few years for this trend to result in the IWW displacing the AFL, let alone the capitalists.) Rossi’s long-standing preference for baring from within the business unions to the revolutionary unionism I prefer is well within his rights. But if he has serious criticisms of our practice to offer, he should provide specific, detailed criticism. It is quite impossible to respond (or learn from) to the vague, formless abuse on offer in his letter, or even to have any clear idea of what he means.

Jon Bekken
Dear Editors,

Your journal has carried a number of quite relevant debates and polemical exchanges on issues key to helping clear out some of the fetid baggage of the stalinist, Trotskyist, social democratic, and other reformist trends. In particular, the ones on the state capitalist nature of the rotted and failed stalinist societies, also the questions of class organization and class consciousness, workers rule, etc.

But in issue #89, a couple of articles seem to have clear retrograde steps back toward more illusions in bourgeois democracy, (the major political ideological weapon keeping the workers in check) and almost negating the role of the working class action in forging new political and industrial organization through future upsurges in the working class struggles against capital and its state.

In particular, the article by Monroe Prussack promotes more confusion and bourgeois parliamentary mystifications. His DeLeonist Society of Canada has descended into outright parliamentary cretinism a la the SPGB, SP etc. Prussack makes a fetish of bourgeois constitutionalist lawyerisms by claiming that the workers can take control of the ready made (capitalist) state machinery and wield it for their own purposes. This method is a clear abandonment of materialism for parliamentary illusions. Whatever the working class could have gained for its interests in parliaments in the previous historical epoch, the 20th Century and the rise of capitalist world economy, monopoly and the professional administrative & military bureaucracy beholden totally to the rule of capital means advocating workers revolution legally through the Constitution using "the amendment clause, Article 5 is pure idealism and utopianism.

No ruling class would ever be so foolish as to relinquish its dominant power, economic and political, by allowing the exploited to have access to the mass media, schools, internet, so as to use these in a mass way to promote any kind of anti-capitalist revolutions etc. In fact even before the events of the 20th century and the rise of world bourgeois economy and sweeping aside of feudal relations, etc, Marxists were clear that "the working cannot merely lay hold of the ready made state machinery and wield it to its own purposes" (Marx – The Paris Commune).

The class struggles themselves as well as the present bi-partisan austerity schemes of the social-democrats allied with bourgeois conservatives are the surest refutation of the no-brainer nature of the nature of the parliamentary cretinism of the Deleonzist Society of Canada and kindred groups a la the SP, the SPGB, etc. Have these people learned nothing from the bloody lessons of history? We have had the experience of first, the 1871 Commune, Russia in 1905 and 1917, Germany in 1918-19, Hungary in 1919 (and 1956) Italy and Austria in 1919-20, Chile in 1973.

(I would also mention in passing that contrary to Mr. Prussack that the end of US chattel slavery was not merely "instituted" through constitutional amendments, but that the 13th-14th -15th amendments only had meaning mainly insofar as the power of the Unionists' force of arms overwhelmed the Confederacy in the bourgeois Civil War. (The bloodiest war in terms of
wounded and killed on both sides in US history.) But the epoch of the "progressive" period of capitalism is clearly over. But capitalism will NOT automatically collapse or be "constitutionally amended" to death either.

The lessons of the workers movements are that the class struggles that break out of nationalist and parliamentary illusions, graduate to mass workers councils, assemblies, soviets, breaking also with trade unionism, etc. can put the workers in position to at least having a fighting chance to occupy industry & overthrow the capitalist-state. The ruling class of exploiters will then (if not sooner) go over to the flip side of the political coin of bourgeois democracy-fascism, neo-fascism, etc to maintain the rule/privileges of the capitalist class and their hangers-on.

Parliamentary and Constitutional illusions are mainly throwing dust in the eyes of the workers. Of course it is not enough to merely abstain from the capitalist financed and controlled election charades which in our epoch, are for workers but an impotent form of political masturbation. Worker militants, revolutionaries, should focus work on educating and organizing inside the class itself, not to sow in a barbaric "democracy" of our rulers, but exposing the sham and in finding methods of political work to raise the tempo of the class struggles that exists today and help build new movements where the revolutionary manist programme can be conjoined by militant workers who want a struggle for the overthrow of wage slavery.

