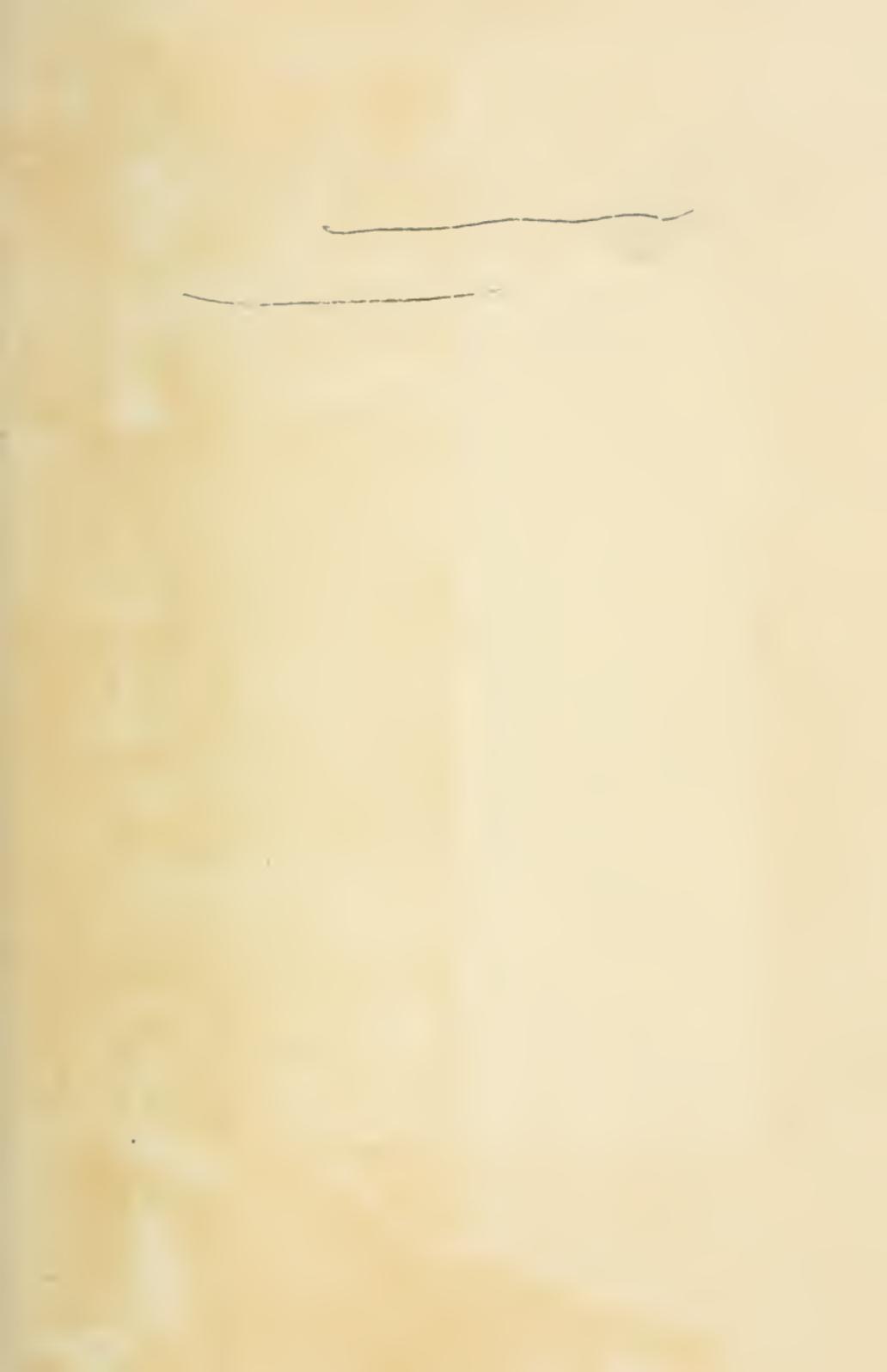


THE NEW POLICIES OF SOVIET RUSSIA





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES



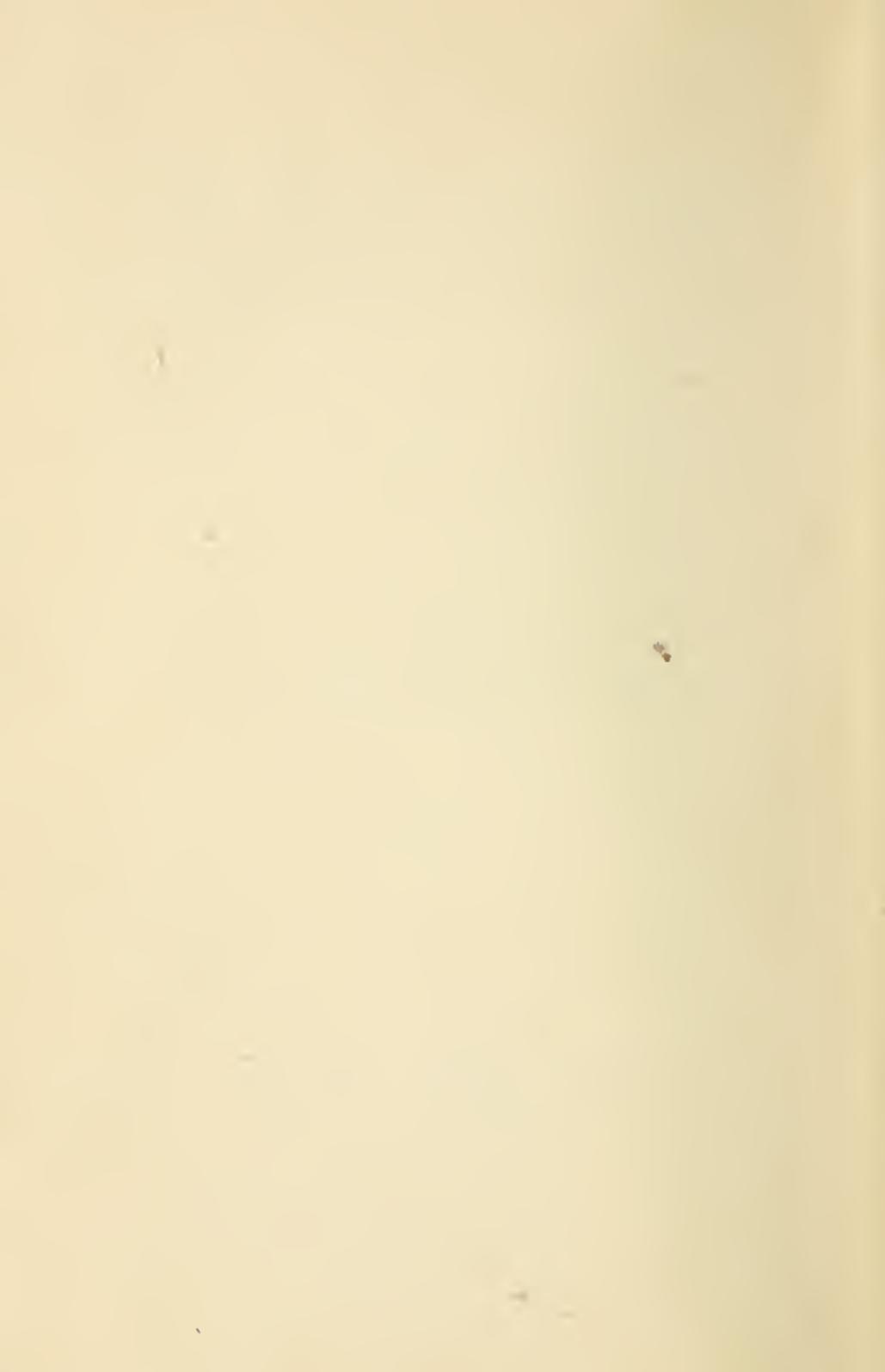


THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY OF
SOVIET RUSSIA.

THE NEW POLICIES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

By
LENIN: BUKHARIN: RUTGERS

CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
CO-OPERATIVE



DK
254
L5n

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE MEANING OF THE AGRICULTURAL TAX, BY N. LENIN	9
THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY OF SOVIET RUSSIA, BY N. BUKHARIN	43
THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, BY S. J. RUTGERS	65

THE MEANING OF THE
AGRICULTURAL TAX.

THE MEANING OF THE AGRICULTURAL TAX.

BY N. LENIN.

The question of the Agricultural Tax at the present moment is attracting considerable attention and is the subject of considerable discussion. This is quite understandable, for it is indeed one of the most important questions of policy under the present conditions.

It will be all the more useful, therefore, to attempt to approach this question, not from its "everyday aspect," but from the point of view of principle; in other words, to examine the background upon which we are sketching the plan of the definite, practical measures of policy of the present day.

In order to make this attempt, I will quote from one of my pamphlets published in 1918. The polemic is now unnecessary, and I leave it out, but I retain what relates to the discussion of "State Capitalism" and to the basic elements of the economics of the present period of transition from Capitalism to Socialism.

This is what I wrote:

The Present Economic Position of Russia

“. . . State Capitalism would be a step in advance in the present state of affairs of our Soviet Republic. If, for example, State Capitalism could establish itself here during the next six months, it would be an excellent thing and a sure guarantee that within a year Socialism will have established itself and become invincible.”

I can imagine the noble indignation with which some will scorn these words. What! The transition to *Capitalism* in a Soviet Socialist Republic a step in advance? . . . Is this not a betrayal of Socialism? It is precisely with this point that one must deal in detail.

There is not a single person, it seems to me, who, examining the economics of Russia, would deny their transitional character. There is not a Communist, it seems to me, who would deny that the expression Socialist Soviet Republic means the determination of the Soviet Power to realize the transition to Socialism, and does not by any means signify that the present economic order is regarded as

Socialistic. What is the meaning of the word—transition? Does it mean, when applied to economics, that in the present system there are elements “partly capitalist and partly Socialist”? Everybody will realize that this is so, but not everybody who realizes this thinks of the numerous kinds of elements, of the various socio-economic strata, which we have in Russia. And this is the very crux of the question.

Let us enumerate these elements :

1. Patriarchal, i. e., to a large degree primitive, peasant production.
2. Small commodity production. (This includes the majority of peasants who sell grain.)
3. Private Capitalism.
4. State Capitalism.
5. Socialism.

Russia is so large and so varied that all these varying types of socio-economic strata are interlayed in it. The peculiarity of the position lies precisely in this fact.

The question is, which is the predominating element? It is clear that in a petty peasant environment nothing but petty bourgeois ideas

can prevail. The majority—and the vast majority at that—of the peasants are small-commodity producers. Our outer shell of State Capitalism (grain monopoly, control of manufactures, merchants and bourgeois co-operative societies) is broken, first in one place and then in another, by *speculators*, and the chief article of speculation is *grain*.

The main struggle develops precisely in this sphere. Between whom is this struggle conducted? Is it between the fourth and the fifth elements in the order in which I have enumerated them above? Certainly not. It is not a struggle between State Capitalism and Socialism, but a struggle of the petty bourgeoisie plus private Capitalism fighting against State Capitalism and Socialism. The petty bourgeoisie resists every form of State interference and control, no matter whether it is State Capitalism or State Socialism. This is an absolutely indisputable fact, and the failure to understand it lies at the root of quite a number of economic errors.

The speculator is our chief enemy from within, and works against every form of Soviet economic policy. Even if it was excus-

able for the French, 125 years ago, to attempt to rid themselves of speculation by executing a small number of notorious individuals, we know only too well that the economic cause of speculation lies in small Capitalism and private industrial enterprise, and that every tiny capitalist is an agent of the latter.

We know that the million tentacles of petty bourgeoisism grasp, in many places, certain sections of the workers themselves.

Those who do not see this reveal by their blindness their servitude to the petty bourgeois prejudices.

State Capitalism is incomparably higher *economically* than our present economic system—that is one point; and secondly, there is nothing in it that is terrible for the Soviet Government, for the Soviet State is a State which guarantees power to the workers and the poor.

In order to make this question clear, I will, first of all, quote a concrete example of State Capitalism. Everybody will know this example: Germany. Here we have “the last word” in modern, large capitalist technique and systematic organization subordinated to

junker-bourgeois imperialism. In place of the military, junker, bourgeois imperialist State put another State, a State of another social type, a State with a different class content, a Soviet, i. e., a proletarian State, and you will get the sum of conditions which gives Socialism.

