• FORUM •

Internal Party Journal of the S.P.G.B.

No. 5 *FEBRUARY 1953* *SIXPENCE*

From America

THE BALLOT v. COMRADE CANTER

IN a lengthy letter, published in FORUM, October and November, 1952, Comrade Cantor presents his thesis, an answer (as he calls it) to a " group of Boston comrades " who have " elevated to a principle question whether or not socialism will come about through the ballot."

As a member of the " group of Boston comrades " in question, I have news for Comrade Cantor. The position on the Ballot as set forth in the original Open Letter was not discovered nor "elevated to a principle question" by a group in Boston. What Comrade Canter refuses to recognise, despite all our literature on the subject, is the fact that this is and has been the position of the Companion Parties since the S.P.G.B. was first organised. Despite the length of the comrade's " reply ", he did not find occasion to mention even once the fact that the position of the 1951 Conference, which he helped to draw up and which he defended so nobly in his treatise, was *defeated* in the subsequent Party Referendum, even if by a fairly close margin.

True it is that due to past laxity in membership requirements and/or laxity in a study of Party literature, there is a minority in the W.S.P. who do not accept the Party position on the socialist revolution. This is bad enough, and in the opinion of this writer should not be tolerated. But when a member who rejects our position on such a vital principle, attempts to square his unsound views with those of the Party—attempts to *make* his views those of the Party and brush off the original Party stand as the views of a small " group of Boston comrades "—that is still worse.

The arguments of Comrade Canter have, of course, all been presented to us before by representatives of most of the radical organisations in this country and they have all been answered by our speakers and writers. It seems, though that we must go into it once again, and so we request space in FORUM necessary to cover the subject. We shall try to be brief and to the point.

Premises upon which we base our case.

Is the "line of demarcation between socialists and non-socialists . . . the belief or non-belief in the ultimate efficacy of the ballot?" In a sense, yes, although this is putting it rather crudely. The only reason the socialist must take the position that socialism will be brought about by the ballot and by no other way is that the only other conceivable alternatives that have been offered involve means which, when analysed, fall too short of fulfilling the objective. Let us begin from the following premises:

(1) the revolution requires a majority of class-conscious socialists in society ;

(2) this majority must take organised steps to achieve its aim ;

(3) the first of such steps must be to wrest control of the capitalist state from the capitalist class.

Flowing from these simple premises we have some equally simple reasoning:

(a) the most logical way that a majority can make sure it *is* a majority and know just what it agrees upon is through elections.

(b) We cannot conceive of any *organised* manner in which a majority can act in its own interests other than through a political party which places its candidates in the field in open opposition to all other parties.

(c) If the object is the wresting of control of the State from the capitalists, then obviously this can only be accomplished by gaining a majority in the organ or organs of State power such as will exist at the time, not by creating " its own " bodies or conventions and attempting to arrange " its own " elections.

Simple as this reasoning is, however, it seems to be incomprehensible to Comrade Canter and those who agree with him.

The " reasoning " of Comrade Canter

Running through the comrade's statement we find the following main arguments:

(1) The advocacy of the ballot is all very fine, we all advocate it, but we must leave loopholes for other means because the ballot may be taken away from us; (2) the capitalists will never allow us to become a ballot majority; (3) history has taught us that the capitalists will use violent means to keep us from becoming a majority ; and (4) anyway, the whole idea is worthless because the American political system (unlike the British!) prevents the overthrow of the American capitalist class because of its involved systems of "checks and balances" and because the socialists, even if elected would not be permitted to take their seats.

All this, mind you, from a man who, with tongue in cheek, claims to advocate the Ballot, even if not as the only way.

Similarity between Canter and S.W.P. (Trotzkyite) position

Be this as it may, we should like to point out that Comrade Canter's arguments re the desirability but improbability of revolution at the polls and his analysis of the American political system are not original. He may or may not be aware of the fact that Mr. Albert Goldman, a Trotzkyite defendant at the Socialist Workers Party " treason " trial in Minneapolis in 1941, used the same arguments. Comrade Cantor states:

> **" There is no specific virtue in the use of violence, nothing to commend it as a way to socialism. But history has taught that the violence always arises from the other side, from the side in power, and that the workers are forced to defend themselves physically." (Forum, Oct./52.)**

Comrade Canter states:

> **" The question, however, is not whether it is desirable, but whether it is possible . . . History knows no example of the peaceful surrender of an exploiting minority to an oppressed majority. The actual conduct of the capitalist class at the present time, the violence which it uses against the workers when they strike for an improvement in their conditions, confirm the historical lesson, and justify the prediction that they, who will lose their wealth and power will utilise all forms of violence against the overwhelming majority." (In Defence of Socialism, Pioneer Publishers, p.41, 42.)**

Again in FORUM for November, 1952, Comrade Canter points out the difficulties of overcoming the U.S. Constitution. He shows us that it " takes a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress to offer an amendment and under the system of proportion described above, this might mean a representation of 75 or 80% of the population ", etc.

Mr. Goldman points out:

> **" The form of government in the United States practically guarantees the ruling class**

Head Office Forum

THE NATURE OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

F. Evans G. McClatchie
S. R. Parker H. Waite

Sats. February 14th, 21st 7.30 p.m.

its domination against the will of the majority of the people. To introduce socialism by law would require an amendment to the Constitution and for that, a two-thirds majority of both houses of Congress and a majority in three-fourths of the State legislatures are required, etc." (In Defence of Socialism, p.42.)

So far, there is not much difference, if any, in the presentations. But it turns out that there *is* a difference, and in Mr. Goldman's favour at that. He goes on to say:

"If there is any one thing that will prevent the capitalists from using violence, it will be the strong organisations of the working class. The greater the strength of the working class organisations, the less violence will there be." ibid, p.42.)

Were Mr. Goldman to have emphasised that these working-class organisations *must* be socialist to be really effective in preventing the use of violence, he would just about have the W.S.P. position.

Revolutionary Majority Will Not Be Constitutionalists

The reasoning by Comrade Canter and Mr. Goldman, however, re the obstacles that the U.S. system of government places in the path of a revolutionary working class is, of course, baseless. Let us point out that the capitalist class have *never* allowed constitutional bottlenecks nor respect for their hoary document to stymie them when quick decisions were necessary. The U.S., for example, entered the war in Korea without so much as a consultation of Congress, but if such a step were taken, the comrade can rest assured that the troops would have been despatched with as little loss of time.

