Business Going On As Usual

Mr. Hoover’s “business conference for the maintenance of business stability” has been operating successfully on the front pages of the daily newspapers. At the same time, increasing numbers of jobless workers appear in the streets, and reports of lay-offs continue to come in from the industrial centers of America. On the one hand, the suave pretense is kept up that the recent crash in the stock market was only a “psychological” one, or at most, a deflation, and that “business is going on as usual,” direct contradiction, on the other hand, is given daily by reports to be found in the press of investigation committees, industrial bodies, etc.

A great hullabaloo is raised when Mr. Ford announces a raise in wages. Little space is given to the number of workers that have been laid off in Detroit, or to the amount of speeding up demanded of those wage-slaves remaining on the job, as the special privilege of being kept there. There was much ado at the time over Ford’s statement that, “... business brains ... had watched the stock tickers instead of their own affairs.” The most important part of the statement was overlooked: “That was a major cause of a general business decline, which, in turn, produced the stock market crash.” (The New York World, Nov. 22, 1929.)

We are not concerned with the peculiar antics of “business brains,” but we are exceedingly interested when the central figure of one of the major industries tacitly asserts the existence of a “general business decline” right out in conference of the biggest capitalists in the United States. A rather discordant note, that, in the midst of voices chanting in unison that there is “business as usual,” a note that spells mounting misery for members of the working class even if there is continued prosperity for the members of the master class. That the latter are to be well cared for, that the spectre of unemployment need hold no terror for those who clutch titles to the instruments and means of wealth production, is pointed out by Mr. David Friday in the current number of Bankers’ Magazine. This economist calls attention to the fact that, in spite of a business depression in 1924, of 18 per cent., and another in 1927, of 12 per cent., at the end of 1927 the surplus and undivided profits of all corporations, after subtracting deficits, were shown by the Treasury as $40,500,000,000; and that this item will, by the end of 1929, reach $44,000,000,000. That in 1927, corporations which reported deficits paid cash dividends of $637,000,000. He adds that it is important to note that the profits above are after interest payments and after providing for depreciation, amortization and depletion. (New York World, Dec. 16, 1929.) It is likely that the coupon clippers will get their dividends for the coming year, at least. (Of course, in the event that the depression is long drawn out, capital will be conserved and dividends will not be forthcoming.)

Behind these figures is the high development of machinery and method of producing wealth, and the rate of speed with which the life energies of the working class can be transferred into salable goods. What a powerful lever modern machinery, with its technique, has become for pouring wealth from the natural resources, is shown by the following comparison: In 1880 the total output of manufacturers was $5,370,000,000 produced by wage-earners numbering 2,733,000. Total output in 1920 was $62,500,000,000, wage-earners numbered 9,000,000. Notice that the total output increased nearly 12 times, while the number of workers increased only a little more than 3 times. Each worker then, was about 4 times as productive in 1920 as in 1880. (The figures given are from “The Americas,” June, 1921, published by The National City Bank of New York.) The total national income in 1928 had jumped to just short of $90,000,000,000. If we follow the same ratio of increase in the number of workers as that given in “The Americas,” the number would not exceed 11,000,000. But there are factors at work that tend to reduce, instead of increase the number of employed workers. For instance, Franklyn Hobbs, Business Analyst, LaSalle Extension University, gives us this:

... the freight ton mileage of the railroads... increased from 307,000,000,000 freight ton-miles in 1921 to 444,000,000,000 freight ton-miles in 1926, a gain of 45 per cent. and this was accomplished by a gain of only 9 per cent. in the number of employees. (Business Bulletin, April, 1927.)

Numerous instances could be cited from other lines of industry to show the same process at work, increasing efficiency steadily decreasing the number of employed workers relative to the amount of production. But the population grows at the same time, and new workers constantly appear. Within the last decade, at least two new industries have grown up, radio and aeroplane. Yet the army of unemployed has not grown smaller, even in time of “prosperity.” During industrial depressions this army swells to immense numbers.

“In 1921, this country lost $7,000,000,000 in wages... after millions of jobless were on the streets, unable to buy the goods that piled up in warehouses, it was decided ‘something must be done.” (Editorial Section, New York World, Nov. 24, 1929.)

The same newspaper on Dec. 16, 1929, gives us this: “Persons who never dreamed they would have to resort to charity are doing it this year, and their distress can be directly traced to the stock market crash, Mrs. Edith C. King of the New York Welfare Council said yesterday.” Then follows an account of how artists, music teachers, chiropractors, architects and others, who depend on patronage of the wealthy for their living, have lost their meal
tickets because the “stock crash made it imperative for many families to curtail their living expenses and those things classed as luxuries.” (The same issue of The World reports work and wages to be steady.)