Socialism is impossible without large capitalist technique constructed according to the last word in science, without systematic State organization subjecting millions of people to the strict observation of a uniform standard of production and distribution of products. We Marxists have always said this, and it is hardly worth wasting even two seconds in arguing this point with people who do not understand it, like Anarchists and the greater part of the Social Revolutionaries.

Moreover, Socialism is impossible without the domination of the proletariat in the State; this is also pure A B C. History (which nobody except the leading Menshevik dullards expected would smoothly, peacefully, simply and easily produce "complete Socialism") has proceeded in such a peculiar fashion that, in 1918, it gave birth to two separated halves of

Socialism, like two chickens born within the same shell of international imperialism. Germany and Russia in 1918 embodied in themselves, on the one hand the most obviously materially realized economic, industrial and social conditions, and on the other hand the political conditions for Socialism.

A victorious proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and with tremendous ease smash the whole shell of imperialism (unfortunately constructed of the finest steel and therefore unbreakable by any kind of "chicken"), and would for certain bring about a victory of world Socialism without, or with very little, difficulty, granting of course, that "difficult" is understood not in a narrow sense, but from a universal-historical point of view.

If the revolution in Germany is delayed our task becomes clear, to learn State Capitalism from the Germans, and to exert all our efforts to acquire it. We must not spare any dictatorial methods in hastening the Westernization of barbarous Russia, and stick at no barbarous measures to combat barbarism.

At the present moment in Russia it is pre-

cisely petty bourgeois Capitalism that predominates, from which *a single road, through the same intervening stations called national accounting and control* of production and distribution, leads both to State Capitalism and to Socialism. Those who do not understand this commit an unpardonable error, and either do not see facts, cannot look beyond the surface, or limit themselves to the abstract contradictions between Capitalism and Socialism, and do not enter into the concrete forms and stages of the period through which we are now passing.

It is just this theoretical mistake which has led astray the best members of the *Novaja Feisin* and *Vpered* groups, while the worst and centre have joined the rearguard of the bourgeoisie. Even the best of them did not comprehend what Socialist teachers have again and again pointed out; the "long birth-travail" of the new society, which, in its turn, would at first be only an abstraction, and would only come into the fulness of life after many and various practical attempts to set up this or that form of Socialist Government had been made.

It is precisely because it is impossible to advance from the present economic position of Russia without passing through *what is common* to both State Capitalism and Socialism—national accounting and control—that to frighten others and oneself by talking about ‘evolving towards State Capitalism’ is absolute theoretical stupidity. It means to allow one’s mind to stray from the actual path of evolution. In practice this is equal to *dragging us back* to small private Capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that my “high” valuation of State Capitalism is not made here for the first time, but was made by me previous to the Bolsheviks taking power, I will quote the following from my pamphlet, *A Threatening Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, which was written in September, 1917:

“In place of a junker capitalist Government, try and put a revolutionary democratic Government, i. e., a Government that will in a revolutionary manner destroy all privileges and not fear to employ revolutionary methods in order to realize the most complete democracy. You will then see that State Monoplist Capitalism under a really revolutionary govern-

ment will inevitably mean a step towards Socialism.

“. . . For Socialism is nothing else than an immediate step forward from State capitalist monopoly.

“. . . State Monoplist Capitalism is the most complete material preparation for Socialism, it is the 'porch' to it; it is one of the steps in the ladder of history between which and the step called Socialism there is no intervening step" (pp. 27-38).

The reader will observe that this was written in the period of Kerensky, that I speak here *not* of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* of a Socialist State, but of "revolutionary democracy." Surely it is clear, therefore, that *the higher* we raise ourselves on this political step, *the nearer* do we approach to a Soviet Socialist State and to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and *the less* imperative is it for us to fear "State Socialism." Surely it is clear that in the *material*, economic, industrial sense, we have not yet reached the "porch" of Socialism, and there is no other way of entering Socialism except through this as yet unreached "porch."

There is a great outcry from the Left Social Revolutionaries against the so-called policy of "compromise" of the "Right-Wing Bolsheviks." These men do not know how to interpret the history and evolution of the revolutionary movement and what it has to teach us in these matters; they do not clearly understand what it is exactly that is prejudicial in any policy of compromise.

Kerensky's policy of compromise meant handing over the administrative power to the imperialistic bourgeoisie, and the problem of power is the root problem of all revolutions. Now that the Government is firmly in the hands of one party—the Proletarian Party—to speak of compromise, when there can be no question of sharing power or going back upon the dictatorship of the proletariat in favor of the bourgeoisie, is the mere empty repetition of senseless parrot-cries. To designate our policy as "a compromise with the bourgeoisie" when we, as the Government of the State, are endeavoring to obtain in our employ the most highly educated elements of the capitalist regime, to help us against the threatening chaos of small ownership, shows an entire

ignorance of the Socialist policy of reconstruction.

In the above-quoted arguments of 1918, there are a number of errors in connection with periods. Periods prove to be much longer than was then assumed. This is not to be wondered at, but the basic elements of our economic life have remained as they were then. The peasant "poor" (proletariat and semi-proletarians) in large numbers have become converted into middle-class peasants. Out of this the small private ownership and petty bourgeois movements have increased; meanwhile, the civil war of 1919-1920 extremely intensified the ruin of the country and retarded the re-establishment of its productive forces. To this must be added the bad harvest of 1920, the lack of fodder, and the death rate among cattle, which still further retarded the re-establishment of transport and industry in that the transport of our chief kind of fuel, wood, was carried on by the peasants' horses. As a result conditions in the spring of 1921 were such that it was absolutely essential to adopt the most determined exceptional measures for the improvement of the

conditions of the peasantry and for raising its productivity.

Why improve the conditions of the peasantry and not those of the workers?

Because for the improvement of the position of the workers it is necessary to have bread and fuel. The "holdup" which exists at the present moment in national industry in the largest measure is due to this, and there is no other means of increasing productivity, of increasing the stocks of grain and fuel, except by improving the position of the peasantry and increasing its productivity. It is necessary to commence with the peasantry. He who does not understand this, he who is inclined to regard this as showing preference to the peasantry, and a "departure" of the same kind as a departure on our part from the dictatorship of the proletariat would be, has simply failed to study the subject, and simply gives himself up to phrase-mongering.

Thus, the first thing that is necessary is immediate and serious measures for raising the productive power of the peasantry. This is impossible, without seriously altering our food policy; and the substitution of the food

requisitions by an agricultural tax, connected with at least Free local Trade after the tax has been paid, is such an alteration.

What is the essence of the substitution of the requisition by the Agricultural Tax?

The Agricultural Tax is a form of transition from the peculiar "military Communism" made necessary by extreme necessity, ruin and war, for the purpose of a proper Socialistic exchange of products. "Military Communism" in its turn is one of the forms of the transition from Socialism, with peculiarities created by the predominance of a small peasantry in the population, to Communism.

The peculiarity of "military Communism" lay in that we actually took from the peasantry his surplus of produce and sometimes a part of that which was absolutely necessary for himself, for the purpose of maintaining the army and the workers. Mostly we took the produce on loan for paper money. There was no other way by which we could defeat the landlord and capitalist in a ruined small-peasant country. The fact that we came out victorious (in spite of the support given to our exploiters by the most powerful States in

the world) proves something more than the wonderful heroism which the workers and peasants are able to reveal for the sake of their emancipation. It proves also what lackeys of the bourgeoisie were the Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionists, the Kautsky and Co., when they *blamed us* for this "military Communism." This indeed should be placed to our credit.

It is not less necessary, however, to know the real extent of the service which we rendered by establishing "military Communism." "Military Communism" was made necessary by the war and the state of ruin. It did not and could not meet the problems of proletarian policy. It was a temporary measure. The correct policy of the proletariat when carrying out its dictatorship in a small-peasant country is to exchange for grain the products of industry which are necessary to the peasantry. Only such a policy can satisfy the requirements of the proletariat; only such a policy can strengthen the foundation of Communism and lead to its complete victory.

The Agricultural Tax is a transition to this policy. We are still in that state of ruin, still

crushed by the burden of war (which raged yesterday and which, owing to the greed and anger of the capitalist, may break out again to-morrow), and we cannot give to the peasant sufficient products of industry in exchange for *all* the grain we need. Knowing this, we introduce the Agricultural Tax, that is, we take the minimum quantity of grain necessary for the arming of the workers, in the form of a tax, and the remainder we will exchange for the products of industry.

In this connection we must also bear in mind that our poverty and ruin is such that we cannot *immediately* establish large State Socialist Factory Production. For this purpose it is necessary to have large stocks of grain and fuel in the great industrial centres, and to replace the worn-out machinery by new machinery. Experience has convinced us that this cannot be done all at once, and we know that after the destruction caused by the imperialist war, even the richest and most advanced countries can solve this problem only during the course of a rather long period of time. This means that it is necessary to a certain extent to assist the re-establishment of

small industry, which does not require machinery, which does not require large Government stocks of raw material, fuel and food, and which can immediately give certain assistance to agriculture and raise its productivity.

What is the result of all this? Fundamentally, we get a certain amount (if only local) of Free Trade, a revival of the petty bourgeoisie and Capitalism. This is undoubted, and to close one's eyes to it would be ridiculous.

We are asked—is this necessary? Can this be justified? Is it not dangerous?

These questions are asked by many, and in most cases they only reveal the naïveté (expressing oneself politely) of those who ask them.

Refer to the manner in which in May, 1918, I defined the economic elements (component parts) of the various socio-economic strata. It is impossible to dispute the existence of these five rungs or component parts of these five strata, from the patriarchal and the semi-primitive. It is most evident that in a small-peasant country the small-peasant strata, that

is, the partly patriarchal and partly petty bourgeois, will predominate. The development of small industry when we have exchange, means the development of petty-bourgeois capitalist industry. This is an indisputable truth, an elementary truth of political economy, confirmed by the everyday experience and observation of even the ordinary man in the street.

What policy can the Socialist proletariat conduct in the face of such economic circumstances? The most desirable and most "correct" policy would be to give the small peasant *all* the products of industry of the large Socialist factories that the peasant requires, in exchange for his grain and raw materials. This is what we have commenced to do, but we are far from being able to give all the necessary products, and we shall not be able to do this for a long time, at least until we have finished the work of electrifying the country.

What, then, is left for us to do? We can either completely prohibit and prevent the development of private non-State exchange, i. e., commerce, i. e., Capitalism, which is inevitable with the existence of millions of small pro-

ducers. Such a policy would be stupid and suicidal for the party which attempted to carry it out. It would be stupid because it is economically impossible. It would be suicidal because the party that attempted to carry it out would inevitably collapse. It is useless trying to conceal the sin which some Communists "in thought, in word, and in deed" have fallen into on this policy. We will attempt to rectify this error. It is essential that we rectify this error or else it will go hard with us.

Or (and this is the only *possible* and sensible policy) we can refrain from prohibiting and preventing the development of Capitalism and strive to direct it in the path of *State Capitalism*. This is economically possible, for State Capitalism exists in one or another form and to one or another extent everywhere where there are elements of Free Trade and Capitalism in general.

Is it possible to combine and to have side by side a Soviet State, the dictatorship of the proletariat and State Capitalism?

The whole question, theoretically and practically, lies in finding the correct means of properly guiding the inevitable (to a certain

extent and for a certain time) development of Capitalism along the path of State Capitalism, and what conditions to establish and how to secure in the near future the conversion of State Capitalism into Socialism.

In order to approach a solution of this question, it is necessary to have as clear an idea as possible as to what State Capitalism will represent in practice within our Soviet system, within the framework of our Soviet State.

One of the simplest cases or examples of how the Soviet Government guides the development of Capitalism along the path of State Capitalism, of how it "plants" State Capitalism, is concessions. Everybody now agrees that concessions are necessary, but not everybody fully appreciate the significance of concessions. What are concessions in a Soviet system from the point of view of socio-economic strata and their inter-relations? They are a treaty, a block and alliance of the Soviet, i. e., the proletarian, State with State Capitalism, against small private ownership (patriarchal and petty bourgeois). A concessionaire is a capitalist. He conducts capitalist business for the sake of profits. He

agrees to make a treaty with a proletarian government in order to receive extra profits, or for the sake of securing such raw materials as he otherwise would not be able, or would find it very difficult, to secure. The Soviet Government secures the advantage in the form of the development of productive forces, and an increase in the quantity of products available immediately or within a short period. We have, say, hundreds of enterprises, mines, forests, etc.; we cannot develop them all, we have not enough machinery, food, or transport. For the same reasons we will develop badly the remaining sections. As a consequence of the bad or insufficient development of large undertakings we get the strengthening of this small private ownership movement with all its consequences: the deterioration of suburban (and later of all) agriculture, frittering away of its productive forces, decline of confidence in the Soviet Government, speculation, and mass and petty (the most dangerous) speculation.