Does Comrade Canter actually believe that we think a revolutionary working class will have any more respect for the capitalist's Constitution than they have themselves? No, a victorious working class is not going to wait four years or two years or even two days to take over. This will be a revolution brought about by workers who have voted for socialism —not by abstaining from the vote or by picketing the capitalist class, as Comrade Canter would have it, or by voting with their feet, as the Leninists delight in putting it. Socialists use their heads, not their feet, when it comes to a serious thing like the franchise. They will never permit such a thing as a Constitution, a Senate, or a Supreme Court to stand in their way. These "checks" will simply not be recognised.

Will elected socialists be denied their seats by the capitalist politicians? We think this may very well happen in the early stages. Like true love, the course of socialist revolution does not run smooth. With such an obstacle confronting it, the issue could very well be forced in the same manner in which the Victor Berger case was forced. The fact that Berger was not a socialist is beside the point. He was still openly in opposition to their war and was seated despite their opposition. Unfortunately, such trials will have to be met with as they arise. Were Comrade Canter to offer any new and constructive method of speeding up the process, we should be very happy to consider it.

Do We Dictate to History ?

According to our critic, we, the authors of the Open Letter, are attempting to dictate to history. Even if, as he puts it, the revolution were to take place in some other way than the ballot, we would declare that it was not according to Hoyle and would have to be made all over again by the ballot. This sort of argument is pure poppy-cock. Were we to point out to the comrade that *he* would reject a revolution as non-socialist unless the gutters were to run with blood and thousands, nay millions, of erstwhile capitalists were to hang by their unmentionables from lamp-posts he would become indignant, or would he? We deny that we are dictating to history when we say that socialism will come about through the ballot and through no other means that our mid-twentieth century skulls can envisage. For it is incomparably easier for a majority of socialists in society to gain control of the State by means of elections than it would be to use any other conceivable means. Can we expect workers to pit their strength, unarmed, and win, against the armed might of the modern state?

Can we expect even a *vast* majority to gain control of the capitalist state by means of a general strike? Even though the majority of the strikers might be socialists, they would starve just as fast as the non-socialist strikers and a whole lot faster than the capitalists. Does it make sense in a highly industrialised country like the U.S.A. to expect workers to organise soviets or workers' councils, to ignore the centralised political machine and build one of their own? Only to the Canter type of reasoning would such a thing be easier or even possible. But this is not reasoning, this is madness. In short, we say that a class-conscious majority *must* use the ballot simply because there is no other possible means they *can* use.

Could Ballot Rights Be Suddenly Withdrawn ?

Can it be conceivable to socialists that the capitalists can suddenly take away the ballot or otherwise make it impossible for the socialists to win an election; that they can do all this or that they would attempt to do all this against a mass of public opinion? Is it not more likely that they will attempt to fight a growth of socialist opinion by selling their system even more vigorously than they are to-day? The crushing of working class movements has always been made simple, because the majority of the workers could be propagandised into the "proper" frame of mind.

Regardless of this point, however, just what does Comrade Canter think a socialist minority or even a socialist majority could do about it if such a miracle could transpire? If a minority were powerful enough to prevent even a majority from voting, doesn't it seem likely that they would be powerful enough to prevent the majority from getting rid of them in any other way? And conversely, if he thinks the socialist majority in such a case could force the capitalists out through some other means than by the ballot, then why would they be so powerless that they could not do the same thing by the ballot?

The point is that a socialist majority cannot be deprived of the ballot. Nor can a majority of non-socialists who insist on having the ballot. The case in a nutshell is simply this: Comrade Canter represents a type of thinking that is in direct contradiction to that of the Party. That this is so is bad enough; what is worse, however, is that he refuses to recognise this fact.

H. MORRISON.

PRODUCTION FOR USE

—or *Mass Production?*

What is Mass Production?

It is that method of production where society is split up into more or less exclusive occupational groups and the work each group performs is broken down into its simplest process and each person becomes a detail worker.

To give an example—where most families made their own bread, there was still division of labour. But this simple division of labour is not mass production. Mass production methods in bread-making are only possible when the vast mass of families, including the mothers and daughters, no longer bake bread.

Prior to mass production, thousands of mothers and daughters were making tens of thousands of loaves of bread, in fact plenty of bread—but it was not mass production of bread. Once the mothers and daughters were taken into factories, offices, etc., other methods were required to produce the tens of thousands of loaves. A relatively few professional bakers and assistants were necessary.

In order that these relatively few people can turn out the bread formerly made by thousands of people, vast masses of machinery have to be made, machinery enabling the process of bread-making to be split up into its simplest operations and the labourers divided, classified and grouped according to these functions. These methods demand the centralising of the activity, such as is to be seen at Lyons' Cadby Hall, 'Hovis", and "Wonderloaf" model bakeries.

Mass production methods demand a hierarchy of labour, from the labourer at the working-tool to the organising manager. It must be remembered that this splitting of the functions demands speed and authority in production and transportation.

Division of Labour

Comrade Parker, in his article "Will there be Mass Production?", writes, "division of

labour is only harmful when excessive". When he says this he has granted me my whole case. What are mass production methods but *excessive* division of labour?

Parker then says: "Further, however, it is argued that mass production necessarily involves pace-making, is exclusive to capitalism, and is inseparable from large towns. These are more controversial statements with which I, for one, disagree."

Seeing that Marx has been quoted, may I be permitted some references?

"The foundation of every division of labour that is well-developed, and brought about by the exchange of commodities, is the separation between town and country." (K. Marx, Capital Vol. 1, p.345, Sonnenschein Edition.)

In case members doubt the wisdom of stating what the future will be regarding the manner and methods of production within Socialist society—that it is not "scientific" but merely utopian:

"The abolition of the separation between town and country is no Utopia, it is an essential condition of the proportionate distribution of the greater industry throughout the country. Civilisation has left us a number of large cities, as an inheritance, which it will take much time and trouble to abolish. But they must and will be done away with, however much time and trouble it may take." (F. Engels, "Landmarks of Scientific Socialism, p.244, Kerr Edition.)