If that is the present condition in such quarters, we have a faint indication of what must be the situation in the ranks of industrial workers. Mr. Green of the A. F. of L. places the number of unemployed at 3,000,000. Other estimates give 5,000,000. Accurate figures cannot be obtained at this writing. Let us refer back to the time of the war. During the height of war time “prosperity” when industry was going at a rate previously unheard of, with millions of young workers under arms and out of the field of production, still there was unemployment. The capitalist system has to have a reserve army of unemployed propertyless workers at all times, in order to insure a plentiful supply of labor and sufficient competition amongst the laborers to keep wages down. However, when this army grows extraordinarily large during crises, the capitalists are seized with great compassion for the jobless. There is a practical reason for this. Again let Mr. Ford enlighten us:

“Another reason is that American production had come to equal, and even surpass, not our people’s power to consume, but their power to purchase. This is not the same thing as overproduction of goods—it is undersupply of purchasing power. Overproduction can never occur until every need is supplied . . .

In this country the purchasing power of the people has been practically used up, and still they have not been able to buy all that they must have. I therefore suggest the need of increasing the purchasing power of our principal customers—the American people.” (The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 22, 1929.)

There is the whole thing in a nutshell. Wages are always only a fraction of the production of the workers (Mr. Ford’s “our people”). So of course the workers can buy with their wages only a fraction of what they have created. Now there is something for the capitalists to worry about. Mr. Ford can use a few flappers, but the bulk of the production of the Ford plants are useless to him unless he can sell them at a profit. When this can no longer be done, production is curtailed, workers are laid off and, having no wages to spend, the market is still further narrowed. This applies to all industry, and seems to be the point that industry has reached at the present moment.

Mr. Hoover says the remedy for the situation is work. In Newark, N. J., the United Advertising Corporation has raised a tremendous sign so that from high in the heavens above the public square these words stand forth in huge, brilliant letters:

The Stock Market Will Right Itself.
American Business Is Sound.
Let’s Go To Work.

Of course, if this means for some of the busted speculators to go to work, we have no objection, but gentlemen, one moment please. The wage-worker must get permission from the capitalist before he can go to work. And the capitalist says he can’t sell what we have already produced, at a profit, so he won’t permit us to work.

We’ve been hearing this admonition to work, and produce more, for years. Work, and produce more: these are just what got us into the present situation. Franklyn Hobbs, cited above, says: “The actual interest saving made possible through the increase in transportation efficiency was sufficient in 1926 to pay all the dividends paid by all the corporations in the United States, excepting only the dividends paid by the railroads themselves.” (L. c.)

The workers of America have become so efficient that they simply oozе surplus value in all directions. This having been duly observed, there was, in recent years much buying of stock, especially the common stock of corporations, which entitles its owner to the greater share of unpaid labor, and also holds the promise of being salable at a higher price in the near future. Moreover, such prosperity in capitalist ranks brought forth immense sums of money-capital that had to be re-invested. Companies were formed to buy up stocks, great pools were organized for the same purpose. Every Tom, Dick and Harry that could get hold of some money-capital rushed into Wall Street in a frenzy to poke his snout into the surplus value trough. Up went stock prices, and in swarmed the speculators, like flies to the aperture of a molasses barrel. And then!

The saddest thing that happens
In this world of buy and sell.
Is a market glutted full of goods,
Knocking profits all to hell!

Far from being a side show, the stock market drama was the close reflection, and the first rumbling, of portentous times in the field of wealth production.

This is the situation in America today. If there is business as usual, why does the capitalist class bawl so loudly, “Business as usual?” Because business is not as usual. The market is glutted and the sale of commodities at a profit is slowing down. What can be done? New markets must be opened up. Perhaps Commander Byrd can find a market at the South Pole. Or business can mark time until vast quantities of goods spoil and are wasted. A few calamities will help. The capitalist system thrives on tremendous waste. For instance, a few days ago the report came in that the Argentine wheat crop had failed. Up went the price of wheat in Chicago. In 1914 the United States was on the verge of a business depression when the war started. In 1915 millions of jobless workers tramped the streets. The word came out of Washington, no taking sides. Wait and watch. Look at the business we will do, selling food, ammunition, etc., to the warring nations of Europe. Of course, it sounded somewhat like an ill-mannered big boy’s raucous voice at a funeral: “Please mister mortician, may I have the geraniums when deceased has been duly interred?” Nevertheless that war saved many a worker from taking in his belt a few notches, and the millions that were killed and maimed have never been missed from industry. The necessary waste includes the lives and limbs of workers. If there would only be an earthquake in Japan; in California even; or a civil war in Austria. If Russia and China could only go at each other in earnest and a few other nations mix in, that would save business. The slogan should be, so long as we keep the wages-system, not “Work,” but “Waste!”