In "planting" State Capitalism in the form of concessions, the Soviet Government strengthens large production against small

production, the advanced against the backward, machine production against hand production, it increases the quantity of products of large industry in its hands and strengthens the State regulation of economic relations as a counter-balance to the petty bourgeois anarchic relations. The moderate and cautious introduction of a policy of concessions (to a certain and not very great extent) will rapidly improve the state of industry and the position of the workers and peasants—of course, at the price of a certain sacrifice, the surrender to the capitalists of tens of millions of poods of most valuable products. The definition of the extent and the conditions under which concessions are advantageous to us and not dangerous for us, depends upon the relation of forces, is determined by struggle, for concessions are also a form of struggle, a continuation of a class struggle of another form, and under no circumstances a substitution of the class war by class peace. Practice will show what the methods of this struggle are to be.

State Capitalism in the form of concessions in comparison with other forms of State Capitalism within a Soviet system, is the most sim-

ple, the clearest, and the most clear-cut. We have here a direct formal written treaty with the most cultured, most advanced West European countries. We know exactly our losses and our gains, our rights and obligations. We know exactly the date on which we give the concessions and know the conditions of buying out on the expiration of a concession, if there is such a buying-out clause in the treaty. We pay a certain "tribute" to world Capitalism, we as it were "buy out" certain relations and receive immediately a definite measure of consolidation of the position of the Soviet Government, and an improvement in the conditions of our industry. The difficulty in connection with concessions is to think out and weigh up things in concluding a concessions treaty, and later to watch the carrying out of the treaty. No doubt there are many difficulties, and in all probability mistakes will at first be made, but such difficulties are the smallest things in comparison with the other tasks of the social revolution, and particularly in comparison with other forms of development, the introduction, the planting of State Capitalism.

The most important task of all party and

Soviet workers in connection with the introduction of the agricultural tax is to adapt the principle that is at the basis of "concessions," to apply a policy similar to the concession or State capitalist policy, to the remaining form of Capitalism—local Free Trade.

Take the co-operative societies. It was not for nothing that the decree on the Agricultural Tax immediately led to a revision of the laws on co-operatives and a certain extension of their "freedom" and their rights. Co-operation is also a form of State Capitalism, but less simple and clear cut, more complicated and therefore creating many practical difficulties for our Government. The co-operation of small commodity producers (it is of these and of workers' co-operatives, as the predominant and typical form in a small peasant country, that we speak) will inevitably generate petty bourgeois capitalist relations, facilitate their development, and will bring the greatest advantage to the capitalist. Things cannot be otherwise in the face of the predominance of small producers, and the possibility as well as the necessity for exchange. The freedom and right of co-operation under the

present conditions in Russia, means the freedom and rights of Capitalism. To close one's eyes to this obvious truth will be stupid or criminal.

But "co-operative" Capitalism in distinction from private Capitalism under a Soviet Government is another aspect of State Capitalism, and in that capacity it is, of course, to a certain extent, useful and advantageous to us. In so far as the Agricultural Tax signifies the freedom to sell the remainder of produce (not taken as tax), it is necessary to exert all our efforts to direct this development of Capitalism—for freedom of trade is the development of Capitalism—along the path of co-operative Capitalism. Co-operative Capitalism is like State Capitalism in that it simplifies control, observation, and the maintenance of treaty relations between the State (the Soviet in this instance) and the capitalists. Co-operation as a form of trade is more advantageous and useful than private trade, not only for the reasons already indicated, but also because it facilitates the organization of millions of the population and later the whole of the population. This in its turn is a tremendous

gain from the point of view of a further transition from State Capitalism to Socialism.

Let us compare concessions with co-operation as a form of State Capitalism. Concessions are based on large machine industry, whereas co-operation is based on small and partly even patriarchal industry. A concession is granted to a single capitalist or a single firm, a syndicate, a cartel or a trust. A co-operative society embraces many thousands, even millions, of small masters. A concession permits of and even pre-supposes a definite treaty for a definite term, whereas a co-operative society does not permit of definite agreements or definite terms. It is easier to repeal a law on co-operative societies than to break a concession agreement; for the breaking of a concession agreement immediately means the breaking off of economic relations, of the alliance or economic "cohabitation" with Capitalism; whereas the repeal of a law on co-operation, or the repeal of any law for that matter, not only does not break off the actual "cohabitation" of the Soviet Government with the small capitalists, but cannot affect economic relations in general. It is easy to "keep an

eye on "the concessionaire, but it is difficult to do so on the co-operator. The transition from concessions to Socialism is the transition from one form of large production to another. The transition from the co-operation of small masters to Socialism is a transition from small production to large production, i. e., to a more complicated form of production. The latter has this compensating feature, however, that in the event of a successful transition, it is capable of tearing out a far deeper and more vital root of the old pre-Socialist and even pre-capitalist relations, of that which puts up the most stubborn resistance to all kinds of "innovations." The policy of concessions in the event of success will give us a few exemplary—in comparison with our own—large undertakings, standing on a level with modern advanced Capitalism; in a few decades these undertakings will come entirely into our possession. The policy of co-operation in the event of success will raise small industry and facilitate, in an indefinite period, its transition to large production on the basis of voluntary combination.

Let us take a third form of State Capital-

ism. The State invites the capitalist as a merchant and pays him a definite commission for selling State products and for buying the products of small industry. There is a fourth form: the State leases a factory or an industry or a section of forest or land to a capitalist; in this case, the lease agreement is more like a concession agreement. The question is whether we can recognize these types of Capitalism? In order to answer the question we must remember the component parts of all, without exception, of those various strata of society which I enumerated in my article of May 5, 1918. "We," the vanguard, the advanced detachment of the proletariat, are passing directly to Socialism, but the forward detachments are only a small section of the proletariat, which, in its turn, is only a small section of the whole mass of the population. In order that "we" may successfully solve the problem of our direct transition to Socialism, we must understand what *indirect* paths and methods we must adopt for the transition of *pre-capitalist* relations to Socialism. This is the crux of the question.

Is it possible to realize the direct transition

of this state of pre-capitalist relations prevailing in Russia to Socialism? Yes, it is possible to a certain degree, but only on one condition, which we know, thanks to the completion of a tremendous scientific labor. That condition is: electrification. But we know very well that this "one" condition demands at least tens of years of work, and we can only reduce this period by a victory of the proletarian revolution in such countries as England, Germany, and America.

For the years immediately ahead of us, we shall have to think of indirect links capable of facilitating the transition of patriarchy and small industry to Socialism. "We" are still too fond of saying "Capitalism is an evil, Socialism is a blessing," but such an argument is incorrect, because it leaves out of consideration all the existing social economic strata, and takes in only two of them.

Capitalism is an evil in comparison with Socialism, but Capitalism is a blessing in comparison with mediævalism, with small industry, with fettered small producers thrown to the mercy of bureaucracy. To the extent that we are as yet unable to realize the direct transition

from small production to Socialism, to that extent is Capitalism to a certain extent inevitable as an elemental product of small production and exchange, and to that extent must we make use of Capitalism (particularly in directing it along the path of State Capitalism) as an indirect link between small production and Socialism, as a means, a path, a method of raising the productive forces of the country.

Facts have clearly demonstrated that we shall have to defer the reconstruction of large-scale industry, and that it is impossible to carry on industry in separation from agriculture. Therefore we must first tackle the easier problem of re-establishing crafts and small-scale industry, which have been destroyed by the war and blockade.

It must be the main aim of all true workers to get local industry thoroughly going in the country districts, hamlets and villages; no matter on how small a scale. The economic policy of the State must concentrate on this. Any development in local industry is a firm foundation, and a sure step, in the building up of large-scale industry.

Formerly it was an inspector's duty simply

to collect the full requisition duties ; while the aim of the new Decree is to collect the Agricultural Tax as quickly as possible, and then as much of the surplus commodities as possible by means of barter. The man who collects 75 per cent. of the Agricultural Tax and then 75 per cent. of surplus is doing a better work for the State than a man who collects 100 per cent. of the tax and then only 55 per cent. of surplus commodities.

We shall compare the practical results obtained in various districts, in some of which private capital will be functioning, in others, co-operative societies, and in a few, pure Communist undertakings. The profits obtained by the capitalists will be their payment for instructing us.

This will mean unrestricted trade, in fact Capitalism. The latter will prove beneficial to us, in proportion to the extent that it aids us to combat the dispersion of small-scale industry and to some measure even bureaucracy. Practical experimentation will teach us the best method to adopt. There is nothing really dangerous in this policy for a Proletarian Government, so long as the proletariat fully

retains the administrative power, the means of transport and large-scale industry.

THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY
OF SOVIET RUSSIA

THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY OF SOVIET RUSSIA.

BY N. BUKHARIN.

On July 8th, 1921, Comrade Bukharin delivered a lecture to the delegates of the Third World Congress of the Comintern in Moscow on the significance of the new economic policy of Soviet Russia, from which we quote the following passages:

In order to understand the new policy and its practical importance, we should consider it in connection with the economic and social crises, which we had to go through this spring. The experience of the Russian Revolution has proved that our former notions of the revolutionary process were rather naive. Even the orthodox Marxian section thought that all the proletariat had to do to take over the technical apparatus after ejecting the upper layers of the bourgeoisie was to capture the reins of power. Experience taught us something very different from that. It proved that during the proletarian dictatorship the complete dissolu-

tion of the old capitalist apparatus is a necessary stage in the revolutionary development.

Perhaps some will object that this experience does not give us a theoretical proof and that the development in other countries may assume a different character from that of Russia. They may say that Russia is backward, her proletariat is not numerous, and big industry constitutes a small proportion of the economy of Russia. In Western Europe and in America, however, the development will take quite a different direction. This idea can be refuted not only by Russian experience—we are convinced of the absolute inevitability of an economic disorganization generally during the revolutionary process.

Every revolution is a process of reorganization of social relations. In a bourgeois revolution this process is not so thorough or extensive as in a proletarian revolution, because capitalism has already been developed and only a political transformation becomes necessary. Feudal property had already become private property, and the bourgeois revolution had only to secure this private property and allow it a wider scope of action. It was main-

ly a question of transferring the political machine from one set of owners to another. But even in this case it was necessary to undergo a certain process of reorganization, which had to be paid for dearly. Even a bourgeois revolution is accompanied by a temporary decline in productivity. Such was the case in the Great French Revolution.

The same was manifested in the American Civil War, where economic development was thrown back for a decade. In a proletarian revolution the same thing takes place on a much larger scale. During a proletarian revolution we must not only destroy the State machine, but completely reorganize the industrial relations. That is the most important point.

What are the industrial relations in the capitalist system? First of all there is a capitalist hierarchy, the subordination of one group to another; higher up there is the class of capitalists, then follow the directors, then the technical Intelligentsia, the so-called new middle class, then the skilled workers and finally the rank and file workers. If these industrial relations are to be recognized it means that we must first of all and immediately destroy

the various ties that bind these groups. The workers achieve this not by street fights only, but by struggling industrially by means of strikes, etc. The working class cannot win the army in time of Revolution if the soldiers obey their officers. It is equally necessary to bring about a breakdown in industrial discipline, if the proletariat is to gain a hold over the economic apparatus.

Once these ties between the classes and strata are severed, the whole process of production will be brought to a standstill. When the workers strike or fight on the barricades, no work can be done. When there is a sabotage on the part of the technical intelligentsia, the whole process of production is interrupted. Only when the proletariat is fully in possession of the whole government machine can it put down such attempts. Until that time the process of production will be paralyzed. Kautsky and Otto Bauer were talking utter rubbish when they spoke of the continuity of the process of production and wish to connect it with the revolution. It would be the same if an army wishing to defeat its officers were to preserve a strict discipline under their com-

mand instead of killing them. Either the revolution will win, and then there is an inevitable disorganization of the process of production, or discipline will be maintained, and then there will be no revolution at all. Every revolution is paid for by certain attending evils, and it is only at that price that we can bring about the transition to higher forms of economic life of the revolutionary proletariat. We need not be afraid of that temporary disorganization. One cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs.

PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP AND THE PEASANTRY DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

Now it becomes clear that the price to be paid for the revolutionary process is greater where there is a more stubborn resistance on the part of all the other classes and groups to the proletariat, attaining its maximum in the country which is first in adopting the dictatorship. In Russia the class struggle involved not only a civil but also a foreign war. Where civil war is transformed into foreign war against powerful States the revolution has to be paid for at an outrageous rate. This is the chief cause of our impoverishment in the

course of the last few years. Nearly 75 per cent. of our small supplies and of our latest products had to be given to the Red Army. Every intelligent man will understand what this means to our economic life.

It is impossible to live without bread. The bread question is the most difficult problem of the revolution. The process of economic disintegration during the revolution is also expressed by the severance of ties which connect town and country. When the battle of classes is raging and the process of production in towns is paralyzed, communications with the rural districts cease. The ties of finance and capital which bind the large landowners and the rich farmers to the banks are immediately severed. The same happened to the connecting links between the various peasant co-operative organizations. All exchange between town and country ceases. The credit system in particular is ruined. When towns cease to supply anything to the country, there is no stimulus to give anything to the towns. The economic equilibrium is destroyed.

As the town population must exist also in time of revolution, special means must be

found to feed it. First the supplies stored in towns are consumed. Then compulsory means may be adopted against the peasants. The third expedient is the consciousness of the peasants that only the Proletarian State defends them against the landowners, the usurers, and others.

The peasants were greatly influenced by that consideration during the civil war against foreign counter revolution. Our compulsory methods found their economic justification in this circumstance. As regards the arguments of the Opportunists that the peasantry was opposed to the Bolsheviks and that the latter rule by sheer force, every Marxist will say that this is nonsense. Not even the Czar's government was capable of performing such a feat. Our compulsory actions found their economic justification in the fact that the peasants, as a class, fully understand that there is no other force that can defend them from the land-owners, of whose estates the peasants have taken possession. In Russia 82 per cent. of land formerly owned by large landowners was given to the peasants. The close-fisted peasant will not allow this land to be taken from

him. He was wise enough to perceive that the main economic problem is to keep fast to the land, as land alone gives him the certainty of growing food. That is why he put up with our methods of requisitions and that is why we were on the whole able to maintain an equilibrium in our social structure. We felt the ground under our feet.

Of course, every war has its laws. The experience of capitalist countries has shown that the economic changes can more easily be effected in war than in peace time. The same can be observed in our country. Certain classes, especially the petty bourgeoisie, were honestly convinced that everything must be sacrificed for war. Due to this we were able to estimate our resources and regulate economy by strongly applying the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But after war was over the contradictions in this economic system came to the surface at once, first and foremost the contradictions between the regulating tendencies and the anarchical tendencies of the peasantry.

INFLEXIBILITY OF THE PEASANT AND DECLASS-
ING OF THE PROLETARIAT.

It was proved economically that if we take away all the surplus of the peasants' produce we take away almost all the incentive to further production. If the peasant knows that he will be deprived of all surplus produce he will only produce for himself and nothing for others. The only incentive that remains is of an intellectual kind, the knowledge that he must support the workers who defend him from the landlord. After the victory at the civil war fronts the effect of his incentive was destroyed. It was observed that the cultivated area diminished. This was also due to the drafting of the labor forces to the army, to the decrease of the stocks of cattle, peasant stock generally, etc. Agriculture was in a critical condition, and we were in danger of being left without sufficient bread.

Naturally this state of agriculture reacted on industry. It is not true that our technical apparatus is totally disorganized. In many important branches of the textile and metal industries, as well as others, we possess a good

technical apparatus. But the great problem facing us is how to provide the towns with the necessaries of life. In our country the workers are hungry because the exchange of goods between town and country is paralyzed.

These economic conditions have their social consequences. When large industry is in such a miserable condition the workers seek to find a way, e. g., by manufacturing small articles of every day use at the places where they work, which they subsequently sell. By such methods the proletariat becomes declassed. When in this way the worker becomes interested in free trade, he begins to regard himself as a small producer, a petty bourgeois. This means the transformation of the workers into petty bourgeois with all their characteristics. The proletariat goes back to the village where it works as small craftsmen. The greater the disorganization the stronger the process of degeneration of the proletariat, now demanding free trade.

The proletariat as such is weakened. Moreover the flower of the proletariat was destroyed at the front. Our army consisted of an amorphous peasant mass which was like wax

in the hands of the communist, and non-party men. We have lost an immense number of these proletarians, and it was precisely these who enjoyed the greatest esteem and confidence in the factories. Moreover, we were compelled to utilize the best strata of the proletariat for the State machine, the administration of all the villages, etc. To organize a proletarian dictatorship in a peasant country meant to distribute the proletarians among certain localities like so many pieces on a chess-board, in order to guide the peasants. One can imagine how the factories suffered in consequence through lack of proletarian forces. Only the worst elements remained in the factories. And on the top of it all came the declassing of the workers. Such is the social crisis within the working class.

The peasantry had also to suffer, but not to the same extent. If we take an economic view of the subject, i. e., not in the sense of power and political rights, the peasantry has derived more benefit from the revolution than all the other classes. Economically the peasantry is better off than the proletariat, though the latter is the privileged class. The peasant feels

himself stronger than ever. There are other, secondary causes. The peasant obtained a good training in the army. He returned from the war a different man. He is now on a higher intellectual and moral level than he was before. Now he understands politics very well. He says: We are the predominating force and we shall not allow others to treat us as silly children. We want to feed the workers, but we are the senior partners and demand our rights.

As soon as the war was over the peasants immediately presented their demands. They are interested in small trade. They are supporters of free trade, and opposed to the compulsory socialist system of economy. These demands were presented in the form of peasant risings in various districts in Siberia, Tambov, etc. Things did not look so bad as the counter revolutionary press tried to picture it, but these events were symptomatic. In their eyes the political solution of the economic situation consists in the motto "For the Bolsheviks and against the Communists."

At first this appears quite absurd, but though it is cryptically formulated this motto

has an intelligent explanation. At the time of the October Revolution and previous to it we were the party that told the peasant to kill the landowner and to take his land. The Bolsheviks were then thought to be capital fellows. They gave the peasants everything and demanded nothing in return. But in the end we became the Party which gave nothing and demanded everything from the peasants. They were consequently against the communists, who were taking away their bread and moreover preached absurd ideas of communism, unsuitable to the peasants. The second watchword was free trade. The first watchword was "For non-party Soviets against the dictatorship of a party." If there are even communists who fail to understand that a class can only rule if it has a head, and the party is the head of a class then we can easily understand the peasants failing to grasp that idea. Such is the intellectual atmosphere prevailing among the lower middle-class and the peasantry.

The proletariat, too, insofar as it was de-classed, of necessity shared the same views. In some places even metal workers took up

the watchwords: "Free trade," against the "Communist," for class dictatorship but against Party dictatorship. Thus the equilibrium between the proletariat and the peasantry was destroyed. A misunderstanding arose which threatened the whole system of the proletarian dictatorship. The crisis found its expression in the Kronstadt mutiny. The documents which have since been brought to light show clearly that the affair was instigated by purely white guard centres, but at the same time the Kronstadt mutiny was a petty bourgeois rebellion against the socialist system of economic compulsion. Sailors are mostly sons of peasants, especially Ukrainian peasants. Ukraine is more petty bourgeois than Central Russia. The peasants there resemble more the German farmers than the Russian peasants. They are against Czarism but have little sympathy for communism. The sailors were home on leave and there became strongly infected with peasant ideas. This was the cause of the revolt.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW POLICY.

As is known we acted with all speed; we mobilized and sent against Kronstadt one-third of our Party Congress, we lost many comrades, but we quelled the rebellion. But victory could not solve the question. We had to take certain measures. Had there been a revolution in Germany we could have brought workers from there and have made a surgical operation. But we have to act on our own. There was one principle which we had to maintain at all costs: the preservation of the dictatorship. It was clear that we were making no concessions to the peasants. We had the picture of the Hungarian affair before us. It is true we should have come into power again after a few months or years, but the bourgeoisie would try its method of reorganization, which costs something, and then we would again try ours. The disorganization of national industry would be so terrible that no one can even guess whether any tolerable state of things could ever result from this chaos.

When the State apparatus is in our hands

we can guide it in any desired direction. But unless we are at the helm we can give no direction at all. Consequently we must seize power and keep it and make no political concessions. But we may make many economic concessions. But the fact of the matter is we are making economic concessions in order to avoid making political concessions. We shall agree to no coalition government or anything like it, not even equal rights to peasants and workers. We cannot do that. The concessions do not in any way change the class character of the dictatorship. When a State makes concessions to another class it does in no way alter its class character, no more than a factory owner, who makes concessions to his employees, becomes a worker. If we look at it from a social and political standpoint the significance of the concessions lies in the pacification and neutralization of the lower middle class. Our former investigations brought us to the conclusion that the economic difficulties consisted in the lack of an incentive to increase production. Now this incentive has been offered in the substitution of a tax in kind instead of requisitions. Now the peas-

ant knows that he will have to give up more if her produces more, but he knows also that he will keep more. Experience has already shown that such are his calculations. As soon as we decided on this new system at our party congress the area under cultivation increased at once to that of 1916 and even 1915.

Politically a general pacification has set in. The guerilla warfare in the Ukraine has lost its intensity. These political measures succeeded in putting an end to the Makno gangs. Some will naturally doubt the wisdom of making these concessions to the petty bourgeoisie. They may say that a period of accumulation, such as existed hitherto, has been inaugurated, that usury will result which will transform itself into industrial capitalism. We are faced by the same danger as we were at the time of the Brest Peace, when we stood in danger of being engulfed by German capitalism. However, such a state of things is only temporary. Our position now is that we want bread and a pacific peasantry, or else we shall go to the dogs. Even the worker will revolt against his own government if he has nothing to eat. Communism requires a certain time to mature

and this process under our conditions of life is more painful than it would otherwise be. We have in our hands large industry, the coal industry, transport, etc. A whole period of history is required to transform the peasant into a capitalist. Our view is that capitalism will rise slowly from below, but we will keep under our control the chief branches of industry. Once this is achieved all the industrial processes will assume their normal course. The declassing of the proletariat will cease, we shall be able to invite foreign workers, etc. We could then pass on to the technical revolution, and will be able to realize the electrification of Russia, which is now in an embryonic stage. If we succeed in realizing even a part of our program then we shall get the better of the petty bourgeois tendencies. If the peasant receives from us electric light and power he will be transformed into a social functionary and his proprietary instincts will not be offended.

If the tendencies of capitalist growth gain the upper hand over the tendencies to improve large industry, then we are doomed. But we hope the contrary will be the case—then we

shall master all difficulties in the field of economics.

Paul Levi and all the Opportunists of the world say: "You see, the Bolsheviks are making concessions to the peasants and we make concessions to the masses.' But this analogy is not correct. We make concessions to secure the equilibrium of the Soviet system, Levi makes concessions to maintain the capitalist equilibrium, and he does not seem to notice this little difference. We might as well say that there is an army in France and there is an army here, a police system there and an Extraordinary Commission here. The essential point is—what are the class functions of these institutions, and which class do they serve? Whoever makes an abstraction of the class lives in the skies, not on earth. And I think it would better if our enemies remain in the skies and we remain on solid earth.

THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE
RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

BY S. J. RUTGERS.

Whilst the conquest of the power by the working class seemed a thing of the far future, the question of the difficulties which subsequently would arise was not much thought about. Most of us supposed it would all be plain sailing afterwards, and this for two reasons. In the first place, because it was taken for granted that, by the time of the capture of power by the proletariat, capitalistic society would have attained to a degree of technical and economic perfection that would ensure sufficiency to all. And in the second place because no doubt was felt about the attitude of the intellectuals; they were sure to adapt themselves to the new order and would prove the allies of the conquering proletariat since,—as was assumed— their chances, material and intellectual, would be better in a socialistic society than in the present one, weighed down by the ever in-

creasing pressure of trust-capital. A serious disturbance in the apparatus of production need not be feared, we thought, the importance of the capitalist's role in the actual control of industry being on the wane, as it was, and there seemed no grave difficulties in the way of the reconstruction of society under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It was, of course plain, that a fierce fight would have to be fought for the conquest of the power, but in this very fight the workers and their organs of class struggle would develop new energies, and thus contribute to the simplification of the problem.

This then, was the current conception of the matter. But Russia reality wears a very different aspect.

In the first place, the establishment of the workers' dictatorship was rendered possible and necessary in Russia—and this will in all probability hold good for further developments of the world-revolution also—as a consequence of the collapse of capitalistic society. Not in abundance but in misery the New Society is born.