High Regards, Neil C

LAWV (communist-left)
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(From p. 10)

better –regress) of capitalism in Russia. Monroe Prussack persists in his efforts to marry the U.S. Constitution to a socialist society. As usual we end with a few notes, announcements, and short reviews.

**Finances**

A local DB reader with a masters degree in accounting informs me that once again I have screwed up the DB bookkeeping, thus giving added credence to the proposition expressed by an old friend that I am functionally enamored. This time I understated the final balance in DB89 by over $30. That’s according to the beginning balance in DB88. Actually I apparently fouled up big-time elsewhere including the date. The actual balance is considerably less as nearly as I and the bank can see. Moreover, the past two months have seen a decline in income. And to think I wrote in DB89 about declaring a dividend. But these two months haven’t been a complete bust. Although relatively few subscriptions expired, thus cutting income from that source, contributions have kept us alive and in good health.

Contributions: Neil Fettes $5; Joe Tupper $40; Jon Bekken $5; Dave Stratman $7; Heinrich Fleischer $17. Total $74. Thank you, comrades.

(to p. 26)
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better --regress) of capitalism in Russia. Monroe Prussack persists in his efforts to marry the U.S. Constitution to a socialist society. As usual we end with a few notes, announcements, and short reviews.

Finances

A local DB reader with a masters degree in accounting informs me that once again I have screwed up the DB bookkeeping, thus giving added credence to the proposition expressed by an old friend that I am functionally enamored. This time I understated the final balance in DB 89 by over $30. That's according to the beginning balance in DB88. Actually I apparently fouled up big-time elsewhere including the date. The actual balance is considerably less as nearly as I and the bank can see. Moreover, the past two months have seen a decline in income. And to think I wrote in DB89 about declaring a dividend. But these two months haven't been a complete bust. Although relatively few subscriptions expired, thus cutting income from that source, contributions have kept us alive and in good health.

Contributions: Neil Fettes $5; Joe Tupper $40; Jon Bekken $5; Dave Stratman $7; Heinrich Fleischer $17. Total $74. Thank you, comrades.

(to p. 26)
Dear DB

The De Leonist Society of Canada was formed in September, 1979, by former members of the Socialist Labor Party of Canada who had resigned from that organization several months earlier following its capitulation to the virus of reformism-revisionism—a virus which had already emasculated the SLP of America. Not only did we thereby establish our revolutionary credentials but the record of the intervening years is replete with proof that we have not wavered from our revolutionary posture. Therefore we were shocked to discover in DB89 that Munroe Prussack has misrepresented us as reformers, thus:

"It took the DeLeonist Society of Canada to open my eyes to the realization that we can teach socialism, not as social revolution, but as a reform of our present society."

Prussack appears fearful of the essential thrust that is implicit in the revolutionary concept—i.e., a confrontation between the capitalist class and the working class in which the latter must needs obtain the unconditional surrender of the former. This is unquestionably a serious matter that no one should take lightly. However, infinitely more to be feared at this late date would be failure of the working class to heed Socialism's revolutionary call. Prussack should reflect upon what has become a dread alternative to social revolution—a dying capitalist social order that has added humans to its count of endangered species.

There is no comfortable road to salvation. The issue must be boldly confronted. "Socialist" reforms are today a contradiction in terms. Socialism cannot be sneaked in bit by bit behind the back of the capitalist class; on the contrary, the working class has to stand upon its own two legs, prepared upon a socialist vote to lock out the capitalist class from the nation's industries and services and immediately commence socialist production and distribution. We hold that there is no other way to reach safety. To quote De Leon from his magnificent address now titled Reform or Revolution:

"Revolutions triumphed, whenever they did triumph, by asserting themselves and marching straight upon their goal. On the other hand, the fate of Wat Tyler ever is the fate of reform. The rebels, in this instance, were weak enough to allow themselves to be wheeled into placing their movement into the hands of Richard II, who promised 'relief'—and brought it by marching the men to the gallows."

