

over the Alps as does to Rome became strong enough, it revolted, and under the guise of Protestantism deprived the Catholic Church of its absolute power and much of its wealth. Since then Protestantism has become the State religion in this country and has acted as a useful prop to support and sanctify capitalism. It has preached the slavish doctrines of resignation and obedience to rulers as the royal road to paradise in a mythical world to come after death.

When the capitalism system was getting firmly upon its feet in the middle of the nineteenth century, children from six years of age were employed up to sixteen hours a day in the factory hells of that time, and the Churches did not raise a finger to interfere with this diabolical system. Wilberforce, one of the shining lights of the Church, even defended it.

Not a vote was given by bishops during the sixty years of the nineteenth century for the bills introduced by men like Lord Holland and Lord Lansdowne for the saving of life, and for the removal from the statute book of bloodthirsty laws, inhuman to decent and honest men.

In the worst days of the Industrial Revolution the bishops and the clergy, with few exceptions made no protest against the long hours and inhuman conditions of the factory or mine in which men, women and children were compelled to work to save themselves from starvation. This is where the ruling class in England consolidated its power and achieved its wealth.

At the same time as the Church was doing nothing to improve the lot of the working class in this country during that terrible period, it was nevertheless actively engaged in trying to convert the heathen abroad. Almost as important as the explorer and the trader in opening up new territories to capitalist exploitation was the missionary.

The missionaries and early colonists in Africa took away the freedom of the natives and gave them a system dependant on a wages system to which they were tied. Religion helped to make native races humble and obedient and taught them the great joys of a wages system.

Pope Leo XIII, in his Encyclical on the "Conditions of the Working Classes," put it officially on record that private property, rulers and ruled, and inequalities of wealth are in accordance with natural and divine law, and must always exist. Under the heading, "The Poor must accept their lot" the Encyclical says, "As for those who possess not the gifts of fortune, they are taught by the Church that in God's sight poverty is no disgrace, and that there is nothing to be ashamed of in seeking one's bread by labour."

Today, religion is a declining force, losing its hold more and more upon the minds of the people. Events have overtaken it and left it lumbering along behind. It sees its teachings and its congregations become steadily smaller.

"For the first time since Christianity was brought to Great Britain, the great majority of its people look upon religion as something irrelevant in their lives. There is very widespread indifference to the Christian faith and a wider ignorance about this faith," Archbishop of York in "In an Age of Revolution".

The efforts of its "progressives" and "rebels" do little to arrest this decline. Its efforts to bring the Church nearer to the people by trying to adopt a more interested attitude to economic and political problems have

little effect. After all, what are their reforms but milder variations of the petty nostrums of Labour and Liberal reformers? Their protests lead down to the usual ones we have heard so often before—of trying to improve things a little here and there. The fundamental cause of the problems facing the world—the capitalist system itself, they leave unquestioned.

Reluctantly and reluctantly, the Church is now trying to show that it is on the side of reform. But in the political field it is only one among many, as it has already begun to find out. The world is full of reformers nowadays, and parties like the Labour Party can do the never-ending job of chasing after reforms, and gain the working class to support them, much more effectively than the Church. In this connection, it is remembering the fate of the organisation that did try to combine religious revivalism with political reformism—the Commonwealth Party. In the wartime atmosphere of political harmony that enveloped the Labour and Conservative Parties for a little while, it was able to make a stir, but when the real test came on the political field "Commonwealth" was very soon extinguished as a political party and, indeed as an organised force altogether. And why? Because there is only one road for two parties along the reformist road—the Tories and the Labourites, both powerful enough to smother any new aspirants.

The Church will find that its new tactic of trying to win over the mass of apathetic people by pushing an organisation of social reform will come to naught. Apart from what we have said above, it is handicapped by its own teachings and traditions, which are fundamentally linked up with the interests of the ruling class. In the past the Church has faithfully played a part of consoling the slave and serving as a refuge for the oppressed. Dutifully it has held for centuries to the subjected and exploited about the joys and comforts of a life to come, as compensation for the sorrows and hardships of their life on earth.

But the working class has outgrown its present need for consolation. It has cast off its humility and its acceptance of things as "divinely ordained".

"The influence which the Church once had on the nation has diminished; religion is now the concern of a small section of its people, its aim for the whole of life is no longer made with confidence, and only very rarely treated as sacred" (In an Age of Revolution).

In such sombre colours does the Archbishop of York himself picture the situation of religion today.

The Church has now become a sort of "spiritual chemists-shop" offering various remedies and nostrums for societal ills, while the occasional confessions are a spring-cleaning for the conscience.

Religion is not nearly so important an issue as it once was. Capitalism is doing most of the work of filling the workers minds of religious ideas. Religion is an outlet which people resort to as compensation for the trials and tribulations of what they choose to call this "vale of tears"; it is the refuge of those who turn in despair from the problems that beset us under capitalism today. Against this doctrine of resignation, pessimism and hopelessness, the socialist message is one of hope and optimism.

Concluded Next Issue

Socialist Fulcrum

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AMBITION & SUCCESS



Russia And The History of Class Struggle

From the pages of the "Communist Manifesto" we learn "The (written) history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles - in the middle ages, Feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeyman apprentices, serfs, in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations" (1)

This materialist view of history is certainly true of Russia, as briefly outlined by David Floyd in his book (2). As far as he develops his theme Floyd is excellent as to the underlying, and by the Czar apparently ignored, developing economic causes of far reaching and swiftly moving changes. Several times Floyd even mentions Marx. But he, (Floyd), does not use any of the many historic examples which we, and still are, at hand to reveal this special 1905 Russian revolution as consistently in line, and linked, with general social evolution and revolution both before 1905 and since in many parts of the world. Also as being consistent with the Materialist Interpretation of History. He treats it as though it were a singular event in history. However within these limitations we briefly review Floyd's book and give credit where it is due even though he surely could have done better.

We read: "At the beginning of the 20th Century Russia was moving fast into the industrial era. The existence of an army of 120,000,000 impoverished and largely illiterate peasants was Russia's greatest single economic problem, which

continued to plague her rulers and which has even today, still not found a satisfactory solution." (2)

For sure this poverty and illiteracy was part of the economic problem of Russia—but by no means the main problem.

Really the main singular problem of illiterate Russia of the early 20th century was and remains the same as now exists—capitalism. Exactly the same problem that long has confounded the literate, semi-literate and even totally illiterate countries all over the modern world.

Was it not "literate" U.S. of A., England, Germany and Japan etc. which plunged into World Wars 1 and 2 along with "illiterate" Russia, India, China, etc.? These "literate" countries originated and developed the nightmare of the recurring bogies of world sweeping wars on land, on, and under the seas, and terror from the skyways: Incapable also of banishing the spectre of fluctuating to rising unemployment, of trade recessions and mass poverty which are forever haunting the developed (?) equally as much as the un or less developed illiterate nations of the world.

Really, in proportion that mass education becomes a national condition of existence within the framework of commodity producing economics, then an even greater pressure, and less excuseable, become the problems of that nation

relatively to the potential offered by such universal education.

