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NOTES ON HISTORY

THE AMBIGUITIES OF TOTALITARIAN IDEOLOGIES

"Things have not happened to me; on the contrary, it is I who have happened to the world." Though incongruous as a description of the impact of a politically insignificant writer on the world, this paradoxical assertion of G. B. Shaw's helps to explain a type of deviation from the traditional concepts of history which tends to arise in our time under the impact of the so-called totalitarian revolution. There is undoubtedly a sentiment in non-totalitarian countries today to the effect that "Adolf Hitler has happened to the world". On the other hand, this is also the mood in which a victorious totalitarian war-band might view its own relationship to the rest of the world.

Certain hints in this direction can be discovered in the very language of the present-day Nazi movement. "Space" or "living space" in this language connotes not just any territory in which people live, but more especially such territories outside the present domain of the Nazi rule as will belong to their empire when the time comes. Thus, there were a "Sudeten-Raum" and a "Donau-Raum", but there never was an "Elb-Raum" or a "Rhein-Raum" since those territories belonged to the German empire anyway. Even the "world" has no longer kept its traditional geographical connotation. It means to the true Hitlerite the world in which the Nazi empire lives and moves and which in due course will become in fact what it already is in essence — a part of Greater Germany, of the Nazi-dominated United States of Europe, or of whatever more extended area will ultimately suffice for the as yet undetermined "living space" of the German race.

Yet we must be careful not to overestimate this or any other feature in the ideology of present-day totalitarianism. In contrast to the belief held by many students of recent German history, the ideology of National Social-

ism offers no clues to its real aims. Unlike other ideologies, it does not even reveal the socio-political realities of a given historical situation or the genuine needs of a definite social class.

Whatever semblance of consistency can be discovered between the flagrantly meaningless and irrelevant phrases assembled in *Mein Kampf*, and the actual policies of the Nazi government is not of a logical order, nor does it result from any but the most arbitrary correlation between facts and ideas. The rapidly changing slogans of Nazism reflect nothing but the fleeting conditions of the immediate situation or the task at hand. They are not even pragmatic but outrightly opportunistic. Their very contradictions do not express, as other ideologies do, the real conflicts and struggles of a given society. They rather arise from a conscious attempt to conceal existing conflicts under the veil of newly invented and altogether fictitious conflicts

Nor would it help to describe Nazi ideology as a systematic negation and reevaluation of all traditional values in the sense of Nietzsche. It is true that one of the most striking features of Nazism during the last ten years has been its absolute irreverence towards the traditional doctrines of state, law and economics, and all other practical and theoretical taboos of the past which might in any way have obstructed its supreme goal of efficiency and conquest. Yet this destructive work has been a means rather than an end, and a matter of practice rather than an openly accepted part of the official Nazi ideology.

The main line of Nazi thought is neither traditionalistic nor modernistic, neither conservative nor nihilistic. Nazism is essentially a counter-revolutionary movement, and it partakes of all the uncertainties, the half-truths, and the mixed nature of the long sequence of counter-revolutionary movements which during the last one hundred and fifty years have disturbed the "normal" progress of European society as conceived by the several lines of inheritors of the historical philosophy of the French revolution.

We must not be misled by the occasional approaches to a genuine activist concept of history which occur in the speeches delivered for particular purposes by one or another of the leading Nazi ideologists. We must not, for example, fall for the pseudo-Nietzschean phrases with which at the first National Convention of the Historians of the New Germany in Erfurt, 1937, the president of the new-fangled "Imperial Institute for History" tried to raise his audience to the level of the historical occasion. "Like the singer Tyrtæus", said Dr. Frank, "the historian should strut in front of his marching people and testify to the eternity of the people as against the coming and going of the individuals."

THE OLD AND THE NEW IMPERIALISM

Another and a much more important step towards a break with the traditional conception of history is contained in the work of Karl Haushofer.

It would be an oversimplification to regard the "geopolitical" theories of Haushofer and his school merely as a forceful continuation of the imperialistic tendencies of the preceding epoch which was represented, among others, by the German historian, Treitschke, and the British historian, Seely. These tendencies were still bound more or less closely to the traditional ideas of the epoch inaugurated by the French revolution. The main problem was still to create the conditions for an unrestricted exploitation of the world market; the inevitable result to draw all nations, even the most "barbaric" ones, into the orbit of Western civilization. "The bourgeoisie", said the Communist Manifesto of 1848, "compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production, to introduce what we call civilization into their midst, that is, to become bourgeois themselves. In a word, it creates a world in its own image."

As the writer has pointed out in another article,*) that whole dream of a cosmopolitan extension of the bourgeois mode of production and of the ensuing domination of an entirely "civilized" world by the Western bourgeois class suffered several serious shocks before the advent of totalitarianism. Far from transforming the whole inhabited earth into one huge colony of the capitalist West, the world-wide expansion of Western techniques, science, political and economic institutions, nationalism, methods of warfare, merely created new weapons which the peoples of China, Japan, India and the Arabian world of Eastern Asia and North Africa could turn against the western aggressor. Thus, since the beginning of the 20th century, there has arisen that new type of imperialist expansion which found its hitherto most efficient application in the theory and practice of totalitarian aggression.

The new techniques of imperialism which were invented almost simultaneously in the East and the West are utterly different from the methods applied by that old-style imperialism of the 19th century which is somewhat nostalgically described by its eulogists as a "democratic" form of imperialist expansion. The difference does not consist, however, in an increase of violence; ruthless violence has been characteristic of every historical phase of capitalist colonization. The novelty of totalitarian politics in this respect is simply that the Nazis have extended to "civilized" European peoples the methods hitherto reserved for the "natives" or "savages" living outside so-called civilization.

The tremendous difference between the old and the new imperialism is expressed ideologically in the collapse of the "civilizing" mission which was formerly attached to the conquest of the so-called "undeveloped" parts of the inhabited earth either by the imperialists themselves or at least by those who half-heartedly opposed their realistic politics. Though this ideological claim of the liberal philanthropists, educators, historians, and other humanitarian ideologists was never fully justified, it was not entirely meaningless in regard to the objective outcome of the competitive race for colonies that was

*) *The World Historians from Turgot to Toynbee*, Partisan Review, September, 1942.

characteristic of the foreign policies of the 19th century. There is a grain of truth even in the well-known assertion that the English "have conquered their empire in a fit of absent-mindedness". It was for markets, trade, privileges, and for the more efficient protection of economic positions already gained that the British state expanded the area of its political domination. It is also true that this old type of capitalist expansion did not lead to a very reliable form of permanent domination. As early as a quarter of a century before the Declaration of Independence, the French philosopher, Turgot, likened colonies to "fruits which cling to the tree only till they ripen". According to this idea, which after the loss of the American colonies was widely accepted among British politicians and historians, it was considered axiomatic that "every conquered empire is ephemeral". Even today an ideological trust in the educational mission of capitalist colonization is maintained in certain quarters of the radical intelligentsia in non-totalitarian countries. As Bertrand Russell says in his critical discussion of the most recent phase of English politics in India, the advantages of a higher level of civilization which at first are all on the side of the conqueror are bound to decrease with time. To be ruled, the conquered territory must be unified. Thus, sooner or later a movement of freedom will arise and will ultimately lead to the overthrow of the conqueror's rule which is based on "prestige and bluff" rather than on real force anyway.

Whatever limited application the theory just described may have had for the British and other types of 19th century colonization, it is certain that it no longer applies to the new imperialism of such totalitarian world-powers as Russia, Japan, or Germany. These powers do not even pretend to aim at a world-wide expansion of their particular brand of "civilization". They have learned to forestall the dangers which, according to the traditional theory, threaten the permanence of every capitalistic conquest and colonial expansion. They can be relied on not to unify but rather to further divide the European and extra-European spheres of their imperialist domination. Far from communicating their superior industrial and military skills to their colonial subjects, even to the modest degree in which this was done, or rather involuntarily allowed to happen, by previous rulers of empires, they do not shrink from attempting to de-industrialize even the fully developed industrial countries of Europe and other continents for the benefit of the conquering minority. There is no doubt that their policy is based on an altogether new conception of the historical process itself and of the part to be played in this process by their own wholly unfettered action.

REVOLUTIONARY AND COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ASPECTS OF TOTALITARIANISM

It is not so certain today as it seemed to the uncritical admirers of totalitarian achievements a few years ago that the Nazis will be able to live up to the ruthlessness of their own original program. It was comparatively easy to apply the new methods of totalitarian conquest to countries which

had lagged behind in the development towards totalitarian forms — a general trend which can be traced more or less distinctly in the external and internal policies of all the great powers of the world, at least since the end of the first world war. It proved more difficult to achieve the same striking successes under more competitive conditions. The monopoly of the Nazis in totalitarian warfare and politics was broken when they tried to subdue Russia in June, 1941, and when a few months later the entrance of Japan into the war transformed a hitherto essentially European affair into a truly world-wide conflict. Since then a much less confident spirit has revealed itself on various occasions in the general tone of Nazi politics. It would seem that during the last phase even the conduct of the war itself has shown a certain tendency to relapse to the forms of the first world war.

Amidst an unprecedented collision of imperialistic forces, in which the weaker side endeavored to enlarge its conquering power by a simultaneous attack on the whole internal structure of present-day society, a fatal ambiguity appears within the aims of Nazism itself. After having gambled with the idea of a world-wide social revolution, the Nazis seem to shrink from the risks and consequences of their own original plan. Thereby they demonstrate the intrinsic limits of a counter-revolutionary movement in contrast to a genuine revolution.

THE HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY OF NAZISM

The preceding analysis shows that the striking ambiguities which we observed in the ideological manifestations of Nazism are based on the equally ambiguous character of its historical action. In spite of appearances, totalitarianism in its present form had not yet freed itself from the traditional concepts of a bygone historical epoch. The Nazis have abandoned the ideas of the ascending phase of the capitalist age only to fall for the undynamic, fatalistic and pessimistic concept of history which in the last pre-totalitarian phase was expressed in Spengler's *Decline of the West*. Every student of Hitler's speeches during the past twenty years has been aware of the fatalistic despair which formed the persistent background of his pronouncements even in those moments when he tried to inspire his followers to their most daring and decisive actions.

This somber aspect of the historical philosophy of present-day totalitarianism is worked out at great length by the old and new ideological exponents of the Nazi myths and doctrines from Moeller van den Bruck and Rosenberg to Juenger and Steding; it is present as an unmistakable undertone even in the utterances of such extremely activist representatives of Nazism as Professor Haushofer.

National Socialism did not break with that long tradition of the historians by which, after the revolutionary inauguration of the present system of European society, the "making of history" was gradually transformed into an objective process in which history is no longer made but rather is

suffered and passively accepted by men. An important contribution to that transformation was made during the 19th century by the idealist philosophy of Hegel and, after him, by the materialist philosophy of Marx. When Marx and Engels finally broke with the "unscientific" dreams of the preceding generations of socialists and anarchists, they also abandoned that great activist concept of history which Marx in his youth had summed up in the famous statement: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is, to change it." In its further development the so-called scientific socialism of the Marxist parties was to lose even the last remnants of a revolutionary creed while, on the other hand, some of the allegedly unscientific and Utopian elements of earlier socialist thought proved themselves scientific and realistic enough when they were turned against their "scientific" detractors by the Nazi counter-revolution.

The final step in eliminating all activist elements from the historical philosophy of the 19th century was made by the ruling bourgeois class itself. Like all other "philosophy", even the philosophy of history was still too reminiscent of the revolutionary period of bourgeois thought and was therefore finally abandoned and replaced by a system of highly specialized and thus thoroughly de-revolutionized historical sciences.

The ultimate decay of the bourgeois conception of history was reached in the pan-historism of the present epoch which found its classical formulation in the work of Spengler.

THE AGE OF PAN-HISTORISM

*When we dream that we are dreaming
we are on the point of waking.*

Novalis

It seems that today we have arrived at a completely historical, and a completely detached, conception of history itself. We know that every approach to history, every term applied to it, and every result of historical research reveals something not only about the attitude of the writer but also about his time and about his particular position in the economic, political, and cultural struggles going on in his time. We can no longer be fooled by the flippant contention of an ultra-modern writer that the historian "should leave out as much as possible", or by the more intelligent pronouncement that it is more important for the historian to forget than to remember. We know that more than a century ago Hegel said that "thought is after all the most trenchant epitomist".

We can not be outsmarted by the equally paradoxical demand of a well-known Harvard professor that the historian "should start with an avowed bias towards the facts of history". Socialist criticism had convinced us long ago of the shaky character of the so-called "objectivity" of history and economics and all other historical sciences of the bourgeoisie. It was only under the impact of the totalitarian counter-revolution that the same critical

principle was adopted by a number of stalwart defenders of the unbiased nature of all true scientific thought, while at the same time and for the same reason some of the adherents of a strictly partisan philosophy and science became remarkably less enthusiastic about the inevitable and wholesome class and party divisions in the realms of theory and culture. We can even smile at the modern craving to introduce a sufficient amount of bias into the historical writing of a highly sophisticated time. We know that no amount of such consciously inculcated bias can rival the strength of the entirely unconscious bias contained in the economic and political theories which were universally adopted during the whole length of the bourgeois epoch. A good example is offered by the implicit faith of the political economists in the inevitability of the particular form of commodity production which prevailed during the early phases of the bourgeois epoch.

To make a long story short, there is nothing in the historical writing of yesterday, today, and tomorrow that can not itself be explained and understood as the outcome of a particular epoch by the completely historical spirit of the present generation. For us it depends entirely on the given conditions of a definite period whether "history" is treated as a providential history of Creation or as a profane history of Civilization, and in the latter case, whether its subject-matter is supposed to be Civilization (in the singular and with a capital C) or a number of coordinated civilizations; whether it is regarded statically as a recurrence of essentially the same processes or dynamically as a "development", and whether the development in question is conceived as an external movement of visible and tangible objects in space and time or as a so-called "internal" development in time; whether it is considered to move upward or downward or on the same level, in a straight line or in spirals or cycles; whether it proceeds from the simple to the complex or vice versa; and whether it is regarded as a harmonious cooperation of individuals and groups or as a struggle of every man against every man, of nations, races, or classes.

Furthermore, it depends on the historical facts of a given epoch whether history is dealt with optimistically as a progressive development or pessimistically as a decline of culture; as a continuous process or as a series of alternating advances and relapses, of organic and critical periods, of prosperity and crisis, peace and war. Again, the outcome of the historical process may be conceived as blind destiny or as a man-made event, as produced by the people as a whole, or as thrust upon a recalcitrant mass by a select minority of great men, of geniuses, dictators, or madmen; as an unconscious growth or a mechanical movement; as a meaningless chaos or the unfolding of a great cosmical order.

Equally dependent on prevailing conditions is the question of whether the historian approaches his subject-matter in a dogmatic or a critical mood, with a rational or a mystical method, and whether he regards his work as a passive reflection of the objective historical process in the mind of an

outside observer or as a by-product of his active participation in the historical movement itself.

Again, it is decided by the objective character of a given epoch what fields of human activity are included in the historical research and which of them are emphasized. History may be represented as a religious or a political, an economic or a cultural process; it may be treated as a history of technics and science, of human behavior, social institutions and ideas. It may be regarded as a cosmical process in which the development of human society in "historical time" is only a short and somewhat discreditable episode; or again, all development of nature and human society may be represented as an incarnation of the mind or "the idea" *per se* on its way towards ultimate self-fulfillment. Or, finally, this spiritual interpretation of history may again be reversed and history regarded as a never-resolved conflict between the productive forces of society and the successive forms of their actual application.

TOWARDS A NEW FUNCTION OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

This pan-historical view of the present age is not only the end-term of a protracted development of the past. It contains at the same time the basis for an entirely new approach which may be described alternatively as the final rejection of the fetishistic concept of history or as the ultimate historicization of all human activities and of all fields of social research.

While we are slowly getting used to regarding the historian and his work as being just as historical as history itself, history seems to lose in importance. It certainly loses all claim to an independent existence. There is no longer a history in general, just as there is no longer a state in general, economics, politics or law in general. There is only a definite, specific kind of history belonging to a particular epoch, to a particular structure of society, or a particular civilization. This does not mean that history is reduced to a mere ideology. It rather partakes of the mixed nature (half material, half ideological) of such "institutions" as the law, the church, and the state. As such it has been treated in Hegel's *Philosophy of Law* where "world-history" is discussed along with the family, civil society, and the state as one of the attributes of what the philosopher calls "*Die Sittlichkeit*" but what is, in fact, the particular structure of modern bourgeois civilization.

On the basis of this new approach the fetishistic concept that the development of the world happens in history is replaced by the relativistic statement that each particular form of history is part and parcel of a given structure of society and changes its form and contents along with the transformations that take place on the economic, political and other spheres of the society to which it belongs. And just as we can imagine a future structure of society in which not only the theory of the state, but even the state itself will have dropped out of existence without having been replaced by another state, we can imagine a time when there will be no history. Something

of this kind must have happened to the Egyptians and to other Eastern civilizations at the time when they passed from their dynamic period of genesis and growth to a less dynamic period during which they tried more or less successfully to protect their society against a threatening disintegration by establishing a universal state. A similar change is in store, according to the theories of Spengler and A. J. Toynbee, for every existing form of civilization, including our own proud civilization of the West.

The ultimate result of the new approach to history here considered is not a total loss but rather a different application of the theoretical knowledge that hitherto was acquired by historical studies. When every theoretical and practical form of dealing with social facts comes to be based, among other things, on a full regard for their particular time-conditioned aspects, an independent science (or philosophy) of history *per se* will be considered just as superfluous as a comprehensive science of "nature" *per se* has been regarded for a long time. Just as the physical sciences of today become more and more closely related to their practical application in technology and industry, so theoretical history will ultimately be fused with its practical application to the concrete tasks to be solved by associated individuals within the framework of a given form of society.

Karl Korsch

MATERIALISM AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

The evolution of Marxism to its present stage can be understood only in connection with the social and political developments of the period in which it arose. With the coming of capitalism in Germany there developed simultaneously a growing opposition to the existing aristocratic absolutism. The ascending bourgeois class needed freedom of trade and commerce, favorable legislation, a government sympathetic to its interests, freedom of press and assembly in order to fight unhindered for its needs and desires. But the bourgeoisie found itself confronted instead with a hostile regime, an omnipotent police, and press censorship which suppressed every criticism of the reactionary government. The struggle between these forces, which led to the revolution of 1848, was first conducted on a theoretical level, as a struggle of ideas and a criticism of the prevailing ideology. The criticism of the young bourgeois intelligentsia was directed mainly against religion and Hegelian philosophy.

Hegelian philosophy in which the self-development of the *Absolute Idea* creates the world and then, as the developing world, enters the consciousness of men, was the philosophical guise suited to the Christianity of the Restoration after 1815. Religion, handed down by past generations, served

as always as the theoretical basis and justification for the perpetuation of old class relations. Since an open political struggle was still impossible, the fight against the feudal oligarchy had to be conducted in a veiled form, as an attack on religion. This was the task of the group of young intellectuals of 1840 among whom Marx grew up and rose to a leading position.

While still a student Marx submitted, although reluctantly, to the force of the Hegelian method of thought and made it his own. That he chose for his doctoral dissertation the comparison of two great materialist philosophies of ancient Greece, Democritus and Epicurus, seems to indicate, however, that in the deep recesses of his consciousness Marx inclined towards materialism. Shortly thereafter he was called upon to assume the editorship of a new paper founded by the oppositional Rheinisch bourgeoisie in Cologne. Here he was drawn into the practical problems of the political and social struggles. So well did he conduct the fight that after one year of publication the paper was banned by the state. It was during this period that Feuerbach made his final step towards materialism. Feuerbach brushed aside Hegel's fantastic system, turned to the simple experiences of every day life, and arrived at the conclusion that religion was a man-made product. Forty years later Engels still spoke fervently of the liberating effect that Feuerbach's work had on his contemporaries, and of the enthusiasm with which Marx embraced the new ideas despite some critical reservations. To Marx this meant a new turn in the social struggle: from attacking a heavenly image to coming to grips openly with earthly realities. Thus in 1843 in his essay "*A Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right*" he wrote:

"As far as Germany is concerned the criticism of religion is practically completed, and the criticism of religion is the basis of all criticism . . . The struggle against religion is the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion. . . . Religion is the moan of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of the people, is the demand for their real happiness. The demand to abandon the illusions about their conditions is a demand to abandon a condition which requires illusions. The criticism of religion therefore contains potentially the criticism of the Vale of Tears whose aureole is religion. Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers which adorned the chain, not that man should wear his fetters denuded of fanciful embellishment, but that he should throw off the chain, and break the living flower . . . Thus the criticism of heaven transforms itself into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of right, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics."

The task confronting Marx was to inquire into the realities of social life. His study of the French Revolution and French socialism as well as English economy and the English working class movement, in collaboration with Engels during their stay in Paris and Brussels, led towards further elaboration of the doctrine known as *Historical Materialism*. As the doctrine of social development by way of class struggles we find the theory expounded in "*Poverty of Philosophy*" (in French 1846), the "*Communist Manifesto*"

(1847), and in the preface to "*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*" (1859).

Marx and Engels themselves refer to this system of thought as materialism in opposition to the idealism of Hegel and the neo-Hegelians. What do they understand by materialism? Engels, discussing the fundamental theoretical problems of historical materialism in his *Anti-Duehring* and in his booklet on Feuerbach, states in the latter publication:

"The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being . . . Those who asserted the primacy of the spirit to nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other — comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism."

That not only the human mind is bound up with the brain, but also that man with his brain and mind is part and parcel of the rest of the animal kingdom and the unorganic world, was a self-evident truth to Marx and Engels. This conception is common to all "schools of materialism." What distinguishes Marxism materialism from other schools must be learned from its various polemical works dealing with practical questions of politics and society. To Marx materialistic thought was a working method. In his writing he does not deal with philosophy nor does he formulate materialism into a system of philosophy; he is utilizing it as a method for the study of the world and thus demonstrates its validity. In the essay quoted above, for example, Marx does not demolish the Hegelian philosophy of right by philosophical disputations, but through an annihilating criticism of the real conditions existing in Germany.