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour has vanished, after labour has become not merely a means to live but has become itself the primary necessity of life, after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flows more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banner from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." ("Critique of the Gotha Programme." K. Marx Selected Works, p.566, Vol. II.)

Whilst quoting Marx and Engels, I am prepared to agree that supporters of mass production may find other quotations that might appear to bear a different interpretation. This shows the futility of relying on any one person or expecting to find the 100% correct position in any one book. But what it does show is the childishness of the accusation that it is utopian if one states that under socialism the excessive division of labour will not exist, and that town and country will be abolished.

I sincerely hope that, now it is shown that the "masters" of scientific socialism advocated all of these things, members will not dismiss the arguments by merely labelling them utopian. Of course, I am fully aware that because Marx and Engels advocated these propositions, it does not make them correct.

Production for Use

In his article, Parker says: "There seems no reason why it should not be possible in a society in which people control their own conditions of work, for a machine to relieve arduous toil and yet not entail boredom." It would appear from this, that he thinks that machinery and mass production are the same thing and, consequently, thinks that members who state that there will be no mass production methods under socialism are saying that all machinery will be abolished. This, of course, is nonsense.

In closing, he says, "but don't expect society to abandon social production of most chairs and tables." Here, again, it would appear that he equates social production with mass production—presumably there was no "social production" until mass production methods were employed!

I agree with Comrade Parker when he says he sees no reason why it should not be possible in a society in which people control their own conditions of work, for machines to relieve arduous toil and yet not entail boredom. But mass production methods preclude the operative from control of their work, compelling them to:

(1) Standardise the machine processes.
(2) Operate a single process.
(3) Standardise the products.

All three points of Parker's description of mass production, as contained in the encyclopedia to which he refers us, demand that people must submit absolutely to a central directing authority. To standardise the machine processes must produce the excessive division of labour which Parker himself agrees is harmful.

To operate a single process produces boredom, and I certainly question whether it relieves arduous toil. Parker certainly gives us no evidence of this.

To standardise the product must mean dictation to the consumers as to what they must have. This is in opposition to a basic socialist principle—Production for Use. Production for use does not mean merely the absence of exchange; it also means that the needs of people will determine production.

Again, all these descriptions of mass production methods demand the development of mono-culture and the division of society into large towns and rural communities, which must prevent the all-round development of the individual.

Parker again shows that he does not know mass production methods when he sees them. When dealing with monotonous and repetitive work, he says, "Mass production is said to involve monotonous and repetitive work. So it does. But so does a great deal of non-mass production. I wouldn't like to argue that writing figures in a ledger all day is much less repetitive than operating an automatic machine."

Surely the clerk who is writing figures in a ledger all day is just as much engaged in mass production methods as the operator of an automatic machine.

Time Saving

Parker says, "Time is worth saving on any job under any system, because it enables us to undertake other jobs or to enjoy leisure."

Time saving does not mean the opposite of wasting time—it means doing everything in the shortest possible time. In fact, the people concerned with saving time are usually found trying to kill time. Why does everybody want to do things in the shortest possible time? Because of the dictates of market production. It would be interesting to hear what Parker has in mind when he writes of leisure. Also, why should people within socialism want to "save time from productive work in order to enjoy other experiences"?

The terms "productive work" and "leisure" can only exist when people are engaged in "getting of living", i.e. productive work, and when a person is doing something for his own pleasure, hobby or recreation, called leisure. The terms have no reference to *what* is being done, but *why* it is being done.

Under socialism there will not be the condition nor the idea of "getting a living". Socialism means to me a way of life in which people will have recognised that "the primary necessity of life is WORK." (*Marx*).

Then Parker tries his hand at speed. He says "Pace-making is certainly a feature under capitalism, but remember it is not the machine that sets the pace, it is the boss." Of course, it is the machine that sets the pace. Certainly it is the employer who agrees to the installation of the belt system, but once installed, the pace is set.

Mass production machinery and methods are a product of property society in which things and services are produced for a market. In society where there is no property, there can be no place for the whip as used in past society, nor its modern counterpart — whipping-up machinery and methods. People will work because they want to and will need no whips, no threats, no promises, no punishment, no reward.

It is easy to write "There are many ways in which mass-production will be different under socialist conditions," but nowhere in the article, or in discussions, have I been told anything about these differences which will make mass-production methods attractive within socialism. I do hope we shall hear from members about these differences.

From my point of view, mass production methods are even less attractive than the cartoon illustrating Parker's article. Some of us, however, can find solace in the fact that neither of these abominations will exist within society where ALL work is useful.

A. TURNER.

SUPER-OPTIMISTS

The members of S.W. London Branch must be super-optimists if they really seriously think that by raising the dues to 6d. per week the Party will have an income of £1,300 p.a.

During the last ten years, including 1952, the income dues has averaged just over £300 per annum, and during that time (or most of it) the Party has had 1,000 members, so I fail to see how the income from dues is going to be quadrupled by doubling them.

Let us be realists and face the facts.

W.T.A.

Reply to H. G. Hayden (below)

ALL CAN ASSIMILATE ANY IDEAS

HAYDEN'S criticism consists of five paragraphs which I will discuss in the order in which they appear.

(1) He quotes two phrases of mine and then adds that I am treading "the very shaky soil of utopism". I am not sure what he means by this, but it is possible that there is a misunderstanding. When I used the phrase "socialist ideas" I meant ideas about Socialism—a world in which people would live in communal association free of all the barriers that split them apart to-day, and have split them apart in the past. As I pointed out in proposiiton (8) this idea, or these ideas, had emerged as a result of past development, and once having emerged can be passed on to all human beings regardless of their present culture. In a similar way, capitalist ideas are at present being passed on to people in different phases of culture. Even the people of Australia, the so-called aborigines, are absorbing capitalist culture without passing through the cultural stages that people of the West have passed through.