Yet—the irony of it—the capitalists are forced to eliminate waste, which really means, eliminate more workers. The railroads want to trustify further. This will make transportation still more (Continued on Page 8)
The Acid Test of History

The old adage, "The course of true love ne’er runs smooth," may be well applied to the course of the "History of the Communist Movement in America." We are prompted to this conclusion after attending a lecture on the above subject, given by the National Secretary of the Proletarian Party on Nov. 30, 1929. We heard a lengthy discourse dealing with the formation of the Communist Party of America, and the various intrigues on the part of different groups in their efforts to gain control of that organization. Of small interest to us is the claim made by the Proletarian Party to being the "real communist movement" in America. Seeing that they receive no recognition from the Third International, we cannot see how they substantiate this. Of more importance to us is their claim to being a Marxist organization equipped with an almost complete monopoly of Marxism. It is on this point that we base our criticism.

We have endeavored to obtain a definite program or declaration of principles by them but have failed to find anything of the sort in their official organ, "The Proletarian." We are therefore compelled to look mainly to the verbal utterances of their speakers. The nearest we can arrive at anything resembling a program is a series of statements made by their National Secretary at the aforementioned lecture. He pointed out that the Proletarian Party stands for "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," the setting up by armed insurrection of some sort of "Workers’ Government," also that they "realize the limitations of Parliamentary action." Being anxious to know, we questioned their speaker as to what these limitations consisted of. In reply, he premised an imaginary condition that a substantial majority of the working class having become conscious of the need for taking over the means of wealth production, and establishing Socialism, express their desires by the vote, and are met with resistance by the capitalist class in the form of military force. Therefore the workers will be compelled to organize a counter military force to enforce their desires. For proof of this their speaker asserted that the Army and Navy are officered by bourgeois and therefore would be used by the capitalist class against the working class.

Had our ultra-Marxists of the Proletarian Party an understanding of the basic principle of Socialism, the Materialistic Conception of History, as they claim to have, they would realize that, the economic conditions of capitalism having evolved to a point at which a substantial majority of the working class have reached an understanding of Socialism, the Army and Navy forces would also be imbued with the same ideology as the civil population, since the immense majority of those forces including the officers are members of the working class. They would be poor material for the capitalists to rely upon to prevent the intelligent working class from asserting its will. However, the working class has not as yet voted for Socialism; until it does we cannot formulate any utopian detailed plans for dealing with an imaginary condition in the future.

We were further told that the Communist Party in Russia is carrying toward completion, and in the same spirit, the movement begun by the Paris Commune in 1871. Both the Communist Party of America and the Proletarian Party in making this claim are either ignorant of the conditions obtaining in Paris during the few short months of the Commune, or they are deliberately distorting the facts concerning conditions existing in Soviet Russia which is a resort to the old time method of all political forces of reaction.

As far back as 1920 we find this quotation in an article, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat," by N. Bukharin, published in the "Workers’ Dreadnought" (April 12, 1920).

"Nevertheless we do not for a moment deny that our apparatus is rigidly centralized; that our policy towards the bourgeoisie and towards the parties of the compromising Socialists is repressive in character; that the organization of our own party, as a ruling party which exercises a dictatorship through the Soviets, is of a ‘Militant type.’"

This is a direct negation of the claim made by the official and unofficial communists of America, that the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" in Russia represents control by the masses. It is the position maintained by the Blanquists prior to the Paris Commune, and which they were compelled to abandon and act directly contrary to, during the tenure of the Commune. In the introduction to the "The Civil War in France," (S. L. P. ed.) Engels points out that:

"The members of the Commune were divided into a majority of Blanquists, who had also predominated in the central committee of the National Guard, and a minority, which consisted for the most part of members of the International Working Men’s Association, who were adherents of the Proudhonian school of Socialism."

Engels then goes on to show how both the Blanquists and Proudhonists did the very reverse of which their schools advocated, thus:

"The Blanquists fared no better. Brought up in the school of conspiracy, held together by the rigid discipline essential to it, they started from the conception that a comparatively small number of resolute, well organized men would be able not to grasp the helm of State at a favorable moment, but also, through the display of great energy, and reckless daring, to hold it as long as required, that is, until they had succeeded in carrying the masses of the people into the revolutionary current and ranging them around the small leading band. To accomplish this, what was necessary, above all else, was the most stringent, dictatorial centralization of all powers in the hands of the new revolutionary government. And what did the Commune do, which in the majority consisted of these very Blanquists? In all its proclamations to the French people in the provinces, it called upon them for a free federation of all French communes with Paris for a national organization, which for the first time was to be the real creation of the nation. The army, the political police, the bureaucracy, all those agencies of oppression in a centralized government, which Napoleon had created in 1798, and which since then every new government had gladly used and kept up as ready weapons against its enemies, were to be abolished everywhere, as they had been abolished in Paris."