* 

At the same time we must also challenge Prussack's following assertion:

"Those Canadian DeLeonists, however, are not clear on whether the political arm of socialism should be instituted before or after the workers take control of the means of production."

This, too, is a gross misrepresentation. The record is as clear on this matter as it is clear on our revolutionary stance. Did Prussack not trouble himself to access the relevant material which he received as a subscriber to both the De Leonist Review and the Discussion Bulletin? Take for instance our position paper (our thesis). In it he will find the following passage:
"As the socialist program [the SLP program] now stands, a landslide vote for Socialism would be the last vote exercised by the people (the people as a whole); in voting for Socialism the people would not only delegate ultimate authority to the Work Force but in so doing would disfanchise themselves! We see, therefore, that standing in the way of a clip and clear presentation of the De Leonist program is this troublesome question of WHO is to be sovereign in a socialist society—the people at work at any time, or the people as a whole?"

Surely our implication is clear that at no time should the body politic willingly surrender its political vote! But does Prussack require an explicit example of where we stand, and have stood, on the question? The same is to be found in our Manifesto, as follows:

"We hold that the question a socialist ticket should ask the people to agree to should not be devolution of their political powers upon an industrial organization but delegation of industrial executive authority to an industrial organization responsible to the people through their legislative assemblies."

But Prussack is not yet finished. Having sought to mollify Revolution with Reform, the gentleman now proceeds to add "confusion worse confounded" to the mix, thus:

"My position is that the people as a whole should unite to reform our state to make private and state ownership of the means of production social property."

With this statement Prussack rejects the meanings which De Leonists ascribe to the terms State, Reform, and Revolution. Thus instead of helping promote Socialism he merely succeeds in muddying the waters! So what, then, do De Leonists mean by these terms? They propagate the Marxian description of the State as an instrument of class rule—and so doing, incorporate Abolition of the State* as a major tenet of socialist reconstruction! And with De Leon they shed light on the huge difference that exists between the concept of Reform and the concept of Revolution—a difference well engraved on the mind by his pithy summations:

"We hear people talk about the 'Reform Force,' about 'Evolution' and about 'Revolution' in ways that are highly mixed. Let us clear up our terms. Reform means a change of externals; Revolution—peaceful or bloody, the peacefulness or the bloodiness of it cuts no figure whatever in the essence of the question—means a change from within."

"So with society. Whenever a change leaves the internal mechanism untouched, we have Reform; whenever the internal mechanism is changed, we have Revolution."

As to the Constitution, Prussack has the cart leading the horse! A constitutional document simply mirrors the way a nation is constituted. Such document is an embodiment and certification, not the genesis, of the form in which and the rules under which a society is organized. In short, contrary to Prussack a socialist constitution can record, but not "administer," the end of wage slavery. What is more, De Leonism insists that the one instrument that can administer a coup de grace to the wages system, in response to a political mandate for Socialism, is a nationwide, self-organized, UNION OF THE WORK FORCE!
As it turns out, however, Prussack has other ideas! It appears clear, finally, that the people he is looking for are not potential revolutionaries but people who want to be told of an easy way out of Capitalism into Socialism. The "easy" way? Simply amend the Constitution! Simply sweet-scent the road to Socialism with constitutional reform—a reform that in context is pure fantasy, a reform that instead of winning the day for Socialism could by all Socialism's teaching merely mock society's desperate plight by putting working-class revolutionary industrial organization (organization by the workers of their ECONOMIC POWER) on indefinite or permanent hold.

What we have here is the antithesis of De Leonism! De Leonism directs its appeal to workers' strength, not their weakness. It acquaints workers with their historic mission to "save civilization from a catastrophe," declaring that not ease but stern duty, not mere political balloting but working-class self-discipline and self-organization is the urgent need of the hour! But let Prussack himself confess his abandonment of Socialism's revolutionary posture in favor of Reform:

"In 1948, I became an active sympathizer of the Socialist Labor Party in New York City....We presented the Socialist message to the public, and their response was not encouraging to me...."

