BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

STUDIES IN ASIAN SOCIALISM

Asoka Mehta

GENERAL EDITORS

K. M. MUNSHI

R. R. DIWAKAR

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

—Rigveda, I-89-i

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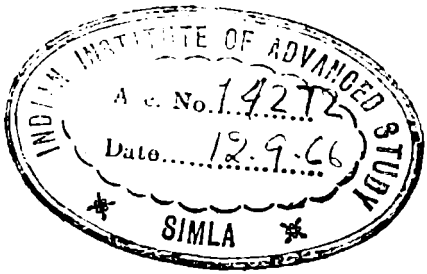

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan — that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay — needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2/-.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages; Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the framework of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach. In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the *Gita*, by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata:* "What is not in it, is nowhere," After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women, and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita*, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi, K. M. MUNSHI
3rd October, 1951.

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FOREWORD

In India today almost everyone claims to be a socialist. Such is the position in most parts of Asia and Africa also, where coloured peoples have regained their freedom. The near unanimity however is based upon a lack of clarity and precision.

Socialist thought and movement have been developing for nearly 150 years and their study can yield a fresh insight and a deeper outlook. For countries of Asia, there is both need and opportunity to think afresh and articulate our socialist future in terms of a comprehensive understanding of socialism and the specific conditions of our countries. While socialism has to be a universal philosophy, its reinterpretation in the light of Asian conditions entitles us to speak in a general way of Asian socialism.

I began the studies while I was in prison. Parts of the manuscript written there I have left untouched. I propose to bring together, initially, six studies:

(1) Ascent of Socialism;
(2) Upsurge of Utopianism;
(3) Proletariat plus Philosophy;
(4) Revival of Revisionism;
(5) Peasant and Socialism;
(6) Economics of Reconstruction.

The analysis offered in the first four studies are sought to be brought together to a common focus in the final two studies.

I have been a student of socialism and have worked in its cause for nearly thirty years. I have inevitably formed certain opinions and they shape the analysis I offer. But my effort has been to discover from the past meaningful experiences and not get lost into arid controversies.

My endeavour is to clarify both the purposes and processes of socialism. At least six more studies would be needed to complete, from my point of view, the enquiry and the analysis. The preliminary studies offered here however lay the foundations and they provide the scaffoldings of the superstructure that I have in mind.

ASOKA MEHTA

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PART I

ASCENT OF SOCIALISM

A student of socialism can be fertile only if he renews himself and for that he has to be constantly enriched by fresh understanding. In periods of pause, as during a term in prison, there is no more fruitful occupation than exploration of the great literature of the past. The classics of socialism offer an unfailing source of rewarding experience.

There is so much to read, the stream has become so broad and vast, that there is a constant desire to sum up: to absorb and to abridge become two parallel passions. The little story to be found in one of the volumes of Anatole France's *La Vie Litteraire* is of pointed significance. A young prince, on ascending the throne, called together the wise men of his land. He asked them to distil wisdom from the great books of the world to help him and guide him in his work. After years of research, the wise men returned with 500 chosen volumes. By that time the king was too immersed in his work to spare the time for such an extensive reading. Further research reduced the volumes to fifty, but by that time the king had grown old and the volumes became too many for him. He demanded that the world's lore of wisdom be distilled to just one volume. Before the quintessence could be extracted the wise men and the enquiring prince passed away. The dream of a quintessential book, however, lingers behind.

From Lorenz von Stein, in 1842, to Harry Laidler, in 1949, innumerable books describing the saga of socialism have appeared. These "outlines," as Will Durant insists in

another yet similar context, may be "humanising of knowledge," but they are also a recurring response to the deathless dream! All "History" and "Outline" books have concerned themselves with stringing together, chronologically or category-wise, the thoughts of different writers and the experiences of different movements. No effort seems to have been made to go behind these changing forms to a stable frame of reference. Behind the changing "modes," is there any persistent "essence" in socialist thought? Are the myriad "thoughts" unrelated, a kind of tropical growth, or are they connected by links of logic and experience?

Some years back, I sought to analyse socialism in terms of certain basic *ingredients*, and to explain its developments in terms of their changing combinations. How far the attempt was worth making only the readers of *Democratic Socialism* can decide. I now believe that a more fruitful source of analysis is to be found in studying the saga of socialism in terms of certain *impulses*, their challenges and response. The different socialist thoughts are only partly shaped by their changing environment, they also respond to the nature and character of the thinkers. Both these seem to possess a certain rhythm of recurrence. To discover the rhythm can be an enthralling experience.