Floyd tells us "The influx of large numbers of workers from the countryside, (a result of the nationwide breakdown of Russian feudalism), into the towns, which were badly equipped to house them and provide their needs, was a major social problem. Working conditions in the factories, which inherited some of the traditions of the days of serf labor, were appalling. The workers never put in less than 12, and were more often to work 16 to 18 hours each day." (2)

These twin aspects of dying feudalism and dynamic capitalism were already dealt with by Engels during 1844 in his book "Conditions of the English Working Class" in almost identical terms.

Another extract has a very familiar ring to that sounded out by Engels 70 years previous to Russia's 1905 revolution: Georgi Gapon—a priest and former prison chaplain and suspected police spy within labor organization, says: "I have often watched the crowds of poorly dressed and emaciated men and women going home from the factories. It was a terrible sight. Their grey faces looked dead, with only their eyes blazing, burning with the fire of desperate indignation, to liven them - After 15 or 20 years of such life both men and women often lose their ability to work and their jobs." (2) Once more a re-echo of

Engels, Maxim Gorky, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Trotsky, Lenin and other favour pre 1917 Russian writers all give testament to these observations of Gapon.

power is bought and sold, or remains unemployed able.

Horse guards repeatedly charged the gathering crowds. The latter continually opened up lanes through which the galloping horses harmlessly charged and closing behind the pass; horses the crowd continually kept reforming itself, kept increasing in volume and kept moving always onto the Palace. "An officer ordered his troops to fire into the crowd and after a few volleys the crowd turned and ran" (2)

(1) Marx & Engels. Engels in 1888 (or perhaps earlier) qualified the original C.M. view of history by interposing "That is all written history" is a history of class struggles see footnote to the Communist Manifesto, London 1888.

(2) David Floyd, author of "Russian Revolt - 1906. The first crack in the Empire of Czarist Russia" (Copies of this have been mailed off to other companion parties.)

(3) Marx: Capital Vol I Chap. VI.

C. Peter Furey
Melbourne, May 1978.

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**Praise The Lord And
Pass
The Graham Waters**

Well, Toronto has just lived through an eight day crusade (June 1-8) by Dr. Billy Graham. While not leaving the town apart with his religious double-talk, he did manage to attract about 200,000 people to hear his views.

On the television program "Back To Faith", aired on CFTO, Graham claimed to be a middle man for Jesus Christ. Dr. Graham said he, personally, couldn't save anyone but, after admitting to having built up a cult following, he just hopes to introduce people to Jesus. Kind of makes you feel like you're at a religious cocktail party, doesn't it?

Canada, Graham says, because of its place in world geography and the fact that it is central in world affairs (the "Hill") is ripe for a religious awakening. He claims it also could be a leader in a world-wide religious revival.

To top it off, Billy says he's in love with Toronto and hopes to come back soon. Perhaps the \$643,000 in donations helped him fall for good old Toronto. Unfortunately, Dr. Graham didn't have time to "clean up" the Young St strip, but I guess he said a passing prayer for it.

Stephen Lewis, former leader of the Ontario N.D.P., was overwhelmed and amazed at Graham's drawing capacity. Lewis (in an editorial on CITY T.V. CHANNEL 70) said, "Is it possible that Graham's crusade and religion in general, is more astounding than politics?" I think Mr. Lewis and his followers should come to realize that both the teachings of Billy Graham and the phony socialism of the N.D.P. are un sound. Graham will not do a thing for the workers. As for Lewis and the N.D.P. they only hinder the development of true socialism.

It is too bad that the Socialist Party of Canada and its rank, parties around the world didn't have \$143,000 in funds to buy time and space in the capitalist media. More importantly, the World Socialist Movement could reach a massive number of workers at one time because our message is a lot more valid and certainly more essential to mankind!

ONE NOTE: *Illustration: Jesus saves - Missionaries!*

Johnny Roberts

Yet this degraded view of themselves does make sense when it is remembered that as serfs, traditionally, they were regarded merely as a form of feudal estate laboring animal. When they were herded into factories this sentiment was sharply reinforced where these proletarians and/or their labor was classified as mere expendable commodities. No wonder they believed themselves merely to have the "appearance of human beings".

Though modified by the emergence of "moral and historical" (3) considerations, due to time and experience, this view socially and unavoidably, still prevails wherever commodity labor

Letters To The Editor

Need Socialism

Derrick Mallard has a case of sorts when he blames the comatose state of a majority of the electorate for allowing governments to control weeds and insects with harmful herbicides (letter, *Shout Louder*, *Times*, Aug. 3). But, strange as it may seem to the president of the Citizens' Association to Save the Environment, the electorate is being consistent in not mounting CASE's white charger to tilt at effects while ignoring causes. By voting for a continuation of the wages, prices, profit system the electorate has opted for a social disorder that cannot avoid poisoning the environment, both in the industrial and administrative sectors.

Production of goods for sale/profit on competitive local and world markets compels industries and their governments, short of destroying civilization, to pollute to minimize costs.

However, Mr. Mallard is wrong in assuming the absence of a public ecological morality. The public is not that apathetic, it merely identifies a solution to the problem within the system which causes it, or because of the failure of tinkering with effects, thinks nothing can be done. And this view may be one step ahead of that of the frantic apathy of the ecologists. But the electorate's political ignorance harmonizes with Mr. Mallard's in seeing an alleged classlessness in the present social structure. Or to use his expressive, "our governments," and "our ministers," including the false concept that governments can create employment or should responsibly explain to the exploited majority why they use cheap but harmful pesticides. As executive committees for the minority owning class alone, one of their duties is to maintain the classless facade.

The emotional and material requirements of the earth's population can easily be supplied with today's technology in a clean environment, if the means of life were directed to society's needs. This can happen when these means are commonly owned and democratically controlled. The impotency of reforms to this system will

be much more effective toward the political maturity required for the final pollution solution. For instance, the current beer strike has been driving hundreds of members of the drinking class to think.

J.G. Jenkins

Sharing Blame

Before one can become a teacher one must first be a student. This lesson seems to be lost on the *Times* editorial (*Teaching Civics*, July 29) as it bemoans that "25 per cent... (of British children) associated the socialist concept of nationalization with the Conservative party."

Ironically enough, these children are not far off the mark inasmuch as the Conservatives have probably implemented as much nationalization as other political parties throughout the world.

The greatest error lies with the editor's contention that nationalization is a socialist concept. In fact, for over one hundred years socialists have been critical of the concept of nationalization (state capitalism). Under it the commodity nature of capitalism remains and profits are drawn through bond dividends.

It is an ominous tribute to the capitalist brainwashing machines that it has managed to associate socialism with its very antithesis—state capitalism. On state ownership (nationalization) Frederick Engels had this to say: "the more does it become the total national capital, the more people does it exploit. The class struggle is in no way diminished. It is rather intensified." (*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*). It is a bit hypocritical of newspapers to bemoan political ignorance when they share in the authorship of that ignorance.