To compare the above condition existing during the Paris Commune, to that existing in Russia, one would have to be a wish thinker like the members of the official Communist Party of America and the unofficial “real” communists of the Proletarian Party. The Red Army has not been abolished, neither has the bureaucracy nor the political police. Witness the rise of (Continued on Page 8)
Greetings of the Season

The holiday season has passed and everything is great, for the working class has just had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. At least they just finished wishing it to one another, exchanging Christmas presents and generally celebrating the occasion. And the children must not be forgotten—Christmas trees bedecked with tinsel, baubles, hanging stockings, and the surprise on Christmas morning when the little ones discover that Santa Claus did, or did not, as the case may be, visit them. Then again, dear old Kris Kringle hasn’t forgotten the workers either, for haven’t they all received many wishes and large bonuses from their dear, kind friends, their employers? Well, if they haven’t gotten bonuses, they at least were tendered hearty hand-shakes and good wishes, and what more could be wanted? It is not the gift, it is the thought that counts,—the good, Christian spirit of the brotherhood-of-man. What a wonderful life, what a roseate picture presents itself!

But there seems to be another side to this otherwise cheery panorama. We don’t like to spoil this pretty picture with unpleasant thoughts, but the New York Times had its usual “hundred neediest cases,” and the New York American, and other newspapers, told us depressing stories of deserving, starving families. Fifty or sixty great business leaders pooled their direct executive genius in order to solve the stubborn problems of over-production and unemployment, and President Hoover assured us that he, and the government, would leave no stone unturned in their efforts to keep the wheels of industry going, thus supplying work for all. It is really touching, how all the Field Marshalls of Industry and Finance, the eminent politicians, and the owners of the daily press worry about the deserving, and maybe the undeserving, masses! Even our beautiful actresses and motion picture stars contributed their bit at charitable benefits, etc., for the aid of “unfortunate cases”—and maybe a little publicity on the side. But the pressing, insistent difficulties continue to intrude themselves upon us, even while the great statesmen, financiers, industrialists, and political economists are terribly busy in conference attempting their solution. They can live in decency and comfort, while their superior brains are at work on all these problems, while as far as the workers are concerned, imagine their embarrassment, when they discover they lack next month’s rent, or the price of their next meal! Therefore, in the meantime, let us, the working class, examine the facts of modern life, and without presuming on the superior intelligence of our masters, discover if maybe we can surprise them and find a way out, a solution that will benefit an overwhelming majority of the population.

In modern society, we find that all efforts are directed towards the production of commodities, that is, articles produced not primarily for use, but for sale at a profit. Industry today is generally carried on in large-scale establishments using gigantic and costly machinery. A small percentage of the population own and control these means of production, while the bulk of the population own nothing but their ability to work, and thus are forced to sell their labor-power to the owning class in order to live. There are, therefore, two classes in society, the owning or capitalist class, and the non-owning or working class. The former live on rent, interest and profit, while the latter live on wages, the price of their own commodity, labor-power. All prices fluctuate with supply and demand, and so do wages. The employers make every effort to buy labor-power as cheaply as possible, while the workers make every effort to maintain or increase their rate of pay. This is the primary cause of the conflict of interests between the capitalist and working classes. This conflict expresses itself as a class struggle.

As all wealth is the product of the application of human energy, through the medium of tools or machinery, to the natural resources, it follows that the workers produce all wealth. They receive, as wages, only a small part of what they produce, the balance, or surplus value, is appropriated by the master class. Hence, exploitation takes place at the point of production. With the constant development of new and more efficient machinery, more wealth can be produced with fewer workers. This results in an ever-increasing amount of surplus wealth for the owners of the means of production and a greater rate of exploitation of the workers. With the continuous concentration and mechanization of the productive forces, which is a necessary condition of the present system, production itself takes on more and more a social character. The workers as a class the world over, produce everything, but no worker can say of a product, “I produced this, this is my work.” This situation, co-operative production on the one hand, and individual or private ownership on the other, is the basis of an irreconcilable conflict between the mode of production and the productive forces, which expresses itself periodically in business crises or depressions, such as now seems imminent. During this period some large capitalist establishments fail, many small capitalists are forced out of business and into the ranks of the working class, and large numbers of the working class become members of the leisure class—without pay, but with plenty of economic problems. Economic insecurity becomes greater, with more unemployment and part time employment than is usual during the periods of so-called prosperity. These crises are the result of overproduction. The productiveness of the working class becomes so great, that markets for these surplus products cannot be found, and the working class suffers for the lack of the very necessities of life. They suffer because they have produced too much wealth—for their bosses.