The Word

So far as is known, the word "socialism" was first used in print in Italy in 1803, but in a sense entirely unconnected with its later meaning. In 1827, the word "socialist" was used in *Co-operative Magazine* to designate the followers of Robert Owen. The word *"socialisme"* was first used in *Le Globe*, a French periodical, in 1833, to explain and characterise the Saint-Simonian doctrine. In the succeeding 120 years the word has been used endlessly but with such vary-

ing shades of meaning that an earnest search becomes necessary to discover a common connotation.

Almost from the beginning, the word has been used with some qualifying or limiting adjective. Some of the combinations may have been coined by opponents to disparage some schools, as for instance, "feudal socialism" and "*petit-bourgeois* socialism" used by Marx in his *Manifesto*. Most of the qualifying words were however deliberately chosen, such as, "true socialism," "state socialism," "christian socialism," "fabian socialism," "guild socialism," "democratic socialism." As generally happens in such cases, the adjective devours the noun, — in the endless nuances of qualifications the original reality gets lost.

The position has become further complicated because time and traditions have put a whole spectrum of meaning in the word "socialism." Professor Cole concludes his erudite survey of early socialist thought with the following observations: "Most of the Left were united in denouncing 'monopoly'; but they differed about what monopoly was, some regarding all large fortunes as monopolistic because they gave some men undue power over others, whereas most connected monopoly with legalised privilege, and associated it with the old systems of feudal rights and privileged economic corporations. Some favoured large-scale enterprise and ambitious projects of investment, especially in railways, canals and other 'utility' undertakings; others were anti-industrialist and believed that men could not live well except in small communities or do satisfying work except on family agricultural holdings or in small craft workshops. Some wanted to diffuse property; others to concentrate it under communal or some other form of collective ownership. Some wanted all men to have the same incomes,

others looked forward to distribution to each man "according to his needs'; yet others insisted that rewards ought to be in proportion to services rendered to the community, and regarded some measure of economic inequality as a necessary stimulus to high production."[1]

Were these differences fortuitous, caused by eccentricities of different writers and thinkers, or, are there any relationships, any causal connections, discernible? That is at once a fruitful and a necessary enquiry.

It has been the effort of students of socialism to impose some pattern on the complexity and abundance of socialist thought. The most famous of such efforts is, of course, of Engels when he divided the orange of socialism into two: utopian and scientific. Too long has socialist thought been viewed in terms of this dichotomy, which is not merely ideological, but, strangely enough, temporal too; for the dividing girdle is set in the year 1848, all that preceded it is utopian, and in what succeeds it the sole meaningful form is scientific socialism. Any new assessment of socialist thought, therefore, has to be from a fresh angle.

Socialism has sometimes been conceived of as bringing together three strands of thought: economic thought from England, philosophical speculations from Germany, and sociological formulations from France. Such a statement possesses just the truth of a picturesque generalisation, and it is meaningful in the case of Marxism alone. The Industrial Revolution swept through first in England. So much of her energy was taken up in the processes of development that not much of it was left for speculation. In later years, when a similar and perhaps a greater transformation was achieved in the United States, tools and techniques took

1. G. D. H. Cole: *Socialist Thought* Vol. 1, pp 304-5.

precedence over thought. In Germany, in the first half of the nineteenth century, in the realm of life, stagnation persisted. Thinkers, even those concerned with social questions, functioned almost *in vacuo;* ideas and material realities achieved cross fertilisation only occasionally. The classic seed-bed of socialist thought was France: in that nursery every future development could be discovered as a seedling. Only in France did thought and economic relations so unfold together as to generate a great debate on socialism which took scholars to barricade the streets and workmen to reflect and write, made theologians into iconoclasts and engineers into social dreamers. There was then a fascinating interplay between ideas and social forces; facts and theories gaily sauntered together. Keys to most problems of socialism are to be found scattered in France.

Socialism was an outstanding product of the vast developments that the two great revolutions set moving. The French Revolution overturned many established institutions and ideas and cleared the ground for political and social experiments and daring voyages of thought. Simultaneously, the Industrial Revolution was refining tools and techniques and creating vast opportunities and great complexities in industry and in agriculture. Life became a flux and thought was in ferment. From this vast churning, as in our mythology, nectar and poison emerged, as also socialism.

Two Reactions

The first hesitating notes struck by socialism were two: the first was opposition to the prevailing individualist order, with its ruggedness, ruthlessness and the *laissez-faire;* the second was against pre-eminence accorded to political over social and economic questions in public thought and affairs.

Socialism was born with the cry of "Social Question" on its lips! That has been at once its glory and its limitation.