Even before the world-war it was plain

that Capitalism was past its creative period of still increasing technical perfection of the apparatus of production. Imperialism had no use for the overwhelming masses of the means of production it manufactured, and sought salvation in extension rather than in intensification by means of an improved technique. Likewise, the tendency to transfer industries to regions not yet opened up, where raw materials and labor are cheap, means a lowering of the average standard of technical power. And, in addition there set in an ever-increasing waste of capital in unproductive expenses, speculative enterprises, etc., culminating in the world-war, which in its turn, overshot the mark, and converted the process of capitalist development into the opposite direction.

Not only has capital proved incapable of further growth, and has it become a hindrance to the natural development of the productive forces, but it has, once more, revealed a sad truth, to-wit, that a class does not die, without defending itself to the very last, resorting to the utmost extremities of cruelty and corruption. From Denikin to Lloyd George, the leaders of reaction, have to a man, shown

themselves absolutely devoid of human feeling; without pity or shame they have pushed on over hills of dead and through deserts of misery for the sole sake of putting off though even for a single day, the downfall of a system which history has doomed. The entire capitalist class is determined to drown society in blood and let civilization, material and intellectual, crash down into the bottomless abyss of universal ruin and chaos, rather than of its free will, concede to the proletariat one single position of power.

It is a consequence of the class-struggle which some of us have perhaps shrunk from facing in this, its fierce extreme, that classes in power maintain themselves as long as they have products at their disposal to bribe parts of the working classes, and materials to make weapons of for the destruction of rebels. We see this day in Russia, and we know both by theory and by practice, that Communist Society can arise only after a terrific struggle, which, in destroying the power of capital must at the same time damage, and, partly, destroy the possibilities of production. The sneering phrase of "the Socialism of hunger" ex-

presses a terrible truth which may, possibly, prove more terrible to Western Europe than, even, to Russia.

And the attitude of the intellectuals as a group in the widest meaning of the word, is, in part at least, determined by this circumstance. Toward the Social Revolution the attitude of the intellectual as a social group has always been one of dislike, and the gulf between workers and intellectuals has gradually widened and deepened. This is pretty generally admitted even by men like, for instance, Dr. Max Adler, who, nevertheless expects great things for the Social Revolution from the intellectuals. In "Socialism and the Intellectuals" he writes (p. 23): "The very class-antagonism which, finally, by arousing its class-consciousness, compels the proletariat to further culture, drives the intellectuals into the camp which most strenuously opposes this craving for culture, the camp of the bourgeoisie".

The attitude of University undergraduates in the various countries likewise points towards an increasingly reactionary temper

even amongst this flower of the intellectual flock.

In the capitalistic system the degree up to which middle-class intellectuals are able to achieve a relative independence in matters material and mental, is determined by the bourgeoisie's valuation of their services; and not only this, but their culture in itself is, moreover, necessarily culture of a bourgeois order. The environment and the education of the intellectual have this for their one aim. The idiotic school system, which all but absolutely bars general culture in order to waste time upon all kinds of irrelevant information which, if eventually needed, may be had from any handbook; the burden of lessons to be learned by rote and work to be done at home, which prevents future intellectuals from gathering any experience of life in their leisure hours; the promoting of an exaggerated and consequently senseless sport: all this, as a system of education, compares only with military drill which, of set purpose, day by day, for months at a time, in an all but absolutely stupefying manner, repeats a score of movements and exercises which the dullest might

easily master within a few weeks, and this, avowedly, in order to deaden the intellect and enforce a habit of mechanical obedience. The little world of the University undergraduate, fenced off from real life, outwardly and seemingly "free" and the secluded circle, animated by an arrogant caste-spirit, in which army officers move, are means to one and the same end: the maintaining of exploitation. Even to workers the process of emancipation from bourgeois ways of thinking and bourgeois culture is the principal hindrance in their struggle for freedom; how much the more then must this be the case with bourgeois and semi-bourgeois intellectuals!

And in this respect, class antagonisms have not, of late years, lessened, but on the contrary, they have increased. Imperialist-nationalist ideology has conquered the whole bourgeois-intellectual world. This ideology was the promotor of the past war as it is the abetter of the war in the midst of which we now live and of the war which is bound to come.

The fact that it is precisely the intellectuals who generally speaking are the propagandists

of Imperialism, is not a mere accident. Extension of the world-power of capital means extension of bourgeois culture over all the earth, and, therewith, extension of the possibilities, material and other, which favor the apostles of bourgeois culture and the adepts of bourgeois science. It opens perspectives which make one forget the deadly monotony of a drudge's existence, forget material and moral slavery. The more desperate the reality of bourgeois life, the more passionate, and utterly reckless the ardor with which the more energetic among them embraces this new ideal. Pioneers of science, engineers, ministers of religion, soldiers, politicians, and journalists leaving their study, sally forth to the conquest of the world, penetrating into the farthest recesses of Asia and Africa. And the home-stayers have a new task in keeping down by fraud and by force the tumultuous masses, the "enemies of culture". The means at their disposal are abundant, and, if they should prove insufficient for the purpose, promises are given the more readily. The process of corruption has penetrated deeply into the layers of skilled labor itself.

All this hardly makes it probable that intellectuals should prove helpful in the building up of Communist Society. It is contended that under Communism conditions of life will be better, for intellectuals as for others, than they are or possibly can be, under the present regime, for the overwhelming majority. This, however, seems exceedingly improbable for the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with which the present generation has chiefly, if not exclusively, to reckon.

The Russian Revolution has demonstrated the fact that, on the whole, bourgeois intellectuals do not readily adapt themselves to the new order of things. The causes are obvious. As was inevitable in so great a general impoverishment, the preference accorded to the claims of the workers caused detriment to all the privileged classes. And this not only materially, as in the matter of food, clothes and housing, but also in many things which we are accustomed to consider as pertaining to the mental and moral privilege of bourgeois culture: a certain outward refinement, a sense of recognized superiority, the ready disposal of manifold resources of art and science.

As to the last-named point, it may perhaps be objected that the new Workers' Government in this very matter makes the utmost exertions to promote and render accessible to the generality both art and science. But it should, at the same time, not be forgotten that socializing a thing means restricting the rights of the few who formerly had the exclusive disposal of it. Partly, too, efforts take a different direction; and, as to important resources which cannot, without further preparation, be made accessible to the masses, these are reserved for the building up of the new life, and this, again, entails restrictions upon *individual* use. Lastly, to the intellectual prejudiced by bourgeois thought and habit of mind, the new surroundings are most depressive, so as to seriously impair his capacity for work.

It has been said: "the workers stand for a new culture, and this must draw the intellectuals to them".

But the culture of the intellectuals is not culture in the absolute sense, but *bourgeois* culture; and bourgeois culture is not only alien but even inimical to proletarian culture.

What is more: proletarian culture cannot

exist but by conquering bourgeois culture; and this is one of the most radical processes of the proletarian revolution. Monopoly must be destroyed not in production only; not in material output only must bureaucratic leadership be replaced by the active co-operation of all and each, but the same thing must be achieved for science, art and all culture in general. Since then, intellect must be absorbed into the mass, the bourgeois intellectuals as a class must be destroyed, it is somewhat naive to count on the support of these very intellectuals.

If and in so far as bourgeois intellectuals obtain the lead in the proletarian revolution and the building up of the new society, and exert a preponderant influence upon the new system of production and the new culture, it will be to the harm of the Proletarian Revolution. For, as monopolists of bourgeois culture, the intellectuals must be the very last to be able to see and solve the new problems.

This sets the workers a difficult task, and it will be well to examine the manner in which these difficulties cropped up in Russia, and

the degree in which they were or were not overcome.

As a preliminary remark, it will of course, be evident that the attitude and development of the intellectuals as a social group must be considered in the first place.

Single individuals of the bourgeois intellectual middle-class join the workers' class; it is plain they do so, and logical that they should; since they are members of a middle-class. These individuals of course, can do useful work, even though, as is probable, they should in many cases prove unable to keep up with the progress of the revolution, especially if that progress be a rapid one. These elements may even be said to constitute an *indispensable factor* in the transition from bourgeois to proletarian society. As it is necessary to take over and use the technical resources of capitalism for the building up of the new world, so it is necessary, and necessary in an even higher degree, to take over and use the results of science and experience, upon which this technique is based. It is true these are, partly, to be found in books; but these books too are as yet accessible only by

the aid of specialists. And for the education of the new generation we still, in the main, must look to the bourgeois intellectual world for teachers. This co-operation of the old and the new renders, therefore, all the more necessary a lengthy period of proletarian dictatorship, in which the proletariat must acquire the mental qualities demanded by the new society. In this process members of the intellectual class who have broken with bourgeois culture form, of course, important elements. They, in a manner, betray the secrets of the power of their class to the enemy; small wonder if, as the struggle grows hotter, the full measure of the exploiters' hatred is poured out on them.

The number of these who thus change sides will, however, necessarily, be relatively small; and an absolute breaking with the past, also in respect of matters of the mind, may and must be demanded. All the same, this refers to exceptional cases, which are not conclusive for our attitude towards the intellectuals as a social phenomenon.

As is well known, the generality of the intellectuals and of the technically educated in

Russia after the October Revolution refused to serve under the proletarian Government and even attempted sabotage on a large scale, and systematic obstruction. This at once caused hesitation, even among certain groups of communists, and there were some who advocated a policy of concessions to the Mensheviki, in order to arrive at co-operation. These projects, however, were not realized and it certainly is one of the very greatest among the many great merits of Lenin, that, in this critical situation he, by his unflinching firmness and unconquerable optimism, restored courage and self-reliance to many quailing hearts.

Now that it is all past and over, this may perhaps seem to many of us the natural and logical acceptance of a principle professed from the outset and always adhered to. But when all circumstances and the personal feelings of those who played a part in the October Revolution become known, it will be realized what it means to act up to principles in a situation like this and claim all power for the workers.

Having refused the co-operation of the

Mensheviki, the workers had to take upon their own shoulders the overwhelmingly huge task of administration and reconstruction. It was a thing that required an almost super-human courage to do as a worker did at the time of the formation of the first Council of People's Commissaries, to-wit, to take upon himself, having nothing to rely upon but the scanty experience earned in the administration of a local paper, and his Communist conviction, to administer, conjointly with the trade-union concerned, the Postal Service; or, as another did,—although after a time he was compelled to solicit for a more practical task—to offer to take charge of the publications of the Secret Archives.

It is difficult to fully realize what it meant to assume the control of the banks, at a time when the counter-revolution and the system of sabotage had established their principal bases precisely in the banks. Who thinks of Trotsky now, sees the well-ordered regiments of the Red Army march past with flying colors, but when, after the October days, this very man had, in his quality of president of the revolutionary military commission, to try

and beat off an attack of Kerensky's troops on Petersburg, the task seemed a thing transcending all imagination. And yet, it was done. Of course, not owing to any military experience of Trotzky—which he could not possibly have at the time—but in the first place because numerous contingents of revolutionary soldiers proved willing to march against the enemy, and the adversary's troops were averse to meeting them in a serious fight.

What proved the most difficult thing at the time was to find a worker who dared to take upon himself the control of the totally disorganized food-distribution; but among Russian communists the rule is, that when the comrades declare a man fit he considers the question settled.

It is not to be wondered at, truly, that the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals were absolutely convinced that this condition could not last for a fortnight: our own friends had only the vaguest of ideas about how they were to manage. But the workers and peasants saw there was no other way out, and they went on, undaunted by temporary difficulties, temporary misery, undaunted even by the doubts that

beset many who came into immediate touch with the all but insuperable organizational difficulties. Here, it was the masses that wrought the wonder, and the chief merit of the handful of intellectual leaders was certainly this, that they never allowed themselves to be discouraged, that they continued to trust in the triumph of methods which, judged by the standard of the bourgeois intellectual, seemed hopeless.

The prediction of a rapid and total collapse of bolshevism was not fulfilled. The much-wondering saboteurs were compelled to come back and beg for work, lest they should starve. But the distrust they had aroused among the workers for a long time still continued to make felt its salutary after-effects.

Compare with this the history of the Hungarian Soviet-Republic, fraternal co-operation between Social-patriots and Communists in a conquest of power at which no blood was shed; high-sounding declarations of engineers and intellectuals, who put themselves at the service of the Soviet-administration in order to co-operate in the reconstruction. Result: extensive corruption from the outset, an or-

ganization of industry in which the workers have practically no word, systematic treason committed, together with the old leaders of the trade-unions and the representatives of the Entente, and, in the end, surrender and the tolerating of a most bestial system of white terror.