As black as the picture may be, there is a way out, but only one. The solution lies in the hands of the working class. Today the workers accept and maintain the present system as the only one possible. When a sufficiently large number of the working class understand capitalism, desire a change, and organize politically for the purpose of establishing a system of society in which social or common ownership shall harmonize with social production, then the problem will be solved. Then every year, without wishing, will be a Happy New Year!

We acknowledge receipt to date of $144.70 toward publication of The Socialist. Our printer’s bill has far exceeded this amount. More donations are earnestly requested.
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Happy New Year

What does the phrase mean? Are we to accept it as a
suggestion to dance about, sustain hilarity, laugh and
sing, and whistle jazz tunes in time with the clank of ma-
chines for the next 365 days? Or is it just a meaningless say-
ing, handed down to us by custom and repeated each year
by thoughtless people who would be dumbfounded if called
upon to explain what they mean by it?

We can readily grasp the sense in Mr. Morrow saying,
"Happy New Year, Mr. Morgan," but we hardly see the
humor in wishing this to a wage-slave when we know be-
forehand that he is going to be catapulted out of his bou-
doir by an infernal machine called an alarm clock with
each coming dawn of 1930, to hustle to his toil, if he is
fortunate enough to have a job; and to search for a boss
if he hasn't one. There may be laboring stiffs dumb
enough to be happy under such circumstances, but they
would be that way even without our wishes.

Our idea of a Happy New Year would be something like
this, that upon picking up the morning Social Gazette we
read: "The proletarians of the earth have finally captured
political power in all their various lands, overthrown the
capitalist system and established common ownership of the
means of living."

Apostrophe

Comrades and fellow workers, all of you, all over the
country: you are not giving us the response that we ex-
pected. Some of you are stirring about, it is true, but not
enough. Some are hustling for subs and kicking in to the
Publication Fund, but many, many more are needed.

Now we know it is nice and entertaining and comfort-
able to grab a copy of The Socialist, or The Standard, to
lean back and read all about it; or to gather of a winter's
night around the cheery, cherry-red barrel stove, squat
smoke. We like to do that, too. But we can't get Socialism that way. No sir! We'll all have to stir our
stumps faster than that. Whether you're back in the hills
or on the plains or in a big industrial city, there is just one
method to be followed: spread sound Socialist knowledge
about capitalism. We are putting as much of that into
The Socialist every month as the pages will hold. And
we are depending on you to push the circulation of The
Socialist. You know who we mean by "You." Boston is
handling 200 copies a month. If that can be done in
Boston (Boston, get that) by a mere handful of comrades,
then what could some of you comrades do in the big indus-
trial hells called Frisco, Chi., Detroit, and so on?

Push The Socialist. Organize branches of the Socialist
Educational Society. Apply to our secretary for mem-
bership-at-large. Send in subs and dig up some donations for
the Pub Fund. Don't be pained if our secretary doesn't
write to you every day.

When we look around and observe the ease with which
the persons collect the dough to build slaughter houses for
peoples' minds, and the difficulty we have in getting to-
gather the few shekels necessary to get a little Socialist
paper on its feet and keep it there, well, we wonder. Queer,
isn't it?

What do you say, fellow workers? Altogether, now, and
let's build up an organization, and circulation for The
Socialist, this month, next month, and right along. Let's
lay the foundation for a Socialist movement in America!

S. E. S. Lectures

The Socialist Educational Society holds free lectures on
alternate Saturday evenings, eight o'clock, at our head-
quarters, Room 9, 132 East 23 Street, New York, N. Y.
The subjects of forthcoming lectures will be:

January 18—The Nature and Development of the State.
February 1—Revolutionary Political Action.

The Society also conducts a class every Tuesday even-
ing, eight o'clock. Text of the course, Socialism, Utopian
and Scientific. Frederick Engels. Admission free.

Boston Study Class

A Study Class, under the auspices of the Socialist Edu-
cational Society, meets every Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at
the International Hall, 42 Wenonah Street, Roxbury, Mass.
Admission is free.

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SOCIALISM
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THE SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY
132 East 23 Street, New York, N. Y.
Science: A Weapon for the Workers
And How to Use It

III.

