

Department for Agitation and Education

Edited by
Sam Darcy

Literature and Book Reviews

Can We Put This Scheme Through?

(A Question to Literature Agents)

If you read the 96-page pamphlet "Why Communism" by Comrade Oglin, you undoubtedly said "That's just the thing I was looking for." If this was not the case we would not have sold more than 1,000 through the district office alone for the short time since it appeared.

But the fact that it goes like hot-cakes only shows us what we could do if we only let go full steam. If you are a Party member or a sympathizer, you should have a bunch of them in your pocket, and when you face the question: "What do you Communists want anyway?" — flash the little revolver. It will save you a lot of lung power, and answer the question better and simpler than our best agitators could.

Now here is what the Western Worker publishers are going to do to help you. If you are going to place the biggest orders you can, immediately, and send a cash payment in advance, we will reprint at least 10,000 here on the coast, and make possible their sale at 5c each—half the present price. We can figure that each pamphlet will get into the hands of at least 5 workers. That means that about 50,000 people will receive a course on Communism. Do you see the great political importance of this big project?

Then, comrade literature agent, do the following. Tackle everyone you see or can reach, and get the orders. In a week's time you should be able to know how safe it is for you to order a certain large number, and how much money you can guarantee as the first payment. Let us know with the fastest mail possible, and before you know it the pamphlets will be in your hands.

We're going to let you in on another secret. We are planning to publish the pamphlet in Spanish. So let's see if we can put this thing across right, and at this mass sale of literature works—well watch the smoke, when many others like it are put through, and watch the figures for car-loadings go up.

Wire, write or telephone all orders to Jeff Goodman, at 37 Grove St., San Francisco.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

L. H. B. Roseburg, Oregon.

QUESTION: If the class struggle is the basic motive force for working class action, then what will be the urge for social activity when a socialist state has established a class-less society?

ANSWER: The urge for social activity will be inspired by the desire of each individual to create the greatest possibilities for economic production and cultural achievement. BECAUSE ALL GAINS IN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY WILL BE SHARED BY ALL. In capitalist countries clearly stimulus is lacking because the gains are acquired by the owners, not the producers. Already today in the comparatively earlier stages during the construction of socialism, industries which make the greatest advances, return to the workers automatically increases in wages, reduction of hours, more social insurance benefits, greater facilities and equipment for cultural activity, etc. This is the motive force which inspires the masses to strive not to satisfy personal greed, but to build a new social order. Workers are encouraged to develop their initiative and are gradually promoted to places of social honor and responsibility. This contrasts with the situation under capitalism where opportunities for education, culture, etc., are distributed, not according to those who can utilize them best, for society as a whole, but only to those who have the most money.

C. P., San Francisco.

QUESTION: Marx taught, there were only two classes in society; the workers and the capitalists. How come you speak of a middle class?

ANSWER: Apparently, comrade, you are not well-acquainted with Marx's teachings. Because Marx never did say "there were only two classes in society." I quote from the "Communist Manifesto": "More and more society is splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly counterposed classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat." Thus, Marx did not say the process had been completed, and ALREADY

only two classes existed, but rather that such a process was taking place. Marx always considered the middle-class, large sections of the rural population, the professionals, intellectuals, etc., as important elements that must be won as allies of the proletariat. Thus, in the Communist Manifesto, Marx said:

"Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole."

"Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."

"The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests; they desert their own standpoint to adopt that of the proletariat."

"The dangerous class," the social scum (Lumpenproletariat), that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."

Here is brilliantly foretold the use which capitalism puts the various class groups to as the material for reaction, via a Fascist movement or revolution as allies of the proletariat.

LOCAL SUPPLEMENTS.

Comrades from many towns have informed us that they found it very useful to insert in each copy of the Western Worker a LOCAL SUPPLEMENT announcing the revolutionary activities of all organizations in that particular town for the current week.

This might be a suggestion to other towns and to neighborhoods to get out similar local bulletins of one sheet (two sides) as supplement to the Western Worker.

SUGGESTION FOR A NOVEL.

Someone ought to write a novel based on the life of the head of an average 1928 working-class family, who achieves a highly skilled trade, and a good job, then loses it and eventually becomes a migratory worker, finally finding his place in the revolutionary movement. What a wonderful opportunity such a story would offer the writer to work in material on the crisis, on characters of various strata of current life, on the strike movements, especially the recent agricultural strikes in California.

Fundamentals of a Communist Political Education

Lecture 4

More About Expansion — What is a Contradiction of Capitalism — Two Chief Contradictions Illustrated — U. S. Gov't. Figures Illustrate Menace of Profit and Private Property

THE MENACE OF PROFIT.