(2) When Hayden refers to "modern socialist theory' he evidently has in mind the Marxian analysis of Capitalism and theory of history. It is only necessary for people soaked in Capitalism to grasp these theories in order to understand the system under which they are living and to be able to refute the claim that Capitalism is the best of all possible social systems–the final fruition of social development. Further it is not necessary to have a literary education to know that you are poor, insecure, suffering the horrors of war, and that Socialism is a system in which these things will have no place. It cannot be true that the problems of Capitalism and their solution arise because capitalist society needs a literate working class; both the problems and the solution were there before there was a literate working class—in the middle of the last century when the Communist Manifesto was written. In fact, Marx himself pointed out that the problems only arise when the solution is present:

> **"The problem and the means of solution arise simultaneously." (Capital, p.60.)**
>
> **"Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation." (Critique of Political Economy, p.13.)**

(3) I have covered the point in this paragraph. People in all forms of society are already grasping capitalist ideas. This is a fact that must be apparent to everybody and is evidence of the fundamental mental similarity of all mankind. Capitalist ideas are more complicated than socialist ideas. If people all over the earth can understand these, then it is reasonable to assume that they will have no greater difficulty in grasping socialist ideas. What does complicate the question now is that people are becoming bemused by capitalist ideas before socialist ideas come their way free from adulteration.

When using the expression "higher culture of Capitalism" it is necessary, for the present discussion, to define the standard of judgment. If the standard is the variety of directions in which human effort can be applied in comparison with other cultures, then Capitalism stands high; if the standard is the security, comfort and freedom from fear for those living under it, then Capitalism stands low in relation to other cultures.

To explain Socialism to people who have absorbed Capitalist ideas, it is necessary to do so in relation to the Capitalist ideas they hold. To explain Socialism to people who have not yet absorbed capitalist ideas, or only partly absorbed them, it is necessary to do so in relation to the tribal or other ideas they hold. Of course it would be absurd to talk of surplus value, crises, etc., to a Central Australian native, but that does not mean that he is incapable of understanding the culture that we put under the heading of socialist society—working together in harmonious co-operation to produce the things we need, in profusion and for our mutual satisfaction. The first reaction of the Australian native would probably be the same as that of people living under Capitalism—"impossible you will have to change human nature!" It has already been demonstrated that there is no group of people incapable, for example, of learning to handle the most complicated modern machinery. On the fringes of civilised territory, native people are now doing the work connected with servicing aeroplanes on the different world routes. When given the opportunity to learn to read and write, they show themselves to be as competent students as are to be found anywhere in the West.

The following quotations indicate that the views expressed above on the mental similarity of all groups of people are also held by anthropologists and allied investigators:

> "We have the same brain, perpetuated by reproduction, which worked in the skulls of barbarians and savages in by-gone ages."
>
> (p.61 Morgan *Ancient Society*, 1877)
>
> "Over and above the sheer intellectual fun of surveying humanity at large, there is unlimited moral gain to be got in the enlarged consciousness of the fact that man is of one kind—that as a species we are near enough to each other in our type of mind to share all the thoughts and feelings most worth having." (R. R. Marett, *Head, Heart and Hands in Human Evolution*, 1935).
>
> "As far as is known, all peoples are able to share creatively in all known cultures and to transmit them through education to their offspring." (p.65, Jacobs and Stern, *Outline of Anthropology*, 1948).
>
> "That all populations to-day have the same complexity of structure of brain and central nervous system is decisive evidence in favour of the judgment that all races are potentially equal and that there are no genetically superior or inferior races." (p.39, Jacobs and Stern *Outline*.)
>
> "Babies have the same central nervous systems in all populations, but what they do, think and become, seems to depend entirely on custom and on familial or social environment."
>
> (p.60, Jacobs and Stern *Outline*.)
>
> "According to present knowledge, there is no proof that the groups of mankind differ in their innate mental characteristics, whether in respect of intelligence or temperament. The scientific evidence indicates that the range of mental capacities in all ethnic groups is much the same."
>
> "All normal human beings are capable of learning to share in a common life, to understand the nature of mutual service and reciprocity, and to respect social obligations and contracts. Such biological differences as exist between members of different ethnic groups have no relevance to problems of social and political organisation, moral life and communication between human beings." (p.9, *The Race Question*, U.N.E.S.C.O. Publication 791.)
>
> The above statement is backed by, among others, Ashley-Montague, Hadley Cantril, E. G. Conklin, Gunnar Dahlberg, J. S. Huxley, Otto Klineberg, H. J. Muller, Joseph Needham, Morris Ginsberg, L. C. Dunn, Levi Strauss, Franklin Frazer and Costa Pintot.
>
> "The powers of observation and reasoning of the aborigines are identical with our own."
>
> "After all, Professor Franz Boas would be the

ON BACKWARD NATIONS (?)

When McClatchie states "there are no groups of people anywhere on earth, regardless of their present culture, who are incapable of assimilating socialist ideas" and "so-called backwardness . . . has nothing to do with mental capacity" he treads the very shaky soil of utopism.

Modern socialist theory was born of the problems of capitalist society, viz., the poverty associated with wage-labour, economic crises (trade slumps) and international war. As these problems can only be understood by people who have received some literary education, and as capitalist society needs a working class that is literate, then therein are born both problems and the conditions for their solution—a working class capable of understanding them.

People who live in a social environment in which peasant proprietorship or the tribal system still survives and all or nearly all are illiterate can have no conception of, let alone interest in, socialist ideas. The problems that concern them are only those of peasants and tribesmen. To talk of explaining Socialism "in language appropriate to their culture" is to ignore the fact that, language and culture being interrelated, then Socialism, which belongs to the higher culture of Capitalism, cannot be "explained" to those in a lower culture. This is because (a) it is a theory that is not associated with the problems of primitive and feudal societies, and (b) of the illiteracy of the people in question.

Man only takes up such problems as he meets. The spread of capitalist economy over the face of the earth and its permeation into lives of the backward peoples will prepare the ground for their reception of socialist ideas only to the extent that the mass of them become literate and solely dependent upon wages.

In short, they will have to be rooted in the culture of Capitalism before they can understand the meaning of Socialism.

H. G. HAYDEN.

last to disagree with me in the contention that any racial theory which would make the human mind different as from one type of humanity to another, is not scientific." (p.xxxiii, Malinowski, Foreword to *Coming into Being Among the Australian Aborigines,* by Ashley-Montague.