The materialist method replaces philosophical sophistry and disputations around abstract concepts with the study of the real material world. Feuerbach preceded Marx in this respect in so far as he was the first to point out that religious concepts and ideas are derived from material conditions. Let us take a few examples to elucidate this point. The statement "Man proposes, God disposes" the theologian interprets from the point of view of the omnipotence of God. The materialist on the other hand searches for the cause of the discrepancy between expectations and results and finds it in the social effects of commodity exchange and competition. The politician debates the desirability of freedom and socialism; the materialist asks: from what individuals or classes do these demands spring, what specific content do they have, and to what social need do they correspond? The philosopher, in abstract speculations about the essence of time, seeks to establish whether or not absolute time exists. The materialist compares the clocks to see whether it can be established unreservedly that two phenomena occur simultaneously, or follow one another.

Feuerbach, too, utilized the materialist method. He saw in living man the source of all religious ideas and concepts. "The validity of his materialism, however, depended on whether he was successful in presenting a clear

and comprehensive interpretation of religion. A materialism that leaves the problem obscure is insufficient and will lead back to idealism. Marx pointed out that the mere principle of taking living man as the starting point for investigation is not enough to lead to clarity. In his theses on Feuerbach in 1845 he formulated the essential difference between his materialist method and that of Feuerbach. We quote:

"Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the human. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations." (Thesis 6) "His work consists in the dissolution of the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular foundation lifts itself above itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm is only to be explained by the self-cleavage and self-contradictions of this secular basis. The latter must itself, therefore, first be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionised in practice." (Thesis 4)

Briefly, man can be understood only as a social being. From the individual one must proceed to society and dissolve the social contradictions out of which religion has evolved. The real world, that is the sensual and material world, where all ideology and consciousness have their origin, is human society — with nature in the background, of course, as the basis on which society rests and of which it is a part altered by man.

A presentation of these ideas is to be found in the book "*The German Ideology*", written in 1845-46. The part that deals with Feuerbach, however, was first published in 1925 by Rjazanoff, then head of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. The complete work was not published until 1932. Here the theses on Feuerbach are worked out in greater length. Although it is apparent that Marx wrote quite hurriedly, he nevertheless gave a brilliant presentation of all essential ideas concerning the evolution of society which, later, found further illumination in the propaganda pamphlet "*The Communist Manifesto*" and in the preface to "*The Critique of Political Economy*."

The *German Ideology* is directed first of all against the theoretical view which regarded creative consciousness and ideas developing from ideas as the only factors that determine human history. Marx has nothing but contempt for this point of view, "The phantoms formed in the human brain," he says on page 14, "are necessary sublimates of their material, empirically-verifiable life process bound to material premises". It was essential to put emphasis on the real world, the material and empirically-given world as the source of all ideology. But it was also necessary to criticise the materialist theories that culminated in Feuerbach. As a protest against ideology the return to biological man and his physical needs is correct, but taking the individual as an abstract being does not offer a solution to the question of how and why religious ideas originate. Human society in its historical evolution is the only reality controlling human life. Only out of society can the spiritual life of man be explained. Feuerbach, in attempt-

ing to find an explanation of religion by a return to the "real" man did not find the real man, because he searched for him in the individual, in the human being generally. From this approach the world of ideas cannot be explained. Thus he was forced to fall back on the ideology of universal human love. "Insofar as Feuerbach is a materialist," Marx said, "he does not deal with history, and insofar as he considers history, he is not a materialist." (*The German Ideology*, pp. 37-38).

What Feuerbach did not accomplish was accomplished by the historical materialism of Marx: an explanation of the development of man's ideas out of the material world. The historical development of society is brilliantly rendered in the following sentence: ". . . Men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking." (*German Ideology*, p. 14). We know reality only through experience which, as the external world, comes to us through the medium of our senses. A philosophical theory of knowledge will then be based on this principle: the material, empirically given world is the reality which determines thought.

The basic epistemological problem was always what truth can be attributed to thinking. The term "critique of knowledge," used by the professional philosophers for "theory of knowledge," already implies a view point of doubt. In his second and fifth theses on Feuerbach Marx refers to this problem and again points out that the practical activity of man is the essential content of his life.

"The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, i. e., the reality and power, the "this-sidedness" of his thinking." (Thesis 2) . . . "Feuerbach, not satisfied with abstract thinking, appeals to sensuous contemplation, but he does not conceive sensuousness as a practical, human-sensuous activity." (Thesis 5).

Why practical? Because man in the first place must live. His biological organism, his faculties and his abilities and all his activity are adapted to this very end. With these he must adapt himself to and assert himself in the external world, i. e. nature, and as an individual in society, as well as with his faculty of thinking, the activity of the organ of thought, the brain, and with thought itself. Thinking is a bodily faculty. In every phase of life man uses his power of thought to draw conclusions from his experiences on which expectations and hopes are built and which regulate his mode of living and his actions. The correctness of his conclusions, a condition for his survival, is determined by the very fact of his being. Thinking is a purposeful adaptation to life, and therefore truth can be attributed to it though not truth in an absolute sense. But on the basis of his experiences, man derives generalizations and laws on which his expectations are based. They are generally correct as is witnessed by his survival. In particular instances, however, false conclusions may be derived and hence failure and destruction. Life is a continuous process of learning, adaptation, development. Practice alone is the unsparing test of the correctness of thinking.

Let us first consider this in relation to natural science. Here thought finds in practice its purest and most abstract form. This is why philosophers of nature accept this form as the subject for their observations and pay no attention to its similarity to the thought of every individual in his every day activity. Yet thinking in the study of nature is only a highly developed special field of the entire social labor process. This labor process demands an accurate knowledge of natural phenomena and its integration into laws, in order to be able to utilize them successfully in the field of technics. The determination of these laws through observation of special phenomena is the task of specialists. In the study of nature it is generally accepted that practice, in this instance experiment, is the test of truth. Here, too, it is accepted that observed regularities, known as "natural laws," are generally fairly dependable guides to human practice, and although they are frequently not altogether correct and even disappointing, they are improved constantly and elaborated upon through the progress of science. If at times man is referred to as the "lawmaker of nature," it must be added that nature very often disregards these laws and summons man to make better ones.

The practice of life, however, comprises much more than the scientific study of nature. The relation of the natural scientist to the world, despite his experimentation, remains sensuous-observational. To him the world is an external thing. But in reality people deal with nature in their practical activities by acting upon her and making her part of their existence. Through his labor man does not oppose nature as an external or alien world. On the contrary, by the toil of his hands he transforms the external world to such an extent that the original natural substance is no longer discernable, and while this process goes on, man changes, too. Thus, man creates his own world: human society in a nature changed by him. What meaning, then, has the question of whether his thinking leads to truth? The object of his thinking is that which he himself produces by his physical and mental activities and which he controls through his brain. This is not a question of partial truths such as, for instance, those of which Engels wrote in his book on Feuerbach that the artificial production of the natural dye *alizarin* would prove the validity of the chemical formula employed.* This is not, to repeat, a question of partial truths in a specific field of knowledge, where the practical consequence either affirms or refutes them. Rather the point in question here is a philosophical one, namely, whether human thought is capable of encompassing the real, the deepest truth of the world. That the philosopher, in his secluded study, who is concerned exclusively with abstract philosophical concepts, which are derived in turn from abstract

*) This formula did not prove — as Engels believed — the validity of materialism as against Kant's "Thing in itself." The "Thing in itself" results from the incapacity of bourgeois philosophy to explain the earthly origin of moral law. The "Thing in itself" has thus not been contradicted and proven false by the chemical industry but by historical materialism. It was the latter that enabled Engels to see the fallacy in the "Thing in itself," although he offered other arguments.

scientific concepts also formulated outside of practical life experiences, should have his doubts in the midst of this world of shadows is easily understood. But for human beings who live and act in the real every day world the question has no meaning. The truth of thought, says Marx, is nothing other than power and mastery over the real world.

Of course this statement embodies a contradiction: Thinking cannot be said to be true where the human mind does not master the world. Whenever — as Marx pointed out in *Capital* — the products of man's hand grows beyond his intellectual power, which he no longer controls and which confronts him in the form of commodity production and capital as an independent social entity, mastering man and even threatening to destroy him, then his mental activity submits to the mysticism of a supernatural being and he begins to doubt his ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. Thus, in the course of many centuries the myth of supernatural deity overshadowed the daily materialistic experiences of man. Not until society has evolved to a point where man will be able to comprehend all social forces and will have learned to master his environment — not until a communist society prevails, in short — will his ideas be in full accord with the realities of the world. Only after the nature of social production as a fundamental basis of all life and therefore of future development has become clear to man, only when the mind — be it only theoretically at first — actually masters the world, only then will our thinking be fully correct. And only then will materialism, the science of society as formulated by Marx, gain permanent mastery and become the only applicable philosophy. The Marxian theory of society in principle means the renewal of philosophy.

Marx, however, was not concerned with pure philosophy. "Philosophers have only interpreted the world differently, but the point is to change it," he says in the theses on Feuerbach. The world situation pressed for practical action. At first inspired by the bourgeois opposition to feudal absolutism, later strengthened by the new forces that emanated from the struggle of the English and French proletariat against the bourgeoisie, Marx and Engels, thanks to their careful study of social realities, arrived at the conclusion that the proletarian revolution following on the heels of the bourgeois revolution would bring the real liberation of humanity. Their activity was devoted to this revolution, and in the *Communist Manifesto* they laid down the first directions for the workers' class struggle.

Marxism has since been inseparably connected with the class struggle of the proletariat. If we ask what Marxism is, we must first of all understand that it does not mean everything Marx ever thought and wrote. The views of his earlier years, for instance, are representative only in part; they are developmental phases leading toward Marxism. While the role of the proletarian class struggle and the aim of communism is already outlined in the *Communist Manifesto*, the theory of surplus value is developed much later. All of Marx's developing ideas are determined by the social relation,

the character of the revolution, the part played by the state. And all these ideas had a different content in 1848 when the proletariat had only begun to develop than they had later or have today. Of vital importance, however, are Marx's original scientific contributions. There is first of all the theory of historical materialism, according to which the development of society is determined by its productive forces that make for a certain mode of production, especially through the productive force of class struggles. There is the theory of the determination of all political and ideological phenomena of intellectual life in general by the productive forces and relations. And there is the presentation of capitalism as a historical phenomena, the analysis of its structure by the theory of value and surplus value, and the explanation of capitalism's evolutionary tendencies through the proletarian revolution towards communism. With these theories Marx has enriched the knowledge of humanity permanently. They constitute the solid fundament of Marxism. From these premises further conclusions can be derived under new and changed circumstances. Because of this scientific basis Marxism is a new way of looking at the past and the future, at the meaning of life, the world and thought; it is a spiritual revolution, a new view of the world. As a view of life, however, Marxism is real only through the class that adheres to it. The workers who are imbued with this new outlook become aware of themselves as the class of the future, growing in number and strength and consciousness, striving to take production into their own hands and through the revolution to become masters of their own fate. Thus Marxism as the theory of the proletarian revolution is a reality, and at the same time a living power, only in the minds and hearts of the revolutionary proletariat.

Yet Marxism is not an inflexible doctrine or a sterile dogma. Society changes, the proletariat grows, science develops. New forms and phenomena arise in capitalism, in politics, in science, which Marx and Engels could not have foreseen or surmised. But the method of research which they formed remains to this day an excellent guide and tool towards the understanding and interpretation of new events. The proletariat, enormously increased under capitalism, today stands only at the threshold of its revolution and Marxist development; Marxism only now begins to play its role as a living power in the proletariat. Thus Marxism itself is a living theory which grows with the increase of the proletariat and with the tasks and aims of the class struggle.

II

To return to the political scene out of which Marxism emerged, it must be noted that the revolution of 1848 did not yield full political power to the bourgeoisie. But after 1850 capitalism developed strongly in France and Germany. In Prussia, the Progressive Party began its fight for a state constitution, whose inner weakness became evident later when the government, in the interest of militarism, met the demands of the bourgeoisie for a strong national state. Movements for national unity dominated the political scene

of Central Europe. Everywhere, with the exception of England, where it already held power, the rising bourgeoisie struggled against the feudal-absolutistic conditions.

The struggle of a new class for power in state and society is simultaneously in its conceptional form always a struggle for a new world view. The old powers can be defeated only when the masses rise up against them or, at least, do not obey them any longer. Therefore it was necessary for the bourgeoisie to secure for itself the adherence of the proletariat to the capitalist society. For this purpose the old ideas of the peasants and of the petit-bourgeoisie had to be destroyed and supplanted with new bourgeois ideologies. Capitalism itself furnished the means to this end.

The natural sciences are the spiritual base of capitalism. On the development of these sciences depends the technical progress that drives capitalism forward. Science, therefore, was held in high esteem by the young bourgeois class. At the same time, this science freed them from the conventional dogmas incorporated in the rule of feudalism. The conclusion drawn from scientific investigations stimulated a new outlook on life and the world and supplied the bourgeoisie with the necessary arguments to defy the old feudal powers. The new world outlook was disseminated by the bourgeoisie among the masses. To the peasantry and the petit-bourgeois artisan belongs the inherited biblical faith. But as soon as the sons of the peasants or proletarianized artisans become industrial workers they easily accept the ideas of capitalist development; even those who remain in pre-capitalistic enterprises are lured by the more liberal outlook of the bourgeoisie.

The intellectual struggle was primarily a struggle against religion. The religious creed is the ideology of past conditions; it is the inherited tradition which keeps the masses in submission to the old powers and which had to be defeated. The struggle against religion was a social necessity. It had to take on varying forms with varying conditions. In those countries where the bourgeoisie had already attained full power, as for instance in England, the struggle was no longer necessary and the bourgeoisie paid homage to the established church. Only among the lower middle classes and among the workers did the radical movement find some adherence. But where industry and the bourgeoisie had to fight for emancipation they proclaimed a liberal, ethical Christianity in opposition to the orthodox faith. Where the struggle against a still powerful royal and aristocratic class was difficult and required the utmost exertion and strength the new world outlook had to assume extreme forms of radicalism and gave rise to bourgeois materialism. This was so to a large degree in Central Europe. It is no accident that the most popular propaganda for materialism (von Moleschot, Vogt, Buechner) originated here. It also found an echo in other countries as well. In addition to these radical pamphlets a rich literature of enlightenment and popularization of modern scientific discoveries appeared, all intended as weapons in the struggle to free the urban masses, the workers

and the peasantry from the spiritual fetters of tradition and to make them into followers of the progressive bourgeoisie. The bourgeois intelligentsia, professors, engineers, doctors, etc., were the most zealous propagandists of the new enlightenment.

The essence of natural science was the discovery of laws operating in nature. A careful study of natural phenomena disclosed recurring regularities which allowed for scientific predictions. The 17th century had already known the Galilean law of falling bodies and the new law of gravity, Kepler's laws of the planetary movements, Snell's law of light refraction and Boyle's law of the density of gas. Finally, towards the end of the century, came the discovery of the law of gravitation by Newton which to a far greater extent than all preceding discoveries, exerted a tremendous influence on the philosophical thought of the 18th and 19th centuries. While the others were rules that were not always absolutely correct, Newton's law of gravitation proved to be the first real, universally applicable natural law which made possible correct measurements of cosmic bodies despite all their irregularities. From this the conception developed that all natural phenomena follow definite, fixed laws. In nature causality rules: gravity is the cause of falling bodies, gravitation causes the movements of planets. All occurring phenomena are effects totally determined by their causes, allowing for neither free will, accident nor caprice.

This fixed order of natural science was in direct contrast to the traditional religious doctrines in which God as a despotic sovereign arbitrarily rules the world and disposes fortune and misfortune as he sees fit, strikes his enemies with thunderbolts and pestilence, rewards others with miracles. Miracles are contradictory to the fixed order of nature; miracles are impossible, and all reports about them in the Bible are fables. The biblical and religious interpretations of nature belong to an epoch in which a primitive agricultural mode of production prevailed under the overlordship of an absolute despot. The natural philosophy of the rising bourgeoisie with its natural laws controlling all phenomena belongs to a new order of state and society where the arbitrary rule of the despot is replaced by laws valid for all.

The natural philosophy of the Bible which asserts theology to be absolute, divine truth is the natural philosophy of ignorance that has been deceived by outward appearances, that saw the immovable earth as the center of the universe and held that all created matter was also perishable. Scientific experiment showed, on the contrary, that matter which apparently disappeared (as for instance in burning) actually changes into gaseous, invisible forms. Lavoisier demonstrated that a reduction in the total weight did not occur in this process and that therefore no matter disappeared. This discovery was generalized into a new principle: matter cannot be destroyed, its quantity always remains constant, only its form and combinations undergo a change. This holds good for each chemical element; its atoms constitute

the immutable building stones of all bodies. Thus natural science with its theory of the conservation of matter, of the eternity of nature, opposed the theological dogma of the creation of the world 6000 years ago.

Matter is not the only substance science found to be imperishable. Since the middle of the 19th century, the law known as the conservation of energy came to be regarded as the fundamental axiom of modern physics. Here, too, a fixed and far reaching order of nature was observed; in all occurrences changes of the form of energy take place: heat and motion, tension and attraction, electrical energy; but the total quantity never changes. This principle led to an understanding of the development of cosmic bodies, the sun and the earth, in the light of which all the assertions of theology appeared like the talk of a stuttering child.

Of even greater consequence were the scientific discoveries concerning man's position in the world. The Darwinian theory of the origin of species, which showed the evolution of man from the animal kingdom, was in complete contradiction to all religious doctrines. But even before Darwin, discoveries in biology and chemistry revealed the organic identity of all human and living creatures with non-organic nature. The protoplasm, the albuminous substance of which the cells of all living beings are composed and on which all life is dependent, consists of the same atoms as all other matter. The human intellect, which was elevated by the theological doctrine of the immortal soul to divinity, is closely bound up with the physical properties of the brain; all spiritual phenomena are the accompaniment to or effect of material occurrences in the brain cells.

Bourgeois materialism drew the most radical conclusions from these scientific discoveries. Everything spiritual is merely the product of material processes; ideas are the secretion of the brain, just as bile is the secretion of the liver. Let religion — said Buchner — go on talking about the perishability of matter and the immortality of the mind; in reality it is the other way around. With the least change in or injury to the brain everything spiritual disappears, nothing at all remains of the spirit when the brain is destroyed, while matter, of which it is composed, is eternal and indestructible. All living phenomena, including human ideas, have their origin in the chemical and physical processes of the cellular substance; they differ from non-living matter only in their greater complexity. Ultimately, one must go back to the dynamics and movements of atoms, that is, explain everything on the basis of atoms.

Having reached these conclusions, natural materialism was of course no longer able to maintain itself. After all, ideas are different from bile and similar bodily secretions; mind cannot simply be put into the same category with force or energy. If mind is the product of the brain, which differs only in degree from other tissues and cells, then, it must be concluded, something of a mind must — as a matter of principle — also be found in every animal cell. And because the cellular substance is only an aggregate

of atoms, more complex but fundamentally not different from other matter, the conclusion must be that something of that which we call mind is already present in the atom: in every minute particle of matter there must be a trace of the spiritual substance. This theory of the "atom-soul" we find in the works of Ernst Haeckel, energetic propagandist of Darwin and courageous combatter of religious dogmatism, who was hated and despised by his reactionary contemporaries. Haeckel no longer considered his philosophical view as materialism but called it monism — strangely enough, for his philosophy sees the dual existence of mind and matter in even the smallest elements of the world.

Materialism dominated the ideology of the bourgeois class for only a very short time. Only so long as the bourgeoisie could believe that its society with its private property rights, its personal liberty, and free competition, through the development of industry, science and technique, could solve the life problems of every citizen — only that long could the bourgeoisie assume that its theoretical problems could be solved by the natural sciences without the need to resort to any supernatural and spiritual powers. As soon, however, as it became evident that capitalism could not solve the life problems of the masses, as was shown by the sharpening of the proletarian class struggles, the confident materialist philosophy disappeared. The world was again full of insoluble contradictions and uncertainties, of sinister forces threatening social stability. The bourgeoisie resorted once more to all kinds of religious creeds and superstitions. Bourgeois intellectuals and natural scientists submitted to the influence of mystical tendencies. They were quick to discover the various weaknesses and shortcomings of the materialist philosophy and made speeches about the "limitations of natural science" and the insoluble "mystery of life".

Only a small minority of the more radical members of the lower middle class still clung to the old political solutions of early capitalism and continued to hold natural scientific materialism in respect. Among the rising working class too, materialism found a fertile ground. The anarchists have long been its most convinced followers. Social-democratic workers received the interpretation of Marxism and the conclusions of natural materialism with equal interest. Capitalistic practices, daily experiences and theoretical discourses on the nature of society contributed greatly towards undermining traditional religion. The need for scientific enlightenment grew and the workers became the most zealous readers of the works of Buechner and Haeckel. While Marxist doctrine determined the practical, political and social ideology of the workers, a wider understanding asserted itself only gradually; few became aware of the fact that bourgeois materialism had long since been outdated and surpassed by historical materialism. This, by the way, accords with the fact that the working class movement had not reached a position enabling it to destroy capitalism, but that its class struggle only served to secure a better place for it within the capitalist society. Thus, the democratic solutions offered by the early bourgeois movement were still

considered valid for the working class also. The full comprehension of revolutionary Marxist theory is possible only in connection with revolutionary practice.

Wherein lies the contradiction between bourgeois materialism and historical materialism?

Both concepts agree in so far as they are materialist philosophies, that is, both recognize the reality of nature, and the primacy of the external world; both recognize that spiritual phenomena, sensation, consciousness and ideas, are derived from the former. Their opposition rests on this: bourgeois materialism bases itself on natural science, historical materialism is primarily the science of society. Bourgeois natural scientists observe man only as an object of nature — the highest of the animals — determined by natural laws. For an explanation of man's life and action they employ general biological laws and, in a wider sense, the laws of chemistry, physics and mechanics. With these means little can be accomplished in the way of understanding social phenomena and ideas. Historical materialism, on the other hand, lays bare the specific evolutionary laws of human society and shows the interconnection between ideas and society.