Early groups of socialists showed certain common characteristics, a common social approach. Inevitably, the central issue was the "social question." It expressed itself in various ways. The emphasis was on co-operation against competitive struggle between men for the means of living, on associative life against rugged individualism; there was a general distrust of politics and preference for organisation through producers rather than politicians. The social and economic side of men offered a new dimension; if men could be organised on that basis the conflicts and oppressions that political organisation had engendered could be avoided. Good men, understanding men, were expected to be the nucleus of the new order. Such an approach was to a considerable extent voluntaristic and optimistic. If only men could be shown what was good, they would promptly follow it; to see good is to seek it, as William Godwin (1756-1836) eloquently argued in his *Enquiry into Political Justice.* Men were conceived as wholly rational, as children of light alone.

Most of those having the above approach believed in a world of independent small local communities, each governing its own affairs. Then would coercion be reduced to the minimum, and democracy in its classic form of free and full debate leading to agreement come into its own.

Men like Godwin put all their faith in reason embodied in words. The revolution need affect only the minds of men; enlightenment alone could bring about the transformation of social institutions. For this reason, as much for its price of three guineas too, William Pitt said of Godwin's book that it could never foster a revolutionary upheaval. Later, Godwin revised this chaste conception of reason in terms

of pure intellect, and included in rational conduct the support of emotions. This concession became necessary because he believed that the natural light of reason gets refracted in the unjust and obsolete social institutions that encase it.

Not a few of the reformers in this period believed that example was better than precept. Men may not be *ideational* — their conduct may not be shaped in response to ideas and words, but example is assuredly contagious. Etienne Cabet (1788-1856) was perhaps typical, not merely in his gospel of communism, but in his endeavour to set up his utopia. Owen, Fourier, Cabet, directly or through their followers, sought to demonstrate to the world the decisive worthwhileness of their ideas and plans by setting up communities in the then sparsely populated areas of the United States.

Two kinds of men withdraw to build exclusive communities of their own. In the storm-tossed waters all-round, they try to build on rock or create islands of harmony. The first are the pessimists, who feel that the world is doomed, and the farther one goes away from it, the more is one saved. The Labadist or the Rappite settlements were of this kind — religious communities set up by men who were keen on withdrawing from the wicked world, for their salvation was not of this world. The other kind who set up communities according to ideal specifications, who seek to live in a utopia, is of men who are fervently optimistic. While the former dreaded the contamination of human wickedness, the latter hungered to be contagious. They believed themselves to be the light on the hill — others have merely to see it to be drawn to it. The force of example would help the world to reshape itself after the patterns in the books of reformers.

There is also a third kind of men. For them truth is meaningful only to the extent they live it, to the extent they weave it into a seamless garment of vision and life, of ideals and actual existence. To live for truth, to be guided by the inner light, to be consumed by it, has been the passion of all true artists, mystics, and intoxicated rebels. Truth to them is not of the realm of reason, such one-dimensional view makes truth wholly bloodless, fit only for *l'homme papier*. Vital truth can be discovered only in life, can be unfolded only through integrated living. The pessimists want to escape the world, the optimists yearn to be an example to it, the social mystics just want to be true to themselves and live their truths in the midst of the teeming multitude. Socialists have generally come from the ranks of the optimists and of social mystics, (who will never admit of being that!)

Socialist formulations emerged as a part of the ferment caused by three-fold changes — social, political and technological — ushered in by the French and the Industrial Revolutions. In these formulations are to be found two fundamentally different attitudes; one seeks to stabilise the changes and consolidate the early gains, the other favours the new forces to run forward their full course.

Science was just emerging as a vital force in society. New means of production were revolutionising not merely economic relations but social life itself. Saint-Simon was the first to analyse the impact and welcome the new developments. Saint-Simon and his followers were firm believers in the virtues of large-scale organisation and plannning. They aimed at transforming national states into vast productive corporations controlled by men of technical and business abilities. From the wedlock of science with society, the long-awaited utopia would be born.

Contrasted to this attitude was that of Charles Fourier, and a little later of Lamennais and Proudhon. Their outlook was essentially agrarian-oriented. Against the Saint-Simonian glorification of *les grands industriels*, they favoured the peasant proprietor; they distrusted large-scale organisations and welcomed science only in so far as it helped the *producer*, not just *production*. The Saint-Simonians considered the oncoming industrial society to be a solvent of all ills and injustices, while the latter believed that an adequate and acceptable social order would emerge only with improved agriculture. This is a historic fork; over and over again, in different countries, in similar conditions, the alternatives recur.