Larry Tickner

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

OBJECT The establishment of a type of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and for the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE

The Socialist Party of Canada holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e. land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent misappropriation of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from its domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and the democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom in emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exist only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocracy and plutocracy.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interest, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interest of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. That the Socialist Party of Canada therefore, within the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether aligned labour or avowedly capitalist, and call upon members of the working class to assist under this banner to the end that a speedy transformation be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Socialist Party of Canada
P.O. Box 4280V, Stn. A
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X8

A Tucson, Arizona Radio Broadcast
By the World Socialist Party - U.S.

Ambition And Success

The capitalist system of society engenders and instills within its youthful members aspirations for "success", and an unflagging ambition to climb the mystical, and somewhat elusive, ladder of fame and fortune to achieve comfort, riches and security. The seeds of ambition are subtly imbedded during early school years. The competition fostered in the educational system together with the distorted presentation of history, the emulation of leaders, national figures, sports heroes and famous people, all help to inspire the young, and virtually con them into a future commitment for hard work and diligence on behalf of the employing class, in order that they might ultimately find the proverbial pot of gold, which in modern day parlance can be equated with money, status and power.

And so the groundwork for the exploitation of wage labor is prepared initially through the educational system, and by false propaganda, that benumbs and misleads the mind when it is too immature to be discerning and too enthusiastic to be realistic. The unwritten code, operating in the interests of the ruling class, might well be: "get 'em when they're young; feed them religion, patriotism, glorification of war and its heroes; success stories of all the "captains of industry" that started from the bottom, and through hard work make it to the top; and by the time they grow old working in the factories, mines, mills, workshops, offices and stores they will have become so used to their enslavement, and resigned to their impoverishment, that the early dreams of success will have faded, and an adaptation to a monotonous lifetime of toil and drudgery will have been accomplished".

Simple arithmetic and logic will demolish the theory that hard work harnessed to ambition will result in the "sweet smell of success" for members of the working class. Approximately 9/10 of the population comprise workers who own nothing of economic consequence except their labor power. They have no legal right, title or control

over the means of production and distribution, and in order to survive they sell their labor power to the owning minority for wages. Viewed from a class standpoint, irrespective of how hard the workers might work, and how ambitious they might be, as long as capitalism exists the vast majority of the population will remain propertyless, alienated and divorced from ownership of the instruments for producing and distributing wealth. Nothing, short of socialism, can ever change or alter this fundamental position. We do not deny that it is possible, in rare instances, for individuals to graduate from the working class to the capitalist strata, but these are the most unique exceptions to the fate and destiny of the majority, and the price that is invariably paid, in the sacrifice of health and happiness, can well offset the material gains.

If the worker naively accepts the proposition that the capitalist is where he is as the result of hard work then the worker, by implication, condones the existence of the system that exploits him. Added to this he is further deluded into believing that given the proper circumstances he too might one day become a "club member".

It is of course quite true that the capitalist class are in their enviable position as the result of hard work - the hard work performed by the working class. The wealth of the capitalist class is assuredly the result of energies, brains and intelligence and these phenomena are contained within the labor power applied by workers. If hard work is the road to financial success then most members of the working class deserve to be millionaires, and if idleness and indolence are the causes of failure there exist many capitalists today who have a lot of explaining to do, because apparently they appear to be most "successful" notwithstanding these negative attributes.

As a matter of incontrovertible fact the harder the working class work the sooner will be divested contradiction of capitalism appear on the horizon overproduction amidst poverty.

Capitalism is a commodity system - goods and services are produced primarily for sale and profit, and markets unfortunately become saturated when an over-abundance of wealth has been produced - and this very situation arises because the workers have once again turned their advisors too seriously and literally they have worked hard, produced too much, and as a result the factory gates are closed and unemployment rears its well-known ugly head. This then is the ultimate reward offered by capitalist society for the many who have indulged in overwork and have allowed their "ambitions" unrestrained to way!

An article in the Wall Street Journal, December '76, describes what is referred to as the "Scardon Plan" which is a program operating in a manufacturing plant in Tennessee wherein bonuses are given each month to workers, providing a certain production level is reached. The plan is a supposed incentive for workers to work harder and to receive in return a higher wage through the monthly bonus. The idea is nothing new, and it is a method of increasing exploitation and deriving more surplus value through the employment of wage labor power. But the fallacy of the concept from a working class standpoint is illustrated by the caption heading the article, and I quote, "Hazard: Layoffs, Overwork," unquote. The article explains that the plan "hasn't a painless cure for productivity problems", and that "some employees complain that it causes both tremendous peer pressure to overwork and layoffs as productivity improves." The plant manager conceded that, and I quote "as productivity goes up, there are layoffs without increased sales", end of quote.

Those who think that a lifetime of hard work will bring their materialistic hopes and ambitions to fruition and that ultimately success will be theirs, are indulging in pipe dreams, and are living in a Workers Wonderland. The worker has no alternative, if he wishes to survive, but to work, and be sure he is

operating in a market economy his intensity of work, resulting in increased production, must lead inevitably to markets glutted with commodities and an increase in unemployment, and the harder he works the sooner is this accomplished.

At all times the worker is expected to be honest, and the socialist certainly does not suggest he should do otherwise. Legal acts are not the answer - but it is ironic that in the area of production the worker, when he produces value over and above the wages he receives, is being methodically and legally robbed by his employer. The worker is expected to enjoy his work, be grateful for his opportunities and ignore his miseries. And at all times, as and when the occasion demands, to support and indulge in whatever chicanery, humbug and deception are required in order that inferior quality products can be marketed, and by so doing enabling his employers to properly compete with their rival capitalists. Finally, when old age catches up with him, he can attempt to retire with a meagre pension or a so-called social security check that will prove to be a constant challenge for survival, and will make a mockery of his lifetime of toil by offering him a pittance on which to live.

There are some workers who after having been able to accumulate comparatively small sums of capital venture into a business of their own. But most such endeavours are doomed for failure. There is an astounding mortality rate in small businesses, and the optimism and capabilities of the entrepreneur is generally never sufficient to overcome the impossibility of successfully coping and competing with the existing established giants of industry and commerce. Irrespective of whatever economic level the worker is able to reach the inescapable fact always remains that his cost of living is barely met by his wage or salary, and most members of the working class spend the whole of their lifetimes in perpetual debt. This applies equally to skilled and unskilled, foremen and managers, and to workers who are at the bottom of the pay scale and those who supposedly are being "well remunerated".

According to a spokesman for a large Detroit bank, in a newspaper article of

September 1976, he stated that the typical U.S. wage earner makes \$3,847.00 but will still be at least \$500.00 in the hole by the end of every year. He simply doesn't have enough savings to last very long, to make the monthly payments on car and home. To those of you who earn less than this sum, which incidentally we are not prepared to accept as being a correct figure, you surely don't need us to remind you of how tragically difficult it is to survive under capitalism and maintain a family.

Yet another article written in December 1976 was headed "The Affluent Poor" and referred to the "American dream" turning into a national nightmare as families earning, and I quote, "hefty incomes of \$20,000.00 and more increasingly find themselves mired in debt", unquote.

The Los Angeles Times in November 1976 ran a story on a Canadian family where the head of the family was a sales manager for a foreign based company, earning about \$34,000.00 a year. They lived in Toronto, rented a 4 bedroom home, drove a 1972 car, and were just about making ends meet.