The axiom of materialism, that the mental is determined by the material world, has therefore entirely different meanings for the two doctrines. For bourgeois materialism it means that ideas are products of the brain, of the structure and composition of the brain substance, in the last instance, of the dynamics of the atoms of the brain. For historical materialism it means that the ideas of man are determined by his social environment. Society is his environment which acts upon him through his sense organs. This postulates an entirely different approach to the problem and a different direction of thought; consequently, also a different theory of knowledge. For bourgeois materialism the question of the meaning of knowledge is a question of the relationship of spiritual phenomena to the physico-chemical-biological phenomena in the brain matter. For historical materialism it is a question of the relationship of the ideas in our mind to the phenomena which we view as the external world.

However, man's position in society is not purely that of an observing being but that of a dynamic force which reacts on his environment and changes it. Society is nature transformed through labor. To the natural scientist nature is the objectively given reality which he observes and which acts on him through the medium of his senses. To him the external world is the active and dynamic element, while the mind is the receptive element. Thus it is emphasized that the mind is only a reflection, an image of the external world, as Engels expressed it when he pointed out the contradiction between the materialist and idealist philosophies. But the science of the naturalist is only a part of the whole of human activity, only a means to a much greater end. It is the preceding, passive part of his activity which is

followed by the active part: the technical elaboration, production and transformation of the world by man.

Man is in the first place an active being. In the labor process he utilizes his organs and aptitudes in order to constantly build and remake his environment.

For this reason he not only invented the artificial organs we call tools, but also trained his physical and mental aptitudes so that they might serve him as effective aids in the preservation of his life and in reacting effectively to his natural environment. His main organ is the brain whose task, thinking, is as good a physical activity as any other. The most important product of thought activity, the effective action of the mind upon the world, is science which, as a mental instrument, stands next to the material instruments and, itself a productive power, constitutes, as the basis of technology, an essential part of the productive apparatus.

Historical materialism sees the results of science, concepts, substances, natural laws and forces, although formed by nature, as first of all the products of the mental work of humanity. Bourgeois materialism, on the other hand, from the point of view of natural science sees all this as belonging to nature which has been discovered and brought to light only by science. Natural scientists consider the immutable substances, matter, energy, electricity, gravity, ether, the law of gravitation, the law of entropy, etc., as the basic elements of the world itself, as reality, that which has to be discovered. From the viewpoint of historical materialism, however, these are products which creative mental activity forms out of the substance of natural phenomena.

Another difference lies in the dialectic which historical materialism inherited from Hegel. Engels has pointed out that the materialist philosophy of the 18th century disregarded evolution; yet evolution makes dialectical thinking indispensable. Historical materialism and dialectics have since become synonymous. It is assumed that the dialectical character of historical materialism is best described when it is referred to as the theory of development. However, the process of evolution was also known to the natural science of the 19th century. Scientists were well acquainted with the growth of the cell into a complex organism, the evolution of animal species as expressed in the origin of species, and the theory of the evolution of the physical world known as the law of entropy. But their method of reasoning was undialectical. They believed their concepts were concrete objects and considered their identities and opposites as absolutes. Consequently, the evolution of the universe as well as the continued progress of knowledge brought out contradictions in the theory of knowledge of which many examples have been quoted by Engels in his "*Anti-Duehring*." Understanding in general and science in particular segregate and systematise into definite concepts and laws what in the real world of phenomena occurs in continuous flux and transition. By means of names, through which language sep-

arates and defines the sequel of events, all occurrences falling into a particular group are considered similar and unchangeable. As abstract concepts they differ sharply, but in reality they converge and fuse. The colors blue and green are distinct from each other but in the intermediary nuances no one can say definitely where one color ends and the other begins. It cannot be stated at which point during its life cycle a flower begins or ceases to be a flower. That in practical life good and evil are not absolute opposites and that the greatest justice may become the greatest injustice is acknowledged everyday, just as juridical freedom may be transformed into its opposite. Dialectical thinking corresponds to reality inasmuch as it takes into consideration that the finite cannot explain the infinite, nor the static the dynamic world; that every concept has to develop into new concepts, or even into its opposite. Metaphysical thinking, on the other hand, leads to dogmatic assertions and contradictions because it views conceptions as fixed entities. Metaphysical, that is undialectical, thinking considers concepts formulated by thought as independent concepts that make up the reality of the world. Natural science proper does not suffer much from this shortcoming. It surmounts difficulties and contradictions in practice insofar as the very process of development compels it to continually revise its formulations and concepts, to amplify them by breaking them up in greater detail, to further modify its formulations to account for the new changes and to find new formulas for additions and corrections, thereby bringing the picture ever closer to the original model, the phenomenal world. The lack in dialectic reasoning becomes disturbing only when the naturalist passes from his special field of knowledge towards general philosophy and theory, as is the case with bourgeois materialism.

Thus, for instance, the theory of the origin of species very often led to the notion that the human mind, having evolved from the animal mentality, is qualitatively identical with the latter and differs from it only quantitatively. On the other hand, the actually-experienced qualitative difference between the human and the animal mind was raised by theological doctrine, in preaching immortality of the soul, to the level of an absolute antithesis. In both cases there is no dialectical thinking according to which substances of similar origin and property become differentiated in the process of growth and acquire new properties commanding new definitions and exhibiting entirely new characteristics, though the original property does not completely disappear, nor are they transformed into the complete antithesis of the original pattern.

It is metaphysical and non-dialectical to identify thought because it is the product of brain processes with the products of other organs, or to assume that mind, because it is a quality of material substance, is a characteristic quality of all matter. It is also false to think that because mind is something other than matter, it must absolutely and totally differ from it, that there is no transition to and connection with both so that a dualism of mind and matter, reaching down to the atoms, remains sharp and un-

bridgeable. From the standpoint of dialectics, mind incorporates all those phenomena we call mental which, however, cannot be carried beyond their actual existence in the lowest living animals. There the term mind becomes questionable, because the spiritual phenomena disappear gradually into mere sense perception, into the simple forms of life. The characteristic quality "spirit", which is or is not there, does not exist in nature; spirit is just a name we attach to a number of definite phenomena, some of which we understand clearly, others only partly.

Here life itself offers a close analogy. Proceeding from the smallest microscopic organism to still smaller invisible bacteria, we finally come to very complicated albuminous molecules that fall within the sphere of chemistry. Where living matter ceases to exist and dead matter begins cannot be determined; phenomena change gradually, become simplified, are still analogous and are yet already different. This does not mean that we are unable to ascertain demarcation lines; it is simply a fact that nature knows no borders. The phenomenon life, which is or is not, does not exist in nature; again life is merely a name, a concept we form in order to comprehend the many different aspects of reality. Because bourgeois materialism deals with life, death, and mind as if they were independent realities it is compelled to work with insurmountable opposites, whereas nature consists of uncountable transitional processes.

The difference between bourgeois and historical materialism reaches down to basic philosophical views. Bourgeois materialism, in contradistinction to the comprehensive and completely realistic historical materialism, is illusionary and incomplete, just as the bourgeois class movement whose theory was bourgeois materialism, represented a limited and illusionary emancipation in contrast to complete and real liberation by way of the proletarian class struggle. The difference between the two concepts shows itself practically in their position towards religion. Bourgeois materialism intended to overcome religion. However, a particular view cannot be ended by mere argumentation; each argument finds a counter-argument. Only when it is shown why, and under what conditions a certain view was necessary can this view be defeated. It must be shown that its basis was merely historical. Thus the struggle of natural science against religion had sense only insofar as primitive religious beliefs were concerned, as for instance, the breaking down of ignorance and superstition towards such natural phenomena as thunder and lightning. The theory of bourgeois society could destroy the theories of primitive agricultural economy. But religion in bourgeois society is anchored in its unknown and uncontrollable social forces. Bourgeois materialism is unable to deal with these forces. Historical materialism, on the other hand, explains and shows why religion was for certain times and classes a necessary and indispensable way of thought. It lays bare the social basis of religion. Only thus may its power be broken. Historical materialism does not struggle directly against religion; from its higher position it understands and explains religion as a natural phenomenon within definite social

forms. It weakens religious thinking through this insight, and is able to predict that, with the formation of a new society, religion will disappear. In the same way historical materialism, too, explains the temporary appearance of materialism within bourgeois society, as well as the retrogression of this bourgeois class into mysticism and religious trends. These trends, to be sure, do not disturb the bourgeois aptitude for thinking in terms of sharp opposites, but they replace the former atmosphere of hope and assurance with a skepticism and pessimism that speaks of the insolvability of world problems. Historical materialism also explains its own growth among the working class as being due not to its anti-religious arguments, but to the developing recognition of the real powers in society. Thus the influence of religion is weakened and will disappear with the proletarian revolution, the theoretical expression of which is historical materialism.

J. Harper

MARXISM AND EMPIRICISM

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Marx's understanding of the anatomy of bourgeois society and its trend toward decay was far superior to that of pre-Marxian socialism and to that of the radical labor movement itself. The ability with which Marx handled the enormous material that makes up the science of society commands the greatest respect. As a thinker he belongs to the era of classical economy that began at the end of the Renaissance and terminated with the Industrial Revolution. The historical position of Marx's ideas has not been sufficiently recognized, least of all by those writers who tried to "revise" or "supplement" Marx. Yet Marx's time-conditioned limitations must be recognized, especially with regard to questions concerning the technological side of the productive process and the role of the human factor within this process.

Let us assume that all the potentialities inherent in modern society have been fully realized. We may then say that the modern productive process comprehends the whole of society. To be or not to be a part of the productive process is, in such a society, no longer a matter of choice. Nor is it a question of the business cycle or of the labor market. Forced labor is predominant. All are subordinated to an industrial totalitarianism. The organic composition of capital rises in this era of monopolistic power policies as it did previously in *laissez-faire* competition. That is, the capital invested in the means of production advances faster than that invested in labor power, thus increasing their disproportional development. Technology, too, is further advanced. But the requirements of monopolistic struggles are high and the costs of monopolistic production are ever increasing. Consequently the technological possibilities can be only partially realized. The emphasis in

production is necessarily shifted once more to the productive possibilities inherent in the force of labor. Under the conditions we have assumed there exists, then, a shortage of labor. To compensate for it the quality of work must be improved in order to increase production. The changed character of the productive process itself provides an additional reason for the improvement of the quality of work. The old division of labor is displaced by the extension and coordination of working functions.

From this point of view we can deny the relevance of all categories that are divorced from work. The period of complete industrial monopoly in which work assumes a totalitarian character has its own categories, notwithstanding the individuals who remain outside the working process, or are even engaged in functions opposed to those processes. On the basis of our assumptions, there exists a total and mobile working order that tends to replace antagonistic ideologies and class consciousness with experiences and experimentations related to the working processes. With the dynamic extension of these new principles, with the elimination of elements foreign to work, or in opposition to it, and with the establishment of new values based on the quality of work, the social irrelevance of rule and control of the world by men become obvious.

Antagonistic modes of thought have become quite fetishistic; but this is not so clear with regard to dialectical thinking. From Kant to Max Adler, from Hegel to Georg Lukacs there prevailed a historical-scientific antagonism which, in its critical or dialectical form, bound the socialism of the workers in philosophical fetters. Only the Marxian followers of Kant distinguished between the science of the mind and the empiricism of the natural sciences. What the real "scientific" criterion for the "science of the mind" is, however, and how history could be dealt with as empirically as is physics — these questions remained unanswered. But this shortcoming belongs to the nature of things. If one takes it seriously, one will have to return to Kant.

Friedrich Engels was aware of the vicious circle to which the formation of historical (or historical-materialistic) non-Kantian concepts would lead. Thus he emphasized not history but materialism. And without seriously entering into the controversies about scientific method in the natural sciences, he recognized that proof for the correctness of a theory was to be found in its usefulness and in its experimentally established validity. This is important for a way of thinking that is concerned with categories derived from production and work functions.

Kant disclaimed an understanding of the whole. He related all practical knowledge to the realm of the natural sciences. The doctrine of human behavior belonged to metaphysics. Hegel tried to regain the lost paradise. In a gigantic thought-experiment he undertook to freeze the social reality at the medieval plane of unity, and then to extend it towards a fragmentary socialism of the future in which society would be once more united. But

history, that is, the concrete totality of the social phenomena, manifested itself to Hegel only as a unity because the "absolute spirit" was antagonistically enthroned over it. He was interested in all social forms of history that allowed for the construction of some sort of totality-consciousness. But he was not blind to the fact that the immediate social development was utterly shaken by various disrupting antagonisms. The miracles of the dialectic had to safeguard the monistic lucidity of "history" and hinder the dethronement of the "absolute spirit". Playfully the dialectic permits antagonisms, only to resolve them again in the higher unity of consciousness. Through the dialectic the "absolute spirit" is reconciled with ever-recurring disruptions of its universal manifestations. The dialectic syntheses become — so to speak — part and parcel of the "absolute spirit" just as human consciousness, finally, is but an incarnation of the "absolute spirit". In the end the blending of the "absolute spirit" and consciousness leads to a confusion of consciousness and reality so that reality resolves itself into consciousness — and thus it actually *does* resolve itself into consciousness.

Marx's genius shows itself at its best in his analysis of Hegel and in his overcoming of Hegelianism. In the theses on Feuerbach, he points out that first Hegel turns the world upside down by the primacy he attaches to the "spirit", and second, that thought-processes can never replace reality — can never be a substitute for a lost social unity. But he also says that it is not enough to interpret the world — the world must also be changed. More than once Marx points out that all the art of interpretation that follows its own logic, that all interpretations not positively fixed upon a specific and central sphere of the social reality must lead to nothing.

In the present-day antagonistic society, according to Marx, the process of production is the cardinal point of all change. The working class constitutes the revolutionary factor. Marx dealt, however, only in a very general manner with the revolutionary position of the laboring class. With regard to the concrete course of the proletarian class struggles that are to lead to the social revolution he postulated some hypothetical formulas such as that the productive forces of society stand in insoluble contradiction to the production relations, that the social character of production increasingly contradicts the exploitative form of capitalism, and that the working class develops into a class capable of revolutionary action. As regards the role and functions of the working class within the process of social change, Marx's explanations remained in the sphere of consciousness. His ideas no doubt stand on a different level from that of ideology. Still, they are only inductively connected with the progressive practice of the productive process. Occasionally Marx dealt with character differences between a social revolution and a mere political-bourgeois revolution. Yet, he is not ready to declare the political revolution inadequate for the requirements of the proletariat. The distinction between a social and a mere political revolution here means that the proletarian revolution has to accomplish social changes first of all,

whereas the bourgeois-political revolution only acknowledges and gives a political super-structure to changes already accomplished.

More than Marx himself, his opponents in the socialist camp stressed the need to deal with the social process more concretely; in such a manner, however, that finally the real concrete character of the social revolution was declared to be utopian. Empirically there was the strike, and when nothing absolute or final was said about the strike by Marx, his followers made a myth out of it. They believed that the strike would influence the economic dynamism in a particular way; that it would further class-consciousness and class organization; that the strike, transformed into the general-strike, would take on the character of a social revolution. However this may be, it is clear that the strike and the general strike divorce the workers from the productive process. In the old-fashioned as well as in the modern sit-down strike, as soon as the workers cease to work their relation to the productive process becomes a passive and negative one. The workers may now enter the sphere of political struggles, yet, whatever they may gain or lose in this field, their role in the productive process is resumed only with their return to work.

If Marx's contribution to this problem remained fragmentary, his contribution to the problems concerned with the inescapable revolutionization of the workers did not. With his theory of "relative pauperization" he points to the sharpening of the social antagonism that move in the direction of revolutionary struggles. Yet, he does not complete his gigantic conception that the key to the transformation of the world is to be found in the productive process and in the working class as the greatest productive force. It seems that Marx really thought that just as in previous revolutions the creative revolutionary act would have to occur in the political-revolutionary sphere.

It may be well to remember that Marx had seen the necessity for an investigation of the role played by the human productive force in the changing productive process long before he studied the classics of bourgeois economy. But the experience there was to draw from was limited. Marx expected to find in economics the answer to the question of how the working class could escape its proletarian position, develop its own consciousness, and unite theory and practice in its actions. Economics however did not provide a solution; all that could be discovered by economic investigation was the inevitability of the sharpening of existing class frictions. Economy laid bare the bone-structure of bourgeois society and introduced into the dialectic an empiricism that seemingly provided a tight frame for a revolutionary workers' philosophy. Marx's switch to economics was like an escape from the speculative spheres of the dialectic to the solid base of the world of facts.

One deals, however, with degenerated economics if one tries to deduce from it results that are not related to its proper sphere — if one deduces, for instance, the social revolution from the fact of "relative pauperization" or from the limitations of the capitalist accumulation process. Apparently

Marx himself could not always resist such temptations. Although he never reached the vulgar position in the search for "causality" that became the vogue with Karl Kautsky, yet in order to counteract vulgarization of this sort, he had always to return to the dialectic. It is thus no accident that during the writing of *Capital* he continually "flirted" with the dialectic, as he himself points out. And though he explains that he did this out of methodological necessity, it is clear that form or method is never secondary but often helps to shed light upon the material it encloses.

It seems that Marx was not at all satisfied with the empirical side of his work; at least not when he compared its results with the plans and aspirations that had moved him during his youth. And here we may find the reason why he never ceased to "flirt" with the dialectic. Because, as we have seen, Marx turned to classical economy as an escape from dialectic speculations to the solid ground of empiricism, we believe that his return to the dialectic must be explained out of his need and desire to maintain the starting point of his theory of revolutionary change. This starting point — the idea that the process of production and human productive forces form the basis for revolutionary change — had not been arrived at by experience, but had been philosophically conceived. However, the concept was in need of empirical verification and elaboration. But first, the productive forces had to unfold themselves further and manifest themselves in specific-actual situations before one could describe their consequences more concretely.

Here, then, we find the inconsistency in the Marxian system which many of its interpreters described as the contradiction between the "young" and the "old" Marx. This gap cannot be bridged, either by dialectical reasoning, or by the empiricism of the economists. Some have tried to save the whole Marxian system through its incorporation into the empirical natural sciences; others have attempted to develop it into a super-mythos. Both efforts are futile. It seems to us that only the developing total world of labor that makes the worker the dominant figure in society will allow for a really empirical approach to the problems that Marx envisioned.

Fred

THE HEYDRICH PATTERN

At all times a nation and a class that were aware of their history have been inclined to call those living outside their sphere "barbarians". In recent times it was predicted that the complete industrialization of society would entail either a socialist revolution or a decline to barbarism. Marx's prophetic words remained, however, dark and ineffective for seven decades. Furthermore, the predicted decline and its assumed alternative — the rise of socialism — happened to coincide in an entirely unexpected manner. Today, socialism can be used in opposition to barbarism only if the term is emptied of all its previous contents and is used to connote everything that at any time stands in opposition to barbarism. On the other hand, barbarism is no longer synonymous with all that is unacceptable. The awareness of history shares the predicament in which all other philosophy and ideology find themselves at present. The curses of the upholders of tradition have lost their terror—just as all other words have. It is for this reason that Marx's prophecy faded away before it had been understood. Only the fearful and terrified went on to use the empty word and carefully registered the dates of the "beginning of barbarism" in each nation: 1917 in Russia, 1933 in Germany.

For the purpose of evading the dynamism of a complete industrialization which is inherent in the totalitarian system and which undermines all political rule, at least under conditions of imperialistic competition, the politically ambitious restored to war its age-old virtue. The ancient despotism of the Orient, the Incan Empire, the slave holders of antiquity and the feudal lords of the Carolingian Empire ruled over conquered peoples. All through history it was military superiority that made slaves, serfs, and authority. It is quite difficult to understand the theoretical narrowness of people who do not realize even today that "democracy" was based on "feudal" and pre-capitalistic authority. The state in which democrats fought for suffrage and over taxes and war credits was the slave-state of warriors, taken over by the bourgeoisie and remodelled to fit its special purposes. The particular abstractness of the ideas in which the bourgeoisie expressed its actual aims was carried to complete blindness by later liberal philanthropy, especially before 1914. The arrogant claims of the ideologists of progress and civilization belong to a highly differentiated structure of society in which force and brutality were just as much the business of one special group as love of justice, tolerance, and humanitarianism were the business of another. The right hand did not know what the left was doing, but one hand was washing the other.

Given such a "division of labor", people could really imagine that tolerance, humanitarianism, liberty, and so on, would grow progressively

with the number of their believers. The particularity of the situation that nurtured such a belief was overlooked. This was nothing more than the arrogance of the philistines of education. The reality of history was something else. The much-heralded "awakening" of the people, when it finally happened, was an awakening amidst barbarism. The educators had not even been asked for their opinion. It was an awakening that saw new enslavers. Nevertheless, the change to a policy of military conquest and domination of oppressed peoples from the threatening development toward a completely industrialized and classless society was in line with all previous history. The abstract capitalistic way of thinking had highlighted only the pleasanter aspects of reality; the shadows had been retouched. But whoever lacks the ambition to become a slave-holder, or a slave-driver, must today be ready to step outside of "history".

Ignazio Silone has said that the fascist *coup d'état* is a substitute for a revolution; that its "socialism," "democracy", and so forth, are substitutes for socialism, for democracy, and so forth. This may have been true of the first phase of fascism, especially of Italian fascism. But enslaving by way of war is more than that. It actually replaces by a new antagonism, and transfers to a new plane, the existing antagonisms of bourgeois society.