"Even when I was a member of the SLP, I continued to take issue with official party positions. If the party were [had been] able to win friends and influence people, I would have been satisfied...." (!!)

Socialists do not attempt to "win friends and influence people" by abandoning their revolutionary posture! The Canadian De Leonists declare with De Leon: "We Socialists are not Reformers; we are Revolutionists." Accordingly, we herewith deny kinship with Munroe Prussack.

Sincerely,

May 30, 1998

THE DE LEONIST SOCIETY OF CANADA

* By Abolition of the State we do not mean abolition of political government, as does the SLP. As explained in our thesis and elsewhere, what we mean is abolition of class control of the institutions of political government.
Dear Frank,

At the risk of coming over like some kind of Dickensian figure I'd like to complain — again! This time, I wish to object to the sentiments expressed in the review of Libertarian Labor Review (May/June DB) where LLR was described as: "It is in effect the theoretical journal of the IWW" (or something similar. I've passed the issue on to someone else.)

This is a preposterous claim. How could a magazine which claims to be a discussion forum for anarcho-syndicalist ideas be the theoretical journal of the IWW? The IWW is a non-political union promoting revolutionary industrial Unionism, and it disassociates itself from the federalist, anti-political outlooks of syndicalism. The union is not and never has been an anarcho-syndicalist organization.

If the reviewer was suggesting that the LLR coterie currently control the Industrial Worker (organ of the USA, IWW), then I feel that he/she may indeed have a point. This, perhaps, points to shortcomings within the IWW where there are, presently, no Editorial Guidelines to either control or protect the editor of the Industrial Worker. In this situation the editor is seemingly free to identify the union with the anti-political creed of syndicalism/anarcho-syndicalism. Similarly, with regard to advertising in the IW, it is currently up to the editor to seek out or select "suitable" adverts. In recent years, the Libertarian Labor Review and other anarchist publications and organizations seem to be favoured by the current Editor for inclusion as "suitable" adverts in the Industrial Worker.

However, I would like to re-iterate my earlier point — the LLR is definitely not the theoretical journal of the IWW.

Fraternally,
Derek Devine

(from p. 22)

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Fraternally submitted,
Frank Girard – for the DB
Brouhaha Over Taxes Camouflages a Far Greater Exploitation of Workers

Almost everywhere workers have joined the "tax revolt." Polls indicate that a large percentage of workers even vote against bond issues that would benefit them, such as those for schools, parks or public transit. Such resentment over taxes is misplaced. It should be directed against the system that allows a capital-owning class to take a large part of the wealth created by the labor of others. Taxes are only a minor part of that wealth.

Workers apply their labor to raw materials, thereby creating a commodity that can be sold in the market for an amount greatly exceeding the wages paid. This fact is attested to by ads placed in business journals by states trying to entice investment from manufacturing and other companies. An ad placed by New Jersey says, "Value added per dollar of wages is a hefty $3.76 vs. the national average of $3.36."

Another ad proclaims that New York's manufacturing workers produce $4.25 in value added for every dollar in wages. Figures from the U.S. Commerce Department's 1987 Census of Manufactures indicate that the major industry groups produced at that time a combined value added of almost $1.2 trillion. Total wages paid were about $252.5 billion, thus realizing a surplus value of $974.5 billion. This is exploitation on a grand scale.

Many workers believe that they are exploited only if they are receiving low wages. Not at all. Workers now are more exploited than workers were 100 years, despite higher wages and fewer hours of work today.

The U.S. Census figures for 1849 disclose a rate of surplus value of around 100%, the same used by Marx in Capital. This means that out of the value added to materials by the workers' labor, half went to the workers as wages and half went to the factory owners as surplus value, or profit.

In the U.S. in 1953, the rate was around 140%, indicating the ratio of surplus value to wages was increasing. By 1984 the rate was near 300% and rising. The relevant figures published for major industry groups in 1987 establish that it was nearing 400%. Today's working class is truly the most exploited in history, getting back only 20% of the wealth they produce.