PURE reason is as mythical as the perfect circle. Reasoning is always impure; is always bound up with impulse, desire, sentiment, prejudice, irrational processes of the mind. Accordingly, only a portion of what passes for science in any period is truly scientific.

Science evolved gradually out of pre-scientific conceptions and procedure having roots in primitive magic and the mental cobwebs of mythology. Astrology was the precursor of astronomy, alchemy of chemistry. These pseudo-sciences were dominated by traditional, unquestioned beliefs. The astrologers held that the planets control men's destinies. The alchemists sought for the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone that would turn base metals into gold. Nothing shook their faith in these conceptions. If experiments did not produce the results expected, they had made a mistake somewhere; they would try again. The secret must lie somewhere; the "elixir of life" exists and can be made, it only remains to discover the mystic formula. This method of working from a pre-conceived idea to facts is the reverse of the scientific procedure we have outlined, which works from fact to theory, the facts of observation being always the final test.

In History and the study of society the progress from supernaturalism to science has been accomplished much more tardily than in the study of nature. Quite recently the medieval view that god or providence controls human affairs was still to be found amongst historians. Bancroft declared the American Constitution to have been drawn up under divine guidance. Even today, in the vaunted "age of science," most of what passes for social science is, as we have noted, definitely unscientific in ideas, methods and arguments.

In no field of study is the objective outlook aimed at by the scientist so difficult to attain as in that involving the social affinities of the thinker himself. No man can insulate himself against social influences. Social theorists and historians have, in the main, been unable to keep their thinking free from contamination by moral judgments as to the good or evil of the institutions, customs and beliefs they studied. Such was not generally speaking their object. It never entered their heads that it was either possible or desirable to consider human affairs from the same non-moral standpoint as one could the rise of the tide or the organization within a bee hive. They were primarily concerned with justifying or condemning rather than describing or explaining. The proportion of valuable scientific thinking to more or less useless moralizing was small and, we may say, still is.

Moral judgments, however, are always the expression, in origin at least, of social needs and interests. That which is believed to be beneficial to the tribe is "good," that which is thought injurious, "evil." Cannibalism, group-marriage, infanticide, have all been good in their day; usury and the unveiled woman the height of evil. In every social group one moral code dominates, though there may also exist sectional or local codes of less influence. In societies that are divided into classes, the prevailing ideas of morality are those that advance the interests of the dominating class. So long as the rule of this class is not seriously challenged its ideas of right and wrong will permeate every social rank even though they be inimical to the welfare of the subjected and exploited classes. Where, however, a subject class grows powerful enough to challenge the ruling section it develops its own ideas of morality to fit its own interests.

Theorizers about society are as a rule justifiers of the prevailing institutions and customs of their time and damming critics of all they consider injurious thereto. Consciously or otherwise they are advocates for the ruling class of the period. On the other hand, rising, struggling classes, seeing things from a new angle, that of their own needs and interests, produce their own theorists, revolutionary thinkers who attack with intellectual weapons, with satire and criticism, the social arrangements, ethical conceptions and mental defenses of the established regime.

Let us consider actual instances. Aristotle was the greatest thinker of ancient Greece, a pioneer in half a dozen sciences. But he lived in an age when chattel slavery formed the basis of society and was regarded by all freemen, rich and poor alike, as the indispensable foundation to all civilized life and culture, which indeed it was at the stage of development the Greeks had reached. In his treatise, "Politics" (I. 5) Aristotle says:

"There are in the human race individuals as inferior to others as the body is to the soul, or as the beast is to man: these are beings suitable for the labors of the body alone, and incapable of doing anything more perfect. These individuals are destined by nature for slavery because there is nothing better for them to do than to obey . . . . Nature creates some for liberty, others for slavery."

Aristotle would have been scientific had he been content to point out that slavery led to the accumulation of wealth by a leisured class which indulged in or patronised philosophy and art, and that, therefore, slavery was the basis of Greek culture. But men of the dominant class are ever reluctant to ascribe their class supremacy to economic causes, even where these are readily visible. They prefer to believe that they are the product of some higher scheme of things. Hence Aristotle called in the "purpose of nature" to supplement economic necessity as the reason for the existence of slavery. In medieval times "divine plan" and "blue blood" played the same role, while today the "onward march of civilization" rather than economic necessity, is held to justify the bloody and brutal subjection to capitalism of the backward peoples of the earth.