The fascist slave-state is an attempt to arrest certain tendencies toward complete industrialization which would make superfluous, and ultimately dissolve, the class structure of society. Through its imperialism it aims at limiting the international basis and the interconnections of modern production. The simplification within the cooperation and division of labor, which resulted from the appearance of ever more equal or similar work processes, must be duplicated again. Because this is only partly possible, monopolists concentrate on attempting to hinder the further extension and interweaving of industrial production. They contrive to exclude certain territories from the process of complete industrialization. For example, the monopoly of armaments today is only another name for the monopoly of industry. Disarmament means a return to agrarianism. It is true that some of the conquered peoples are employed in the industries of the ruling fascist monopolies. Yet, whether there is more or less division of labor in the slave economy of fascism, the opposition between rulers and ruled is based on something unlike the previous form of economic differentiation.

Today there is no longer any sense in starting from the model of a "pure capitalism". All models that look upon war as an abnormality are useless; in brief, all the models of economists are insufficient.

Hitler first suppressed and destroyed the German nation. He is now busy destroying others. The imperialist destruction of nations destroys not only the democratic basis of their national consciousness, but their productive powers as well. The empire based on warfare is a slave state that is only partially industrialized. In it nationality is used arbitrarily and artificially,

just as anti-semitism is, to introduce new differences into the leveling process of complete industrialization.

Equality in a totalitarian state is not formal equality before the law, but the equal denial of rights to all. It is social equality, subject to totalitarian leader-hierarchy. Even this equality, the equality before the plan, the war, the Gestapo turns into an equality that interrupts and arrests the process of complete industrialization. The formal equality of state-controlled labor relations is broken up by arbitrary differentiations of the labor conditions of workers of various nationalities. Forced labor is first of all the forced labor of conquered peoples.

For example, according to a report from Berlin on November 22nd, 1941, in eleven German armament factories a polyglot mixture of workers from all Nazi controlled nations labor under the strict supervision of police agents. A high officer of the Elite Guard (S.S.) is the manager of these enterprises. Their factory kitchens serve the same food to Germans and all others. Non-German workers are contracted for one year by German labor offices established in the various conquered countries. Wages for male and female workers are the same. There are three shifts of eight hours each, or two of ten hours each. A bonus system serves as a work incentive. Fifty percent of the laborers are Poles. They have a letter "P" sewed on their coat-sleeves. Laborers from other countries are designated by their national colors. Living conditions are graded according to these designations, and that means according to the national status, especially as regards leisure time. The Poles occupy the lowest level.

A report from Leipzig says that Poles, French prisoners of war, Croats, Yugoslavs, Belgians, Hungarians, and women from Croatia and Poland are working in six armament factories in Saxony. The Poles are not prisoners of war but have been "hired" for a year of work. Each worker carries a number in addition to the symbol of his nationality. The company for which he works provides him with working clothes, room and board. Carriers bring the stew from the factory kitchens to the eating barracks in long queues. Foreigners and Germans receive the same pay; about 18 marks a week. But Croatia women receive only 14 marks. Room and board amount to ten and a half marks a week. Here, too, the Poles find least consideration. They are completely isolated and cannot go to places frequented by others. They have no ration cards for bread and are not permitted to buy saccharin for their substitute-coffee.

About half of the Jews of the world are under the control of the Nazis. In Alfred Rosenberg's ministry a gigantic concentration camp is planned to serve as a "Jewish State". Meanwhile hundreds of thousands of Jews work in the German industries. For example, in Litzmannstadt in what was formerly Poland, ten thousand Jews from Belgium sew on uniforms for the German army.

There are, furthermore, three million prisoners of war, 75 per cent of whom are working. From almost all European countries people have been brought to Germany in one way or another to work for her. From Czechoslovakia alone there are at present 400,000 people working in Germany. According to an estimate of the Polish Government in Exile, at the end of 1940 about one and a half millions from occupied Polish territory had been deported to Germany. Then there are still hundreds of thousands in German concentration camps, all engaged in working for the war. The variety of enslavement is indeed great.

Graded in pyramid fashion, the treatment of the various nations by the ruling totalitarian state obscures recognition of the fact that the state itself is in the process of becoming an empty institution. Yet it does not hinder the continuance of the process. Such distorted forms of an increasing interconnection and rotation of international labor only serve to revive a narrow nationalism clothed in anti-imperialistic ideologies. Yet these very ideologies can be used by the anti-fascists in their struggle for a further weakening of the state.

In no case can the rebellion of the nations against Hitler be a national or a political rebellion.

This war is the crisis of the "world revolution" which it proves to be only another form of imperialism. A defeat of Germany in the present war would only further establish the fact that neither the revolutionary nor the counter-revolutionary form of the imperialistic onslaught can be successful any longer because both imperialism and world revolution are inadequate for the real needs of society.

Both the pact with Hitler and the war against Hitler served only to further develop the parochial character of Stalin's regime. Stalin did not raise the issue of world revolution and thus did not even reach the level of the present day conception of imperialism. He only repeated the performance of the Spanish civil war.

Imperialism spelled the end of nationalism. The more perfect form of imperialism attained by totalitarianism gives the *coup de grace* to the last remnants of democratic impulses, institutions and ideologies. Therefore, all national as well as all revolutionary action comes to an end through the social process, now under way, that empties all political institutions and tactics of their former content. Revolutionary defeatism, for instance, was a political tactic against the imperialistic war. Its absurdity today is only a special case of the absurdity of all political slogans.

In the end war itself, as a specific action of the state, becomes undermined. The result of complete industrialization is the absurdity of "total war". The incongruity of all political goals with the increasing productive forces of industry becomes ever more obvious. For some time to come the new productive instruments may still be misused as instruments of war. But

it will become ever more evident that the force of industrial power transcends all political powers. The misuse of the new instruments for political purposes will finally become impossible.

For this reason, a political conception such as that of "turning the imperialist war into a civil war" has become outmoded.

The new slave state of the fascists no longer stands on a bourgeois level, but neither does it represent an advance. Every unrestricted push into the field of possible operations that arises from the further unfolding of industrialization goes beyond the traditional concept of the interrelatedness of economic and politics. Thus the war does not open up any political perspectives that are worth being pursued.

This war will not lead to a revolution; it is in itself one form of the "totalitarian revolution" now in progress. However, the present totalitarian unity of revolution, counter-revolution and war is not a revolutionary war in the traditional sense. The fascist attempt to liquidate the revolution is only a prelude to the liquidation of the state and thus of class society. To secure its rule for any length of time fascism would need to establish by war a totalitarian slave state embracing the whole world. But today we are far from a single world monopoly. There is little point in thinking about the consequences of the end of imperialist competition and its resulting dynamism, the "totalitarian world revolution." Imperialist competition and the struggle against it are the problems of today.

The totalitarian world system finds its pattern in the imperialist exploitation of colonies. But the present war does away with the traditionally accepted differences between colonial and independent industrial territories and with the consequent difference in status of their workers. The world fights today not for or against freedom but to settle the question of what proportional quota of lower and upper slaves, slave-drivers, and statesmen should fall to the various peoples in the coming monopolistic world system. As Churchill expressed it in December 1941: "An adequate organization should be set up to make sure that the pestilence can be controlled at its earliest beginnings."

In its ultimate results the slave state created by external war is not different from the state that grows out of civil war. In total war, war and civil war become a unity. The differences of origin disappear in the totalitarian terror.

In sum total, equality in the totalitarian system means the following:

- a) equality through state-controlled labor relations, e. g. end of professionalism, the introduction of forced labor, etc.
- b) equal pressure on everyone to belong to the same organizations
- c) standardization of consumption and way of life, e. g., the same radio

programs, newspapers, books, movies, etc., etc.

d) a relatively greater equality of opportunity

e) compulsory participation in certain public works, e. g., work service, harvest help, work in youth organizations, in the army, etc.

The inequality introduced by conquest pervades every phase of the trend towards equalitarianism. By enforcing a new form of the "international division of labor" the fascist state arrests and counteracts the processes that have a tendency to end the social division of labor.

There is a lot of talk about unity, but the speakers start from various and conflicting interests. It is characteristic of the race ideas of the Nazis, in the first place, that they propose to breed not one race, but more than one. We, however, take our departure from the unity of the material fields of operations provided by the complete industrialization of society, which is destructive of all class distinctions and of all political rule. We point to the variety of possibilities inherent in these material fields. One single plan controlling the many contradictory private interests is the goal of the monopolists. For that purpose they try to conserve the contradictions between private interests while in the meantime destroying step by step the social structure upon which such private interests are based. For the furtherance of the workers' homogeneous interests, which survive the destruction of private interests, not one but many plans are needed.

Alpha

WHAT DESTROYED DEMOCRACY?

AN ANALYSIS OF CAPITALIST TECHNOLOGY

The declaration of war in August, 1914, unquestionably marked the beginning of a severe crisis for the socialist movement which is still going on. It did not immediately become apparent that this crisis was anything more than a dispute about tactical problems or a different interpretation of the theory originally presented by Marx — that it might be, in fact, the consequence of an error in the theory itself.

Lenin always described himself as an orthodox Marxist in contrast to the militants of the Second International whom he called traitors. He always based himself on the works of Marx and Engels in his vigorous and bitter criticism of his opponents in the movement. And his program of the conquest of power was taken directly from the democratic theories of Marx.

The bolsheviks' conquest of power and their carrying out of their program should have marked, indeed, the end of the socialist crisis by demonstrating the soundness of their doctrines and of their critical attacks against reformism. Nothing of the kind happened, however. It is no exaggeration to maintain that on the contrary their coming to power only deepened the crisis of socialism.

Why? Because the bolsheviks did not exert power without having abandoned their original program. One need only compare Lenin's program on the eve of October, 1917, with what the Soviet state became after a few months' experience in order to see that the latter was almost the antithesis of the former. It is true that Lenin had always warned that it would not be possible to achieve socialism in Russia without the support of the Western European countries nor without victorious proletarian revolutions in the leading industrial countries. Yet neither the revolutionary defeats in other countries nor the more and more totalitarian orientation in socialist Russia can be explained by chance.

Certain events can help us clarify this subject a little. First there is the ultimate success of fascism, then of National Socialism, and the kind of irresistible development which dragged both the democratic and the non-democratic countries of Europe towards a more and more forcible tightening of the social disciplines and towards an exaggeration of the powers of the more and more powerful and totalitarian state.

Totalitarianism succeeded where socialism had failed. Where socialism had succeeded, it could maintain itself in power only by abandoning the democratic program in favor of dictatorial methods. There must be some simple element, some connection which explains this.

The general and complete defeat of the Marxist parties on the European continent is not explained, and cannot be explained, merely by tactical mistakes. There must have been a failure in adapting the doctrine.

And this ought not to surprise us. A few years hence, one hundred years will have elapsed since the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto* in which Marx and Engels exactly predicted the inevitable impasse toward which the contradictory development of capitalism was heading. And it was during the following two decades that the penetrating analyses of Marx's *Capital* were elaborated. In truth there is no other example in the social sciences of a deduction more completely confirmed by the test of a long period of time. In a time when things change from day to day with increasing rapidity, is it not extraordinary that we had to wait so long before the theory could be subjected to valid criticism even in a strictly limited sense?

When one examines reality today, which contrast appears most clearly between theory and facts?

The founder of scientific socialism disclosed, in the imperfections of the capitalist form of production, the elements of a socialist synthesis that would have been the dynamic inheritor of the material progress and intellectual culture which bourgeois society fostered and favored in the period of its vitality and development, but which it only thwarted in its senility. Thus it became necessary to establish, on the technical structure created and developed by capitalism, certain social relations which would be more equitable and better adapted to material progress and to transform political democracy to social democracy.

Today the liberal capitalism which was analyzed and condemned by Marx is unquestionably dead, but the new regime which succeeded it is not socialism. It is a state capitalism which can be described as a pluto-bureaucratic system.

This new regime appears, furthermore, as the normal outcome, the logical result of the, in a way, organic development of the capitalist mode of production.

One might object that this is indeed entirely natural and does not contain any contradiction to the Marxist doctrine since the capitalist relations of production have not been changed and the existing rule of property is still the rule of private property. But this would not be exact. For it is impossible not to see that the rule of property is modified slowly but surely in the modern state; the interests of private ownership give way more and more to the collective interests, but to those of the dominant social group, not to those of society as a whole.

Just as in feudal society military command and administration of justice were the natural functions of landed property, so in capitalist society the management and command of industry became the natural functions of capital. A century and a half ago the bourgeois was not merely the holder of a more or less voluminous heap of shares and titles. He was the proprietor and the head, in the full sense of the term, of an industry, a business, or whatever enterprise he himself managed. In the great majority of cases today the capitalist is content to be simply a *rentier*, without any real connection with production. The bourgeois capitalist has withdrawn himself from production and has become socially useless. He has yielded his place to the technician. Management has been separated from ownership. Property has ceased to be the dominant element in present-day production. The dominant social group is still largely composed of capitalists but more and more intermixed with technicians and production and state officials.

Nevertheless the social organization of today has a connection with that of yesterday, a potent connection — that of technics. Totalitarianism seems to be the logical consequence of the technics developed by liberal capitalism.

It is here that the contradiction with theory appears. The technics developed by capitalism were always considered by Marxism as a rational application of science. With due regard for the better use that could be made of them, and for the waste resulting from the anarchy of individual enterprise, technics were still assumed to be independent of the form of production. Marxism has always maintained that capitalist technics could be taken over and utilized by socialism.

Yet it seems to me that there is more than a coincidence between the technics of the great modern states and the totalitarian tendency of their political and social regimes. They seem to be connected by a relation of cause and effect.

Capitalist technics are not those technics commonly imagined which are supposed to have increased human forces tenfold, and which could, if utilized for a human and rational end, greatly diminish man's toil. They have of course allowed some great achievements, but only under certain conditions. Capitalist technics have been conceived and developed as a function of foreign markets to be exploited; they have been, in other words, an instrument created and developed for the needs of imperialism. And they have become an imperialist instrument which in its present form can no longer be used except for imperialistic purposes.

If one tries to discover the general characteristics of capitalist technics, one inevitably finds the tendency to develop more and more the quantity of the means of production, of machinery in relation to the number of people that use it; the tendency to concentrate more and more of this machinery in a decreasing number of bigger and bigger enterprises; and one finds, lastly, a tendency to increase unceasingly the speed of the circulation of products, to decrease the interval between the moment when the first elements of the article are put into production and the moment when it is finished and delivered to the consumer.

On the one hand, these technics were possible only through the existence of immense, foreign, non-capitalistic markets which could be exploited with complete security. On the other hand, the development of the productivity resulting from these technics has never reached the proportions dreamed of by many.

It is well-known that non-capitalist foreign markets have gradually faded away because the earth's surface is restricted and because the new countries conquered for the blessings of capitalist "civilization" have finally transformed themselves into competitors of the old capitalist countries. Thus it will not appear extraordinary to maintain here that technics ought to be seriously reconsidered if they are to be harmoniously adapted to the needs of existing markets which they will suit very poorly from now on.

It is not so well known, though, that modern production consumes much more labor than is generally believed. It has been proven that when enterprises had reached a certain size they no longer had the same proportional output that could previously have been legitimately expected, and that there resulted a kind of diminishing return. And similarly, an ever increasing speed has certain results very economical from the point of view of capital, which must circulate, but which, at the same time, costs more in expenditure of labor.

Nor is this all. In order to demonstrate the increase of the productivity of labor, the usual procedure is to compare, for two given periods, the relation between the quantity of workers employed and the quantity of commodities produced in any sort of enterprise. For example, one reads currently that a certain shoe-factory, which employed X quantity of workers for producing Y quantity of pairs of shoes twenty years ago, today employs the same quantity of workers for producing ten times as many shoes. Yet this form of comparison, often used in the propaganda of all parties of the extreme left, is completely devoid of scientific precision.

In order to arrive at a less inexact comparison it is necessary at least to take into account the length of the working day, the intensity of labor, and the quality of the product. If a person buys a pair of shoes for half the price of those he now wears, he will have effected a real economy only if those shoes are of the same quality and will stand the same amount of wear. If the quality is inferior, and the shoes stand only half of the amount of wear, the economy will be zero.

On the other hand, the comparison which takes account only of the shoe-factory — the last link in a long chain of enterprises providing for raw materials, supply of energy, manufacture of machine-tools, assembly of parts, and transportation — is an insufficient comparison.

The visible development of technics depended on the division of labor within the single factory and within society. Within the factory there has been a subdivision of productive activities into a "series" of functions, and, besides the working personnel, there has developed a staff of supervisors, controllers, engineers, accountants, office workers and shippers who are not generally included in the productive staff although their labor is nevertheless indispensable for modern production. A proportional part of the workers who were working in shops twenty years ago are now employed in the auxiliary workshops and offices of businesses. Within the social organism, the commercial functions have been separated from industrial functions, financial functions from commercial functions, the organization of transportation from the organization of commerce. A gigantic army of officials, salesmen, railway operators, commercial travellers and advertising agents, and so forth, has arisen under our eyes. Part of the workers who once worked in the shops are now employed in making machine-tools, producing electrical power, adding, subtracting or multiplying numbers, designing plans and

posters, selling in the stores, etc. The work of all those employees and officials is not accounted for in the work needed for production, though without them production could not have proceeded on the same scale.

Besides the particular equipment of the private factory there exists a whole collective machinery — production of energy, water supply, waste disposal, railroads and rolling stock, roads, bridges, canals, locks, ports and vessels, postal and telegraph services, docks and warehouses, etc., etc. — machinery quite as necessary for the birth of a pair of modern shoes as the hammer and pliers of the primitive cobbler. For the transformation of the humble workshop of the artisan or the manufactory into big automatic factories depended on the formation of markets of corresponding magnitude, and on adequate social services.

Another example could be found in the price-curve. Disregarding monopoly prices, every increase in the productivity of labor must be translated more or less rapidly into a decrease of prices. The enormous technical development of the last century should have resulted in a considerable decline in the general price index because competition has played its part and monopoly prices remained an exception. In fact, there has been a decline in the general price index for a century, but the index has fallen comparatively little, especially if one considers that the prices generally studied for comparisons of this kind are wholesale prices, on which the costs of renewing and further developing the collective machinery have little influence since a great part of the taxes are paid either directly by individuals or indirectly on retail prices.

Finally, if it were correct that the technics of machinery had extraordinarily developed the productivity of labor, the older capitalist European countries should long since have had an output which would have made it possible for them to produce more than they consumed, and to flood the world with their products without receiving goods in exchange. There has been nothing of the kind. The capitalist countries of Europe supplied the world markets with their finished goods but only to the extent that the world markets provided them with raw materials, food stuffs, and all kinds of consumer goods.

For the purpose of dispelling the myth of the high productivity of capitalism it would be sufficient to find an equality of exchanges between the old capitalist countries of Europe and the new countries of the world. Such equality would mean that the capitalist countries of Europe, whose living standards were not even those demanded by a minimum of humane consideration, produced no more than they consumed. But that equality did not exist. For a long time the imports of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands were higher than their exports. That is, the national production of those countries was not sufficient for their consumption. They consumed more than they produced. If the standard of living, though too low, of these countries was still higher than that of the new countries

with the exception of the United States, it was not because of the high productivity of their technics, but because of their imperialist *rentes* which allowed them to import more and to exports less.

Capitalist technics are closely linked to foreign exploitation. Close the exploitable foreign markets and national technics will not be able to fulfill their economic functions on a national scale. Now it is understood that a socialist regime worthy of the name could not organize itself on an imperialist basis. Thus it would be obligatory to modify the technical structure of national production in order to direct it towards a strict economy of human labor and national resources,, foreign trade being restricted to providing exotic materials and such as are not included in the national production or that can actually be produced more economically abroad.

There is perhaps an even more cogent reason which might require a revision of technics in a socialist state. That is the disastrous consequence for culture in general of the social division of labor which has been developed by the technics of the capitalist mode of production. Throughout the age of manufacture, and for the whole period of modern industry, the capitalist mode of production has not ceased to generate and deepen a hierarchical division of functions and to separate manual from intellectual labor to the greatest detriment of both.

More and more the workers have been transformed into an army of manual laborers, without initiative and without thought, whose sole task has been to repeat incessantly a certain number of identical and automatic gestures. Thus they have lost all habit of thought and of a conscious and intelligently directed personal activity. From being manual laborers in the field of production, they have become manual laborers in the trade unions and political parties, as well as in civil life, waiting for slogans and directions from above, from their leaders who have become the technical experts of political action.

The managing and controlling personnel have gradually formed themselves into superior hierarchical ranks, detached from the capitalist proprietors, who are without any socially useful functions, but separated as well from common manual laborers. By their occupation with the tasks of organization and direction, the technicians have acquired a natural and functional tendency to regard the workers as mere hands whom it is possible and legitimate to manipulate and rationally utilize for the general interest with no other criterion than that of the efficiency of their labor. They suffer the distortion common to all those who hold a part of the power. They play with the human material in the same detached and inhuman manner in which the officer directs from his place of command the military operations on an extended front.

All kinds of functionaries participate in this mental attitude to the extent that they become conscious of their organizing and directing role

in the modern state and of the social superiority which their "intellectual" function gives them, superficial as it is.

And if the "hands" of production have become the hands of the trade unions and parties, the technicians of production have become at least candidates for the role of technicians of political life. At all events the essential change in the character of the dues-paying membership of trade unions and parties has placed their leading officials in the position of technical experts charged with the task of initiating and preparing their activities; and the personal interests and mental attitudes of these party and union officials tend to fuse with those of the technical experts of production.

Thus there appears in both the economic and political life of modern society an organic tendency to become a technocracy. A French sociologist, a member for a certain time of the Socialist party, described for the first time, with intelligence and precision, the corporative principle as a normal social form resulting from the social division of labor. It is particularly interesting to note in this context that Durkheim was a democrat writing in a period when there was not the remotest thought of fascism. Yet in his objective study of the technological bases of production he had arrived at the idea that the social forms best adapted to them would be those most strongly organizing their functions. He did not even mind the possibility that the distinction between intellectual and manual laborers might translate itself in the long run into some kind of a biological or racial distinction.

It must be mentioned here that the French sociologists have all been more or less influenced by A. Comte, who in his works recommended giving the direction of the state to the bankers and to the intellectuals representing the "spiritual" power. Comte himself was a follower of Saint-Simon and thus one of the socialist parties of France has always been impregnated with non-democratic doctrines of a corporative character.