We leave out of discussion the question whether the Hungarian Soviet Republic would, without the help of Russia, have been able to maintain itself as a purely proletarian organization against the united attacks of its enemies, under the leadership of the Western democracies; but the manner in which the Soviet-dictatorship arose and fell, is, in itself, most instructive.

And when now and again it is rumored that in Germany large groups of intellectuals are in favour of Soviets, that manufacturers are perfectly willing to continue business on a new basis, and even army officers are interested in Bolshevism, this is sign of a danger, that should not be underrated.

It had often been said: in the countries of Western Europe it is difficult for the workers to conquer the power over well-organized

capital, but once they have the power, the construction of a new society will be a much easier thing. This verdict is mainly based upon the consideration that the great number of intellectuals and "educated" workers will strengthen the communistic organization. And this illusion is cherished, although we see, even now, that the best educated groups of workers are, and necessarily must be, the most reactionary and the most bourgeois, not to mention the intellectuals. For the reconstruction of a society based on new principles, men are looked to as leaders who at this moment, as chiefs of parties and as trade-union officials, sell and betray the workers.

It is, perhaps, unavoidable, that men like these should once more deceive the workers, that production should once more have to be based upon new bureaucratic foundations; but this much is evident, that the workers will weather these dangers the better, the less they suffer themselves to be deceived by illusions.

In Russia, both the inexorable policy of the party, unswervingly true to principle, and the attitude of the intellectuals themselves, threw back the workers upon their own resources;

and this indubitably, accounts for the success of the Revolution. What, now, were the subsequent developments?

The intellectuals, as we saw, made haste to retrace their steps and proffer their services, which have been accepted. But their co-operation was far from being a cordial one, and covert opposition, or, at least, absolute deficiency of co-operation was a general phenomenon.

My work in Soviet Russia brought me into frequent contact with engineers in the employ of the Soviet organization for Public Works. Under this come all new construction, the building of roads and bridges, of new railway lines, canals, systems of irrigation, draining, etc., an immense field of labor, and in which a number of problems arose that could not fail to attract engineers at all interested in their work. Without going into details, this much may be said, that the radical alterations in the whole of the economic system brought new problems to the fore and gave to old problems a shape entirely new. It was, for instance, necessary to transfer industries, to exploit new resources, to solve

the problems of communication and distribution according to a new and more rational point of view, or at least, to prepare a solution for the future, etc. Moreover, in the planning and the execution of new works everything had to be put upon a new basis. The cost of all raw materials, of machines and of human labor underwent, of course, a radical change, in their relation to one another, as in other respects; in consequence, in similar cases different materials and different methods had to be employed in order to obtain the best results. All this, one would expect, would have the attraction of pioneers' work. One would expect a certain enthusiasm if only for the sake of the technical importance of the thing—the enthusiasm of the engineer who has to execute a great work in a region not yet opened up.

But it did not appeal to the bourgeois engineers of Russia.

Although, as early as at the first General Congress of Economic Councils, the Communists proposed and discussed a number of new technical economic problems, no sign of interest was forthcoming from engineering cir-

cles, much less any partial solution of these vital problems. My experience was gathered more especially in the department for water-works, where very little was done by a number of engineers of acknowledged practical ability, and who in matters of theory were in no way inferior to their Western colleagues. In the extensive Moscow bureaux old projects, approved in the main by the previous Government, were elaborated and discussed on the basis of the condition of the past. Of new points of view, resulting from the radical change in circumstances, but very little was to be seen.

And yet, it had repeatedly been pointed out, not only at congresses, but in the communist press, that a great number of problems would necessarily undergo great changes, because of the fact that, instead of private profit as hitherto, public interest was to be the basis of all enterprise. The iron industry, for instance, would in great part have to be centralized in localities where ore and coal are easily accessible; other industries, by systematic decentralization, would have to link up with agriculture; the entire problem of dis-

tribution assumed a new aspect. The means of transport were involved to a considerable extent. Not only was a rational railroad system an absolute necessity, as well as utilization to the full of the extremely favorable opportunities of an extensive system of transport by water, but in the new system, the rivalry between railroads and water-roads would be done away with, and they would become one another's complement. To confine myself to the waterways. Any one must see what an extraordinary development of possibilities arose now that the entire fleet of river and canal-boats was brought under one management, and the ceaseless conflicts of numerous private interests being done away with, a rational organization of the inland shipping-trade, such as of the railway service in other countries, was rendered possible .

Besides, for a number of general problems, the new conditions had to be decisive for all technical details. The choice of materials, of working methods, the determination of the order in which various works were to be executed, absolutely everything would have to be examined anew, according to the altered cir-

cumstances. To mention only the most important of these: ground-rent and interest on capital were no more, the output of labor had changed, the relation between machine labor and hand labor, between the direction and the execution of a work, had altered.

Of course, all these problems did not at once make themselves felt in their full significance; and, it need hardly be said, circumstances were, for the time being, most unfavorable for the execution of important works. But so absolute a lack of comprehension and of interest as was evinced by the engineers "of the old guard", is extremely significant. As in so many other provinces of mental activity, so in this, leaving aside, of course, a few favorable exceptions, listlessness and reluctance were the characteristics of bourgeois intellect. Plainly, the intellectual middle class, inasmuch as it failed to assimilate the communistic ideals, was of but very slight value for the establishing of the new society, that is founded on labor.

A comparison between the brisk and energetic life among the masses of the workers, where every problem aroused the keenest in-

terest and raised endless discussions, and the torpid apathy prevalent in the engineers' offices, makes it evident that these latter were incapable of fulfilling any but a subordinate and more or less mechanical part in the building up of the new system of production.

And yet the Soviet took a great deal of trouble to meet the wishes of intellectuals and engineers. Technical and intellectual work was highly appreciated, and this appreciation, which was also expressed in the shape of high salaries, was transferred to the representatives of capitalistic intellect. But these gentlemen did not feel at home under a workers' dictatorship. For not only was the petty-bourgeois way of life which they loved, threatened—as must be the case especially in a transitional period when impoverishment is general—by such measures as house-distribution, and by the absence of all sort of comfort and luxury; but, a thing which they felt even deeper, the new system attacked their position as monopolists in the control of intellectual social life and the processes of production. Under this system, as a matter of fact, knowledge of the ancient kind, based as it is on an

experience of things past and gone, becomes, practically, or in part at least, worthless. In consequence, the intellectual loses his self-reliance; the more because he sees that his individual case is becoming the general rule, and society as a whole is fast losing its faith in old-time customs, truths and traditions.

The workers demand that account be rendered to them; they demand an equal share of authority, they demand tangible results. And, naturally, they are as yet, lacking in the experience, the knowledge and the insight needed for the formation of a correct judgment in matters which often are exceedingly complicated. The intellectual, in consequence, imagines himself to be indispensable; he thinks he need but assume an attitude of waiting; that in one form or another former conditions are sure to return, and therewith, the importance of his role. Only, in the meantime, he feels superfluous and therefore is depressed.

An engineer who complained to me of the cold in the unheated bureau, and other inconveniences of the kind, grave enough certainly, added: "But the worst of all is—we are bored!" This enforced inactivity of course,

did not prevent him from pocketing a salary higher than that of a People's Commissary, who works sixteen hours a day that he may, to the best of his ability, solve the new problems cropping up in all directions.

As we have stated, the intellectuals, generally speaking, offered their services to the Soviets for material considerations only, and this, as a rule, without any enthusiasm. In the central bureaux, where the general control is exercised, results, as we saw, were most unsatisfactory. Control by workers' committees is difficult, especially in cases where the necessary preparation is lacking. In the building works and in the factories conditions are, of course, better. The most urgent work at least is done, because the need of the day compels the doing of it, and a control by the workers is more feasible here.

From my inspecting-tours in the provinces I always returned in a hopeful mood. In the smaller units better work was done, there was more organization there, more enthusiasm, more sense of the new than among the generality of the officials in the great bureaux of Moscow. In Moscow too, it is true, en-

deavors were made to make workers take a part in bureau-work; but whilst discharging this unaccustomed task they, in many cases, soon grew subject to the influence of the surroundings, and the new bureaucratic elements are not less of a danger to the success of Soviet organization than the old were.

Those who foster exaggerated expectations about the substitution of new independent or even communistic leaders for the old bureaucratic trade-union officials, may take warning by the fact that in Russia as in Hungary corruption was rife among the new bureaucrats as among the old. These results are produced by the system, not by the individuals. And the chances are that this danger will increase.

As the stability of the Soviet regime grew more and more manifest, the number of bourgeois intellectuals who offered their services increased, and the bureaucratic element was strengthened. The submission of the intellect was greatly rejoiced over, and great expectations were cherished as to the results of this co-operation. *But unless the workers ever and again break up this bureaucratic apparatus, pushing "from the bottom upwards",*

it is doomed to petrify, and to become a new instrument of oppression. Against this contingency even the Soviet-form offers no guarantee if it ceases to be a living organism, based upon the active will of the mass of the workers.

It is, therefore, a matter of the very greatest importance that the trade-union movement in the shape of industrial organization shall be kept intact, even after the proletarian revolution, as in this the proletarian character is preserved better than in the Soviet organization, which, on account of the participation of peasants, intellectuals and intermediate groups as well as by reason of its specific functions of general administration and control, is more exposed to the danger of bureaucratization. In Russia this danger has been very plainly revealed, and the Communists fight it to the uttermost. The special peril lies in the involuntary alliance of the old bureaucracy with the new, in consequence of which many originally sincere revolutionaries gradually degenerate into bourgeois.

This is what the workers' masses and the communists must, from the start, oppose with

all their strength; always and everywhere they must demand the largest measure possible of control by the workers themselves. It is a question of self-reliance and courage, and of being prepared to temporarily sacrifice technical perfection and higher productivity rather than give up control. The more firmly resolved the workers show themselves to do without the help of bourgeois intellectuals, if necessary, the more eager the latter will be to proffer their services. For, when all is said, the decline of productive capacity under a consistent regime of workers' dictatorship in the first place affects those who are accustomed to a higher standard of living.

Here, however, we are confronted with one of those seemingly insuperable difficulties for which only a revolutionary development provides a solution. It is the same as with the productivity of industrial labor, which declines when food is insufficient, while an increase of the food-production is possible only when the productivity of industrial labor increases. Similarly, control of the intellectuals by the workers is necessary in the very first place; but for this a degree of culture is

required the monopoly of which is provisionally, held by the intellectuals. For education too is, necessarily, in the hands of the intellectual bourgeois middle-class.

NEW METHODS OF PROLETARIAN EDUCATION.

Small wonder the Workers' Republic should proclaim entirely novel principles in the province of education also, and that they should give the most assiduous attention to school matters and to the education of the new generation!

And, again, experience demonstrates, in Russia, that the workers cannot rely on bourgeois intellect in this matter. The Workers' Unity School suffers severely from the lack of sympathetic insight and co-operation among the old-time teachers. It is worthy of remark, too, that the higher the grade of these teachers, the more disappointing the results. Among the teachers of the elementary school for children of seven to fourteen, a certain number were found more or less able to cope with the new task; but the masters of the

higher schools with few exceptions proved absolutely unfit; and in the matter of the reorganization of university teaching hardly anything has been effected, if one excepts the fact that the universities now are open to all—a thing of small moment in a revolutionary period, and to the workers who have better things to do than to listen to old-time learning.

But even for the lower grade of the workers' unity-school, the best teachers often prove to be workers trained in a course of a year, sometimes even of only half a year duration. At the Moscow training school for teachers, workers as well as teachers, were trained for teaching at the unity-school; and the results with the workers were more satisfactory. The teachers on the contrary for a long time continued to form an exceedingly reactionary group, and of the far-reaching plans for reorganization of the schools of the second grade, very little could be realized in everyday practice.

It is not only lack of sympathy and zeal that is at the bottom of this trouble in the matter of education as in others, but even more lack of understanding and imagination.

Precisely because development has been along definite lines, a breaking with the past is exceedingly difficult. That is the reason why the new ideas and methods are elaborated and advocated in workers' periodicals and papers, and institutions often far removed from teaching circles, although of course they are vigorously supported by groups of communist teachers, which, during the revolution, gradually increased.

It is, for the rest, easy enough to understand, that just as an engineer tied to formulas and rusty experiences cannot adapt himself to the new life, so a dry formalistic, priggish and, in school, omnipotent school master feels miserable within the workers' system of education.