When the mercantile classes were struggling for political power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were in need of theoretical arguments to oppose to the views then prevailing as to the divine right of kings and the hereditary privileges of the aristocracy. The conditions of mercantile life became the foundation for theories that justified their political aspirations. Possession of property, not "divine right" or "blue blood" was the basis of their
social importance. Furthermore, theirs was a special kind of property—salable goods, commodities which were interchangeable and met in the market on equal terms. The trading class therefore rebelled against the centuries old principle and buttress of the feudal system that landed property is a superior form, "real" property, entitling its owners to superior social rights and political privileges. They naturally stood for the recognition in principle and practice of the social equality of all people of property. Property, however, unlike noble blood, is detachable from its owner and can be increased from small beginnings or decreased to vanishing point. It logically follows therefore, that all human beings are potential owners and thus have, at least potentially equal rights. This was the basis in every day business life for the new political theory that was expounded by many revolutionary thinkers on behalf of the bourgeoisie, notably by Locke in England and Rousseau in France. They proclaimed with a great flourish that all men are born with equal natural rights, a doctrine made all the more necessary to the bourgeoisie because they needed the active support of the propertyless and subjected masses in their fight against the tyranny of the crown and the hereditary privileges of the landed nobility.

The intense industrial competition that accompanied the growth of the factory system gave rise to yet another theoretical system—that of the so-called Classical Economists from Adam Smith onwards who proclaimed that out of the seeming waste and anarchy of the struggle came order and harmony through the workings of the beneficial law of supply and demand, which regulated production with the utmost possible exactitude and apportioned the wealth produced with the greatest justice attainable. That the capitalist received the bigger share was only right and reasonable for did he not "risk" his capital? That the worker risked life, limb and health in factory, ship, field and mine was a matter hardly worth the mentioning.

The same school of thinkers developed the view that the best interests of the community are served when each individual zealously pursues his own interests, and thus they gave a moral sanction to the unfettered individualism of early capitalism. Malthus wrote his celebrated theory that population always outstrips the food supply, to prove that the terrible poverty of the workers was due to natural law and inescapable. Later, even Darwin's theory of the "survival of the fittest" was torn from its biological context and used by sociologists, and by the eminent biologist, Ha- Beckel, to explain and justify the capitalist system where the "fit" survived as wealthy capitalists and the "unfit" only just survived as poverty stricken wage-slaves. Even Herbert Spencer, great thinker though he was, expressed in his "Social Statics" and similar writings little more than an elaborate theoretical defense of the capitalists' prejudice against state interference in industrial relations.

These are but a few examples from the superabundant evidence (available to the reader in any well equipped library) demonstrating that social theorists always reflect the spirit of the age in which they live and are for the most part, the spokesmen of classes rather than the unbiased enquirers into the facts of social life which they consider themselves to be. That this class bias is often, even usually, quite unconscious, does not alter the facts. We are not here apportioning blame but dealing with a historical process. The institutions, the customs and the ways of looking at things, peculiar to a period naturally appear to the majority of men then living as the essence of reason and justice, even as the only forms possible. This applies no less to the philosopher than to the average man. The former, indeed, in the main merely elaborates and puts into logical form the opinions of the latter.

Let us now return to the problem facing the working class student anxious to gain an insight into the organization and evolution of society. Today, as throughout the past, prevailing theories of society are those that tend to uphold the existing social order, and demonstrate its eternal necessity and justice. An unusual admission is the following by J. A. Hobson, the eminent English economist:

"... an immense output of new theories... is constantly taking place. What determines which ideas are selected, adopted, elaborated and become orthodox, and which ideas fail? Not wholly, and not chiefly, their inherent truth or value. In all thoughts or actions calculated to affect vested interests of power or property these interests exercise a vigorous selection. Ideas favorable to them receive recognition and flourish. Ideas unfavourable wither and perish." (Democracy after the War, p. 113.)

The orthodox economists proclaim capitalism, which cannot exist without the exploitation of the wage-workers, to be the best of all possible systems. All the higher institutions of learning are subsidized by the capitalist class. As well might one say that the Roman Catholic Church is impartial in its pronouncements on religion and science as that a university today is without bias in its attitude to the relations of capital and labor or to Socialism. Upton Sinclair, in the "Goose Step" shows with overwhelming proof that the universities of America are controlled and their policies largely influenced by enormously wealthy capitalist trustees and directorates; Morgan amongst others dominates Columbia, Rockefeller and the Standard Oil, Chicago University, and so on. The professors of the universities, though they make a greater parade of impartiality, in deference to the "method of science" than ever their predecessors did, are, and must be, in the main, apologists for the present system.

These universities are furthermore the training ground for the "spokesmen" of society, scientists, economists, historians and intellectuals in general, whose ideas fill ponderous volumes, magazine and newspaper articles, and are broadcasted on the radio.