Karl Marx was fully aware of the dangers of specialization and pointed them out several times. But they appeared to him to have a social rather than a technological origin. He carefully investigated the means of cancelling the effects of the separation of manual and intellectual labor, and particularly recommended a polytechnical education. However insufficient the device recommended by Marx may appear today, it serves to put into even greater relief the general indifference towards the whole problem since the death of Marx.

One must admit that the socialists or sociologists who have recommended the corporative principle, or recommend it today, are completely logical as soon as one accepts the technical organization which we inherited from liberal capitalism. In fact, one must be prepared either to accept this technical organization by developing, rationally, the social relations that it implies, or be willing to organize a real democracy by engaging in the technical revolution which it presupposes.

Democracy of course is not a monster exacting the sacrifice of progress. What is at stake here is, on the contrary, a revision of the ways and means of technics in order to eliminate from them everything that was done only in the interests of capitalism, not for the end of human progress, and to reorganize the methods of labor which will increase its output and diminish the strain and length of the working day.

The present crisis of the socialist movement arose from the cleavage between the democratic conception of social progress and the dictatorial practice pursued, willingly or not, by the various organizations of the workers.

The end of the second major imperialist war will probably offer new opportunities of struggle for the socialist movement of Europe. It depends on the conscious orientation of the militants whether the struggle results in new failures — least unfavorably in new types of "red" fascism — or in the establishment of a new, socially, and intellectually progressive democracy.

Julien Coffinet

THE STRUCTURE AND PRACTICE OF TOTALITARIANISM

Had one listened to them all, as the gravedigger observed of a field of battle, not one ought to have been dead.

Michelet

The following remarks are concerned less with the factual contents of the book in question*) than with its contribution to the anti-totalitarian fight that lies ahead of the present generation. The descriptive part of the book contains first-rate information on almost every important aspect of National Socialism with the exception of the topics *culture and education*, *the agrarian market and the food estate*, and *war financing* (pp. 221, 349), which are specifically omitted. It is based almost exclusively on German sources; the annexed *Notes* contain more than nine hundred references to a slightly smaller number of distinct items. This feature alone should secure for Neumann's book an outstanding place in the current literature on totalitarianism.

WHY BEHEMOTH?

It seems a bad omen that the author has chosen to name his book after one of the monsters of the Babylonian-Jewish eschatology. First of all, the

*) Neumann, Franz. *Behemoth. The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*. Oxford University Press. New York, 1942 (XVII and 532 pp.; \$4.00)

Behemoth ruling the land is no greater a plague than the *Leviathan* ruling the sea, and the rule of both will remain unbroken until the day of judgment. In the second place, the title of the book does not suggest a scientific investigation of the essential characteristics of the so-called "new order" of totalitarianism. It rather leads us to expect a new contribution to that common run of anti-Nazi literature which paints pre-Nazi society all white and Nazism all black without even asking how far the victory of totalitarianism was prepared by trends and forces already operating within the preceding phases of capitalist, monopolist, and imperialist society. "To call the National Socialist system *The Behemoth*" means, in the author's own words, to describe it as "a rule of lawlessness and anarchy which has 'swallowed' the rights and dignity of man, and is out to transform the world into a chaos."

We shall see at a later stage that this is indeed the ultimate attitude of the author towards the subject of his study. Yet there is the redeeming feature that he does not thereby blind himself to the continuity of the trends prevailing in present Nazi society and its historical prelude, the so-called Weimar Democracy. In an introductory section he discusses the reasons for *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic*, and he returns to this topic in a number of subsequent chapters dealing with *Racism in (pre-Nazi) Germany*, *Democracy and Imperialism*, *The Political Status of Business in the Weimar Republic*, *The Bruening Dictatorship and the Cartel*, *The Failure of Democratic Planning*, and *The Working Class Under the Weimar Democracy*. In all these chapters, and in the discussion of many other specific questions throughout the book, he deals with a process which he quite aptly describes on one occasion as the growth of National Socialism "in the seed-bed" of the Weimar Republic (413).

The reader should be careful, however, not to be misled by such critical outbursts. They are counter-balanced by at least as many testimonies to the positive accomplishments of Weimar, and their real aim is not to refute but rather to restore, in a critically purified form, the violently shattered respectability of the designs and achievements of the Weimar politicians. We shall return to this point below. For the moment we are content with calling attention to the fact that the author is most prone to describe the Nazi system as "the system of the Weimar democracy, stream-lined and brought under authoritarian control" in those cases in which he claims for the Weimar regime a share of such outstanding performances of Nazism as its elaborate system of *social security* (431-32) and the success of its *war economy*. Thus we read on p. 351 the following amazing statement:

"The contribution of the National Socialist party to the success of the war economy is nil. It has not furnished any man of outstanding merit, nor has it contributed any single ideology or organizational idea that was not fully developed under the Weimar Republic."

As every one knows, one of the main causes of the victory of Hitler was the fact that the Weimar Republic was not able to guarantee the social

security of the laboring masses. It is equally well-known that whatever ideological contributions to the war economy may have been "fully developed under the Weimar Republic," its present success is due to that tremendous efficiency which it did not attain under the pre-Nazi regime, and not even during the first years of the Nazi regime itself.

How can we explain such surprising statements on the part of an undoubtedly well-informed writer? For an answer we must deal in greater detail with certain characteristics of the author's methodological approach and with the form in which his theoretical results are affected by his political outlook. By so doing we do not want to object, on principle, to the so-called intrusion of the partisan spirit into scientific investigations of this kind. In the present all-embracing conflict of irreconcilably opposed forces, the claim to complete detachment becomes a mere pretence. Under these conditions it appears as a sad commentary on the completeness of the defeat of the traditional socialist movement that for fully nine years after 1933 there has been no major attempt on behalf of the defeated party to re-open the apparently decided struggle in the field of theoretical thought. So far as Neumann's critical analysis of the totalitarian society represents an attempt at filling that deplorable gap in the current anti-totalitarian literature, we have no quarrel with his socialist bias. Though we do not agree with his particular point of view, we welcome the fact that the necessary task has been approached at last.

THE LEGAL MIND

The first remark to be made with respect to the methods applied in the book is that the author, unfortunately, is possessed to an extraordinary degree by what is commonly described as the legal mind. In this sense his critical attack on Nazism reminds one strongly of those two Manifestos by which in 1850, in the words of Marx, "the two defeated factions of the Montagne, the Social Democrats and the Democratic Socialists, endeavored to prove that even though power and success had never been on their side, they themselves had forever been on the side of the eternal right and of all other truths". The only difference is that according to the changed spirit of the time the primary concern of the author is no longer the principle of eternal justice but that of positive law. He complains that "the position of the *party* within the Nazi state cannot be defined in terms of our (!) traditional constitutional jurisprudence" (74) and that "no one knows whence the constitutional rights of the *leader* are derived" (84). He contends repeatedly that "National Socialism is incompatible with any *rational political philosophy*" (463). It lacks not only a "rational political theory" but even "*an anti-rational one*", and this for the simple reason that "*a political theory cannot be non-rational*" (464). He likewise denies "the existence of *law* in the fascist state" because, as he says, "law is conceivable only if it is manifest in general law, but true generality is not possible in

a society that cannot dispense with power" (451). Last but not least Nazism's political system is not a *state* (467) and "it is doubtful whether National Socialism possesses a *unified coercive machinery*" (468).

"The very term '*state capitalism*' is a *contradictio in adjecto*", and "the concept of state capitalism cannot bear analysis from the economic point of view" (224). Assuming that in spite of all such legal deficiencies Germany should be victorious in the present war, how will it be possible, he asks, for a future German government "to *justify* her influence in Middle Europe" (182)?

For further illustrations of the peculiar reasoning of the legal mind we refer to Neumann's juristic proof of the continued existence of "*free labor*" in Nazi Germany after the complete destruction of the right of both individual and collective bargaining (337-340), and to the beautiful conclusion that the "individual measure" replacing the rule of "general law" in the period of monopoly capitalism though it destroys the only conceivable form of existence of "law" (451), yet at the same time does not destroy "*the principle of equality before the law*" because "the legislator is faced with an individual situation". (445) (Reviewer's emphasis).

IDEOLOGY VERSUS HISTORY

Fully one third of the book (pp. 37-218) is devoted to an analysis of the legal and political ideologies of the Nazi movement. It is extremely difficult to understand the purpose of this ideological analysis for the author's theory. It would seem that the real subject matter is sufficiently covered by the second part of the book, which deals with the "new economy" and the "new society". Every possible aspect of the Nazi system, including its legal and political structure, is fully discussed in this latter part of his analysis. The only form in which an independent study of the ideological slogans, which in his language constitute the "Political Pattern of National Socialism", might add to the interest of the book would be by a historical analysis of the growth and functions of their various elements. This seems to have been, indeed, part of the author's intention. He takes his departure from a fairly convincing description of the various phases of the historical process by which the ambiguous (half-democratic, half-"collectivist") principles of the Weimar Republic were replaced by a series of new principles in turn predominant in the successive phases of the Nazi state. He shows the interesting interplay by which each phase of Nazi ideology, as soon as it had fully served its purpose, was replaced by an entirely different ideology. Thus the ideology of the "totalitarian state" was thrown overboard in 1934 to make way for the new ideology of the "movement state". In a similar way the "racial theory" which had justified the "liberation" of Germans from foreign sovereignty and the incorporation of European territories largely inhabited by Germans was forthwith rejected, and replaced by the new ideologies of "living space", "geopolitics" and "the

racial empire", when changed conditions required the conquest of such unquestionably non-German territories as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia.

Yet only a small portion of the author's discussion of the "Political Pattern" of Nazism is presented in that genuinely historical manner. Although the author himself affirms that all we can learn from the mutually contradictory and rapidly changing ideologies of Nazism is that they are all equally irrelevant, he goes on to regard them as "the best clue to its ultimate aims" (37), and to base his own analysis of the Political Pattern of National Socialism on various elements of its ideology. Just as Proudhon once described his pseudo-Hegelian method as a procedure by which "history is told not in the sequence of time but in the sequence of ideas", so Neumann announces that the categories which he proposes to develop in his study on Nazi ideology "do not necessarily correspond to definite stages in the growth of National Socialist ideology, although some of them coincide" (38). Thus he loses himself, and bewilders his readers, in a lengthy discussion of logically and factually meaningless ideas, and it happens quite often that in this process he himself inadvertently falls for an outright fascist idea.

THE NATIVE RETURNS

The true meaning of the Behemoth-theory becomes clear in the Second and Third Parts of the book where the author lays bare the operation of the material and social forces that in his view determine the structure and development of the Nazi society. It is here that we are met by what at first seems to be an inexplicable contradiction.

In dealing with the "new economy" of National Socialism the author reveals himself as a staunch supporter of the unadulterated capitalist character of Nazi society. He wages a fierce war against all those theorists who before and after the victory of Nazism in Germany described the "new" totalitarian system as a system of brown bolshevism, of state capitalism, of bureaucratic collectivism, as the rule of the "managers", in short, as "an economy without economics" (222). In his resolute defense of the capitalist character of fascism he does not even spare the arch-prophet of the whole heresy, the foremost economic theorist of the Social Democratic party, Rudolf Hilferding (223). Neumann shows that in spite of the transition from free competition to monopolistic rule and an increasing interference of the state, the present German economy has retained the essential features of a genuine capitalist economy. It is based, now as before, on private ownership in the means of production guaranteed by the state, the only difference being that this auxiliary guarantee of private property is no longer the contract but the administrative act of the government (260). Though it has adopted the new features of a "monopolistic economy" and, in part, of a "command economy", the German economy of today has remain-

ed a capitalist economy. "It is a private capitalist economy, regimented by the totalitarian state" (261).

Despite the increased importance of the totalitarian state power it is still the profit motive that holds the machinery together. The only distinctive feature of the present setup is that in a completely monopolistic system profits can no longer be made and retained without the totalitarian power. "If totalitarian political power had not abolished freedom of contract, the cartel system would have broken down. If the labor market were not controlled by authoritarian means, the monopolistic system would be endangered; if raw material, supply, price control, and rationalization agencies, if credit and exchange-control offices were in the hands of forces hostile to monopolies, the profit system would break down. The system has become so fully monopolized that it must by nature be hypersensitive to cyclical changes, and such disturbances must be avoided. To achieve that, the monopoly of political power over money, credit, labor, and prices is necessary" (354).

An entirely different view is held by the author with respect to the corresponding developments in the political and social structure of the Nazi state. One would expect that the state, which was an indispensable implement of the society of free (capitalist) producers even in its early beginning, would become an even more important instrument of the ruling class at the time of its full development. In a sense this is what the author said himself when he pointed to the increasing dependence of the monopolistic machinery of present-day capitalism on political power. Yet he adds that the particular usefulness of the Nazi state for the aims of the present monopolistic system is derived from the fact that this state is no longer a state in the traditional sense of the term but is rather a state in dissolution. The astounding achievements of the new German economy — the abolition of unemployment, the increase in production, the development of synthetic industries, the complete subordination of economics to the needs of war, the rationing system before and during this war, the success of price control — all these universally acclaimed achievements of the Nazi economy were realized at the very time, when according to Neumann's paradoxical theory, the German state no longer possessed the essential characteristics of a state, and its formerly united ruling class had dissolved into a number of independent "ruling classes" composed of the leading strata of the party, the army, the bureaucracy, and industry.

A partial explanation can be found in the fact that the author is not prepared to accept the Marxian concept of the state for that form of government which preceded the present Nazi state. In his view the aims of monopoly capitalism were not aided and abetted by the bureaucracy of the Weimar Republic. They were rather controlled and restrained by the alleged tendency of every public bureaucracy "to serve the general welfare" (79) and, more particularly, by the forces of political democracy that were represented by the Social Democratic party and the trade unions (260). "The complete subjug-

ation of the state by the industrial rulers could only be carried out in a political organization in which there was no control from below, which lacked autonomous mass organizations and freedom of criticism" (261).

This theoretical attitude of the author has a most important practical implication. If the main cause of the present unsatisfactory state of affairs is the collapse of that system of checks and balances by which the wild and insatiable forces of monopoly capitalism were controlled and restrained at the time when there was still a real "state", the first thing that is required after victory to destroy the scourge of Nazism is to restore the genuine political democracy of the Weimar Republic. Yet under the changed conditions of the present time this alone is not sufficient. "That much the Marxist and National Socialist criticism of liberalism and democracy have indeed accomplished", says the author on p. 475 in an unexpected last-minute tribute to his two chief antagonists:— "Political democracy alone will not be accepted by the German people".

K. K.

THE MARXIAN DIALECTIC AND ITS RECENT CRITICS

INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the European labor movement, the war, and the growth of fascism all over the world reduced the "market value" of Marxian theory almost to zero. Anti-Marxism, however, is still in vogue. In "democratic nations" it has been extended from the "right" to the "left". Some of the new critics oppose the "old" Marxism only in certain details, such as the estimation of class forces, the elasticity of capitalism, and a number of organizational and tactical problems. Others agree with the fascists that Marxism, being a by-product of *laissez-faire* capitalism, necessarily disappears with the latter. Though some of these critics stress the economic-political, and others the philosophical, aspects of Marxian theory, all agree that Marxism is both a false and an outdated doctrine.

Because Marxists regard the dialectical theory as the consciousness of a practice that is to change the world, their critics feel that if the dialectical theory is destroyed, all other elements of Marxism are likewise demolished. Thus, whenever the economic and political ideas of Marx have been assaulted, his dialectical materialism has also been attacked. For instance, when the *Revisionists* of the old socialist movement turned against Marx because the "real" development of capitalism seemed to contradict the Marxian theories, they also turned away from dialectical materialism to naturalistic and idealistic philosophies. The new anti-Marxian literature, too, is deeply saturated with both disappointment and malicious joy. More than all the

theoretical considerations, it is the "failure" of the Marxian movement itself that convinces its critics of the unscientific character of Marxian thought.

Max Eastman, for instance, who, though not a confessed Marxist, has regarded Marx as "one of the giants of science,"¹⁾ and has considered his work of tremendous importance if only it were freed of its unnecessary Hegelian metaphysics, is now convinced that Marx cannot be called a scientist at all, since he produced his class struggle theory and his main work *Capital* for the sole purpose of demonstrating his metaphysical dialectical theory. In Eastman's present opinion, this theory is not merely superfluous decoration, but the underlying reason for the Marxian debacle.²⁾ Edmund Wilson explains that "from the moment that Marx and Engels had admitted the Dialectic into their semi-materialist system, they had admitted an element of mysticism."³⁾ Even the limited critique of more timid re-evaluators, Lewis Corey,⁴⁾ for example, holds that "the Hegelian hangovers in Marx," are partly responsible for the Marxian failure. Sidney Hook, too, climaxing his anti-Marxian development that began with *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx*,⁵⁾ no longer merely opposes the "universality" of dialectical materialism but is now convinced that the term dialectic "is so infested with ambiguity, that it is not likely to function as a serviceable procedure in any inquiry which aims at the achievement of reliable knowledge about ourselves and the world we live in."⁶⁾

According to the dialectical theory, say the critics, the opposition between capital and labor must grow and lead to a socialist revolution. The revolution must lead, of necessity, to a higher stage of social development, just as the bourgeois revolution has led from the "lower" social and cultural level represented by feudalism to the "higher" one of capitalism. Instead, the development has led to the practical abolition of the class struggle and to the fascist society. The dialectical law of development is supposed to manifest itself not only in the sphere of political struggles but throughout nature, in thought, and in all realms of social life. Belief in this law, the critics maintain, accounts not only for the wrong Marxian notion of the "inevitability of progress"; it also explains the Marxian disregard for inductive research methods and for a practical approach to the real social problems. It supposedly also explains the Marxists' a-moralistic attitude. They are said to believe that regardless of their behavior, whether it is right or wrong, good or bad, they must be victorious in the end, because "history is on their side."

1) See Eastman's Introduction to the Modern Library edition of *Capital*. New York, 1932.

2) See Eastman's *Stalin's Russia and the Crisis in Socialism*, and *Marxism: Is it Science*. New York 1940.

3) *To the Finland Station*. New York 1940, p. 189.

4) *Marxism Reconsidered*, the "Nation"; February 17, 24 and March 2, 1940.

5) John Day Company. New York 1933.

6) *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy*. New York 1940. p. 266.

Before dealing with specific arguments of latter-day critics it must be said in advance that unfortunately everything brought forth today merely repeats the criticism of Marxism of yesterday. The new "anti-Marxists" have not even learned to avoid their predecessors' mistakes. Nor do they show any ability to understand the actual historical development which they offer as proof for the wrongness of the Marxian point of view. Rather, just as "official Marxism" itself degenerated to the point of being outright silly, so its critics, too, descended to the same low level, if not a lower one. There is for instance, Sidney Hook's essay "Dialectic and Nature"⁷⁾ which manages to say in 43 pages just about what Benedetto Croce, in 1906, was able to put on a single page,⁸⁾ namely, that it is merely amusing to look upon dialectical materialism — as Friedrich Engels did — "as the science of the development of human society and thought," and then to illustrate its validity with examples taken from natural processes such as the growth and decay of plants. Edmund Wilson, to give another example, brings forth the "deep-searching" but very old remark that the "Hegelian triad: the *These*, the *Antithese*, and the *Synthese*, taken over by Marx, was the mythical and magical triangle which from the time of Pythagoras and before had stood as a symbol for certainty and power and which probably derived its significance from its correspondence to the male sexual organs."⁹⁾ Such statements have about the same importance as the utterances of opposition "dialectical materialists" like J. B. S. Haldane, who claimed a great improvement in his digestive system after being converted to Marxism.

Whereas dialectical materialism "is easily one of the most important social doctrines of our times" for Sidney Hook, who conveniently measures "the importance of a philosophy by the number of people who hold to it,"¹⁰⁾ for Max Eastman there is pleasure in the fact that "in England and America Marxism never found a home." The reason for this, he thinks, is "that Marx was educated in the atmosphere of German metaphysics." The Germans, he continues, "notwithstanding their great achievement in the laboratory, have remained by comparison with us (the Anglo-Saxons) primitively credulous and animistic."¹¹⁾ These Germans, Wilson agrees, "who have done so little in the field of social observation, . . . have retained and developed to an amazing degree the genius for creating myths."¹²⁾ This German propensity, plus an "Old Testament sternness" brought Marx, in Wilson's opinion, "closer than he could ever have imagined to that imperialistic Germany he detested." Because Marx harnessed "the primitive German Will," disguised as the Dialectic, i. e. the "semi-divine principle of history," to his movement, he finally only helped prepare the way for fascism.

7) *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy*, p. 183 to p. 226.

8) *Lebendiges und Totes in Hegels Philosophie*, p. 167.

9) *To the Finland Station*, p. 190.

10) *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy*, p. 183.

11) *Marxism: Is it Science*, p. 174.

12) *To the Finland Station*, p. 189.

"After all," Wilson says, "the German Nazis, too — also the agents of an historical mission — believe that humanity will be happy and united when it is all Aryan and all submissive to Hitler."¹³⁾

In this manner anti-Marxism takes its place in the present war effort. It is fitted into the struggle against Nazism. To oppose Marxism at home is to fight the imperialistic competitor abroad. But here, too, the Nazis acted first and with much greater ruthlessness. They declared Marxism a part of the "Jewish-Bolshevistic-Plutocratic-Anglo-Saxon" conspiracy to destroy the Germans and rule the world. The present-day American "anti-Marxists" merely turn the nonsense around by declaring Marxism to be part and parcel of the imagined "historical mission" of the Germans to rule the world. In both cases, consciously and unconsciously, there is an attempt to establish an "internal unity" that conforms to the external imperialistic needs. It is thus no accident that anti-Marxism gained new impetus in the United States with the coming of the war. It is an additional way of declaring one's solidarity with the imperialists of the nation.