"This is not to say that the Australian aboriginal is a being mentally inferior to ourselves that he is incapable of our particular kind of reasoning, or that he has a pre-logical mentality, or what not. The facts point clearly in the opposite direction, namely, that the Australian aboriginal native endowment is quite as good as any European's if not better. In support of the latter statement, there exists a certain amount of evidence of the weightiest kind, such, for example, as the opinions of observers who have lived among them for many years and who are not by any means inclined to be prejudiced in their favour. Then there is the more direct evidence of the effects of schooling, the rapidity with which the native learns, and, what is more important, the consistency with which he generally maintains that learning, as is abundantly borne out by such a fact as the recent achievement of a school whose scholars were composed entirely of aborigines, and which for three successive years was ranked as the highest standing school, from the point of view of scholarship, in Australia. The ease with which natives acquire good English when it is spoken to them as compared with the difficulty with which the white man acquires the native language has often been remarked upon by white observers.' (p.11, Ashley-Montague, *Coming into Being Among the Australian Aborigines,* 1937.

(4) It is not helpful just to state that people must become solely dependent upon wages before they can understand Socialism. It is necessary to explain what there is about this dependency without which mankind is incapable of assimilating ideas about mutual co-operation. Capitalism grew out of Feudalism and Feudalism out of a chattel slave-based system in the order of Western development. Are we, therefore, to assume that all cultures must go through these three forms? If not, then why is Capitalism the elected system? If it is necessary to experience Capitalism because it precedes Socialism, then surely it is equally necessary to experience Feudalism because it preceded Capitalism. In fact, groups that have never known either chattel slavery or Feudalism are jumping straight into Capitalism—a system that has emerged as a result of past development and the ideas of which are being explained to, and assimilated by, people of different kinds of culture. What Hayden overlooks is that once an idea has emerged, it can be passed on. People are not born into Capitalism with capitalist brains. They are born without ideas and are taught them—in tribal society, tribal ideas; in feudal society, feudal ideas; in capitalist society, capitalist ideas. All children can be taught any ideas, and all grown-ups can assimiliate any ideas, however advanced, if sufficient effort is put into the process, because humanity at large is fundamentally curious and reasonable.

(5) In the last paragraph, Hayden is unwittingly committing himself to a view that he does not hold. If all people have to be rooted in the culture of Capitalism before they can understand the meaning of Socialism, then all our efforts should be directed towards spreading capitalist culture as widely and as rapidly as possible, in order to prepare the way for Socialism!

G. McCLATCHIE.

A BLIND EYE TO ELECTORIAL SNAGS

The Errors of Horatio

". . . this bankrupt party, impoverished by reckless election spendthrifts . . ."

"A great deal of useful criticism can be levelled against the party's first election battles."

". . . rash expenditure on leaflets and meetings . . ."

—HORATIO.

DID Horatio say that? He most certainly did—and the quotes (unlike some of his own) are word perfect. A few well-chosen quotes ripped from their context and suitably juxtaposed and you can make anyone say almost anything. Then it may be necessary to fill in some of the carefully omitted parts in your own words before you have a crack at an answer.

Such was the technique used by Horatio in his reply to my article in the first issue of FORUM. It can be highly successful if the reader is unable to refer back to the original article or if, wanting Horatio to be right, he does not bother to check.

Strained Misinterpretation

For example, from my statement that activity is a short term method, whereas propaganda is essentially a long term policy, he draws the illogical conclusion that "therefore socialist propaganda and contesting elections are opposed"—and attributes it to me. The actual inference was, of course, merely that electioneering was therefore an inferior method of propaganda.

Again, my assertion that the most sensational methods which are useful to other organisations are not necessarily the best for ours is for some unknown reason taken to indicate an opposition to elections as such.

This applies also to his third point, in which his misinterpretation is so strained that he takes three sentences to alter "figureheads" to "leaders" and to infer from this that I think the Party is undemocratic. He does not, however, tell us what other function a candidate has from a propaganda standpoint. It must be remembered that these three statements referred specifically to candidates considered as a propaganda venture, and have nothing to do with their value as delegates to the House of Commons, which Horatio cleverly assumes in order to charge me with denying the Party's principles.

Clutching at Straws

After mentioning the main *purpose for contesting election,* i.e., political representation, I go on to examine secondary considerations to see whether "the Party gains some benefit from contesting an election which is not directly related to this main purpose." This prompts Horatio to ask ," what other purpose *the Party* has, which is not even related to its main one." 'Nuff said.

In trying to make an objective analysis of the propaganda value of elections I point to the extra indoor meetings which are possible in the constituencies and say that "*apart* from this it is difficult to see what can be done with a candidate which cannot be done without one." Here that bias, which I warned should be guarded against, so blinds Horatio that he reads "these meetings could be held without a candidate."

My critic further tries to make a mountain out of the molehill of the extra £49 worth of literature sales at election time—2,000 pamphlets, he says! It sounds a lot until we remember that this increase over a period of six months does not even cover the extra copies of the S.S. printed during the election month itself.

He then begins to clutch at straws. In answer to my comparison of the inability to trace any enquiries about the Party to electioneering with the numerous replies obtained from adverts in esperanto journals, he boldly asserts that these "were made only because we ran candidates"—forgetting that this work was carried on around the time of the last election, in which NO candidates were put up.

Horatio's Positive Case

The next paragraph is a classic. After taking a number of quotes and semi-quotes from all over the article and juxtaposing them to put me in a false position, he then makes me arrive at an equally false conclusion by taking part of a subsidiary clause from five paragraphs before the last quote, misquoting it and sticking it on with a conjuction of his own to suit his own purposes. Then, realising it doesn't make sense, he re-states the whole thing "in other words"—his own, of course. It must be a weak case indeed which drives one as able as Horatio to such contemptible methods.

Next comes an appeal to our principles and policy. He turns a masterly summary of our general theoretical position and its application into a rigid dogma. As if eight short paragraphs can answer all the questions in the world and settle every practical issue that arises. Even Horatio himself realises the falsity of this argument in his more sober moments.

As he says of the Party earlier in his article: "if practical considerations (lack of support) deter it, it should say so plainly, telling the worker the difficulties, but making its object and method clear." Admirably put. I endeavoured in my article to assess the practical considerations, and I am convinced that it is time we stopped trying to fool the workers (and ourselves) that we are something we are not. We should endeavour to bring home to them our difficulties and the urgent need for their support and work, so that we may the sooner be able to seriously challenge the control of the state machine.

J. TROTMAN.

"MUST THE S.P.G.B. CONTEST THE NEXT ELECTION?"