He is altogether helpless and at a loss when venturing upon even the very simplest and most primitive attempts in the direction of the new ideal. He knows nothing about handicraft and the different kinds of material. For direct work, in doing which the children are free to move about, and exercise a certain measure of initiative, is a very different thing from standing in front of a class where the

children are nailed fast to the benches, half dazed with monotonous drudgery. If we desired a kind of systematic higher kindergarten-teaching according to a method set down in a convenient handbook, and aided with all manner of technically perfect appliances and silly models in glass cases,—well, that might at a pinch be put up with by the schoolmaster. But these workers want everything to link up with practical life: they want really useful things made, clothes and shoes repaired, objects mended that the children bring with them from home, the schoolroom and the furniture kept clean, help given with the laying of the wires for the supply of electric light, with the cooking of the food, etc., etc. And all this as a starting-point for the imparting of knowledge and ideas necessary in everyday life.

It really requires courage to select for this task out of all the elements inherited from oldtime society, precisely the most unpractical people, the teachers ever so far removed from real life. A “certificated” teacher in front of a class of the unity-school is as great a risk as a czarist officer at the head of a division of

the red army. Both should be closely watched by the workers.

And so far we have considered the most primitive form of the labor unity-school only. But what must be the average schoolmaster's feelings in the model training-school of our enthusiastic comrade Levitine!

Writing, arithmetic, geography, history, all of the evil past. Throw the old litter and the old books on the scrap heap!

Here we are going to *make* something, never mind what, say a wooden spoon to eat our dinner with. In the school-garden we select a tree to fell. Not all trees are equally fit for the purpose! In felling the tree we have to consider several important questions, and the laws of equilibrium cannot be neglected with impunity. There, the monster lies prone; and having first seen to it that our tool is fit, which again causes many important question to arise, we begin sawing. That is great fun! Sawing by turns, two together, whilst the others sing or count. In the beginning it goes quickly, but the cut widens, and it gets to be quite a problem to make out whether every couple of sawers does an equal

amount of work. Suddenly there is a stoppage. The strongest boys try their strength in vain. A clever fellow discovers what is the matter; the saw had got stuck, the tree bends with its own weight. Quite a series of new problems arises. What is to be done now? We will have to lift the tree, but we are not strong enough to do it. How strong would we have to be? And here we learn naturally the computation of cubic content, computation of weight, specific gravity of wood. We are measuring, weighing, ciphering, before we know, there is practical reason and use in what we learn. The youngest child can feel that.

Then comes the mystery of the lever, the wonder of success. In the meantime the teacher has found occasion to tell things worth knowing about the branches and the leaves and about other trees and other methods of working. And the children make sketches of all the tools, the axe, saw, etc. They note dimensions, qualities, differences in kind. They handle iron, stone, willow-wood, ash-wood. Of the different kinds of wood pieces of an equal size are weighed or pieces of an equal

weight are measured, and calculation is set going once more.

To conclude, the older pupils send in a written report of all their experiences gathered during the work; the best descriptions are read out to the class and supplemented. And everything must be systematically arranged, and written out neatly and plainly, with sketches and calculations. How good the porridge will taste that is eaten with that spoon! what memories, what pleasure, what pride!

But the model-school offers a great many possibilities: there is the vegetable-garden and the flower-garden, the tree-nursery, ponds and water-supply, a loom, a printing plant, a carpenter's workshop, an engineer's workshop, a photograph studio, etc. Such is the equipment of a model school.

Still all these many appliances may very well be dispensed with. Every kind of work affords opportunities for teaching. Any sort of material will open up perspectives of geography, history, physical science. All occupations require counting, weighing, measuring, writing, singing. But a far greater

amount of real knowledge than a teacher of the old stamp possesses is required for this. Moreover his old-time knowledge is practically of no value, and he has to begin over again.

For a working man of a certain degree of general culture and a modicum of imagination, the contrary is true. The new method is something like a revelation. He sees new perspectives opening, he is surprised and delighted to perceive what a multitude of meanings is revealed by the very simplest kind of work, once one develops a habit of inquiring into the connection of things, and of satisfying the natural craving for knowledge and insight instead of thwarting it. For him, the model-school is a true academy, an introduction into a new field of labor, not the completion of an earlier education. He will not be distressed at his pupils putting questions to him which he is not able to answer off-hand; not only the distinction between learning and working, but up to a certain degree the distinction between teacher and pupil by and by is obliterated for him. And where his own imagination might fail, the many-headed

imagination of his class will prove an inexhaustible resource.

A certain degree of systematization will certainly be required in the long run, and this is what is being attempted, account being kept of the teachings of experience. It may lead to more rapid results in the direction of a culture as many-sided as may prove possible (polytechnic culture). But even in the absence of a strict system, relying solely on the haphazard of arbitrary selections out of the infinite riches of living reality, this method will lead to surprising results. Once a pupil has learned the art of tackling a problem, of gaining an insight into its meaning, of investigating and of conquering difficulties, he has gained all that is necessary to prepare him for life. For concrete knowledge is necessarily limited within narrow bounds; while in any special case it may be supplemented and extended without great difficulty.

However, the teachers of course must possess a certain degree of general culture and of imagination, besides possessing knowledge of the *execution* of work of certain kinds. For a bourgeois intellectual this is not a simple

matter. Even the usual school-experiments attempted by our teachers in physical science, with the aid of an assistant and with perfect instruments, beautifully polished, often failed in the most miserable manner.

It is easy enough to prescribe that when in the process of some work a fire is needed, the class be shown in what way our ancestors used to make fire. But it is not so easy to manufacture the little contrivance, by which fire is made by friction, and to really make fire with it. But if this is achieved with the aid of simple appliances and not with model-instruments bought in a shop, it will not harm the class to learn by experience what a deal of painstaking and thought goes to the making of a real thing. The making of fire too requires considerable exertion. In the model-school it was done in this way. And it was a good object-lesson in history, geography, physical science and arithmetic, that ended in a calculation of the time and labor saved at present by the use of matches, by one person in a day, in a year, in a life-time; and, again, for all the town, all the country, all Europe in an hour, a day, a year.

It is true that for this one had to know the population figures of the country and of Europe, but as a matter of course one goes to a handbook for information of the kind, and the teacher need not be ashamed if he does so. Moreover the pupil who joins in similar experiments and calculations, and sends in a report, has a far better chance of remembering the figures than the victims of the present system, who learn by rote long series of figures for the next examination.

There may, possibly, be some use in plaguing our fourteen-year-old children with elaborate geometrical artificialities that have no conceivable relation to reality; it may be, as it is argued, that this is a form of gymnastics of the brain; but the mental agility attained by this method may be gained in a more pleasant manner by the solving of riddles and the telling of anecdotes. And as for the knowledge of geometry and surveying a great deal more will be gained by the measuring of buildings and sites, complemented by the determining of superficial contents and weight of objects and of position in respect to the sun and the stars.

But if one then thinks of the schoolmasters of this present day, the absolute unfitness of the bourgeois intellect for the new society, the necessity that this entire generation of intellectuals should disappear in the transitional process of the dictatorship of the proletariat, becomes evident. The annihilation must be definite, for the type cannot be tolerated even in a modified form. It is evident that the very notion of teacher, professor, etc., must be obliterated. The ideal can be approximated only if all co-operate towards "education", considering this as a natural part of their daily work.

Small wonder that the bourgeois intellectual proves unable to develop the new principles in education, and that the failure should be the more conspicuous the deeper the intellectual is incrustated in bourgeois culture. I have referred to the fiasco of Russian teachers in high schools.

High school education should link up with the real labor in factories and workshops, in offices and in the field, without the loss of its many-sided (polytechnic) character, that is, without dwindling into the one-sidedness of

a specific technical education. The "pupils", too, should be allowed in a generous measure to share in control, freedom and initiative. The purpose to be effected is the complete dissolution of schools formerly planned for the age-limit of fourteen to eighteen, and the formation of free groups of juveniles, self-controlled as far as possible, temporarily conducted by teacher leaders, but developing into a vital part of the social body, and participating with a production of their own in the general process of labor, where the grown workers will have the leisure and the degree of culture necessary to influence youth by instruction and general mental and moral education.

The thing always to be kept in view is that culture should be general, many-sided, not *subservient* to production as to its purpose, but still promotive of production. Physical science, chemistry, mechanics, trigonometry, book-keeping, geography, history may be efficiently taught in this manner, not to mention writing, drawing and arithmetic. More manifold international intercourse by travel and migration complemented by reading, singing and listening to lectures, will open

opportunities for foreign languages and literature, which for many reasons will exert a most favorable influence. Anyhow, old-time methods and old-time teachers may be dispensed with, in this province also.

For university education and science as such the change of course is even more radical. "Undergraduates" of eighteen to twenty-five or twenty-six will be unthinkable and impossible in a society based upon labor. Not only because an adult not performing useful work will not be tolerably safe as an exception only, but because in future every human being possessing sound brains will both learn and teach all his life, will both give and take. It is plain that this will revolutionize science. Science too will link up directly with labor, and in this way be released from its present state of seclusion.

Those wishing to study medicine and hygienics will gather knowledge in and by practice under proficient guidance, and in so doing will be brought into contact with a number of cognate sciences. A natural differentiation according to practical and spiritual character and bias automatically sets in. Those who,

by experiment and investigation, are able to open up or to prepare for new points of view, or to apply to better purpose the knowledge gained, will find at their disposal the best resources, laboratories, appliances and materials; but discoveries will be the result of individual exertion much less than of an exchange of thought and of collective research, in which new perspectives appear as the strict delimitations between the many various provinces of science are done away with.

It will prove possible to find a common basis for branches of learning seemingly far apart, to reduce to unity the countless disciplines of our modern specialists, whose professional interest induces them to make things as intricate, and as incomprehensible to the outsider, as possible.

Bourgeois intellect is petrifying; it shares the fate of the capitalistic process of production in its entirety. What, in the beginning, was a motive power of unparalleled energy, the specialization and individualization of science and art as of labor, has already come to be a hindrance to further development. In industrial production finance capital tries to

overcome difficulties by fusion of its masses into ever larger units, but with no other result than to cause the difficulties to develop into catastrophes which irremediably ruin the entire system. In art, science, culture, a wave of nationalism overwhelms the last hopes of real unity. For this means, not a bond, binding up into a larger unity the several mutually estranged special disciplines, but a fetter absolutely inimical to the genius and essence of science, or more exactly, a noose for the strangling of all.

Who is there does not think with reverence and pride of the initial period and the triumphant evolution of the natural sciences and philosophy, of the conquest of the world by steam and electricity, of biology, of bacteriology, and the investigation of the wonders of the skies? Who among the elder generation but remembers the war which so fiercely and for so long a time, raged around Darwinism; but remembers the beginnings of the emancipation from religious dogma as a paramount social force? What proud hopes seemed justified by the spectacle of this evo-

lution in its vertiginous course! And how absolutely sterile it all has already proved!

Dogma reinstated and enthroned, but in a throne of cardboard and plaster instead of halo-encircled gold. Scientific and technical research intent, principally upon discoveries in matters of detail merely. No great ideas except in the last abstractions of mathematics and speculative philosophy; and a practice that dooms to sterility all important inventions.

Even technical science, Capitalisms' favorite child in the day of his power, is in the Imperialistic period valued as a factor of annihilation only, and for the rest is balked as much as possible in its creative energies, because under Monopoly, it is not intensity of production but the closed market that promises the greater profit. Great technical discoveries which in an ever augmenting degree, require the co-operation of many and vast material resources, become a menace to extant monopolies and the capital invested, real or fictitious, in them; and thus, they are, practically, rendered impossible. The engineer or intellectual who achieves practical results does

so by dint of dogged perseverance in a monotonous and strictly specialized labor that precludes all contact with the fullness of life, all mutual inspiration resulting from interaction with other branches of science, art and philosophy.

The new communistic society strives after unity in production, unity in mental life, in science. In this direction too there are remarkable beginnings in Russia. With loving reverence I think of Professor Bogdanof and his work.

In the interest of the future of science, it is necessary that the system of the specialists be done away with; the bourgeois intellectual class and its mental monopoly must be annihilated. The fight of the workers against the bourgeois intellectuals as a class is, therefore, one that must be fought out to the bitter end. It is part, and, in fact the principal part and the most arduous of the struggle for the new communistic society.