Aside from this, the identification of Marxism — via Hegelian idealism — with German mysticism, is not only nonsensical but is an argument as old as Marxism itself. The Hegelian philosophy was an expression of the whole cycle of the bourgeois revolution that began by attacking one form of class rule and exploitation, only to wind up by establishing another. However, although Hegel's philosophy reflected the whole of the bourgeois revolution, and thus also the period of *Restoration*, it emphasized the latter. This fact, the politically "reactionary" side of Hegel, which paralleled in Germany a relative backwardness of scientific development and an industry that was only in its infancy, has always been related to the "mystical principles that rule German philosophy." Even the young Marx thought it was characteristic of the Germans that their "practical life is unintellectual as their intellectual life is unpractical."¹⁴⁾ But he soon ceased explaining this situation in terms of the "German character," and went on to explain it in terms of historical and economic differences between the various nations.

The difficulties and frictions accompanying the transformation from feudal to bourgeois society produced positive and negative, static and dynamic philosophers, and also the Hegelian variety that contained both dynamism and resignation and was both negative and positive. The contradictions of the capitalist system provided its philosophers with either revolutionary or reactionary attitudes. In Hegel both elements are found together. His ideas can be interpreted in manyfold ways. But such interpretations shed light not so much upon his philosophy as upon the ideas and needs of his interpreters. To find, as is done today, a kinship between Hegel and the Nazis, or to deny such a kinship, to accept or reject Hegelian dialectics

13) *Ibid.*, p. 197.

14) *A Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right*. Selected Essays, New York 1926, p. 36.

in the name of science — all such attempts do not much more than explain prevailing political and economic rivalries that find expression in philosophical thought.

Hegel's idealization of the real historical processes that form the basis of his philosophical system comprises more than just the German reality. His philosophy must be explained not only by the German situation, but by this situation *within* the whole setting of the expanding world system of capitalism. After all, he had been profoundly moved by the French Revolution. He knew the political economy of his time, that is, the *laissez-faire* ideology of France and England. He had beheld the great social upheavals of the Napoleonic wars. The range of his knowledge — despite the nonsense incorporated in it — remains an amazing intellectual feat. It would simply be preposterous to explain his philosophy by his German surroundings alone. It was the capitalist mode of production itself, quite independent of its concrete manifestations in any one nation, that determined Hegel's idealism.

It makes one suspicious, however, that so much attention is paid to a doctrine that is regarded not only as utterly false, but as of no value to the practical aspiration of its supporters. It makes one suspicious, too, that all the arguments directed against the dialectic deal only with its formal aspects, which should attract the smallest interest. Yet, examples of manifestations of "changes from quantity into quality," of "dialectical opposites and their syntheses," presented by Marxists are refuted over and over again. "Triumphs" are gained by tireless quoting from Bolshevist sources¹⁵⁾ ridiculous attempts to apply the "dialectical method" to all branches of science to art and literature, and to pastimes of all sorts. The reason for this kind of simplification is to be found in the fact that the critics do not attack the Marxian dialectic at all, but a dialectical strawman of their own making. They argue only against their own insufficient conceptions of what constitutes the dialectical theory, or against "Marxists" who do not understand or do not care to understand its meaning. In order then to refute the recent critics of Marxism, it is first of all necessary to re-state the dialectical theory and, second, to trace its historical development up to the present. The fact that most of its critics argue beside the point will then become almost self-evident. There remains the question of why these critics insist on dealing with a distorted Marxism rather than with its real content.

I

DEVELOPMENT OF BOURGEOIS SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

Professor Whitehead has noted that "the history of philosophy runs curiously parallel to that of science."¹⁶⁾ But there is nothing curious about

15) See J. Rosenthal's articles *What is Dialectical Materialism?* in the "Modern Quarterly". May-June 1935. Also the chapter "Science and the new Obscurantism" in S. Hook's *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy*.

16) *Science and the Modern World*. Pelican Books, 1938, p. 167.

this fact. Hegel's philosophy, from which the Marxian dialectic issued, also corresponds to a certain level of scientific progress and to a definite stage of social and economic development. Hegel himself maintained that "every philosophy belongs to its own time and is restricted by its own limitations." Nor must the "parallelism" noted by Whitehead be taken too literally. For a long time philosophy and science were one, "paralleling" with their own development that of society. Their serious separation coincides with the rise of the capitalist mode of production. In Hegel, philosophy seemed at odds with science; the "parallelism" of both came to light by way of their disagreements. The feud between science and philosophy has not yet come to an end. The justification for philosophy itself is often questioned as it is now, for instance, by Max Eastman. Yet it is still difficult to draw a line between science and philosophy, a fact made manifest by the various existing "philosophies of science" and, perhaps, also by Eastman himself, when he complains that there is "unfortunately no word in our language to distinguish philosophy (in the pious and soul-upholding meaning of the term) from the effort of sublimely curious minds to develop the most general implications of science, to reconcile its conflicts, investigate it with its own method, and criticize it from the standpoint of its own cool search for fact."¹⁷ Meanwhile, until such a word is found, Eastman, too, has to speak of "philosophy." But he "escapes" the dilemma by putting it in quotation marks.

However, instead of trying to solve the problem by a definition of terms, we will investigate how the problem itself arose. This is not difficult, because the continuity of the social process as manifested in the development of the means and modes of production is revealed also in the history of science and philosophy. In the Middle Ages science and philosophy were closely bound up with theology. The Renaissance disconnected science — the natural sciences — from its religious frame. There was of course a continuous development of science despite its previous connection with religion, because of the general social development. Change took place even during the Dark Ages; otherwise they would be still with us.

Modern science, however, begins with the Renaissance. Its development is that of capitalism, and vice versa. Feudalism gave way to the modern nation state, and serfdom to wage labor. With the decline of medieval society the power of the Church declined. The discovery of gunpowder and printing "democratized" Europe; militarily, and intellectually, the feudal lords and the Church could be attacked. Trade and commerce found social recognition; riches were accumulated; banking developed. The towns grew, and with them a large middle class. Craft-guilds flowered under the protection of kings. The New World was discovered; the old world became new. All this development influenced thought.

It is of course impossible to place successive periods of history side by side as just so many separate entities. There is much overlapping. Scien-

17) *Marxism: Is it Science*, p. 164.

tific methods were used hundreds of years before the Renaissance; many scientific achievements of later periods had been conceived in the forgotten past. But with the Renaissance, a way of thinking that had been the exception became the rule; isolated scientific results were brought together into a system of knowledge; a new way of production — a new way of life needed continuous scientific development just as much as they inspired that development.

The Renaissance was a transitional rather than an independent stage between feudalism and capitalism. It was a bridge that led from agricultural to industrial production, from hand to machine labor. It was an age of mechanical inventions as much as it was one of crafts, arts, and literature. Its *new, its mechanistic side* was what determined the character of its philosophy.

To be sure, there was no straight road that led from the Renaissance to modern capitalism. Progress and reaction alternated; the scenes of capital development shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic; there was a difference between where capitalism began and where it could really flourish. And it was not until the *Industrial Revolution* that capitalism as a world system really came into its own. The guilds, for example, at first gained in importance because of the development initiated by the Renaissance, and by so doing retarded capitalist progress. They disappeared first in England, the most advanced capitalist country, but lingered on until the nineteenth century in other, less developed nations. Manufacturing and the transformation of agricultural workers into factory hands was not at first based on machine production; but it derived its organization, its methods, its incentive, its rationality, from mechanistic principles that had their source in machine mechanics.

The parting of science and religion furthered the separation of science from its immediate connection with the productive processes. Backward agricultural societies in which technology and industry are only supplementary factors of secondary importance do not call forth the "independent" development of science. There the "applied sciences" are undistinguishable from the productive process; the "theoretical sciences" from religion. With the development of technology and industry, theoretical science finds greater application in material production, but, through the accompanying division of labor, it becomes increasingly separated from the direct labor process. As an "independent" force it escapes the narrower limits of slower-changing productive habits that are determined by class relations as well as by technical improvements. Its own rapid development, however, hastens the development in the productive sphere. But this development does not proceed so consistently in the latter. Hence the often regretted gap between potentialities and reality, between scientific and social achievements.

In the Renaissance, however, science was not as yet truly capitalistic, not as yet subordinated to the specific capitalistic division of labor. Side-

stepping religious issues and traditional philosophies, science became experimental and returned for observation to the fields of practical activity. The thinkers of the Renaissance were quite aware of the real driving forces behind thought processes, and many of them were actually skilled in both manual and intellectual labor. Leonardo da Vinci, for example, could not conceive a science that was not practical. But those "who love the practice without the theory," he also said, "are like the captain of a ship without a compass; they do not know where they are going."

The technical revolution united rational training and manual work which, in turn, gave further impetus to the development of the machine. Da Vinci was only one of the countless inventors, scientists, philosophers, artists, and craftsmen who were profoundly influenced by the new productive force. Galileo shared their view of the close relationship between theory and practice; and it is this attitude that made him consistently use the experimental methods that ever since have guided scientific research.

It was also this close relationship that led to generalizations based on mechanical principles derived from experimental science and the numerous mechanical instruments already in use. The applicability of the mechanical principles to the world at large was indeed astonishing and it is not surprising that men, impressed by the discoveries in the mechanical science, should extend these principles into a mechanistic view of the world and universe. The mechanistic view dominated the mind wherever machine-processes made their appearance, in Italy as well as in all other advanced sections of Europe.

All science depends on manual work. The early geometry, astronomy, and mathematics corresponded to the economic needs and capacities of agricultural class communities. The problems of science change with socio-economic changes. Other questions and new questions are raised and answered. The structure of modern science cannot be divorced from the modern form of production. The relatively static character of pre-capitalist modes of production caused men to inquire into the nature of things; the more dynamic capitalist mode of production caused men to prefer inquiries into how things behave. The new scientists were concerned less with the primary or ultimate nature of one or another phenomenon than with relations between them. Not substance but sequence interested them first of all. To alter the stuff of nature, not merely to classify it, was a new scientific outlook initiated by actual socio-economic developments. Science was extended from its earlier application to limited social needs, to new needs arising out of machine production and all that goes with it. Experiment displaced mere speculation, and assumptions of the past, when tested, either were shelved or took on new meaning. Nevertheless, the methods of inquiry that were least concerned with the "true" and "final" nature of things disclosed more about their nature by following their relational behavior than by regarding them as static entities. The skepticism of the experimenter led to greater certainty than the "certainty" of those who refused to, or could not, engage in experiments.

Machines were constructed to obtain greater control over nature, to increase the exploitation of men and, with it, the wealth of the ruling classes. "The first forces to be utilized were the passive forces of weight and pressure exerted in the natural motions of air and water — the wind that fills the ship's sails, the stream that drives the water-wheel . . . The pioneers of science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, notably Galileo and Newton, were specially interested in the laws of motion and gravity, which they were the first to formulate. Later came the much more powerful active energy released by combustion. After taming the earth and air and water, man harnessed fire to his engines of production. But one cannot effectively enlist these natural forces until one knows a good deal of their working apart from human control. So a science ultimately bent on the fruits of power and wealth will find it useful to regard nature itself as a machine of unsuspected complexity.¹⁸⁾

That there were mechanisms working in nature could not be doubted; the mechanical laws of motion and gravity were verifiable. It was odd, however, that the "laws of nature" and the mechanical processes in production were so much alike. Why should a certain way of thinking arising out of production fit nature to the extent that it actually did? It was much more plausible to think that man had finally discovered the "laws of nature" and could now adapt himself to these laws. The better these "laws" were understood, the easier it would be to control nature and to better the life of man. Mechanistic principles thus led to positivistic philosophies.

Did science read these "laws" into nature, or did it discover them in the study of nature? Here we must recall that the development of the machine had been preceded by inventions and by the improvement of simpler tools. But whatever tools had been used, they had been adapted to man's need of wresting a living from nature. The direction of the development of tools and laboring processes was determined largely by man's situation within the whole of nature. The tools he used, the measures he took, the thoughts he had were adapted to natural facts. He either employed or fought natural forces. "Laws of nature" had thus always been taken into consideration wherever man was an active partner in the human-nature relationship, i. e., where he became a producing and therefore a social being.

Ruled by the forces of nature, and bent on controlling them, man always found a connection between the "laws of nature" and the tools he used to cope with the "laws." The more men improved their means of production, the better they could deal with nature, and the more facts they could discover about it. "Laws of nature" were recognized to the same degree that the means of production were improved and production itself extended. In other words, the "laws of nature" were produced through social production within nature. These "laws" were just as much a product

18) F. M. Cornford, *Greek Natural Philosophy and Modern Science*, in "Background to Modern Science." New York, 1938, p. 19.

of society as society was a product of nature. For social man, the discovered "natural laws" were certainly "objective", but for him they were "objective natural laws" only because of the existence of tools and the fact of labor. The tools — mental and manual — proved the "objectivity" of natural laws. But these tools were also products of natural forces that had determined their character. The interrelation between the status of the productive forces, of which science is but one among others, and that of insight into "natural laws" is inescapable. The "laws of nature" are thus "objective" in so far as man's capacity is able to deal with nature. This capacity is historical, and therefore all "natural laws" though "objective" are nevertheless historical laws,— whatever nature itself may be.

If nature exists independently of man, "our knowledge of the external world cannot be divorced from the nature of the appliances with which we have obtained the knowledge."¹⁹ To be sure, the transformation of nature into society, and of society into nature as accomplished by social production is not so simple as it might appear from what has been said here. It is clear that men knew about "natural mechanisms" long before machine techniques were able to influence their thought. The philosophers who developed the mechanical view of the world did not do so merely by projecting the ingenuity displayed in the productive process into their picture of the world, for most of them reached their conclusions long before the machine became really dominant. Neither were those scientists and philosophers imbued with a capitalist psychology, for that psychology arose much later. Behind their labors there were no "economic motivations" in the sense they could be found at a later stage of capitalist development that made science its direct servant. The mechanical view was a mathematical view, and mathematics existed long before machines were used. But precisely because "a mathematical formula can never tell us what a thing is, but only how it behaves,"²⁰ mathematics were particularly fruitful for scientific inquiries that concerned themselves first of all with the behavior of things. The mechanical age was thus a mathematical age. Yet neither the predominance of mathematics nor the development of machine techniques can by themselves explain the rise of the mechanistic view.

The mechanistic view that ruled science and philosophy depended, finally, on the whole of the development that changed the feudalistic into the capitalistic society, as well as on everything that occurred before. Simply to state this, however, is to say nothing. All understanding implies discrimination. To understand society, and the view of the world that prevails in it, one must select its most important aspects for investigation. Besides science and technology, other factors such as ideologies, traditions, class and property relations must be considered to develop theories which, though not exhausting the concrete reality, may still be sufficiently clear to serve the

19) A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*; p. 154.

20) Sir James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe*. Pelican Books, 1938, p. 178.

practical needs of society. Science and technology are only two aspects, though outstanding ones, that enter the formation of thought. Although "distorted" when isolated, they serve well, if not best, to explain the rise of the mechanistic view of world and universe.

In a rapidly expanding economy the practical application of science is of prime importance. Thus the empirical side of science is stressed. Experimentalism is based largely on instruments developed in the course of research and in connection with the expansion of production and commerce. The continuous extension of man's power over the material resources of nature led to the belief that if more and more riddles are solved, all problems may finally be understood, provided the newly-found road to progress was consistently followed. The successes in mathematics and physics would be augmented by similar successes in other branches of science; mechanical principles would finally account for the whole of the universe. It seemed, indeed, that all the labor of the past had at last yielded the truth. After a long period of observation of the apparent nature and motion of things, man had seemingly come to recognize their hidden "real" nature, their "real" motion, and their "real" relationships.

The mechanistic conception of nature ruled physics to the end of the nineteenth century and played an important part in philosophy. For Descartes, the founder of modern philosophy, as for most of the scientific philosophers of the early capitalist period, nature was a mechanism and the human body itself a machine. The human machine in distinction to other mechanisms was, however, a thinking machine. It was "alive", whereas matter was "dead." Thought did not fit into mechanical conceptions. The soul and the body, matter and mind, were different but equally real. Descartes raised the question of the interrelation of these apparently unrelated entities. But despite the otherwise great complexity of his philosophical reasoning, this problem he "solved" quite simply by saying that God had willed things to be as they are — had willed, that is, the separation of matter and mind.

This dualistic view of matter and mind has never left the thoughts of men. There were thinkers, of course, who "simplified" the problem by explaining all things in terms of matter where others explained all things in terms of mind. Monistic views appeared in both a materialistic and an idealistic garb. But the mechanical view continued to dominate science and its existence "turned the harmless distinction between subjective and objective components of observation into a dualism of inner and outer world. And it is rather comprehensive that, under the influence of religious tradition, this dualism was more or less identified with the contrast of soul and matter."²¹

21) Edgar Zilsel, *Problems of Empiricism*. International Encyclopedia of Unified Science. Vol. II; No. 8, 1941, p. 69.

It is interesting to note that it was in England, the nation ripest for capitalist production, that dualism was first challenged. Robert Boyle, for example, saw the mechanical and the thinking world as part of one world and reasoned that though "it may be necessary to treat them as entirely separate from each other in order to bring the problem within the compass of human understanding; the separation is due to our need of simplifying the problem by treating it successively from different aspects. A better mind than ours might be able to see the world *staedily* and see it whole,²²⁾ To others like Hobbes, such problems did not even exist. They took sensation, thought and consciousness as mere phantasms caused by the action of atoms in the brain; the only reality was matter in motion.

Whatever the problem, one should be satisfied with the possible. And it was possible to change the actual conditions of life with the help of the science that furthered productivity. The key words of Bacon's philosophy, "Progress" and "Utility", became the slogans of the advancing bourgeoisie, whose real concern was the accumulation of wealth, and the pursuit of which took all their energies.

Of course, science was more than technology. It had to be in order to make technology possible. But it was more not because the mind was searching for "truth," but because "truth" was sought to foster technology. To restrict the search for "truth" meant only to concentrate on that "truth" that was of utility and that fostered the progress of capital. In technology the products of scientific research find their practical application. The rest of "truth", found gratis so to speak in the pursuit of capitalistic ends, did not matter very much. The bourgeoisie could be content with Berkeley's "salutary truths of the Gospel" as well as with the truth discovered by scientific research unhampered by faith. That phase of science that did not find practical application remained "philosophical" and served merely ideological purposes. About this phase of science there could be quarrels; it did not interfere with the scientific needs of capital.

Behind the philosophical controversies, however, there were again social conditions that had been altered through the application of science to production. The unbroken connection between medieval scholasticism and Descartes dualism corresponded with an incomplete transition from feudal to bourgeois society. The more complete "divorce" of science from religion in England was due to the success of capitalism there. The newly discovered "natural laws" found different interpretations. Newton's mechanistic cosmogony, itself the result of a long chain of discoveries leading back to Galileo, Kepler, and Copernicus, was for Newton himself, just as for his predecessors, no more than proof of God's great sense of beauty and order. But for the French Encyclopaedists it supported a materialism that denied the existence of God. There was a wide difference between the natural facts discovered and the kind of ideological garb in which they were attired.

22) W. C. D. Dampier-Whetham, *A History of Science*. New York 1931, p. 153.

Henry VIII and the Church of England had done away with the power of the papacy which tried to help maintain the feudal relationships. In France that power was still unbroken. Adapting itself only reluctantly to the capitalization of the world, the Catholic Church maintained as long as possible its control over science and philosophy. The capitalistically-oriented intellectuals, that is, the progressive forces in the Catholic countries, had not only to compete with the feudalistic ideology, but, in view of the strength of the Church, to reckon with religion to a far greater extent than had been necessary in England where a new, capitalistic church had fitted itself very well into the new reality. Whereas in France, as Adam Smith²³⁾ remarked, scientists could not enter the universities, in England the Church drew its best elements from the universities of scientists.

The "timing" between technological advancement and sociological conditions was somewhat different in France than in England. In the former, atheism was to play a great part in that country's capitalization process but a very small part in the latter. Of course, the philosophical issues discussed as well as the scope of thought depended on general conditions. But because capitalism did not develop simultaneously and with equal force in all nations, philosophies that in some countries were the last word in actual accomplishment forecasted a new era in others. The general philosophical and scientific heritage was differently reproduced and reinterpreted to fit numerous real and imaginary purposes. Class and group points of view, shifts in power relations, found expression in philosophy; and philosophy, in turn, consciously and unconsciously served class and group interests bound to specific social structures. The internationalization of science and philosophy, the interchange of ideas and experiences that progressed with the expansion of the exchange processes, allowed for feudalistic ideologies in capitalist nations, for capitalist ideas in backward countries, and for all sorts of mixtures of both. These and other reasons may explain the co-existence of different philosophies and different states of scientific development, as well as the variety of interpretations of specific philosophies and of the meaning of science during a particular historical period. Yet, all in all, it is clear that different nations recognized and interpreted general conditions with regard to their particular advance in the capitalistic development which, in turn, was dependent upon the degree to which science was practically applied in social production.

The Church had an economic base. Its own interests opposed other economic interests. For a long time Catholicism was practically the private business of a few powerful Italian families. Whatever did not suit the Church was brutally suppressed. It has been pointed out²⁴⁾ that one of the reasons for that memorable intellectual movement in the great commercial cities of Upper Italy that ushered in the Renaissance was the papacy's seventy

23) *The Wealth of Nations*. Modern Library Edition, p. 763.

24) J. W. Draper, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*. New York 1897, p. 291.

years absence from the Eternal City. The French-Italian rivalries that brought the papal court to Avignon in France fostered the freedom of thought in Italy, although the power of the Church remained unbroken. The Church, for some time a mere tool of the French, could in turn exercise the severest despotism in France. The first attacks of the emerging bourgeoisie had to be directed against the Church. Attempts were made to split Church and State, but during the reign of Louis XIV the State allied itself still closer to the Church, having recognized the common enemy in the rising middle-class. The attack upon the state was simultaneously an attack upon the ruling religion. The defeat of the Jesuits in France indicated the growing strength of the bourgeoisie; yet the weakness of the Jansenist movement — an attempt on the part of the upper layers of the bourgeoisie to adapt church and state to its own needs without resort to revolutionary measures — showed that the situation did not favor compromises. The revolutionary movement had already embraced too many layers of the population and the issues at stake could not be smoothed out merely by adjusting ideologies to the shifts of class forces.