Debate between H. Young & J. Trotman at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park, London, E.12

8 p.m. Wednesday, February 25th

THE NATURE OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

4—SOCIAL MAN

The evolution of multicellular organisms, which involves the differentiation of parts (organs), involves also the development of integrative mechanisms (the hormonic and nervous systems) to co-ordinate the organs as a team, co-ordinators developing in step with the increasing complexity of organisms. What is true of organisms which consist of colonies of cells is true also of herds, which consist of colonies of individuals. Gregarious animals have mechanisms for quickening the responses and the unity of the herd, so that, for instance, one individual comes to the alert when his neighbour does, or so that the signs of sentinel or leader may be unanimously acted upon.

Among many of the higher animals, not strictly " gregarious ", sex division involves the continuous association of male and female and their young, and they therefore possess the mechanisms for this continuous association—possessiveness, protectiveness, sympathy, dominance, submission, etc. They communicate their needs or intentions, by purring, barking, cooing, by song and dance. The parents teach by example, rebuke or reward, the young learn in play the arts of defence and attack.

In the gregarious animals, the social instinct is not merely one among others, but paramount. It conditions the expression of the other instincts—even the so-called first law of nature, self-preservation—for the group is the means by which the individual survives.

Apparatus of Sociality

The physical apparatus of sociality are the sympathetic mechanism, the imitative faculty and suggestibility—heightened in man by his refinement, particularly, of vision and voice as the receivers and transmitters of communication. Men have an extraordinary subtlety of vocal inflexion and facial expression, and, as its counterpart, an extraordinary ability to grasp at a glance a thousand permutations of voice and face (of which words are the slow and laboured accessory)—receivers and transmitters which respect the need for social reference. The measured artificial word is a precision tool of labour: as flesh and blood we link by song and dance—the voice sings and the face dances. By the interplay of frontal, orbital and naso-labial muscles we express not merely lust but affection, tenderness, devotion; not merely fear, but horror or anxiety; not merely anger or pleasure, but disgust, admiration, suspicion, irritation, grief, approbation, resignation. A smile may vary from a ghost to a grin, a laugh may be full or empty, the lips are compressed differently for determination or disapproval, differently pursed for doubt or disappointment.

Refinement of the organs of communication proclaims the natural need for kinship, antecedent to the social development which locks us in the bonds of labour and elaborates the linguistic conventions. The development of language itself depends on the sympathetic and imitative faculties which are mechanisms of the herd instinct. We show disgust, for instance, by wrinkling the nose as in retreat from a smell; the " faugh " of contempt spits out the offending notion or blows it away as a thing of no account; the head is raised in defiance, while in the shrug of resignation it is tucked into the shoulders to ride the blow which cannot be avoided; the eyes creep sidelong in suspicion, in disdain they look down half-closed upon the low person hardly worth noticing. The voice in turn mimics the face—in doubt or question, for instance, the rising inflexion imitates the raised eyebrows (raised to widen the field of vision, to place in perspective the thing in doubt).

Imitative and Suggestible

The imitative tendency enables us to learn without being taught, as a baby learns to smile or a child to talk, or as we adopt the ways and accents of those we live among. Grimaces and gesticulations evoke incipient movements of the same kind in the auditor (although sometimes too slight to be detected without apparatus). This ostensive, unconscious learning facilitates the identification and assimiliation of self with others it quickens the responses and the unity of the herd.

The same tendency, when it is applied to the field of sentiments, attitudes, feelings, is called " suggestibility ". Although we notice our suggestibility mostly in the more violent (so-called pathological) forms, in panic and pogrom, in hysteria and hypnosis, it is a necessary structure for social behaviour, an organ of social creatures. It is the mental counterpart, for the animal who thinks, of the sympathetic and imitative apparatus. It constitutes a permanent gravitational pull towards accepting the standards and attitudes of our associates (particularly in matters charged with moral judgment) in order to be accepted by them. In such matters, to have to convince by reason would be slow and uncertain, as teaching infants to talk by grammar would be impotent, and would therefore retard social cohesion. Suggestibility dispenses with the need for cumbrous reasoning: it is reason enough that a certain attitude prevails. It does not eliminate the critical self, but it ensures that the self is subjected to the unifying pressure of group sentiment. It quickens the responses and the unity of the herd.

In the crowd (the match or the meeting or the stupid hoky-koky), we forget ourselves, our inhibitions inhibited by the pressure, in the tight mass, of the sympathetic mechanisms. With gregarious creatures, attitudes are irresistible in proportion as they are unanimous, and it is this which underwrites the power of propaganda and leadership and advertisement and hypnotism. It is the knowledge that the great leader has a great following that gives weight to his words, in proportion as he personifies, represents, a mass of men. Advertisement achieves the same result by evoking mass sentiments (" a man's drink ", a " British product ") and by repetition, for repetition is only a crowd by instalments. In the hypnotic state, the voice of the hypnotist is the subject's whole sensual world, represents the voice of all mankind, and it is this which gives his suggestion its irresistible force—provided it does not conflict with the moral code of the subject, that is, with his moral world.

Never Asocial

What we call the " herd instinct " in other gregarious animals becomes in thinking men the high susceptibility to approval or disapproval, which is the core of his psyche and magnetic north of his behaviour. It is not an accident that the word " like " has two meanings: to be like is to be liked. Of all creatures, only man blushes—approval or disapproval will so disturb his nervous system as to effect the somatic functions. He signals his social distress to a social world, which will respond to the confession and mitigate its judgment. In men, the most individuated and anarchist

Correspondence and articles should be sent to FORUM, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High St., London, S.W.4. Subscriptions 12 months, 7/6d, 6 months 3/9d. Cheques and P.O.'s should be made payable to:- E. Lake, S.P.G.B.

There is a decided and welcome increase in the amount of matter we are receiving for publication. We have no complaints about this. If it continues and we were faced with an accumulating surplus, the only remedy would be an increase in the amount of matter published. This possibility would only be realised if the cost of the increase was covered by sales. In the interest of this new venture, it is important that the maximum sales are reached throughout all the companion parties.

COMRADES ABROAD

George Gloss, Boston, U.S.A, article received will be published in March FORUM.