It seems to me the most perilous form of opportunism if in their struggle and for the building up of the new society, the workers put their trust in the help of the bourgeois in-

tellectuals. Just as the development of mass-action by which alone the war can be won, is impossible so long as the masses trust to the activity of the leaders, so the building up of the new life is impossible so long as the workers allow intellectuals and bureaucrats, even if they should have come out of their own ranks, to take the lead. It must result in a complete failure, if workers listen to advice such as is given by Karl Radek in his "Entwicklung der Welt-Revolution und die Taktik de K. P." (Development of the World-Revolution and the tactics of the Communist Party) November, 1919, to-wit, to so conduct their struggle as to win over large groups of intellectuals to their side: Radek writes:

"From this it follows, that the Communist Parties from now on must exert themselves to the utmost to win over to the cause of the proletariat the greatest contingents possible of intellectuals". He argues that circumstances are much more favorable in this respect in Western Europe than in Eastern, more especially than in Russia. Having conceded that, in Russia, the intellectuals as a class are "sworn enemies to the proletarian revolution"

and that the workers must relentlessly beat down their opposition, Redak goes on to say: "The situation in the West is totally different". There, it would seem, intellect is disappointed in its expectations from imperialism and democracy, the low material status of the intellectuals drives them into Communism, etc.

It is doubtless a fact, that these and similar circumstances may impel a number of intellectuals into the proletarian ranks, more especially those who, by the economic development have already been proletarianized into mechanical adjuncts of the technical or bureaucratic apparatus.

These nethermost layers of the proletariat constitute, however, as any one may observe in practice, but unimportant and most unreliable auxiliary troops of the proletarian army. For the leadership, and for the building up of the new society, the men wanted are of course, precisely those intellectuals who have given proof of experience and self-reliance also in bourgeois society. It is plain, too, that this is what Radek means, when with a pathos most surprising in a man of his habit of mind, he exclaims, "We would have to despair of

humanity if it could be doubted that the condition of European culture must drive the best elements among the intellectuals into the ranks of the world revolution”.

That is why he demands that we should help the intellectuals to overcome their last prejudices and should make them our allies. For “the intellectual proletarians also belong to this people which is creating a new society”. And, finally: “The proletarian dictatorship does not threaten the intellectuals. As long as they are part of the poor and suffering mass they can become a contingent of the proletariat organized as a ruling class. Whether they will, depends on themselves, but also on the work that we do amongst them”.

This theory assumes the identity of the bourgeois intellect and intellect in the absolute sense, just as Kautsky assimilates bourgeois democracy and democracy, but is unwilling or unable to understand that another than the bourgeois form of democracy is conceivable. The mistake in the matter of bourgeois intellect is, however, even more fundamental and more dangerous than the mistake concerning bourgeois democracy, because the lat-

ter is only one of the peculiar forms under which bourgeois intellect attacks the workers. Proletarian revolution threatens annihilation to the (bourgeois) intellectuals as well as to bourgeois democracy.

But, says Radek, "we need the bourgeois intellectuals". Certainly, the experience and the knowledge of many generations and long centuries has accumulated in the heads of a small privileged group. And we cannot forgo this precious heritage. Material wealth too is in the hands of a small group and of this also we wish to save what save we may. Opportunists and social traitors lift up a voice of warning: no revolution, no civil war in which factories, mines, cities may be ruined. Gradual processes, compromise, re-establishment of capitalistic production by hard work, economy and submission to the capitalists to begin with, and subsequently only the realization of socialism by the action of parliamentary democracy and the superiority of our organizations and our leaders.

We know by rote the cant phrases and will not repeat them here. Communists who do not believe in this idyl, but are convinced that

it is the power and the organizing capacity of the masses that are the decisive factors, are willing to pay the price, and know that it can be reduced in practice only by perseverance in the principle. As Bukharin expressed it: "The losses represent the cost of the revolution, caused by the change in the process of production, they are the direct material expenses of the civil war: without such losses the transition to a new society is unthinkable, and so, therefore, is the transition to the effective development of the forces of production unthinkable without these expenses".

But, like the material losses, the mental are inevitable, and a condition of higher development.

Naturally, we will not needlessly destroy cities and factories, and as little will we purposely waste intellectual values and energy. But the condition of success is that we do not recoil from sacrificing values if this be necessary in order to attain our end: the power and the leadership of the proletariat. The more resolute the action of the working class, the lesser the social and personal "losses" will be.

This holds good especially in the difficult

matter of the mental leadership. Factories and tools can be expropriated, accumulated knowledge and experience cannot.

The bourgeois intellectuals therefore, must take part in the building up, and at the same time bourgeois intellect must be defeated. It is not to be wondered at that, all difficulties caused by the lack of intellectual helpers notwithstanding, the transition should begin at an earlier moment, and in a more fundamental manner in Russia than in Western Europe, where bourgeois culture has penetrated so deep into the entire fabric of social life.

The small group of intellectuals who have openly broken with bourgeois society and consciously even though, of course, imperfectly, adapted itself to the new conditions, naturally fulfills an important function in this process.

For the majority of the intellectuals, however, a greater or lesser degree of coercion is necessary, although of course, this cannot be of a material kind exclusively.

Let us, for an example, consider an extreme case: In the Red Army tens of thousands of old-regime officers are employed, and this especially in the higher ranks, in the gen-

eral staff, etc. Of course treason is frequent, and the possibility of treason must always be kept in view. Together with every commanding officer therefore, a worker is appointed as "commissary" to exercise supervision. In case of attempted treason the most severe measures are, of course, taken, and the commissary then has a great responsibility. Apparently his task is hopeless. As he has no knowledge of strategy worth speaking of, the general-specialist finds himself free to do very much as he likes. And, as a matter of fact, contra-revolutionary plans succeed at times, and divisions of the Red Army are delivered over to the enemy by treason.

But, on the whole, the system has proved efficient, in an ever augmenting degree, for the protection of the Soviet Republic. If the commissaries possess sufficient self-reliance, sufficient "arrogance" to demand, again and again, explanations, and sufficient intelligence to combine data, they soon gather fundamental ideas and a working knowledge that can be extended by attending discussions, lectures, etc. In this manner a former hair-dresser's assistant has risen to the command

of three army divisions. This, however, is, for the time being, an exception. The majority of proletarian army commanders could not be made to understand that they had to take care of themselves, and one after another fell.

The chief peril is this, that men who educate themselves in this manner are prone to become, so to say, infected, and develop bourgeois-intellectual bureaucratic qualities. Therefore, control must be exercised not by individuals, but by boards, by committees for instance, that can be appointed, recalled and periodically renewed. In the army-organization this involves grave difficulties, and, even in Russia, reformers have recoiled from a consistent application of the principle. As, however, the army is only a temporary institution, and in any case a body extraneous to the workers'-state, this is perhaps comparatively unimportant.

Still the entire principle of the Soviet is based upon this general co-operation in execution and in control, with a many-sided system of committees, in permanent contact with the mass of the workers, who issue instruc-

tions and retain the power to recall the persons appointed. The difficulties of controlling the mental and technical direction do not in the process of production and in social life exceed the average worker's horizon so far as in the army, but the dangers in themselves are hardly less.

The form of a committee evidently is the one best adapted to the purpose; a committee numbering representatives of the different categories of workers in the building-trade is, of course, the proper body to control the actions of an engineer charged with the direction of a great building work. In a factory too it will often prove possible to have control exercised by committees without this arrangement degenerating into a farce. But the workers must feel very deeply that it is of the utmost importance they should not confide this control to single individuals. The temptation is great to leave it to a few of the ablest, most intelligent and most energetic among the workers to so educate themselves as to be fit to personally assume the direction; but this frequently ends in their being absorbed into the bourgeois intellectual class as

were the leaders of the old social-democratic parties, and of the old trade-unions. Therefore, the temptation must be strenuously resisted.

When news reaches us from Russia that the intellectuals grow more and more reconciled to the Soviet regime and become enthusiastic co-operators in the new reconstruction, this certainly is to be rejoiced over, as a proof of the increasing power and stability of the Soviet Government. But, on the other hand, we must not overlook the danger of a new period of supremacy of the old and new bureaucracy, which in that case would again have to be defeated by the effort "from the bottom upwards" of the masses. Fortunately, we may rest assured, that very many of our Russian friends are aware of this peril and constantly on their guard against it, and that they will fight it, even though economic and technical reconstruction should have to suffer.

But in Western Europe, where the peril is so infinitely greater, the problem is, as yet, hardly discerned. Its effects made themselves felt in the shape of a distrust of a direction, a direction from headquarters, "from the top

downwards", in a dislike of centralization, and above all, in a vigorous hatred of the officialdom of trade-unionism and the social-democracy. But in general this attitude is instinctive rather than conscious and systematic, and it hardly takes into account the real difficulties connected with the problem of the transition and the reconstruction, and with the comparative inevitability of the phenomenon.

Centralization is necessary in modern class-war as well as in modern production; in connection with this, it is not possible to avoid bureaucracy from the start, and it may even again and again become necessary to suffer it to regain the ascendant; this would be the case if only by such a course the continuation of the class-war or of production could, under certain circumstances, be rendered possible. But quite as necessary is an insight into the dangers of this policy, and into the imperative necessity of defeating bourgeois intellect of which specialization and development into a separate and independent existence as bureaucracy are forms of manifestation.

Class-war, nay life itself, sometimes forces us to compromises. But the communist is

justified in his existence as such by his clearer and deeper insight into the truth that we must overcome these compromises, and it is his duty to discern clearly from the start the danger they involve, and the aim that lies beyond. The deeper our conviction of the inevitability of reverses and compromises in the great process of social growth, the more inexorable must be our exposure and our attack of them. For only if we clearly discern and thoroughly understand the compromise as a compromise, as a defeat, as a danger, then only shall we be able in a subsequent period to overcome it as completely as may prove possible.

In the matter of compromises with bourgeois culture, such as the accepting of bureaucratic forms of organization and direction, this attitude is even more necessary than in the matter of compromises with the material resources of the bourgeois state, because in the former case the dangers are so much more difficult to discern and the process of overcoming them more lengthy.

This, too, is what determines our attitude towards the intellectuals as the representatives of bourgeois culture. There must be no at-

tempts by special propoganda and compromise to conquer the prejudice of these groups against Communism. The proletarian, anti-bourgeois, character of our struggle and of our victory must be emphasized in our dealings with them also. No endeavors must be made to gain a "support" that later on must prove unable to withstand the shock of reality. Only those individuals can be of real use who possess the strength to break in act, or at least in spirit, as completely as possible with extant conditions. Such will feel the remnants of their bourgeois culture as a hindrance, and will ask for a modest place in the ranks, and in the daily struggle will divest themselves by and by of their ancient impediments, and perhaps, someday may be able to render important services to the workers' class. But the danger of reaction exists all the same, and vigilance is always required on the part of the workers.

The best among the intellectuals certainly will not disapprove of such vigilance, but rather applaud it. The great majority of bourgeois intellectuals should be considered as our enemies until such time as they shall

have given indubitable proof of the contrary. They will accomplish their part in the struggle and in the reconstruction the more readily in proportion as the working-class finds in itself the more energy for direction and control. The more the workers show a determination to sacrifice everything rather than remain dependent upon intellectual leaders and bureaucracy, the less the chances of a return to ancient forms.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary for the transition to communistic society. It is necessary while the resources of the bourgeoisie are, as yet, unimpaired. But among these resources the mental weapons, the culture of the bourgeoisie, are the most difficult to break. Whilst economic and social reconstruction is dependent upon the cooperation of bourgeois intellectuals, the workers cannot do without weapons of their own even although it may prove possible to gradually soften the more rigorous forms of the dictatorship.

The duration of this historical period can be shortened only if the workers resist every compromise with bourgeois culture, and op-

pose as strenuously as possible all forms of bureaucracy. For it is not impossible that the social process may as yet be interrupted by new periods of exploitation, based upon a monopoly, not of material, but of mental possessions, of direction and intellect, in the form of a bureaucracy which in economic, as in military organization, had achieved a position of power, which again necessitates a renewed and severe struggle of the masses.

The expropriation and socialization of capital, therefore, is insufficient, unless followed up by the socialization of intellect and culture. The former is the condition of the latter: but this too can be brought about by the class-war only, and the sooner, in proportion as the difficulties are the more clearly realized from the very beginning.

The titanic war we wage is one and indivisible. It is against monopoly, all monopoly, whether monopoly of money or monopoly of mind.

.N



3 1158 00685 54

DK 254. L5N



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 812 487 7