England exported ideologies as well as commodities. But what in England was merely the natural science of an enlightened bourgeoisie turned, as French materialism, into a sharp weapon against the ruling classes. In England theology itself preached materialism; in France materialism was the mortal enemy of theology. God was not "supplemented" but displaced by the new "natural laws", because the bourgeoisie had yet to unseat the feudal lords. If Bacon, Hobbes, Newton, Hume could be both scientists and believers, in France the thinkers from Voltaire to Holbach and Helvetius had to be believers in science exclusively. French materialism was directed against all metaphysics because metaphysics was synonymous with theology.

Eighteenth century atheistic materialism took its starting point from Newton's cosmogony. With Copernicus, the earth had ceased to be the center of the universe. Newton ascertained that the planetary movements were determined by general mechanical laws. Thus the Christian conceptions of earth and universe were shattered, and the attack upon the clergy could be widened into an attack against religion. There was no need for reason and faith; reason was enough. Physical and mechanical principles would explain everything; some day the progress of nature might become predictable. The old atomistic theories were revived; Democritus and Epicurus found their place in the new materialism. Matter — the solid impenetrable Newtonian particles — was the ultimate reality. Descartes' immaterial sensations became Hume's material sensations. Man was a purely physical being. And it was soon thought that on a small scale man was only what nature was on a large scale. Whereas Locke had differentiated between sensation and reflection. Condillac reduced reflection to sensations. For Holbach matter itself was capable of thought.

Newton's countrymen accepted both his natural science and his Christian faith. "This English tendency to hold simultaneously beliefs which, in the knowledge of the time, seem incompatible", says Dampier-Whetham, "is a constant surprise to continental minds."²⁵ But there is no reason for surprise. The "secret" of this English tendency is not to be found in the "English character" but in Britain's unique position within the developing world capitalism. The "consistency" of the French materialists and the "inconsistency" of the English naturalists had nothing to do with "the knowledge of the time;" this knowledge was employed merely for different political purposes. Locke's and Hume's skepticism as regards the human ability to acquire knowledge, their willingness to exclude metaphysics from science without denying metaphysical thinking, could not serve the needs of the French Revolution. To be effective materialism had to be fanatic and dogmatic. As an instrument of change it could make no concessions to the Christian traditions without strengthening its mortal enemies.

Even if all impressions, conceptions, experiences stem from sensations; if the sensual world, the empirical world, is the only world there is; if in a materialistic sense, man is not free, because he has to adapt himself to natural facts, still the manner of adaptation was left to his decision. The materialistic determinism which put man into his place and pointed to his limitations, also showed him where and in how far he could be an active being. The materialistic doctrine, applied to social life, enabled man to see himself no longer at the mercy of uncontrollable forces but able to alter these forces through his own intervention. By recognizing his limitations, he recognized his potentialities. The French Revolution enunciated reason's ultimate power over reality. Thus mechanical materialism served both the ideological and the economic needs of the bourgeoisie. The natural sciences fulfilled spiritual and real functions in capital production. Living in capitalism, one accepted its science and philosophy as *science proper*, as the "true philosophy." One recognized this science, this philosophy to be true, because the new social relations, the new productive system, the new way of life were true.

METAPHYSICS AND EMPIRICISM

In relatively static societies there is little need for philosophy. Magic, or primitive religions, are reproduced without much alteration. It is true that all reproduction involves change, for repetition in an absolute sense is impossible, but these changes may be so gradual as to escape recognition for considerably long periods. The existence of philosophy indicates a swiftly changing society, relatively speaking, where traditional beliefs no longer suffice to serve the intellectual needs that arise through actual changes in social customs, class relations, and production.

Changes in class societies mean different things for different classes, groups, individuals. Some groups foster development; others hinder it; but

²⁵ *History of Science*, p. 214.

the latter groups have to change themselves in order to cope with the former groups and thus, even those opposed to change must change in order to oppose change. Consequently, changes may be hampered, though they cannot be prevented, for if they could there would be no social history. In one sense medieval conditions were changed by medieval conditions, for their reproduction incorporated change.

Change is continuous and manifold; one thing is also another, one activity another activity, one idea the reason for another. Though the unfolding of science, as we have seen, required its liberation from religious shackles, religious thought itself helped to remove those shackles. The "separation" of science from philosophy, demanded and effected by the increasing division of labor and the growth of the social forces of production, fostered the rapid development of science. Yet philosophy itself prepared the "divorce." Even the training of the intellect for the needs of science was both hindered and cultivated by medieval mysticism. Professor Whitehead points out that "the habit of definite exact thought was implanted in the European mind by the long dominance of scholastic logic and divinity. The habit remained after the philosophy had been repudiated, the priceless habit of looking for an exact point and of sticking to it when found."²⁶

Metaphysical philosophies did not prevent the advancement of the sciences that are directly related to the socio-economic development. They searched beyond the observable phenomena for the "deeper meaning" of human existence. In their attempt to render comprehensible the mysteries of the universe, they tried to bring "sense" out of the bewildering world of facts, "order" into the welter of ideas. As long as it was thought that God determined everything, philosophy was necessarily a sort of advanced or "critical" religion. It sprang from the reproduction of religious beliefs in changing circumstances. It tried to reconcile apparently "contradictory" processes of thought and action, to reconsider the past in the light of new revelations and added experiences either to give new strength to time-worn beliefs, or to fit them to the new developments.

The materialism of the eighteenth century, however, attempted to end metaphysics. Even for the English materialists "theism became nothing more than a convenient and easy-going way of getting rid of religion."²⁷ The question of physics and metaphysics was one of religion and anti-religion because of the long history of religious thought and the existence of the Church as a social force. The problem of matter and mind split philosophy into idealism and materialism. That there were both, matter and mind, was clear. Those who attributed matter to mind and those who attributed mind to matter were equally unconvincing. The question boiled down as to what existed first, matter or mind. In practical affairs, of course, neither the one nor the other conception played a real part, but because each served

26) *Science and the Modern World*, p. 23.

27) K. Marx, *Selected Essays*, p. 190.

ideological needs, they influenced the character and movement of society. For the needs of human life the "problem" is meaningless. It could only be posed, and the opposing factions developed, through the class structure of society. It was important to one class in society to maintain that mind was first and matter second, and important for another class to maintain the contrary.

In England the capitalist mode of production was safely established some time before the decisive struggle for it disturbed the Continent. The English bourgeoisie was over its storm and stress period; revolution, civil war, dictatorship, the Puritans, the Levellers, Cromwell, were history. A period of relative stability led to the belief that a form of society and a system of production that corresponded best to human needs and capacities had finally been found. But the memory of the bloody religious, political, social, and economic struggles in the middle of the seventeenth century was an additional reason for declaring that the new status of society was the true status. The fact that the beheading of one King had led only to the crowning of another, that, despite all class struggles, class relations continued to exist, led to a new static attitude in regard to the problems of humanity. "Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places," wrote David Hume, "that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations."²⁸

The problem of matter and mind had been raised in the search for ultimate truth, and idealists and materialists spoke in absolute terms. The discoveries in the natural sciences, however, were not doubted by either group. Cartesian physics, mechanical materialism, remained the basis of all subsequent science. When Descartes' pupils, not to speak of his antagonists, were already greatly dissatisfied with his dualism and attempted to explain mind with the same materialistic principles that had been generally accepted in physics, the whole discussion took a different course with Locke and Hume. The latter declared ultimate problems to be unsolvable ones, as not belonging to the world of science, that is, the world of the senses, of appearance, of phenomena. They contended that reason deals with the empirical world, and that what concerns ultimate reality is a question of faith.

This way of thinking, of course, was not new, since the idea had been held by the Nominalists since the fourteenth century and was not unknown in antiquity. The Nominalists favored the divorce of science from religion. To favor this separation was to oppose the Church. But though the Nominalists were limited by the strength of the Church, they succeeded in clearing the way for capitalist materialism, atomism, mechanism, sensationalism as well as for Hume's skepticism. The philosophical advance from William of Occam to David Hume is not great, but the weight of Hume was to be

28) *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Chicago, 1935, p. 86.

felt in extraordinary measure because of changed circumstances. Hume's division of reason and faith found a period and a society in which the independence of science was an accomplished fact. This division was no longer detrimental to the interests of the Church. In fact, it saved the Church from the onslaught of science, whereas in Occam's case science had to be safeguarded against religious dogmatism. "Theism", apparently "an easy-going way of getting rid of religion," as Marx said, was in reality a subtle way of maintaining it. "To be a philosophical sceptic," wrote David Hume, "is the first and most essential step towards being a sound, believing Christian."²⁹

Hume was interested not only in the problem of human understanding, but in that of society as well. He was a friend of Adam Smith and shared his economic views.³⁰ Though not an atheist, he dined with pleasure with the godless French materialists, for he shared their antipathy toward the squandering nobility. Though he respected the less expensive Catholic clergy and though he was happy that in England one could open up a new religion as easily as a pub, he thought it wise to put the clergy on the payroll of the state, because "in this manner ecclesiastical establishments, though commonly arising from religious views, prove in the end advantageous to the political interests of society."³¹ And the political interests of society were those that served the economic needs: order and industry. Thus he favored everything that favored the existing bourgeois society, convinced that this society was best suited to human nature — such as it is.

Bourgeois society is based on private property. Feudalism, too, was based on private property. However, private property in the form of capital was something other than the possession of land and control over serfs. First, it was the property of a new class; second, it was property not based on, nor limited by, the conditions of the past, the accident of birth, nor that of location. It was the property of the future, the result of "individual enterprise." It was property competing with property, flexible, changeable, growing. It was property, furthermore, that yielded greater results than agricultural exploitation, and that developed industry and a world economy. It contained the promise to exceed all hitherto existing social and human conditions. Therefore to prevent or hinder its expansion was utterly unreasonable; to support it was to follow the demands of reason.

29) *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill. Modern Library, New York 1939, p. 764.

30) "Commerce and manufacturers," wrote A. Smith (*Wealth of Nations*, p. 385). "gradually introduced order and good government, and with them, the liberty and security of individuals, among the inhabitants of the country, who had before lived almost in a continual state of war with their neighbours, and of servile dependency upon their superiors. This, though it has been the least observed, is by far the most important of all their effects. Mr. Hume is the only writer who, so far as I know, has hitherto taken notice of it."

31) Quoted by A. Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*, p. 743.

The "hero" of this new social order was the individual capitalist. If he combined with others, he did so for political reasons contingent on his unfinished fight within feudalism. The only "unity" he knew was the unity of struggle against his enemies. This was regrettable, but was determined by those forces clinging to the past which refused to give way to reason. With the triumph of reason there would end all need for unity, for common action, because the self-love and self-interest of the individual constituted the principle that assured the welfare of the whole of society. "By directing industry in such a manner as its produce may be of greatest value," wrote Adam Smith, "the individual intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. By pursuing his own interests he frequently promotes that of society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it."³²

It was believed that the exchange relationship, competition, and the law of supply and demand regulated the economic life of society in a just and roughly equalitarian manner. The price mechanism harmonized production and distribution and satisfied the needs of the people. General competition assured identity of value and price, if not immediately and in each case, then generally and in the long run. This system increased the productivity of labor, assured the greatest economy, and increased the wealth of nations. There was no strictly economic reason for any sort of pessimism; a happier future was assured.

The individual, not society, the particular, not the general, the part, not the whole was worth attention. The rest could be left to that "invisible hand", i. e., the mysterious result of material actions that themselves could not be described in material terms or grasped by empirical means. The "invisible hand" was taken for granted: the methods of science failed in the sphere of socio-economic activity. The "invisible hand" was, like the "ultimate reality", — or vice versa — a matter of faith, transcending experimental science. This ideology of commodity production was bound to influence the thoughts of Hume, as one of its strongest supporters.

The science of the bourgeoisie was natural science. There was no science of society. Economy was merely the recognition of the widening division of labor and its productive results. By organizing the labor process and by employing the machine one created more products in shorter time, and, with the increase of production, lowered their value. All this did not demand a science of society. These were observable facts. To comprehend and systematize them it was enough to employ the methods used in the natural sciences.

The question of human understanding had always been one of mind and nature; hence the identity on the part of Greek stoicism, the Nominal-

32) *Wealth of Nations*, p. 423.

ist critique of scholasticism, and Hume's skepticism in their approach to the problem. The question of society, however, did not enter the problem of mind and nature though, to be sure, research in the natural science was encouraged because of social needs and social problems. The limitations of science were seen as human limitations, as the mind's inability to understand the whole of the universe. For the Nominalists there were no universal laws; ultimate realities could not be known. Things themselves were unrelated; it was man who, in order to control events, established, with organizing principles, relations between them. For Hume, too, thought was merely a practical instrument for the convenient interpretations of human experience, having no objective nor metaphysical vality of any kind. Only particulars could be known; there was no empirical proof for general ideas, and all inferences from experience were effects of custom, not of reasoning. The idea of "necessity and causation arises from the uniformity observable in the operation of nature, where similar objects are constantly conjoined together, and the mind is determined by custom to infer one from the appearance of the other,"³³⁾ wrote Hume. Our knowledge of the external world is won by inductions from particular instances. Thus all knowledge, bound to particulars as it is, is only one of probabilities, though there are all sorts of degrees of assurances "from the highest certainty to the lowest species of moral evidence." But there is also a "kind of pre-established harmony between the course of nature and the succession of our ideas; and though the powers and forces, by which the former is governed, be wholly unknown to us; yet our thoughts and conceptions have still gone on in the same train with the other work of nature. Custom is the principle, by which this correspondence has been affected."³⁴⁾

What Hume called "custom" is of course the labor process that transformed nature into society. The harmony between the "course of nature and the succession of our ideas" is established by the activity of social man in his adaptive struggle with nature. Hume's limitation is the limitation of bourgeois society, the science of which restricts itself to natural facts. "Experimental reasoning which we possess in common with beasts," wrote Hume, "and on which the whole conduct of life depends, is nothing but a species of instinct or mechanical power, that acts in us unknown to ourselves."³⁵⁾ This, however, was only half the story. It left unsatisfied all those who were curious to know all of it.

English empiricism, quite satisfactory to the developing capitalist society, was utterly unsuitable to those societies which were in need of change or in the process of transformation. Without capitalism there is no need for a specific capitalistic science. To acquire that science and that capitalistic

33) *Concerning Human Understanding*, p. 84.

34) *Ibid.*, p. 55.

35) *Ibid.*, p. 113.

development, the backward nations required a philosophy or political theory leading to social change. The social question was the burning one, not that of man and nature. Nevertheless, their opposition to empiricism was an opposition favoring empiricism, although in a round-about-manner; for those societies that were still in their transitional period aspired to nothing more than to reach the stage of English development. That stage had now to be reached not only in opposition to feudalism, but also in opposition to the nation that vigorously enjoyed the advantages of an early start. At a period when other nations were still trying to unify themselves in their specific territories, England had already formed her Empire. The influence of her philosophy on the Continent had about the same effect as the influx of her commodities. It hampered progress on the Continent at the same time supplying an incentive to follow her example. Yet these nations, ultimately directed towards capitalist order and industry after the English example, had first to think in social and revolutionary terms in order to attain that goal. Thus the attempt in France to use mechanical materialism for social purposes; thus also the German dissatisfaction with the narrow bounds of English empiricism.

The English attitude in regard to social and political questions was, of course, the product of prior developments as much as it was of the new capitalistic reality. But the prior developmental stages were now adjudged as just so many incomplete steps towards the final, the prevailing society. For Hobbes, who had experienced a series of social upheavals, man was a contradictory being of reason and passion. Man's anarchical nature would make for social anarchy if reason did not keep passion under control. To control passion was "natural," because otherwise man would destroy himself, and social life would not be possible. To enforce observance of the "natural law" of self-preservation, a strong state was necessary. Locke, however, had seen the possible dangers implied in the existence of an all-powerful state, and held the view that men by nature are quite able to live together peacefully and guarantee social harmony by respecting the "natural rights" of all men, i. e., the rights of life, liberty, and property. The state was necessary only to prevent practices directed against these natural rights, to prevent unnaturally-inclined minorities from interfering with the right of property. The liberty to maintain individual property and the state that protected private property, in brief, the society that Locke represented, he conceived as the natural society. With David Hume, however, the capitalist society had consolidated itself sufficiently to drop the claim of representing natural rights. The idea of natural rights made room for theories of government based on strictly utilitarian principles. These principles did not allow, nor did they call for, the development of a scientific theory of society.

In France — at this time — capitalism had not been fully realized, and political rule was still in the hands of the feudal class. The existing

state of affairs seemed unnatural to those opposing it. To reach the natural rights proclaimed by Locke it was not enough, however, merely to accept the materialistic view of nature. The struggle against the Catholic Church, one of the strongholds of feudalism, made atheism necessary, as the Reformation had long ago spent its force. But the materialistic philosophy did not provide for an ideology able to revolutionize the whole of society. Feudalistic society had not brought forth social political theories. The political views of Hobbes and Machiavelli which climaxed the political theory of the Renaissance were no more than the separation of politics from theology accompanying the separation of science from religion. These theories dealt with the mechanism of taking and holding power. Yet, to employ the mechanism, one had to have forces at his disposal. To get these forces, the slogan "life, liberty, and property" as being the natural rights of man had to be sufficiently flexible to attract more than the capitalistic layers of society, which were a mere minority opposed to the feudalistic minority. More than mere abstract theories had to be set against the religious assertions that nothing could be changed because all that exists by the grace of God and is therefore unalterable.

The goal of the bourgeoisie was not society, but a society of property owners. The freedom of the individual, not his subordination to feudal authority, was desired. Yet, social action was required to realize the individualistic goal. A social ideology was needed that did not violate the capitalistic inclinations of individuals. The atomism of bourgeois society, in harmony with their atomistic view of nature, had been the result of the successful English revolution. This revolution itself, however, had nourished quite different ideologies. In theological disguise they had expressed not only the desire for property but also the desire for the abolition of property in the interest of social unity and a true community of men. The English slogan, "King and Commons", had been directed against the egotistical rule of the feudal lords. The equality of men had been conceived as the equal right to work on the land, to hunt in the woods, to fish in the rivers. In his *Law of Freedom in a Platform*, Winstanley wrote: "Commonwealth government may well be called the ancient of days, for it was before any other oppressing government kept in." In a *Declaration from the Oppressed People of England* (1649) it was said "that men should endeavor to shut out of the Creation that cursed thing called Particular Property, which is the cause of all wars, bloodshed, theft and enslaving laws, that hold the people under miserie." The hope for the restoration of an imagined lost community that accompanied the narrow aspirations of the advancing bourgeoisie was, of course, the reaction to the Enclosure Acts practiced since the middle of the 15th Century. In 1649 the Diggers of Cobham issued under the signature of Winstanley and Everard a *Large Declaration* which said, among other things, that the Diggers "intend not to meddle with any man's property nor to break down any enclosures, only to meddle with what was common and untilled, to make it fruitful for the use of man. And that the

time will be when all men shall willingly come in and to give up their lands and estates and submit to the community. And for those who should come and work, they should have meat, drink and clothes, which is all that is necessary to the life of man, and that for money there was no need of it, nor of clothes more than to cover nakedness."³⁶⁾

Society was divided in more groups than just the ruling feudal class and the developing capitalist class. There were peasants, laborers, paupers, whose aspirations were not directed towards capitalist property, because their very existence was still bound up with the land, with the simple task of making a living, and no more. The capitalist layers were those that already owned capital, already possessed a degree of power. Their political outlook was from the very outset of the bourgeois revolution opposed to that of the hungry and beaten mass of the people which, with their utopian yearnings, gave an emotional and human drive to the Revolution. But Cromwell saved the day for capitalism, which tended not towards the distribution but towards the concentration of property.

A somewhat similar situation prevailed in France before the revolution. A chain of peasant risings preceded the city rebellions. These upheavals lasted "until the village communes were granted the right of resuming the communal land which had been taken from them during the two preceding centuries."³⁷⁾ The growing city proletariat, still bound with many ties to the peasantry, could not be satisfied ideologically nor derive a revolutionary enthusiasm from the mathematical abstractions that pleased the educated bourgeoisie. Though others already looked at them as being just another sort of commodity, they themselves, at this time, still felt and thought like human beings. The ideas of Rousseau who, of all the philosophers of his time, was closest to the masses, who had lived with them and had shared their miseries and hopes, were the product of the mental state of the masses as much as they were an attempt to mobilize them for a decisive struggle against the conditions of their existence.

The rationalism of self-interest appealed as little to Rousseau as it did to the non-capitalist yet revolutionary elements of France. The right to private property, equality before the law, democratic representation did not, in his opinion, guarantee real freedom, real equality, and real happiness. However, the future belonged to the "abstract freedoms," to that class that used them for its own capitalistic interests. To look beyond the capitalist society, which itself was only in its infancy, was quite impossible. The mind thus searched in the conditions of the past for clues that would lead to the realization of the desired social organization. The solution of the human-social problem Rousseau saw in the return to an original, primitive, natural

36) Quoted by H. Holorenschaw: *The Levellers and the English Revolution*. London 1939, p. 20 a. p. 31

37) P. A. Kropotkin, *The French Revolution*. New York 1927, p. 111.

social state that had no class divisions and no property relations and in which a real communal spirit could exist.³⁸⁾

It was of no importance that the call for a return to a more rudimentary way of life was not realizable. Rousseau himself did not really believe in such a possibility, but he was convinced of the moral value of the idea and of its great emotional power. It was an awkward attempt to think beyond the limited program of the bourgeois revolution, an attempt to bring the social element into a revolutionary movement that ideologically had no more to offer than the findings of the natural scientists. The bourgeois thinkers simply assumed that what was good for the individual property owner was automatically good for everybody. Being empiricists in the sphere of natural science, they were metaphysicians in the sphere of society. Their social views were mere speculations, untested and unconfirmed. Rousseau, too, was not able to develop a science of society equal to that of the science of nature. He had merely a distorted "dream" of what should only much later become a reality.