Not irrelevant facts are these, but facts that the worker student must face. They demonstrate unmistakably that the sort of scientific education that we are here concerned with, a mental training that will assist the workers to comprehend and solve the problems they have in common—their class problems—cannot be obtained from such anti-working class sources. Where then must the proletarian student turn? (To be continued)

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**Indispensable!**

The Socialist Standard
Monthly Magazine
Organ of the Socialist Party of Great Britain
Obtainable at 5c a copy through the
Socialist Educational Society
132 East 23 Street, New York, N. Y.
Business Going On As Usual
(Continued from page 2)

efficient, thus enabling big business in general to hold and
even extend its advantage in the world market. The same
with the telephones, telegraph and radio. They will trusti-
fy. On a day in 1905, President Roosevelt, who carried a
Big Stick with which to spank trusts, said in Philadelphia:
"Neither this people nor any other free people will permanend-
ly tolerate vast power conferred by vast wealth in a corporate
form, that does not lodge somewhere in the Government a still
higher power of seeing that this power is used for and not
against the people as a whole."

That same day a huge railroad trust was formed, christen-
ted "The Big Four." The next day the Cotton Trust
was formed, comprising almost all the mills in Massachu-
setts and some in the other New England States. Let not
"our people" be deceived that "vast corporate wealth"
will not be permitted to further trustify.

Whether we are on the verge of the worst "panic" the
workers of America have ever borne the misery of, or
whether the capitalists, with their Executive Committee,
the government, succeed in staying off yet awhile the crisis
and establishing "business balance," which simply means
the steady, grinding development of capitalism; ever more
efficiency, ever more production by ever fewer workers,
ever more want and insecurity in the midst of plenty, and
ever more jobless proletarians; workers of America, con-
sider this: "We now have 207 Americans who have an
annual income of more than $1,000,000. Seven persons at
the top of the list declared a total income of $61,382,836."
(Brooklyn Eagle, April 4, 1927.)

We Socialists have been accused of wanting "to divide
up."

Well, the New York World (Dec. 16.) estimates that
"the national income at present would provide for each
person of the United States an amount equal to $749 or
for each family of five, $2745."

Fellow workers, how do you like "business as usual?"
A. Cheseff.

The Acid Test of History
(Continued from page 3)

the Opposition groups and the wholesale expulsion and
exile of many of those prominent early in the Russian
Revolution. Is this analogous to the Paris Commune?

Again let us look at Paris during the Commune, to see
the attitude of the Communards towards parliamentary
action and the value of the vote. According to Engels
the Commune "filled all positions of administration, justice,
and instruction, through election by universal suffrage;
the elected being at all times subject to recall by their con-
stituents" (op. cit.), a system which our "communist"
friends would mistake for bourgeois democracy. Engels'
concept of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is also
expressed in the conclusion to the same work, page 20,
"... look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictator-
ship of the proletariat." The conditions existing in Russia
bear little resemblance to those obtaining in Paris during
the Commune. Neither, for that matter, do they resemble

Declaration of Principles
of The Socialist Educational Society

The Socialist Educational Society holds:

That society as at present constituted is based upon the owner-
ship of the means of living (i. e., land, factories, railways, etc.)
by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement
of the working class, by whose labor alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests,
manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess
but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipa-
tion of the working class from the domination of the master class
by the conversion into the common property of society of the
means of production and distribution, and their democratic con-
tral by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the
last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the
working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind with-
out distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class
itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed
forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the
capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working
class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest
of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this
machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an in-
strument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the
overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class
interests, and as the interests of the working class are diametri-
cally opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class,
the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to
every other party.

THE SOCILALIST EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY therefore, de-
clares its purpose of carrying on Socialist educational work to
the end that this political party be formed, determined to wage
war against all other political parties, whether alleged labor or
avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the working class to organize
under its banner in order that a speedy termination be wrought to
the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labor, and
that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality,
and slavery to freedom.

Those according with the above principles and desiring enroll-
ment in the Society should apply to Room 9, 132 East 23 Street.
New York, N. Y.

the conditions in America, England or any other developed
capitalist countries. In Russia, where primitive peasant
agriculture prevails, the institution of Socialism is at pres-
tant an impossibility, because there is lacking the highly
developed productive forces and the enlightened proletar-
ian majority, both of which are necessary for that pur-
pose. Where matured capitalism exists and where the
workers are therefore the majority of the population, they
can achieve their emancipation as soon as they understand
what Socialism is and desire it, and they will effect this by
the simplest, and in fact, the only means available—the
democratic conquest of the political forces of society—at
present used for their subjection.

"He who tells the people revolutionary legends, he who
amuses them with sensational stories, is as criminal as the
geographer who would draw up false charts for navigators."
(Lissagaray, preface to History of the Commune.) Alf.