George R. Ross, Victoria, B.C., Canada. Your letter referred to Frank Evans, who will deal with the observations you make.

Greetings to both and our assurance that we shall always be pleased to hear from the U.S.A. and Canada.

of gregarious creatures, the impulse to accept what others accept, in order to be accepted by them, is the all-powerful mechanism of social survival, the centre of gravity of human mind. Our actions may be called "social" or "unsocial", but they are never asocial; all the attitudes of men—protective, dominating, submissive, vain, ambitious, competitive, virtuous or naughty—reflect the thirst for approval.

The difference in the behaviour of the good child and the bad is one of method, not motive. The unwanted, the neglected, the illegitimate, the bewildered, the unsure delinquent, will obtain somewhere and somehow the modicum of approval and acceptance his sociality requires, or kick you to pieces in desperation. Aggressiveness tries to conquer by force the submerged fear of social unacceptibility. Bombast, and inflated behaviour generally, reveal an anxious fear of inadequacy. Servility hopes to secure the small change of compassion, and snobbery to preserve a status felt to be insecure. It is not the form but the fact of flattery that counts, for it is that that flatters. Hypocrisy is the homage of egotism pays to sociality, and "rationalisation", the finding of good reasons for doubtful ends, does not derogate from the social impulse; on the contrary, the need to rationalise proclaims it.

Morality Inheres

When Koestler contrasts the energy of thought with the "inertia of social behaviour", he merely paraphrases the "power of social tradition" without observing that it testifies to the social psyche of men. The *power* of social tradition is inexplicable, unless it bespeaks a social instinct. We may defy the mass, repudiate the orthodox, violate convention, but only while we have some moral support. Who dares to be alone is already mad. Only the idiot dispenses with social sanction. His id is absolute because it is defective, lacking the mechanism for its social determination. With a normal person, the approval of others is meat and drink, and disapproval, in proportion as it is general, is painful, worrying and intolerable. To be scorned is to wilt, to be spurned is to wither, and, on the other hand, nothing succeeds like success, for there is no greater stimulus nor more satisfying reward than acclamation, and advocates of the "profit incentive" merely insist that to him that hath shall be given, thus describing, not the nature of man, but the nature of capital—surplus value.

Here in the social impulse is the physical basis of morality, which has no other relevance and no other meaning than sociality.

Conscience and the feeling of guilt (in thinking man, the sentiment of duty) are the peculiar property of the gregarious animal, for to be gregarious is to be susceptible to the mandates of the herd, and "virtue" is nothing but the satisfaction of this instinct. Shaw expresses this in his sentimental way when he describes virtue as the self-indulgence of the the good man. So does Shakespeare, with whom it is "twice bless'd". There is no need to be confused by the false separation of "egotism" from altruism. We are neither selfish nor unselfish, nor even good or bad: we are social. And morality is niether revealed nor taught, it *inheres*, as the integrative mechanism for group survival.

At a later stage we shall discuss its bearing on Socialist theory and propaganda.

F. Evans.

WHAT SOCIALISM WILL BE LIKE

THE following are a personal idea of the future, after a new generation has grown up in free social conditions.

Communities

People will live in large communal communities of various forms, which will be scattered over the country amid surroundings that are pleasant and healthy. Each community will be self-supporting as far as is practicable. Each will include the factories that are essential as well as schools, laboratories, playing-fields, theatres, and the like. Also included will be fields for domestic animals and arable land for grain, vegetables and fruit.

The communities will be connected with each other by transport systems and other means of communication. They will have storehouses to ensure and adequate and regular supply of what is needed. There will be hosts of chalets and the like scattered about the country in suitable surroundings, where couples and groups can temporarily play-act and dream away time together.

All buildings, whether for habitation, for work or for entertainment will be fitting for their purposes; harmonious, rhythmical and pleasing. There will be no huge factory areas, nor will there be great expanses given over to grain, cotton, fruit and the like. Gigantic buildings, huge liners and other monstrous products of man's ingenuity will also be absent. But at suitable centres there will be large theatres, concert halls, museums and special schools and laboratories for the enlargement of knowledge.

Travel

The number of the population as a whole will tend to remain stationary, or slightly decline rather than grow. The tendency will be for the majority of people to remain settled in their early environments, but they will travel to other parts for temporary periods.

People will travel extensively in their youth, but the "rolling stone" kind will be the exception. Travel will be easy, because wherever people go they will "fit in".

The use of cars and aircraft, other than for the transport of goods, will not be as prevalent as it is to-day. The horse and the sailing boat will become popular, both for amusement and travel. The need for speed will have vanished; time will no longer be at a premium and everyone will be able to satisfy the desire to see different places without the need for haste.

Work will be done by machine and by hand and craftsmanship will be revived. Mere repetition work will be limited to what cannot be avoided.

I have referred to how things will be arranged in a "country" but I am really referring to the world as a whole, because the world will have become a unit —one country.

Production

Let us look in more detail at some of the aspects I have mentioned.

Although I have said that the communities will be self-supporting, as far as possible, I do not mean by this that they would only produce for themselves. What I mean is that there will not be the localisation of production that there is to-day; there will not be grain areas, timber areas, machine producing areas, cotton spinning areas, pottery areas, and so forth. Some raw materials can only be obtained from particular parts of the earth; these areas will supply the rest of the world. In like manner, grain, stock, on so on, will pass freely from one community to another as and when required.

Again, ships will, of course, be built by communities bordering the sea, rolling stock wherever suitable for the transport system, and reservoirs where they are most convenient.

Now about hand work and machine work. A camera handled by a craftsman can produce pictures of groups, of objects and of scenery that are delightful to look at. This applies particularly to colour photography. But this does not take away the joy of looking at a picture painted by a competent artist. We want both! So it is with machine work and hand work. A smoothly-running machine produces a pleasure of its own, and so do the intricacies that combine to produce its action in shaping things. But again this does not deprive us of the pleasures of hand production. On the other hand, the very roughness and contrast of an object produced by hand has a charm of its own and is a relief from the deadly monotony of the machine-produced object.

So in the future we will have both machine production and hand production and we will see that we achieve a balance and become the slaves of neither.

Factories

What will the factories be like? First of all they will "make no sordid litter, befoul no water nor poison the air with smoke". They will produce no shoddy things; the hours of work and the distribution of work will depend

upon the nature of the work and the pleasure or discomfort it gives.