Let us illustrate this point concretely. According to the United States Government figures for 1921 to 1929, the national annual income increased by 30 billion dollars. Out of this—

In 1921, workers got	63%
In 1926, workers got	54%
In 1929, workers got	48%

EXPANSION.

In fact, in its quest for profits the capitalist class was compelled to develop the productive forces on an ever-increasing scale. This is so because the workers, getting back only part of what they produce cannot buy all the products on the market. Therefore the capitalist must find ever new markets to sell his goods. Also, in order to undersell his competitors he must produce more cheaply. And, cheaper production can be accomplished only when it is large scale production. Therefore, here also he always strives to expand. By doing this, however, it tremendously aggravated the contradictions within its own system.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONTRADICTIONS?

For example, UNDER CAPITALISM THERE IS A GREAT CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF LABOR AND THE SYSTEM OF PRIVATE ACQUISITION OF THE PRODUCTS OF LABOR. Thus, the factory is organized on a social scale, (different from the old handicraft individual production). Thousands, even hundreds of thousands, are united in a single plant with a fine division of labor, each contributing some minute detail to produce a particular commodity. But when the commodity is produced and put on the market, except for the small amount which the capitalist gives to the worker in the form of wages to reproduce his labor power, he (the capitalist) privately acquires the product of the workers' toil. Thus we have social production versus private acquisition. Actually, this contradiction, as time goes on, grows into a huge cancer that chokes capitalism and endangers its life.

A PRIZE FOR WRITERS ON JOAQUIN MURIETA.

How many know of Joaquin Murieta? Joaquin was one of the most interesting characters in California history. We are certain that if short story writers are looking for material to write fiction based on historical truth, they will find no more dynamic personality than Joaquin Murieta.

In fact we are so convinced of this that we hereby invite writers to write short stories based on his life. **WE WILL PRINT THE BEST THREE OF THESE SHORT STORIES AND WILL AWARD TO EACH WRITER ANY VOLUME OF THE PRINTED WORKS OF COMRADE LENIN THAT HE MAY CHOOSE.**

This ought to be sufficient stimulus for any revolutionary.

SUGGESTION FOR AN ARTICLE.

Also we could use an article which surveys the tremendous increase in personnel and cost of the government bureaucracy in the United States for the past century. It might also give us a good description of the de-classing of the middle-class and professional people, and the growth of the white-collar groups in the employ of the capitalist governments.

However, the market is limited. It is limited at home because the wages paid to the workers make it impossible to buy back all they produce; and the market is limited abroad because the earth is already divided amongst the various big powers and there is no room on this globe for expansion. As a result, as each year passes, even in periods of so-called "prosperity", there is a steady increase in mass unemployment and devastating crises.

THE MENACE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

How could this be overcome? It could be overcome by dividing the total amount produced among the producers either in direct consumption or in the form of social insurance, administrative expenditure, etc. However, the system of private property does not allow for this, because it is based on profit. **THIS, THEREFORE, BRINGS US TO THE SECOND GREAT CONTRADICTION OF CAPITALISM BETWEEN THE GROWTH OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES AND THE PROPERTY**

IN THESE 16 GROUPS OF INDUSTRIES—

	1919	1929
No. of Establishments	274,598	210,959
Wage earners (average for year)	9,041,311	8,838,743
Wages	\$10,461,786	\$11,620,973
Cost of materials, fuel and purchased electric energy	\$37,288,752,000	\$38,549,580,000
Value of products	\$62,193,426,000	\$70,434,863,000
Value added by manufacture	\$24,904,694,000	\$31,885,284,000
Horsepower	29,327,669	42,931,061

RELATIONS OF CAPITALISM.

Let us illustrate this more concretely:

We have seen above that in order to continually increase its profit, each boss must continually expand his production. This he tries to do through speed-up, through more efficient machinery, through increasing hours and every way possible, intensifying the exploitation of the workers.

Literature Agents! Workers Attention!

Very shortly we expect Comrade Stalin's speech delivered at the 17th Party Congress, in full, printed in pamphlet form. If you read it in the Daily Worker, then you know that the speech by the greatest living authority and leader of the world revolutionary movement, is the most powerful agitation pamphlet we could put out.

While it furnishes the key to solving the most complicated problems, it is put in such a simple manner that every worker will easily understand it.

So place the biggest orders you can as quickly as possible and you will therefore be able to get a shipment as soon as it is ready. Order from District Bookshop, 37 Grove Street, San Francisco.

Facts for Speakers

(Clip for your notebook)

Sources given upon request. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope to "Facts for Speakers", 37 Grove St., S. F.

"OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS"

We take for granted that you have read in past issues of the Western Worker, the Communist analyses and forecasts of worsened economic conditions for the workers.

Now let us quote forced admissions that the New Deal is a Raw Deal for the workers and farmers:

From the National City Bank (N. Y.) Monthly Bulletin (Jan. '34). The rise in the cost of living "has almost exactly offset the increased money wages received by CONTINUOUSLY EMPLOYED INDUSTRIAL WORKERS. . . . Hence these workers have not had their purchasing power increased." (Emphasis ours—S.D.)

"In the case of the higher-paid WHITE COLLAR WORKERS, PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, and others who have had NO increase of money wages or income, their money now buys less than a year ago, and therefore THEY HAVE LOST PURCHASING POWER." (Emphasis ours—S. D.)

Claiming gains from February to July of last year "toward an equality of purchasing power" for the farmer, the same bulletin admits that the farmer "has lost ground since July"; and that in the Government's program "for the slaughter of pigs and taxing both hogs and corn," "THE FARMERS ON THE WHOLE HAVE BEEN THE LOSERS." (Emphasis ours—S. D.)

MORE FIGURES ON HOUSING

For three years, (1930, 1931 and 1932) in 279 cities the Government Bureau of Labor Statistics show:

Increase in Number of Families	757,112
New Housing Units Built for Families	257,300

This shows that two-thirds of these families had to double up with others, in addition to many thousands of families already sharing living quarters, due to wage cuts and loss of jobs.

In Philadelphia alone, 29,000 families are reported "doubled up", while there are 25,000 vacancies in the city.

The number of new dwelling units built in 1932 was 5.9 for each 10,000 population and about the same for 1933. This partly explains the figure already given in this column of 9,000,000 families living in houses unfit for human habitation.

U. S. WORKERS' AUTOS, GOING, GOING —

Over 3,000,000 workers and poor farmers lost their automobiles during the crisis.

SOVIET AUTO PRODUCTION GOES TOO, BUT UP!

1928 Soviet Union produced	2,500 cars
1930	10,000
1932	25,000
1933	40,000

(proposed plan, complete figures most likely exceed this figure)

INCOME UNDER CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY.

The average weekly wage of an employed worker is about \$16.00 or \$32 a year.

To illustrate the salary of intellectuals in the U. S., one out of every four American teachers is now receiving less than \$750.00 per year.

Compare this with the average salary of presidents of the large life insurance companies, which is \$135,000 per year. Samuel Untermyer (capitalist lawyer) has an income of more than a Million Dollars a year.

George Washington Hill, President of the American Tobacco Company, in 1931 received salary and bonus of \$1,018,000.

President, and 47 officers of the Chase National Bank in 1932 got salary and bonus ranging from \$87,000 to \$220,300 each.

In fact these latter are just "small change", because in 1928 there were 513 persons who received income for the year of more than a Million Dollars, according to their sworn statements to the income tax bureau of the U. S.

Clearly, it is the increased surplus value which was wrung from each worker for the benefit of the capitalist class. We must again call the student's attention to the fact that these two years are not years of especially aggravated crisis such as we had from 1930 to date but are so-called "normal" periods of capitalist development.

These small producers are squeezed out because they cannot compete with the tremendous efficiency and ruthlessness of large scale individual capitalist enterprise which commands vast capital resources. The process under capitalism is the continual concentration and centralization of capital and the ruin of small individual enterprises. It throws millions of people out of useful life—at the top by creating a class of parasites who live off interest and dividend coupons, and at the bottom by creating a vast army of unemployed.

A SIMILAR PROCESS ALSO GOES ON IN THE RURAL REGIONS. There however the small farmer sometimes succeeds in maintaining his hold on the land only through maintaining the fiction of independence. In other words, while holding his small parcel of land and working it with individual effort he may still hold on to it by working excessively long hours and by starving himself and family, in order to meet his obligations to the bank, the railroad company, the marketing corporation, etc. This is his so-called "independence". This is in fact a greater enslavement and an equally severe exploitation. In the past few years however the over-production of farm products has become so great that large amounts of farm products had to be destroyed. If the banks controlling these products were to maintain their profits, a concentrated drive has therefore developed to eliminate as many of these small individual farmers from production as possible. This took the form of increased and more ruthless foreclosing of mortgages, of open payment by the government to the farmers to leave the land, of plowing under certain crops such as cotton, and uprooting trees, especially fruit bearing trees.

WAR.

On an international scale the struggle between one country and another over the markets where to sell their goods and make profit, or between one group of countries and another has reached such intense proportions that especially in the twentieth century an incessant round (with rare abatement) of imperialist wars with its nightmare of suffering for the masses has been raging throughout the world.

(End of Lecture 4)