This surplus value, or its near equivalent, gross profit, should not be equated with net profit, the so-called bottom line. Net profit is the figure nearly always mentioned in corporate publicity or in the media as the decisive one. Yet it is only a small part of gross profit.

For example, in 1981 Exxon had over a $34 billion gross profit, but "only" around $5.5 billion in net profit. An IRS report for 1979 showed gross profits for all corporations at almost $11 trillion, with net profit of $213 billion after taxes. Clearly, net profit represents only a small part of the total surplus value.

The distribution of surplus value is of interest to workers since they, after all, create it. Some published profit and loss statements by corporations and IRS statistics give some clues.

For example, IRS figures for 1971 manufacturing companies show $41 billion paid in interest, $16 billion in rent, $105 billion in taxes (to be accurate, amounts withheld from wages for taxes should also be included), $283 billion in other expenses, leaving $105 billion for net profits. All these billions come from gross profits, which is the surplus value created by workers.

The composition of "other" can be inferred. It includes payments to advertising agencies, accountants, lawyers and similar groups. Also included are high executive salaries, corporate jets, company cars and other perks. The billions in expense accounts comprise a major revenue source for expensive restaurants and hotels. Media and political attention allotted to these enormous expenditures is insignificant compared to the amount of time they spend bewailing the "welfare problem" and the
amount of tax money going to needy families with children.

Under capitalism taxes are the concern of the capitalist class, since taxes come out of surplus value, not wages. The lower the taxes, the more wealth remains in capitalist hands. This explains the heavy emphasis placed on tax reduction in the media and by politicians.

The deep tax cuts under Reagan in the 1980s made the top 20% even more wealthy. At the same time, average wages declined, and workers found they had to pay more for community college tuition and to pay user fees for parks and beaches as social services generally were slashed. Clearly, capitalists are not going to share tax savings with workers.

That most workers are so riled about taxes and so indifferent to the real robbery says a lot for capitalist indoctrination. Workers aren't born with such ideas. These perceptions, like so many others, are shaped by those who control the main sources of knowledge and information, the owning class itself.

Workers not only need to realize that they are receiving a small portion of the wealth that they and only they create, but also that they are being conditioned to accept a false view of the process. They might then resent the really big robbery of the wealth they produce, and not just the minor amount for taxes.

by Alan Bradshaw

(From May 1998 New Unionist, 2309 Nicollet Ave., #202, Minneapolis, MN 55404)

(from p. 32)

(Chapter 24), one finds a fine serious article "Anthropology and Anarchism" by Brian Morris along with "Bill Gates Gets a Pie in the Face: An interview with Noel Godin by Hughes Henry," which includes before and after pictures of the actual act. As usual there is an extended and excellent section of book and media reviews and much more including articles by John Zerzan and other renown "lifestyle?" anarchists. $6 from C.A.L. Press, POB 1313, Lawrence, KS 66044.

Subversion (Number 23) is the free publication of a group that is "against all forms of capitalism: private, state and self-manages. We are for communism, which is a classless society. ..." Many of the articles in this 23-page issue continue ongoing debates with readers under such titles as "Against Pious Moral Liberalism," "Doling It Out," "State Power and Class Solidarity," and "Useful Work and Useless Toil," Who Can Afford the Cost of a Communist Utopia?" and "Trade Unions and the Communist Left." Especially interesting to DB readers is a review of the books published by Collectivities and reviewed in the DB: Ballad Against Work and Reflections on Marx's Critique of Political Economy. Available from Subversion, Dept 10, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1HW England, UK. Although Subversion is free it wouldn't hurt to include a donation.

--fg
Frank:

I received *Reflections on Marx’s Critique of Political Economy*. Thank you for sending it. The authors indicate it is a dry read:

“Critique of Political Economy, of Marxian Political Economy may appear to be dry stuff but it needs to be grappled with...”