The true predicament of the working class is hidden and camouflaged, and the Socialist attempts to acquaint his fellows with a true perspective. There are legal documents of record that verify the ownership rights of the capitalist class but there are none reflecting the wage slavery of the working class. We are told that we are living in a "free society", whatever that ambiguous phrase might mean, and that with the proper assertion of our abilities opportunities abound. The gullible receive vicarious thrills when they hear of the riches and splendid life of a small privileged section of society, and imagine that similar good fortune might one day be theirs. We are told to regard adversities and woes as challenges, and that the threat of poverty and unemployment provides the incentive for hard work. The fairy tales of Genesis, Chapter 1 are matched and rivalled by the stories of hard working, ambitious, genius capitalists who, just like the Good Lord, started with nothing, and then created a financial empire. In fact, after hearing so many accounts of how people become rich beginning with "nothing", one might well get the impression that if you start out in life with "something" it's a disadvantage!

Reverting once again to simple arithmetic, if 9/10 of the population under capitalism are economically destined to be members of the working class how can we justifiably change ourselves, and adorn our past endeavours with recriminations and explanations of why we never quite "made the big time".

We urge our fellow workers to stop chasing will O' the wisp, and to face up to the harsh realities of a private property system that historically has outlived its usefulness. The solution to the social problems and evils of capitalism will not be found in competitive and futile attempts to "reach the top"; in endeavouring to acquire symbols of status, and in the process ruining your health, marriage, or becoming overburdened and crushed with debt.

The socialist has an ambition but it is harnessed to the world of scientific reality. The desire to help in the conversion of our fellow workers to the socialist cause in order that a politically conscious revolutionary majority can legally and peacefully establish a new order of society - Socialism. With one international declaration and enactment, reinforced by a socialist mandate, all men, women and children on the face of the earth will automatically and simultaneously arrive at the pinnacle of social success - they will own in common all the means of production and distribution, and will democratically control them for the benefit of society as a whole. They will receive the highest reward attainable, by abolishing the wages system and money and replacing these outmoded economic letters with free access to whatever they require, and together with this, the privilege and pleasure of contributing to society according to the best of their ability. This is socialism - let this objective be your cause, and devote your hard work and ambition to this end.

We look forward to hearing from you and unashamedly ask you to help us and yourselves in our tremendous task, and send us your contributions if you have the desire and can afford it. In any event make contact with us.

The World Of Make Believe

In our early childhood, when our mothers had time, they would on occasions read us stories from Grimm and Hans Andersen and other fairy tales. Today some mothers read to their children stories about "Winnie The Pooh" or the Muppets. These stories are very real to children who have a vivid imagination, and most children live in a world of fantasy. Today they also watch make believe characters on television, which also fan their imagination.

The tales we heard as children concerned our formative years. In fairy stories the good was always a beautiful princess or a handsome prince, while the bad was an ugly witch who lived among cobwebs, dirt and darkness and the good always triumphed over evil.

At school we were taught the history of kings, queens and heroes, and the "common people" were barely mentioned. We never had arithmetical problems showing us how to make ends meet during a depression. We sang "Rule Britannia" and that Britain ruled the waves, and that we would never, never be slaves. Later, some of us became inquisitive and learned otherwise, for we found that we were already slaves. Wage slaves in a hostile world.

We were taught that when we went out in the snow to earn a living, if we were conscientious and hard working (good character), we too would be a success (become wealthy).

During world war one we were told that we were fighting for a world fit for heroes to live in and in world war 2 we were told that we were fighting to make the world safe for democracy. Workers from childhood to adulthood have been misled in fairy stories all their lives. No wonder their thinking is confused.

It is unfortunate and tragic that workers actually believe the fairy stories which are dished out to them by politicians and the news media, although today workers seem to be more cynical, but they still hang on to ideas which in no way agrees with the real world.

In North America aggressiveness and rugged individualism was and is the accepted norm, which interpreted, means war or you are "hurt off" in the "rat race". It is true that some individuals "make it" if success is equated with money, power, influence and wealth, but the odds of doing this are astronomical. Of course, if you have aspirations of becoming a tycoon, you must have capital and employ labour in order to abstract surplus value to make a profit. Capital is not easy to come by and the competition in the business world is fierce, for thousands of small business go broke every year, but the custom of rugged individualism,

although tarnished in the present economic climate of escalating prices and high unemployment, still persists.

Workers desperately clutch at other will o' the wisps. They spend their money on Bingo, or buy government sponsored lottery tickets, which seems to be the last hope of the desperate, but the only people that are sure of making any money are the promoters, and they make millions.

It would be funny if it was not tragic, the capers that workers employ in supporting a society in which the "good times" can only be a promise of less anxiety, but never a taste of the better things in life - the high quality of living which is the prerogative of the rich.

We are all aware of the "bad times" in which anxiety mounts when mass unemployment stares workers in the face, and when they can no longer provide for their families. This anxiety is never felt by the smiling politicians you see on television, for they are the power seekers and manipulators, who represent the interests of the manufacturers and multinational corporations, who are the ruling class, and the politicians in the main are members of this power elite.

No wonder they smile, for they are firmly entrenched whether they hold the reins of government or not, and for centuries they have bamboozled the workers with their pie crust promises they almost never keep, or persuade workers to support issues which are not in working class interests, but, on the contrary, are often to their detriment. The ruling class and their henchmen, the politicians, have the power of the state to support their nefarious actions, and the state is, as Marx so aptly put it, "the public power of coercion". Why do you think the army and police force exist - to protect your little homes and few sticks of furniture?

What is not generally realized is this simple fact, the stores and the supermarkets are bursting at the seams with commodities which often we cannot buy because we are returned by the wages we receive. Yet socially the working class produce all the commodities. Do you not think the time is ripe, for the working class to assert themselves to satisfy their needs, and to hell with the wages system, which has caused so much crime, so much anxiety, and has prevented us the producers from having a full and enjoyable life.

Forget the fairy stories, turn off the television, and think about it. S.C.

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among the answers to questions for General Certificate of Education at advanced level was the following: Darwin's theory was based on three good solid points (six) (1) The struggle for the exists (2) survival of the fittest (3) material selection."

Gavin obviously is a passionate devotee of both Darwin, as a man and of natural evolution as a dynamic process. He writes a tremendous fascinating account of these two merging components. He has recently (1983) gained access to private papers, notebooks, letters, original works and other data previously unpublished. Skilfully, lovingly, he blends this in together with the outcome of ongoing research into modern chemistry, geology, genetics and other subjects related to evolution in general. (1) An additional attraction of this book is that Gavin lights up his favorite themes with many a lightening flash of buoyant good humor. (see above)

Much of the circumstances of Darwin's life, studies and work previously appear to have been under reported, read and rewritten in conflicting confusion. But now with Gavin's light, straight forward and clear. To the present writer, here 3 queries have been answered regarding Darwin's upward climb from the possible obscurity of a country paragon to world fame as a leading exponent on organic life.