Apparently Rousseau simultaneously nourished two contradictory ideas. On the one hand he favored the return to a primitive communal spirit and organization; on the other he proposed the *Contrat Social*, a theory of society that demanded the subordination of the individual to the "will of the people," the "general will," which was only another name for the state, and was, in fact, conceived in an attempt to reform the General Council of Geneva. Latter this idea was taken up in an elaborated form by the German philosopher, Fichte. The mystical state or the "will of the people" could in reality be no more than the ordinary bourgeois state as advocated by Locke. However, it was precisely the vague and idealistic concept of the state that best served the ideological needs of the bourgeois revolution. It was his inconsistency and the contradictory character of his ideas that made Rousseau the prophet of the revolution. He could be admired by all revolutionary groups, the bourgeoisie proper, the democratic lower middle class of property owners as represented by Thomas Paine and Robespierre, and by the mass of the disinherited who were destined to become the industrial proletariat.

In Germany, the situation was somewhat similar to that in France. There were also, however, important differences. The Reformation as represented by Martin Luther had been a movement of the middle class for secular against ecclesiastical authority, for the development of a social order

38) "In his praise of the state of nature," writes Gunnar Landtman (*The Origin of the Inequality of the Social Classes*, p. 4), "Rousseau was not so very wrong, although he mainly constructed his views out of his own mind. Not entirely so, however, for in *Discours sur l'Origine et les Fondements de l'Inegalite parmi les Hommes*, for instance, he to some slight extent follows the same method as modern sociologists in trying to corroborate his ideas regarding primitive stages by references to existing savage tribes. For this purpose he even makes use of a few books describing native tribes which are still quoted in modern sociological works"

beneficial to the petty bourgeoisie. The power of the Catholic Church had largely been broken. But the peasant risings and the Thirty Years War had sapped the strength of the peasants, impoverished the middle class, and slowed up commerce and industry. The Peace of Westphalia hindered territorial unification and the political and economic centralization needed for capitalist development. Only with the rise of the Prussian state was the basis for a capitalist development laid. Of course, the expansionist policy of the centralized military-bureaucratic Prussia of Friedrich Wilhelm I and his heirs was undertaken, first of all in the interest of the ruling house and its supporting feudal caste. Yet the Prussian state was the necessary prerequisite for the capitalist Germany to come. Unable to compete economically with the stronger European powers, the Prussian state relied on military-political means to secure its existence and its further development. Within this Prussian setting it was quite difficult to think in the terms of the English bourgeoisie or in those of the French revolutionists.

Germany was still further removed from the conditions existing in England than from those in France. Her thinkers of the Enlightenment found it more enlightening to learn from the French than from the English. And although French thought could not really be distinguished from English science and philosophy, the French version of that science and philosophy appealed more to the philosophical needs of the German bourgeoisie. Not immediately in need of that naturalistic mechanical materialism which was so important to capitalism and to the French revolution, German philosophy was more interested in the idealistic and theological problems connected with the new philosophy. Leibniz tried to find a bridge between the older teleological conceptions of nature and mind and the Cartesian dualism, in order to establish a new harmony between reason and faith. He agreed with Hume that general principles could not be proved empirically, but he maintained that pure reason is more important and more comprehensive than mere sense perceptions, the latter being only a limited form of reason. Kant went one step further. He thought that Leibniz merely read intellect into the senses as against the English empiricists, who turned reason into sense perception. Instead of identifying the one with the other, he tried to combine rationalism and empiricism. He was at once ready to accept as limits of scientific investigation the Newtonian methods of mathematical physics, and to hold with Hume that science cannot deal with ultimate reality. He pointed out, however, that the empiricists were not able to show that sense experience also furnishes the means and ways by which the empirical material is organized. Reason was the organizer. Our knowledge, though unable, Kant insisted, to comprehend ultimate reality, was more than mere knowledge of particulars perceived through the senses. To reach general laws from sense experience presupposes independently established rational principles.

For Kant the objective world is produced by the subject, not by the individual, but by mankind. Things are knowable insofar as they enter into

the forms of human thought and intuition, but things change their character in the very process of becoming comprehended. The truth we know is the truth for man. Understanding, Kant said, "does not derive its laws from nature, but rather imposes them upon nature." The matter with which thought deals is furnished by the outside world. The form of knowledge, however, is furnished by the subject. Kant's reasoning, to repeat, did not refute any of the important principles of Hume; he tried to overcome their limitations. If Hume thought that causality is the product of mere association and habit, Kant maintained that it is the work of man, the result of his reasoning. It is thought and not mere sense that bring coherence into the phenomenal world. He objected to Hume's skepticism because he thought it prevented man's self-determination through his rational will. "If reason in man is made to serve the same ends which instinct serves in animals," he said, "it can do nothing to lift its possessors above the merely animal state." From such a position, he felt, no answer can be given to the question as to what one should do and what one may hope for. He insisted that although there can be no final truth, there was still to be gained the truth relative to man.

Dissatisfaction with the narrow naturalistic materialism at the base of English philosophy, great concern for social problems and the inability to find a connection between science, philosophy and society forced Kant into his idealistic position as it had forced Rousseau into Romanticism. Kant greatly admired not only English science but also the French Revolution and particularly Rousseau. He favored the capitalist mode of production and the ideological forces connected therewith. The economic principles hidden behind Hume's philosophy also furnished the background for Kant's reasoning. But reason had not yet installed the new capitalist reality in Germany; it could not abdicate before it was incorporated into the social organization. Reason could thus not be a passive acceptance of the conditioned world of experience, but had to serve as an active instrument for molding the world to the new needs of man. To satisfy the active needs of man for shaping the world to his new values, one had, if necessary, to proceed against all experience. As regards nature, Kant said, "experience gives us rules ready to hand; here experience is the fountain of truth." In regard to moral law, however, "experience is the mother of illusions, and it is extremely undesirable to derive the norm of what I ought to do from that which actually is done or to let this fetter my action in any way."

The *Age of Reason* which in England was already an age of capitalist industry and in France an age of revolution was, at the same time, in Germany a mere belief in man's capacity to alter his own situation. It was the ideological adaptation to conditions existing elsewhere and thus a mental preparation for the changes due in Germany proper. It was the recognition that institutions are not fixed by nature or God, but that they can be formed according to the will and reason of man. By turning the ultimate meaning of the world into a moral meaning, Kant emancipated the moral will, or the

practical reason of man, from a world conceived in static terms. Whereas in England the bourgeoisie was already thinking in strictly utilitarian terms, that is, was conceiving the well-being of the *citizens* as the supreme end, Kant's Germany was still too far removed from the capitalist reality to share the utilitarian principles whole-heartedly. Her *citizens*, i. e. the bourgeoisie, not as yet *citizens* in the English sense, demanded first of all justice for themselves. For Kant the supreme end one had to strive for was justice, not well-being. Reason was transformed into a principle of morality, because at this stage of development reform not revolution was deemed possible and desirable. Behind Kant's dualism of scientific and moral knowledge was the dualism of the evolving capitalist society that needed a concrete science and an abstract morality, because it needed industry and profits as well as an ideology that changed specific capitalistic needs into general moral principles.

The same German situation that did not prevent the ideological acceptance of the principles of the French Revolution, but prevented their realization by direct revolutionary means and thus transformed into idealistic general principles of self-determination and free will what was only the materially and specifically motivated will of the French bourgeoisie — this situation determined also the idealism of Hegel, the successor of Kant.

(This article will be continued in the next issue with a discussion of Hegelianism and Marxism, the history of the dialectical theory since Marx, and the present status of Marxism with regard to modern science and philosophy.)

BOOK REVIEWS:

THE STRUCTURE OF THE NAZI ECONOMY. Harvard Studies in Monopoly and Competition. By Maxine Y. Sweezy. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1941. (225 pp.; \$3.00)

THE SOCIAL POLICY OF NAZI GERMANY. By C. W. Guillebaud. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1941. (134 pp.; \$1.00)

Miss Sweezy's study, "the product of several years' research in German statistical documents, National Socialist writings, and foreign secondary sources," is one of the best so far published on Nazi-Germany. It is not possible to deal with all the details that give the work its importance; only its general ideas can be considered here. And these ideas, well fortified with empirical data, come the nearest to presenting the fascist reality.

The book starts with a short review of the pre-Hitler situation in Germany. The Nazis took over a crisis-ridden economy and were temporarily able to solve the most urgent social problems. The secret of Hitler's "successes," as well as "the clue to the significance of the changes wrought in the economic sphere," Miss Sweezy finds in "the total coordination of Germany's entire manpower and natural resources . . . for

warlike enterprise." With Veblen she regards this as the "logical outcome" of the system of business enterprise. Not only in Germany, but generally, "the period in which business could entirely dominate government and the period in which business was largely independent" is now gone. She does not fail to indicate that the German scene is part and parcel of the capitalist world situation as, for instance, when she points out that "state invasion in the economic sphere could go so far in 1933 because the program of the politically victorious Nazis met with demands arising from the long-conditioned depression and the almost colonial subservience of the German economy to foreign control."

The book describes the relationship between business and government in great detail. It makes clear "that private property and state regulation are not opposed to each other if the ruling power has interests identical with those of the owning part of the community, or if the ruling power is the owning group." She shows that thus far the Nazis "transformed the already highly organized entrepreneurial economy only in so far as was imperative to consolidate the political power of the party." Neither the structure of the Nazi economy, nor the measures employed, differ in any radical manner from long-known practices, nor from the previous structure of capitalism.

Miss Sweezy deals especially well with the Nazi attempt to solve the unemployment question by way of a levelling process, public works, and armaments. She also points out the limitations inherent in such practices and the drives to solve by imperialistic means what cannot be solved in ordinary ways. Her material is of the greatest interest as are her observations in regard to questions such as transportation, corporations, investments, and social politics. Especially important are the chapters on the German cartel system, developed during the last war, and its present role in the Nazi scheme of things. The price policy

of the Nazis she considers a "remarkable achievement unique to economic history since the industrial revolution." But most interesting of all are the sections that deal with the regimentation and conscription of labor, with newly developed institutions such as the Labor Front and its various activities, and with the German social policy in general.

The author points out that "National Socialists recognized that destruction of labor unions might strengthen radicalism among the workers and that it would be necessary to run these energies into channels useful to the dictatorship." The new institutions and the social legislation serve the Nazis first of all. If questions of income, consumption and social welfare are considered, it becomes clear that the German "trust" is run for the Nazis and the owning classes. Although the living standard of the workers has not been reduced below the depression level; they have not profited by the increased economic activity and its greater productivity. The most striking change in the structure of the national income is the increased share going to property and the decreased share represented by earned income. Consumption has been limited in favor of capital investments. The new industrialists of Germany as Miss Sweezy sums them up "are Nazi party members, and their competitors — other business interests at home and abroad — are at an extreme disadvantage." The Nazi owning-class "still exercises one function — the receiving and accumulation of profits."

Mr. Guillebaud's book deals with the German social policy at greater length. He, too, demonstrates an ability to look objectively at the Nazi scene. His treatment, however, of the Nazi social policy becomes at times more positive than is really warranted. The reason for this may be found in the discrepancy between theory and practice. All that Mr. Guillebaud brings forth exists no doubt on paper, but what it really means in actual terms he fails to

demonstrate. Nevertheless he is right in pointing out that it is wrong to assume that the German masses "have entered a stage of peonage, the like of which has not been seen in the countries of Western Europe for centuries." People who hold such assumptions, he says, not only fool themselves, but "lay themselves open to the counter-charge that the same statement could be applied to the British worker in July 1940."

Although Mr. Guillebaud is inclined to look too positively at the Nazi practices in the social sphere, and particularly in regard to the capital-labor relations, he admits that the "progress" undoubtedly made in Germany came to a sudden end with the outbreak of the war. Yet, the

war cannot be divorced from either the general policy, or from the specific social policy of the Nazis. The war itself shows that all "progress" in capitalistic social policy is bound to turn against the workers and even against their very lives. The book is to be recommended nevertheless because it helps one to understand why Hitler could count, and still can count, on a large mass support. The "liberty" that individuals and organizations lost had ceased to mean very much within the general crisis conditions. Even that miserable form of "security" which, for a time, the Nazis were able to provide, weighted more heavily than the liberalistic ideology for which there was no longer any basis.

P. M.

FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN WORLD SOCIETY. By Linden A. Mander., Stanford University Press (910 pp. \$4.25)

Professor Mander's book deals with the need for a world organization of society. It is evident, Mander writes, "that nations as isolated units of government are unable any longer to perform their tasks as sovereign independent entities except at ruinous costs." Nor are the existing systems of government adequate for the purposes of the present world. International government has become a necessity.

Mander describes at length the previous attempts at international organization which had been restricted to such apparently non-political phases of social life as health, crime prevention, communication, legal rights, and collaboration on intellectual and religious issues. In the course of his exposition it becomes evident, however, that these everyday problems of human welfare are entirely dependent upon political and economic world relations.

In the economic sphere Mander's attention centers on monetary issues, loan, investment, tariff, and banking policies. He tends to believe that "financial stability cannot be attained as long as excessive tariff bar-

riers and other economic rigidities remain," and he expects that the international authority he envisions will assume control over more than just the financial aspects of the economic life. The added controls would make the international authority vastly different from that of the League of Nations. How much control the new authority should assume, Mander does not state, but without committing himself he quotes Condliffe, who has expressed the fear that the envisioned world state might "look very much like a totalitarian world-state." However, Mander would like to utilize the existing international organizations such as the diverse trade and commercial associations and the International Labor Office for the purposes of the coming world order.

Although Mander sees clearly that "national and international economics are different aspects of the same reality," he does not see that the difficulties facing an international economy are caused not so much by a lack of organization and an unwillingness to bring it about as by the peculiar character and structure of the existing class society. All he

can answer those "who believe that apart from the problem of war no satisfactory relation can be worked out between capital and labor, between government and industry, and between the individual and the community," and those who hold with the Marxists that society "cannot be regulated under a capitalist system," is to point optimistically to the now passe "Scandinavian Middle-Way," which was merely a by-product of the general European preparations for the present war. However, Mander recognizes the need for a solution of the problems presented by the social relations to achieve an efficient international organization.

In great detail Mander describes the various attempts to achieve national security. His work becomes here a very useful handbook for the student of international affairs. It deals with almost everything one needs to know about the actual and the proposed systems of collective security; the principles and problems connected therewith; the different agreements reached and broken; the ambiguities of neutrality, the meaning of the balance-of-power policy; questions of federation, armaments and disarmament, and so forth. It gives the history of regional organizations for political, economic, and military purposes such as the Little Entente, the Balkan Conference, the Scandinavian Co-operation, the Monroe doctrine, and all the other aspects of bloc politics up to the recently discussed proposals for a European Federation. All these questions are dealt with in connection with the specific problems of the great powers, their relations one with another and with the world at large.

Especially interesting are Mander's chapters on the future of nationalism, minority problems, colonial and mandate policies in connection with the war and the various post-

war plans. It seems evident to Mander that no problem can really be solved short of a fundamental reconstruction of the world system that leaves a single authority in control; or the creation of a world system that arbitrates its frictions and is ready to offer its problems to the judgement of the international authority. Nations will have to recognize the new situation, Mander believes, for "modern war has revealed that the sovereign state is an inefficient instrument for achieving national security." To resurrect the smaller nations overrun in the course of the war he holds to be futile. Also the great powers "will bankrupt and ruin themselves if they continue to try to solve the problems of war by their independent sovereign efforts." Even continental security, Mander concludes, "must be part and parcel of the larger world security; it cannot be attained by continental exclusiveness."

Mander's own ideas about the post-war world ask for more than a British-American power monopoly. He hopes that the other allied nations will participate in it in some measure, so that the period of world rule may only be a transition to world understanding. He does not advocate Germany's destruction, but wants to disarm and control her to give her that Reason which, presumably, and in the not too far future, may also induce the victorious nations to abdicate from their power position and to give up their privileges in favor of peace, justice, and a better life for all. He recognized that his suggestions to this end are no more than a mere hope, but his particular bias does not allow him to wish for more than that the men fighting for the cause of the Allies may be able both to "maintain the fight and yet keep a clear vision of the greater values at stake."

M.

THE NATURE OF MODERN WARFARE. By Cyril Falls. Methuen & Co., London 1941

The author discovers that modern total war is a reversion to the most primitive conception of warfare and differs from tribal war "only" in that it is practiced between nations in a highly developed material civilization. Yet he does not extend the adjective "retrogressive" to the "nation-wide effort" which total war demands nor to the "profound interference with social life" which is represented, among other things, by the "rigid limitation of the output of corsets and silk stockings." He finds his greatest comfort in the old Clausewitzian wisdom that "war is never likely to be as absolute in practice as in theory." He thinks that even at the time of his writing (January to March, 1941) "the logic of total war has been carried to the point of absurdity because it has become too perfect." Thus we can hope that "when peace comes again the people will realize that war has now become . . . a veritable negation of organized life, that is, death."

With that pious hope the author concludes the first chapter which deals with the totalitarian aspects of war. He does not show that he is aware of the revolutionary impact of the present total war on all previous concepts. He comes nearest to it when he complains of the decline of "the noble profession of arms"

by which the professional soldier has come to be regarded by his new masters as a mere tool, "of no more practical utility than the propagandist or the thug who does his dirty work." He shows in his second chapter that he has learned since the days before Dunkirk to appreciate somewhat better the decisive importance of those technical changes that have recently revolutionized the practice of modern warfare — changes that go by the general name of "mechanization." Yet even this modest level of awareness of new developments is not maintained in subsequent chapters.

The book as a whole should be studied less for its contribution to the theory of the present war than for its particularly British flavor. What the author says on page 17 in regard to the use of parachute troops might be said of all the striking innovations of modern totalitarian warfare. Even if they had been used by the English, "our methods would have had little in common with those which have recently been seen, because our minds do not move within the orbit of total war." This is, to apply a favorite phrase of the author, the real "predicament" to which the totalitarian war has brought the ruling classes of the British Empire today.

l. h.

CHALLENGE TO KARL MARX. By John Kenneth Turner. Reynal & Hitchcock. New York. (445pp.; \$3.50)

Despite his conviction that the "so-called 'crisis of capitalism' did not come about in the way and from the causes named by Marx," Mr. Turner thinks Marx's influence is still important enough to make an "accurate estimate" of his ideas more useful than ever. His estimate is summed up in the statement that Marx's "supreme conclusion"—the end of capitalism and the victory of the proletariat—proved to be false. Marx's most widely recognized mistake, he says, is the idea of the polarization of society into workers and capital-

ists in the wake of the concentration and centralization of capital accompanying its accumulation process. Marx wrongly thought that this process would cause the rates of profit to decline and thus lead to a sharpening of the social conflict, the development of class consciousness and, finally, to a revolution and a new society. This whole development Marx tried to explain with his labor theory of value which, in turn, was based on and supported by the evolution theories (Hegel and Darwin) current at Marx's time. The Marxian

dialectic, the idea of the inevitability of progress, is at the bottom of the whole Marxian thought. Marx's value and surplus value theory say the same things in economic terms. As this philosophy is a mere myth, all propositions stemming from it remain unrealistic.

From this position it should have been enough for Turner to refute Marx's philosophy. It is therefore difficult to see why he follows in such great detail all the wrong ideas flowing from Marx's mythical source, and why he attempts to oppose them with the acts of history. Turner admits, however, that "the item on which Marx was least wrong was the accumulation of capital;" only it did not simplify the class issue in the way Marx thought it would. But it is possible to quote from official and unofficial sources more convincing facts in favor of Marx's predictions than Turner is able to muster against them. The "persistence of the middle classes", of which Turner speaks, is, after all, only the defence of an ideological idiosyncrasy the more indulged in, the more its believers become proletarianized. "The infrequencies of crisis", which Turner holds against Marx, is just another expression for the relatively diminishing expansion of capital, that is, for more permanent crisis conditions. And if Turner hopes that, in spite of what Marx has said, the concentration of capital may soon be arrested because it leads to inefficiency in large-scale enterprises, this hope is based on no more than the mistaken assumption that concentration and centralization of capital and bigness of enterprise are the same.

Turner speaks of a "Marxian law of wages which permits of no general rise in living standards," and he believes that this non-existing Marxian wage law is "essential to the whole Marxian scheme of social progression leading to the destruction of capital." He thinks that Marx conceived price and value as identical quantities, and repeats the argument of the so-called "great contradiction" between the first and third volumes of *Capital* where Marx, in explaining the average rate of profit, supposedly aban-

doned "his proposition that the prices of individual commodities are fixed by labor time." But Marx could not identify price and value, as may be seen by the mere consideration that the law of value asserts itself for Marx by way of crisis and collapse. For Turner it is not a fact but just a "Marxian law" that there is a "progressive increase in constant capital in proportion to variable." Thus he does not accept the law of the falling rate of profit since Marx, he says, "cannot be correct both in his law of the falling rate of profit and his law of accumulation in a constantly growing progression." Either process would exclude the other. But he forgets that Marx did not believe in a constantly growing progression of capital expansion but in crises, stagnation, and collapse, and that the law of the falling rate of profit must be conceived in connection with the limited possibilities of and the unlimited need for exploitation that accompany capitalist development.

For Marx, Turner states, the market and competition were only modifying factors for capital development. For him they are the determining factors. He thinks, nevertheless, that Marx employs the "buying-back" argument of the overproduction theorists who restrict themselves to problems of distribution. If Marx shares their views, he must share also Turner's position that the market and competition are the determining economic factors. Yet this is not the case as Turner insists. There is, however, little need for pointing out additional inconsistencies in Turner's reasoning, because the whole economic argumentation seems to him to be of small importance. He believes that the social problem is a political and thus a psychological one. His positive suggestions restrict themselves to a "great educational crusade against an adulterated democracy on behalf of the genuine article." He feels that we "have solved all our pressing problems except that of our social relations," and that this latter may also be solved through a greater application of reason in the advancement of existing democracy.

Luenika