The buildings that comprise the factory will be spacious, airy, well lighted and harmonious. The internal decorations will be such as conduce to pleasure, including perhaps fountains, pools, flowers, statuary and pictures, where appropriate, as well as the provision of music.

Those who work in the factories will consist of groups of men, women and children of all ages working together in harmonious co-operation for useful ends. They will not be places of toil but places of interesting and pleasurable occupation. There will not be overseers to watch that no time is wasted, nor will there be any need for speed-ups. Children will work in these factories as part of their general education. When a child knows it is taking part in some work that is useful and real, it is far more interested and anxious to learn than when it is doing something that is just make-believe. Also factories will not be just machine shops; they will be the communal workshops where everything can be made and each can have the satisfaction of accomplishing something new and original when seized by the desire to do so.

Jobs that are purely repetitive will be performed by some agreeable system of rotation. The same method will be adopted if it happens that there is a branch of work to be done which is unavoidably unpleasant.

Education

As education and experience will be many-sided and practical, there will not be the comparatively isolated specialisation that is common to-day, which requires single-minded concentration for years. Outstanding performances by people who dedicate their lives to one pursuit only is unlikely. On the other hand, it is probable that most people will eventually settle into occupations they prefer, but will have other interests as well.

When people will be free from commercial considerations, have a full and many-sided education, take joy in what they do and in the approbation of their fellows, it is conceivable that these conditions themselves will act as a spur to superlative achievement.

G. McCLATCHIE.

PAROCHIAL ORGANISATION AND THINKING

(Comments on "What Socialism will be Like")

I MUST congratulate Gilmac on having the courage to "stick his neck out" in such a fashion as above. The interest taken by those both inside and outside the Party in this subject is out of all proportion to the meagre amount written on it. It is much to be regretted that some members still cling to the view that propagating Socialism consists only of analysing Capitalism. Those who are reluctant to talk of the future should remember that present disagreements about it are always likely to be resolved by fuller discussion of the issues involved.

Yet I must confess that I nearly always find descriptions of the future a disappointment—perhaps because their authors cannot help being influenced by the past and the present. I know that whatever Gilmac or I or any other socialist thinks the future will be like (and it would be very unimaginative of us if we had no mental picture of it) our visions, must necessarily be crude and somehow smaller than life. "To anyone who has at all adequately realised the significance of the past evolution of mankind, all our halting millennial dreams are by comparison puny and impotent; the retrospective vision of accomplished fact is the most fantastic of all Utopias."

Communities

Although he refers to communities as "large", everything he subsequently writes about them seems to show he really means "small".

Chalets scattered about the country, self-supporting as far as possible, the horse and the sailing boat—I get the impression that these are the things Gilmac really likes, the *motifs* that he wishes to predominate. The addition of transport systems and machinery, denying that the communities would produce only for themselves—all these seem to be superimposed on the main picture as afterthoughts or concessions in a attempt to disarm criticism.

Travel

What particularly concerns me is the application of a principle, mentioned by Gilmac in the words "the world will have become a unit". This concept of unity, wholeness, oneness, universality—call it what you will—is surely the essence of Socialism. It is inconceivable to me that people will be in any way parochial in their social organisation or in their thinking. Gilmac obviously has this in mind when he suggests that people will travel to other parts for temporary periods and extensively in their youth. But "in their youth" suggests to me that the norm will be little or no travel, and this impression is backed up by the methods of travel that he forecasts will be prevalent.

Gilmac sees horses and sailing boats ousting cars and aircraft for popularity. Let us leave aside the question of amusement and concentrate on the practical aspect. Any change in the means of transport—any change that is going to be more than a temporary phase or an isolated instance—is bound to be progress, that is, more efficient, more fit for its purpose and not less.

This question of travel is not in itself important, but is, I think, symptomatic of other features of society. In this connexion it should be noted that, whether or not we think it desirable to preserve the techniques of production that Capitalism has brought into being, there remains the element of necessity that may override other considerations. Marx did not underestimate this practical aspect:

> "Men never relinquish what they have won, but this does not mean that they never relinquish the social form in which they have aquired certain productive forces. On the contrary, *in order that they may not be deprived of the result attained* and forfeit the fruits of civilisation, they are obliged, from the moment when the form of their intercourse no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms."
>
> *Letter to Annenkov, Selected Correspondence*, p.8

Universality

Any picture that I attempted to paint of the future would be coloured by a much greater degree of contact, awareness and knowledge than exists now or is suggested in Gilmac's notes. Universality is no mere idea in men's heads—it is rooted in material conditions. It will become an actuality when the idea of it is "in the air", and the form of society that will result will bear a direct relation to the universal means used to bring it about.

As an example, let us take the dissemination of news. It is reasonable to suppose that, after elimination of "politics", society gossip, murders, etc., there will still be a demand for information about what is going on in the world—a demand that will probably be enhanced in other directions. In social organisation prior to Capitalism, "the world" consisted of a tribe, a village, or at most a city. To-day, our news is largely national and, to a certain extent, international. With Socialism it will become world-wide, which does not necessarily mean the absence of more localised news. It is impossible to foretell what the means of mass communication will be, but it seems likely that there will be an increase rather than a diminution in the points of social contact.

Organic Unity

Perhaps a better word to describe the world than "unit" would be "organism". This complex organism, which has grown from the single cell, is at present diseased, but the trouble is not to be remedied by removing some of the nerve fibres. When the treatment (social revolution) is given, the patient (humanity) won't become *simpler*—he will just be made to "work" better.

So "gigantic buildings, huge liners and other monstrous products of man's ingenuity" might conceivably be adapted to the needs of the new society. For it is not so much the size of the buildings that is monstrous, but the uses to which they are at present put. I am prepared to envisage *some* gigantic buildings under Socialism only because they might be more convenient in which to administer certain affairs than another type of building.

The world won't be a unity because lots of people in communities will *think* it is a unity. It will be so because material developments will have taken place (far more extensive than any of us can now forecast) that will knit people together in society as indissolubly as the separate cells in their bodies are knit together.

S.R.P.

Published by S.P.G.B., 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4 & Printed by L. E. Westwood Ltd., (T.U.) 14 Kingsbury Green Parade, N.W.9