The first of these

Malthus and Darwin and their Mutual Interaction

It is now clearly known the extent to which Darwin drew upon Malthus for his ideas on evolution. Malthus held the view that the human population continuously outgrows food supply (this during an age of food glut). Malthus further would have us believe that this would continue as a Divine Law for all eternity with no hope of improvement. Darwin as a young student seized upon this very point and adapted it to his own purpose. "I would (he writes) apply it not only to the population and depopulation but extermination and production of new forms (species)". There is irony in the fact that Malthus's aim was to prove that man was socially unimprovable, while Darwin used this one point only in his argument to show that all species can improve their adoptions. Darwin used Malthus's argument to show that mortality in the struggle for existence was the method by which nature enforced natural selection (1) Parson Malthus was unashamedly pro capitalist and anti working class. Yet Malthus, in his anti working class thesis, enabled Darwin to see how inexorably nature, among other causes, enforced natural selection through starvation.

(2) Mendel and His Genetic Discoveries

Gregor Mendel was a Augustian Abbot in an Austrian Monastery. Paradoxically he also was an ardent biologist and a

Honing Finer Still The Cutting Edge Of Darwins Theory

student of Darwin's Origin of the Species. He bred garden peas. He cross bred, hybrid, and retired them from the original stock. He carefully, noted, numbered and named all results over many generations of these peas and came out with broad, cross and accurately recurring generalisations of forms which he names genes. These were divided into dominant and recessive genes which can alter and even reverse roles as circumstances change. Mendel thereby discovered the underlying mechanics and mathematics of infinite individual differences and variations. Whereas he became aware of this he couldn't accept the view of the emergence of new species. Darwin on the other hand, was quite convinced of new species emerging through the connecting chain of individual differences, through variation and through the sub-species, but was not aware of the genetic mechanism of this movement.

But how did Darwin remain in ignorance of this contemporary valuable complimentary line of research?

Again Gavin answers: Both the lack of general interest in Mendel's finding and Darwin's lack of awareness of these findings was probably due to the divorce between the studies of Mathematics and biology during the Darwin period.

(1) Darwin himself, master of an imprecise science was equally imprecise in mathematics. Even so, his own research brought him within a hairsbreadth of independently making the same discovery as Mendel. Darwin failed to grasp the significance of what he was looking at.

(2) After several decades of further research and disputation along their diverse lines there emerged a harmonising, during the 1920's, of the Mendel school of genetics with Darwin's theory of natural evolution as applied to variation of species and of species themselves.

And now into the final of these three queries.

(3) Darwin and Marx.

Supurb as Darwin was, a vigorous, capable and courageous pioneer in many vital areas of natural evolution, he was a baby in the fields of social evolution and economics. These were as much a mystery to him as Genetics. Yet all three subjects were developing and evolving around him during his own life time. 1859 saw the last publication of Origin of Species. Marx also during the same year published (in German his own "Critique of Political Economy" to which he was able to write by way of introduction,

"What is called historical evolution depends in general on the fact that the latest form regards earlier ones as steps in the development of itself". Similarly, only when the self-critic of bourgeois society had begun, was bourgeois political economy able to understand its feudal, ancient and oriental economies." (2) This is a social parallel to Darwin's View of biology.

Darwin, in the main, solved the riddle of the differences between, and common origin of all species and banished God from the center of Creation. Marx unravelled the riddle of social evolution, alienation and class exploitation and banished, potentially, class rule from the earth, raised socialism from the intermediate stage of Utopian ideas to a science.

While Marx was fully alerted to the significance of the works of Darwin and had tremendous admiration for him, Darwin knew nothing of the works of Marx (and to his credit freely admitted this). Darwin wrote in a letter to Basil Von Echerzer: "What a foolish idea seems to prevail in Germany on the connection between Socialism and Evolution through Natural Selection". He wasn't aware that evolution applied also to society on society's own terms, nor did he know of those terms.

Marx, on the other hand, because of his tremendous admiration for Darwin wrote to the latter asking his permission to dedicate the English edition of Das Kapital (1879) to him. Darwin with great courtesy declined this offer from Marx, and replied his refusal was based not on political grounds but on his wish not to be associated with direct attacks against Christianity and theirism (1)

which brings us to: Paradoxes of Darwin

Throughout this book on Darwin there are several other paradoxes. Among these, religiously or orthodox evolutionists, predecessors and contemporaries of Darwin, and upon whom he relied so heavily for his data and methods, found themselves in open conflict with Darwin when he disposed of the need for Divine Intervention in the organic world. Gavin lists as the Supreme Paradox is when Darwin uses Lyell's own methods (expounded in Principles of Geology) to show Lyell's own views on biology were wrong. (2)

Darwin comes close to the view of the philosophy of Evolutionary Materialism when he asks: "Why is thought being a secretion of brain more wonderful than gravity a property of matter?" To which query we would answer: Gravitation is the universal influence in that it acts on all matter in proportion to the greater or

Letter From Jamaica

lesser man and inversely according to the distance. Human mind too, displays a similar infinite capacity in its endless searching out of the infinitely great, and infinitely little, including tangible and intangible problems. Both too, equally, are forces of nature: human thinking is further extended in that it is also a social product and force.

"Civilized nations have all once been barbarous, and historical evidence for ethical progress confirmed Darwin in his belief that "all morality has grown up evolution". Ethical behaviour can be seen to develop in individuals and to have evolved in societies" (1)

Morality of course is to be found in even the most savage of human, and even lower down the scale of evolution, in animal societies. The main single basis for morality is for that line of conduct and attitude that tends best to continue the perpetuation of the specie. But social morality of tribal Communism broke down and became converted with the evolution of society into a two class structure. Morality likewise became divided with the emergence of slave and slave master; serf and landowner, wage-labor and capitalist. While this lasts the dominant genes of morality are morality of the ruling class: the recessive genes of morality belong to the subordinate, slave, or wage working class. Along with morality go ideas. And from Marx we learn that "The ruling ideas of an epoch are the ideas (morality etc.) of its ruling class" (2)

One final paradox ends this article: Mendel and Malthus two professional Divines and Darwin himself originally similarly inclined and from a highly religious family, and A.R. Wallace, later in his life returned to the faith as a practicing believing spiritualist, - all four of these men individually, diversely and collectively immensely aided in the building up of the case for organic evolution, - an anti theologic concept. Surely a classical example of Marx's famous Negation of negation.

C Peter Furey

(1) Charles Darwin 'evolution by Natural Selection'

(2) Critique of Political Economy, Moscow Edition, page 211
1970 Moscow publication.

What Is Socialism?

If you work for wages it is not socialism. If goods and services are sold in the market place with a view to profit it is not socialism. If the world is divided into nations, it is not socialism. If there is any kind of government over people it is not socialism. Unless each man, woman or child in the world has free access to all goods and services it is not socialism.

We are literally going through hell fire out here under Michael Manley's kind of "socialism". Another devaluation has just been effected making it the third since the year started. This last one seems to be a precondition to get

the IMF assistance (International Monetary Fund). The cost of living is now reaching horrible proportions, against the background of a country with massive unemployment. Almost forty percent of the work force is now without jobs!