And in some respects it is, although the historical side notes are quite interesting. In the Politics, Aristotle says that the person who lives outside the polis (or political community) must be either a beast or a god and that he will ever be making war. “Reflections” is written from the inside with personal insight and experience. English author Evelyn Waugh had a habit of using a throwaway phrase to express core meanings, and the author (s) of “Reflections,” at least to me, achieve the same distinction in simple prose, sans doctrinaire verbiage. “Reflections” says:

“Capitalism is a social system.”

Indeed it is. It is an economic/social/philosophical/amoral system. A complete and total way of life its advocates dare not admit. I have yet to encounter a group on the left, hard left, ultra left, far left, left-left, way left, super left, left of left-left, etc. that sees and expresses that clearly and lucidly with 20-20 vision/sight. Author Arthur Miller got it right. But I never cease to be amazed that semi- or orthodox, and super orthodox Marxists can rhapsodize at great length about some particular aspect of Marxism, as religionists do about the Bible, but fail to understand truly that capitalism is a complete, one-package system. A way of life. As one well known American professor said some years ago:

‘To be a professor is wonderful; all your personal mistakes become official doctrine”

He was a Catholic professor at a Catholic university. Our Faridabad friends appear to appreciate such truth. The age dominated by the genius of Marx, Darwin, and Freud, each of whom contributed something which fires the imagination has been replaced by an age dominated by entertainers and sports celebrities. It seems to me that today the works of Michel Foucault have much to contribute side by side with the insight of past genius. In any event, “Reflections” made a vital and long dormant point. Write on

Other Comments

1. As one who is interested in the crux of what Barbara Shawl-Jolly is saying, I find it ironic that she writes:

“I often wonder why today’s socialists feel it essential to justify every statement they make by quoting Marx or other philosophers. Marx et al. defined a socialism for the 20th century, which is now gone [sic]. Yet the socialists continue to quote these century-old theorists as if everything they wrote was cast in stone and cannot tolerate any deviation.”

The gnosticism of the second to fourth centuries Mrs. Shawl-Jolly proposes to re-adopt would provide solid moral/ethical/humane, basic socialist structure distinct from the capitalist system. Personally, it
seems to me that a neutral reading of the Gospels presents a Jesus who is a religious, ethical-anarchist. However 12 different individuals reading the Gospels could come up with 1/2 dozen different opinions. And do.

(Gnosticism rested on the Greek phrase "Ho huioi tou anthro pou," generally translated "son of man," but precisely rendered "The son of the man," which indicated that Jesus repeatedly referred to himself not as the messiah, or as the son of God, but simply as a human being.)

2. One or some DB readers should be keeping up with Norilsk in the new rapacious capitalist Russia. Much has transpired during the last 24 months there which is not appearing in the American media. Norilsk is famous (or infamous) as the huge Russian metallurgical complex located above the Arctic Circle. In 1997 the complex and the entire city itself were sold to a Moscow Banker. Then the Russian electricity workers were replaced by cheaper workers from Azerbaijan and the Caucasus. The city government combined with the workers have now locked horns with their new owner.

3. Good trial lawyers (and they are rare) make their living convincing a small group of widely divergent persons – a jury – of a specific set of facts and circumstances, and advise a jury how to render justice. The best ones use a simple formula, KISS: “Keep it simple, stupid.” Perhaps the greatest problem of all shades of the left is that they make it COMPLEX and KEEP IT COMPLEX.

4. As an open question, with the globalization of rapacious capitalism, isn’t it time to elevate Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman from its status as a great and poignant tragedy to the level of epic?

Best wishes,

Robert J. Zani
No. 328938, Michael Unit, 12-B-20, Rt 1, Box 4500, Tennessee Colony, TX 75886

Dear Readers,

From my point of view, the economic and political crisis in the Far East, as well as much of Latin America, is a repeat of the Great Depression of 1929 that also started with trouble in big banks. The failure of a big Austrian bank around 1929 set off more bank failures that depressed the economies in most of Europe and later the United States. Today big Japanese banks that are the largest creditors in the Far East are losing lots of money, much of which is not fully reported. Their reaction to the bad loans they have been making is to diminish the amount of credit they can extend presently and to call in loans more extensively. To Marxists, this means trouble because in no way can the economy function without expanding credit.