Crime continues to be an attractive occupation for young people, it is as if they know what Oscar Wilde once said, "It is more noble to steal than beg." On a more dangerous level criminal gunmen are now totally professional; they are now an accepted part of society. We have degenerated into being a completely brute force nation; disillusion is widespread. Manley plays on as if nothing has happened, although there is now an exodus from his party, and government people at the top. Recently his deputy Prime Minister and Minister of finance resigned from the party, and his post in the government. When I think of the number of people killed by the callousness of politicians it makes me shudder, and wonder at the road of our civilization.

LATER

The IMF loan has been secured. Following on the agreement was another round of price increases on basic items. They are telling us that we are living too well! Consuming without producing. The economy must be deflated and the way to do that is to tax the things that the people need the most. You can imagine the condition of the unemployed, and lower paid workers. The government itself has thought of this, they say it is necessary for us to struggle! Apparently they mean that we should face the prospect of starvation cheerfully. As this is necessary now, so that things can be much better later. Talk about symptoms of madness, is there anything more interesting?

JACK JONES

unDEMOCRATIC unSOCIALISTS

Of interest to socialists was the news of a "Socialist International" in Vancouver, Nov. 3 - 5. The Socialist Party of Canada wondered why no invitation had been sent it. Looking over the roster of speakers it was easy to see why: people like Willy Brandt of the German Social Democratic Party and Ed Broadbent of Canada's New Democratic Party. Nevertheless the General Executive Committee felt there should be at least one Socialist at the conference and decided to send Larry Tucker to represent the party. This would be in order, according to information circulated from the "Socialist International" in London.

The experience at the posh Hyatt Regency Hotel where the conference was being held was something again. Comrade Tucker was informed that only N.D.P. members would be admitted and he would not be admitted to the conference in any capacity - delegate, observer et al! He then enquired if he could distribute Socialist literature outside the conference and was told no that he would have to leave the hotel. Comrade Tucker subsequently contented himself to distribute literature outside in the rain.

A weird sort of harassment ensued. Three separate individuals visited him and explained at great length how he was allowed to distribute literature on the street. Out of utter frustration Tucker finally said, he wasn't in Germany and he won't need any jackboot to tell him what he could do on the street. The local press gave the incident some coverage. It also made some unfavourable impression on some of the visitors, not yet accustomed to the "New Democracy" of usened socialists.

IN THE NEWS

Bigger "Red" Chinese Profits
From the Nov. 78 PREVENTION magazine comes a report on the mainland Chinese government's desire to emulate western capitalist methods of quickly and cheaply refueling its working class, so that the task that is demanded of a modern private property society may be more efficiently carried out.

One Big Ming, Please.

When our editor, Bob Rodale, went to China a few years ago, he was very much impressed by the culinary skill of his Chinese hosts, who frequently put on lengthy dinners featuring one fancy dish after another.

In the near future, though, a visitor to that country might be shocked to discover his host taking him out to lunch to enjoy a Big Ming.

Yes, honorable reader, China is switching to fast food. And not because the Big Mac people or Burger Emperor are selling franchises. It's the new official policy of the Chinese government. And in China, government policies have a way of getting carried out fast indeed, if not instantly.

According to an article in the International Herald Tribune, a Chinese newspaper has urged readers to abandon homemade steamed dumplings and other traditional meals in favor of convenience foods, such as dehydrated rice, mass-produced noodles and packaged dinners.

The idea, says the article, is that getting people out of the kitchen, whether at home or in restaurants, means more people spending more time in factories.

The Chinese newspaper called the People's Daily made a special pitch

to women, claiming that by substituting instant noodles and store-baked bread for the home-cooked rice dishes and cakes that are the staple of most diets, they could have more spare time to study and rest. And, oh, if they felt like working in a factory for a while, that would be okay too.

The government seems pretty serious about this new policy, and Western observers say that in Peking today, nearly every market sells prepackaged food, in some cases even selling precooked combinations that have been dubbed "Chinese TV dinners."

According to one journalist, "You stand in a long line, tell the clerk which combination you prefer, and then he scoops everything—an egg, vegetables, seasonings, perhaps a little meat—and dumps it into an old issue of the People's Daily that is rolled up like a cone. Everything is ready for the work."

Now, if they would just give you a little plastic envelope filled with hot mustard on the side, it would be just like home.

Dear Comrades:

I am doing research for a Labor History paper, and perhaps other work(s) on the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. Any material or information not likely to be found in libraries or archives would be appreciated.

In researching the old Western Clarion in the B.C. Legislative Library a number of issues are found to be missing. The journal eventually became the journal of the old S.P.C. It would be helpful if anyone could loan

the missing issues. This would aid in future planned research as well as helping to complete the Legislative Library's collection. The issues can be microfilmed and returned to the owner. The missing issues of the Western Clarion are: All of the issues from its founding in 1902 until June 18/04, June 25/04, July 2/04, July 23/04, Sept 17/04 to Mar 4/05, July 26/05, Sept 2/05, Dec 30/05, June 25/04, Jan 6/06, Mar 10/06, Jan 26/07, Apr 6/07, May 4/07, May 18/07, June 07, Feb 1/08 to May 1/09, Apr 26/13, July 12/13. All issues Jan 10/14 until wartime censorship caused replacement by Red Flag and to Jan 6/20, Feb 15/21, Mar 1/21, Mar 16/21, Dec 16/21, Jan 15/22, May 15/22 to June 15/22, Oct 1/23 to Jan 15/24, Mar 1/24 on?

Although, at present, the research on the old S.P.C., I do run into some interesting items by and about the old party. It appears the old party was quite a mixed bag, ranging from reformists, syndicalists, direct actionists to what seem to have been very sound socialists. Naturally, in an atmosphere such as this, there were times almost as much energy was spent criticizing each other as capitalism. Nevertheless some of these writings make interesting reading. Some of it is almost prophetic.

Out of that, and other aged writings it is my intention to offer a column entitled "Vintage Views." Since the column will be mainly the writings of others with minimal interspersed comments it will not bear the collector's signature.

Please address all research material through the S.P.C., P.O. Box 4286, Stn. A, Victoria, B.C., V6X 3X8

Yours for socialism
Larry Ticker

Christianity and Socialism

Part 10 Conclusion

The modern apologists

MOST CHRISTIAN apologists have very little to offer.

In the thousands of books written by bishops, priests, religious journalists and lay preachers, they all attempt to bring Christianity up-to-date, by trying to adapt it to modern economic conditions.

Their method is to unite the fundamentals of their

religion (as in the Apostles' creed) and emphasize the "do good to others" aspects.

Many of them would like to dump the biblical miracles, the virgin birth, crucifixion, resurrection and the promises of after life. But Christianity without these emotional trimmings would be like Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. None of the writings of these reformers contain anything enlightening.

However suitable Christianity was under slavery, it is completely anachronistic to twentieth century capitalism.

Among the many modern Christian confusionists is the Jehovah Witness organisation: a group of arrogant believers who make up in enthusiasm for what they lack in knowledge. They appear to be very successful as a publishing and propaganda body, especially in the developed lands. They have apparently no intention of reforming matters, but rather in preserving the status quo of ancient beliefs. Recently they have produced their own Bible, minus a few of the most glaring mistakes which have no doubt been thrown up against them in the past. They make no claim that their new translation of the scriptures was inspired.