The working class cannot consume all it produces, even with credit, and production will not increase when domestic and foreign markets are not growing. People in East Asia do not buy, so the United States runs record trade deficits. When we see Asian banks investing less in United States stocks, bonds and real estate, we will be sure that 1929 is with us again.

During my school years, my awareness of the Great Depression and of the buildup of the powers that resulted in World War II made me interested in socialism, and
fortunately I was attracted to the Socialist Labor Party. The Communist Party would have made me morally corrupt. Their philosophy that the end justifies the means promoted the attitude that all thinking is relative and that there is no such thing as right or wrong. At least the Socialist Labor was not committed to defending the politics of the Soviet Union. The Socialist Party I did not consider at that time, because it represented the reform policies of the New Deal. Although I worked in private and government industry most of my life, I was not convinced that working people can some day take over all the industries and run them. However, I accepted that belief because no other positive plan for society presented itself that I believed the people would accept.

Now that the world is faced with similar economic forces that previously resulted in the Great Depression, I believe we should all think anew to face this growing crisis. To be honest, what is on our minds is not the hope of building a new and better society on the ruins of this old order. We want to save ourselves from the economic ruin that faces the people of the world. No longer do I believe in the plan of the Socialist Labor Party to convince the majority to win control of the government so we may transfer power to workers in industry who are ready and willing to democratically run those industries. The local, state and national governments will be abandoned like the French abandoned the Bastille once they captured it and started the French Revolution. That vision inspired the Marxist Socialist Labor Party, as well as the thousands who voted for it. To give up our constitution is to give up our laws, loyalties and security. We do not have to abandon our Constitution to establish socialism. The amendment clause of our Constitution allows us to make the means of production social property. We can also declare that people working in those industries should elect their supervisors, as well as plant managers and inter-plant, as well as inter-industry, managers. People will be working for society and society, through our constitutional government, will decide how to compensate all people.

In ancient Greece, the citizens lived off the labor of slaves as cultured free people. We will live in comfort under socialism, and hopefully, with high standards, but those of us who work in industry will be free like the rest of us.

When our Constitution was adopted we did not have national or international banks, and under socialism, we no longer will need such institutions of coercion and oppression.

Fraternally yours,

Monroe Prussack
NOTES, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND SHORT REVIEWS

Help! I'm interested in older SLP pamphlets, particularly titles by Eric Hass. If you have some you'd like to sell, or if you'd be willing to xerox some and send them to me (I'd, of course, pay costs) I'd be much obliged. Chris Faatz, 1701 Broadway #211, Vancouver, WA 98663 cfaatz@teleport.com

Back Issues of the Discussion Bulletin. I had a request for back issues accompanied by payment and seem to have mislaid the correspondence. Any reader waiting for back issues, please drop me a card or else E-mail me at fgirard@iserv.net

Revolutionary Perspectives 9 and 10 are the Winter and Spring 1998 issues of the quarterly magazine of the Communist Workers' Organization. RP, like other publications of the communist left, is fascinated by the history of the European revolutionary socialist movement during the final days of WWI and the period immediately following it. Three articles in Number 9 and one in Number 10 detail the events, especially in Germany, during this period. U.S. readers will be interested in another look at history, “USA 1943-44: Strikes Against Second World War.” 28 A4 pages, 12 each (about $3) plus $1.50 postage from CWO, PO Box 338, Sheffield S3 9YX, UK.

Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed (#45/Spring Summer '98) continues as the primary source of anti-Bookchinism—perhaps tied in that role by Fifth Estate. Unfortunately for Bookchin the author of “Confession to Comrade Murray Bookchin, Chairman and General Secretary of the Social Ecology Party and Founder of Dialectical Naturalism (DIANAT)” identified only as “C.” has a talent for ridicule superior even to Black and some of Bookchin's other detractors. I regret C.'s ability in this respect, because I think Bookchin is on the side of the angels in this brouhaha. But there is much more in this 84 page issue. Besides the obligatory installment of Raoul Vaneigem's The Revolution of Everyday Life

(to p. 28)