During the last 50 years several new translations of the Bible have been issued. If the various Christian factions took any of this seriously it could lead to a religious upheaval, and if it had occurred in the Middle Ages it would have inevitably ended in another 30 years war. But nobody takes any notice of it today.

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The Christadelphians, a somewhat similar group to the Jehovah Witness are also tied to the Bible. There are dozens of lesser groups and Bible associations who carry on tract propaganda mostly on the basis of "Jesus only", or "the Bible, the Word of God"

The Christian Scientists are entitled to be called Christians, for they subscribe to the Christian mythology. They are not scientists in any way for the basic principles of science are not known to them, otherwise how could they believe in the scriptures?

Of recent years a whole lot of "Jesus cranks" or "Jesus freaks" as they are called have sprung up in America—mostly claiming the same old story that others have long since abandoned. The film "Jesus Christ Super Star" and similar ones have added to the confusion. These films are not intended to teach Christianity, nor to lead us back to God; but like everything else under capitalism, they are produced to make profit. The producers are not concerned whether they praise or debunk religion. Most of them play it very cool so as not to offend possible supporters, and because of that these films are colourless and meaningless, and "all things to all men."

There are the "Children of God" and other groups of young people who live in communes. They are heterogeneous collections of youths, often drop-outs, drug addicts, college failures and frustrated adolescents who believe in the Jesus cult. They abandon their homes and parents for various reasons. These spiritual misfits are a product of an age of intellectual and cultural degeneration. Some of them think they are socialists, but they only do a disservice to socialism by spread-

ing their spiritual ambiguity.

The mass of religious splinter groups in America—like the monks of the priests and evangelists, emphasise leading a good life and helping others; they maintain belief in the essence of the Christian mythology, as exemplified in the Apostles' Creed. They have therefore in effect abandoned Christianity. The Ambassador College Press (another American religious business) publishes the "Plain Truth" magazine, a well illustrated monthly which circulates thousands of copies free. It contains no advertisements and deals with many aspects of world problems—including pollution, war, conservation, health, etc., in fact anything that is topical. The solution for all the problems of society is of course, Christianity and the Bible. The organisation carries on an extensive broadcasting programme—all to sell Jesus to the modern world, and to provide a comfortable living for those engaged in this particular branch of the god-business.

Billy Graham—the latest of a long line of similar campaigners which included Amy McPherson, Billy Sunday, Father Divine (all American incidentally) worked up a lot of enthusiasm as well as fame and fortune from evangelism.

Recently a new divine has appeared on the religious horizon—Guru Maharaj Ji, a young man emanating from India, a land riddled with superstition. He has likewise established his brand of the religious business in the gullible and profitable U.S.A. He gets as near to claiming he is God as it is humanly possible, and what he does not or dares not claim for himself, his followers do the necessary for him.

Most of these revival groups die with their leader, although the Quakers (Society of Friends); the Shakers, so called because of their ecstatic and emotional shaking; the Adventists; the Christadelphians; the Plymouth Brethren; and the Mormons (Latter-day Saints), are like Tennyson's "Book" — they seem to go on for ever.

The Mormons were a product of the nightmares of a fifteen year old boy Joseph Smith, who claimed that God in a vision told him that all existing Christian churches were fraudulent, and that he was chosen to found the only true church. He was instructed (so he said) to unearth a set of golden plates and translate them. This he did and it became the "Book of the Mormons" and is accepted as holy scripture in addition to the Bible. It tells how a group of Hebrews migrated from Jerusalem to America in 600 B.C., and how Jesus Christ later appeared there — centuries before Columbus. The golden plates have long since conveniently disappeared, but a thriving business has been built up in the U.S. around this myth.

The economics of Christianity

CHRISTIANITY WAS adopted as the official religion of the Roman Empire by Constantine the Great at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. Constantine was reported to have killed his son and strangled his wife, but he accepted Christianity because he thought it was the most suitable religion for the slaves upon which

the Roman Empire was built. At that time, many slaves were revolting and needed curbing if Rome was to survive. Christianity offered just that possibility.

Under slavery it was the obligation of the slave owner to feed his slave. Hundreds of slaves had already been freed as Rome had too many. Once freed the former slave had to live, but free men could not compete with slave labour, consequently these free men had no alternative but to fight against the Roman order.

During this period Rome was being assailed by the Goths, Ostrogoths and Huns, as well as the soldiers from former empires which Rome had over-run. Rome was indeed in serious trouble and this influenced Constantine in his choice of a religion to hold the slaves down and the empire together.

Christianity presented itself as a "hotch-potch" of religion or a "cemetery of dead religions," for as the slaves were brought to Rome from many different countries, they brought with them their religious ideas.

Prof. Seeley wrote: "The age was religious because it was an age of servitude and the Christian teachings of blessed are the meek, the humble, and the merciful, fitted very well into the needs of society at the time. Christianity produced a complete change in the attitude of the people to the Emperor. It made their loyalty more intense" (Lectures and Essays).

The New Testament admirably says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers that are ordained by God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to them damnation." (Roman 13.1). This is confirmation of the Christian acceptance of the old dictum, "Slaves obey your masters!"

The Roman Empire was already crumbling when Christianity was ushered in, and some spiritual opium was needed to quieten the slaves against revolt. Were it not for Constantine—and of course the need to pacify the slaves under the Roman yoke, Christianity might have disappeared, as did so many other religions. The promise of Christ "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away before these things be fulfilled" (Matt. 24.34) had not been achieved. The time limit (this generation), had expired, and the people knew that Christ was not the true Messiah for which they had been waiting.

In the Middle Ages, since the church owned most of the land, they had a considerable amount of real economic control in their hands, for he who controlled the land, controlled most of what was on it.

In more recent times we have the power of the Catholic political parties in pre- and post-Nazi Germany; while Italy, France, Spain, Austria, Eire, Central and South America have remained Catholic strongholds. The controlling of education by the church is exemplified in the Jesuits who proclaimed "Give us the child for the first five years of its life—you can do what you like after," which shows their knowledge of the power of religious indoctrination.

The many Catholic newspapers, magazines and publishing houses throughout the world ensures and strengthens the influence of the Catholic church. Even the Watchtower magazine of the Jehovah Witness organisation has a 6,000,000 circulation in 25 different languages.

When capitalism was developing, missionaries played an important part in paving the way for the trade that was to follow. The African natives, some of whom were

discovered, were told by the missionaries that God frowned on nudity, and that to be a good Christian and qualify for Heaven, they should at least cover their genitals. They possessed no clothing with which to gain the favours of God, but they did have some pieces of gold, diamonds and ivory tusks. As *Chicago* would have it, Lancashire had plenty of cheap pyjamas in all the colours of the rainbow—which no self-respecting Englishman would wear even in bed. They guess what happened? Yes, trade started. No wonder they named parts of Africa the "Gold Coast" and the "Ivory Coast." Where the missionaries did not conduct the trade themselves, an enterprising trader followed them around Bible in one hand and Union Jack in the other.

"Look up to heaven," said the missionary to the natives, and the latter did so; when they looked down again, their goods and chattels were appropriated. As the Zulus say: "When white man first came to us, he had the Bible, and we owned the land. Now we've got the Bible and he owns the land."

Bishops and other church dignitaries have become in some cases fabulously rich, so rich that many invested thousands of pounds in armament firms and other industries (See Alan Handsacre's "The Revenues of Religion").

Marx claimed that the Church of England would prefer to give away 38 of the 39 articles which founded its constitution, rather than to give away one thirty-ninth of its property. The churches have amassed huge fortunes; they control investments in all kinds of property including land and many slum tenements. Were it not for the ceaseless propaganda from the press and radio, religion would soon lose its influence, for on the merits of the case, few would be so stupid as to subscribe to it.

Religion and the materialist conception of history

ENGELS WROTE in the preface of the Communist Manifesto (1848):-

"In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch."

This means that the cultural ideas, religious, scientific, juridical and artistic, etc. are rooted in the mode of production. It follows, that in a period of social revolution, when one mode of production is being replaced by another (feudalism by capitalism for example), there will be a correspondingly massive upheaval in man's ideas and in the ways in which they interpret the world. It is in this way that Marxists explain phenomena such as the Reformation. The Protestant Ethic for example, is brilliantly adapted to the needs of the rising capitalist class, in the same way that the ideology of the Catholic Church formed one of the

* See *Foundation of Christianity* by Karl Kautsky.

mainstays of feudal society. Thus Reformation and Catholic backlash represented the struggle between feudalism and capitalism being fought out on the battlefield of ideas, with religious interpretation and dogmas as the weapons.

Let us look at religion in terms of the social function it fulfils. The role played by Catholicism under feudal conditions and the evolving protestantism in the developing capitalism is clear, but what can be said of religion in relation to the modern working class? Today the average man or woman in the highly industrial countries is completely apathetic towards religion; religion has about as much relevance as the phlogiston theory. Of course, this has not always been the case, even under capitalism. When Marx was writing a hundred years ago, it was quite reasonable for him to refer to religion as "opium for the people." At that time the majority of the working class was still riddled with religion, and socialists had the task of exposing these superstitions. This was especially necessary because organised religion was an unshamed and valiant defender of privilege and private property. This was shown by the attacks of the Popes of the time (and other church dignitaries) on the mild reforms for which the social democratic parties were campaigning.

Today it is different. In Britain, religion is only an insignificant weapon in the hands of the ruling class—except on special occasions like those which arise during war time. After all, who takes any notice of what the Archbishop of Canterbury or Cardinal Heenan have to say? Even the late Dean of Canterbury, Hewlett Johnson (the Red dean) was all confused between his religious views and the propaganda of the Soviet Union, which was at times embarrassing both to the Communist Party and to the church.

It ought to be clear that Socialism does not merely represent a new and more rational society which is therefore worth struggling for. If that were all, socialists would be another bunch of utopians. Socialism instead represents an integrated philosophical system, and analysis of capitalism and previous social orders, which serves as a guide to revolutionary activity to liberate the working class. The person who finds Socialism attractive merely because it appeals to his moral sense, who thinks in terms of "good" and "bad" or applies similar standards to capitalism, is likely to be led up all sorts of garden paths by his unhistorical approach.

Of course, not all countries have reached the level of understanding the real position of religion as Britain. In Ireland, for example, religion is still in the turmoil which England threw off centuries ago. Many Irish Catholics see no contradiction between Catholicism and Socialism, and so claim that they are both Catholics and Socialists. This is principally because whatever they understand by the term Catholic, they have only vague ideas of what constitutes Socialism. Socialism means that land and industry will be owned by the whole community; and the use of the land and industry will be under the democratic control of the community. Buying and selling will come to an end; wealth will be produced solely and directly to satisfy man's needs. Each individual will have free access to wealth according to his needs. The wages system will be replaced by voluntary work. All frontiers will be abolished and all armed forces disbanded.

Neither the Catholic church nor any other church could endorse this. The churches all support the private ownership of wealth including the means of production. They all accept the wages system, and the profit

motive in society. They never suggested that the fruits of industry should belong to the producers, or that the workers shall inherit the earth. Pope Pius XI in his encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" 1931 said: "No man can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a Socialist." Socialists would say that nobody can be a Christian of any denomination (or a believer in any form of religion) and a Socialist. He either serves God, and the mystical dream world of the past, or present-day society.

There are many other socialist views, for example on human nature, education, marriage and the class struggle, which Catholics strongly denounce.

Catholic democracy has been defined on "the government of the people by the Pope and for the Pope!" Many parallels has been drawn between the Catholics and the Communists (Soviet brand). Both are believers in authoritative regimes where questions must not be asked and where free expression of opinion not permitted.

Acceptance of scientific materialism—that the origin and development of the universe, of life, of man, of human society and religion itself, can be explained adequately without recourse to the so-called supernatural—is an integral part of socialist theory. A socialist party is made up of fully convinced socialists. To admit people who merely want Socialism because they think it morally right or because "it fulfils God's plan" (whatever that may be), would be to run the risk of eventually ceasing to be a socialist party at all. The Socialist Party of Great Britain may have been dubbed the "Small Party of Good Boys" because of its membership — but it is the only political party one cannot join by signing one's name on a form. Every member must understand and subscribe to the party's "Declaration of Principles". This honest affirmation has limited the party's numerical growth, but it has kept it from drifting away from Socialism. "For many are called, but few are chosen." (Matt. 22:14).

One of the mistakes made by the old Social Democratic parties of Europe which had a paper commitment to Marxism, when they proclaimed religion was a "private matter" was the refusal to engage in anti-religious education. A mistake which is now being committed in Ireland—and for the same reason—by the People's Democracy of that country.

Ramsay MacDonald proclaimed that a man's religion is like the colour of his hair; it has nothing to do with socialism. This position is a dangerous one, for religion is a social question which Socialists must face openly. Like racialism and nationalism, it is one of the delusions held by the workers which stands in the way of the spread of socialist understanding. Therefore, opposition to religious ideas and institutions must be a part of socialist education.

There are plenty of arguments against religion, and perhaps the chief one is that religion is false, and discourages serious thought and the desire to solve the realities presented by modern society. It is based on believing absurdities of no value to mankind.

Socialism on the other hand, is based on understanding—understanding the position of the world today, analysing this position and constructing a plan for adjusting and correcting the things in this world. There can be no link up between a philosophy based on belief in the next world, and one based on understanding of the economics of this world. Nobody can therefore be a Christian and a Socialist.

"For too long" wrote Marx, "has religion explained history, let us with history explain religion."

What Is Socialism?

If you work for wages it is not socialism. If goods and services are sold in the market place with a view to profit it is not socialism. If the world is divided into nations, it is not socialism. If there is any kind of government over people it is not socialism. Unless each man, woman or child in the world has free access to all goods and services it is not socialism.

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From a pamphlet *China and the Socialist Revolution* by Kiang Kang Hu, National Secretary of the Socialist Party of China. Published in San Francisco, 1910.
(From the Socialist Standard, Dec:73)

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(Daily Colonist, Feb. 9/78)

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