Rhapsode of Industry

Saint-Simon (1760-1825) was an avid believer in the certainty of human progress. Progress is made possible by the advances made by scientists and technicians, but they get baulked by obsolete social institutions. History thus alternates between periods of construction and of criticism, of upsurge and of destruction. The social fabric usually fails to match the advance made in *les lumieres*, then criticism and destruction become wholly necessary. At last the time had come when the dreams and fancies of Francis Bacon could become real. The "New Atlantis" could be discovered in old Europe itself! As in Bacon's utopia, Saint-Simon desired power in the hands of scientists, technicians and industrialists. He wanted the *regime governmental* to be substituted by a *regime administratif*. He had no use for politics, politicians and democracy. The only politics he cared for was, as he defined it, of "the science of production."

Saint-Simon was convinced that engineering could span our world of poverty with the future lands of plenty. He,

and more so his disciples Bazard (1791-1832), Enfantin (1796-1864), Leroux (1797-1871), drew up plans of a vast network of railways, of great canals, such as were ultimately constructed at Suez and Panama, and invited Britain and France to get together to undertake projects of public works and developments that would cut across, and eventually efface, political frontiers. Only the new leaders could form a European Parliament and ensure universal peace. War must be replaced by industry, and faith by knowledge.

The Saint-Simonians wanted society to be organised in the interest of the vast multitude, *"la plus nombreuse et la plus pauvre."* But such an organisation depends upon full use of science and emphasis on industry, where industries would be organised in large scale corporations run by skilled technical management. They planned large public works and desired widespread (later on known as "full") employment. Only then "the third and lasting emancipatory phase of history" can come about, the final phase in which (the first having made serfs out of slaves and the second wage-earners out of serfs) "the abolition of the Proletariat, the transformation of wage-earners into companions (associes)" will be accomplished. (Bazard in 1829).

The Saint-Simonians, as their organ *Le Globe* presented their case, appeared as the advocates of a thorough-going system of technocracy. They displayed a deep contempt for political democracy. Power must necessarily reside in the organisers of the process of production. "The producers have no wish to be plundered by any one class of parasites than by any other. It is clear that the struggle must end by being played out between the whole mass of parasites on the one hand and the mass of producers on the other, in order to decide whether the latter shall continue to be the prey of the former or shall obtain supreme control of society." (Saint-

Simon). With the emergence of science and the upsurge of technology, the incompetent politicians and the exploiting *oisifs* get pushed aside; men see through the smoke-screen of liberty and democracy and turn to order. This is not the order of the *ancien regime,* established by the oppressors with whiffs of grape-shot, but peaceful and *nouveau* order of scientific, industrial, and economic organisation achieved by *flambeaux.*

Such an order presupposes centralisation of power. The Saint-Simonian conception of planning, of *economic dirigee,* was based upon the use of science, and leadership of *les industriels,* domination of the technicians. Against *laissez-faire* was posed *economic dirigee;* against agriculture, modern industry; against social predominence of the landlords, *les oisifs,* the importance of bankers, industrialists, technicians, *les savants;* against localism and dispersal, *la doctrinne saint-simonienne* favoured centralisation and concentration of control and power.

These were new aims, they were of a grain that till then was not only not known, but was feared too. In Asian countries, with the challenge of undevelopment all-round, the advocates of industrialisation have usually rhapsodied by plagiarising the teachings of Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon.

The Culture of the Soil

The movements favouring science, large-scale industry, centralisation, and the rule of the experts was not the only reaction. Equally pronounced was the other reaction that welcomed the end of feudalism, the dethroning of privileges, but which made the producer, and not *production,* the centre of its thought. Its first exponent was Francois Marie Charles Fourier (1772-1837). He was averse to develop-

ments connected with large-scale industry and saw happiness inextricably mixed with the soil of agriculture and woven into the texture of simple life. The source of men's sorrow he saw in the market place; in the complicated routine of buying and selling, man was robbed of his freedom. What was needed was an end to this futile competition and to organise instead production directly for consumption. He was opposed to the centralising impulse that was endemic to the French Revolution.

Like all early socialists, Fourier had no use for politics and politicians. His panaceas could be realised through voluntary effort and association, for example had the highest contagion in it. Good life can be realised only when work ceases to be irksome, when life is built not on compulsions and frustrations but on attraction and satisfaction. It is necessary to construct social organisation where human passions are not repressed or treated as evil and anti-social but are given full expression in a manner that furthers individual happiness and social well-being. It is necessary to change not man's nature, but his environment, and the clue to the change is organisation of society in accordance with the principle of *"association,"* as against the prevalent isolation and competition. The central idea of Fourier's social scheme is *attraction passionnelle*, the urge in men to union.

Socially healthy and psychologically satisfying life can be developed in associative agricultural community, neither so small as to restrict the range of occupation nor so large as to exceed man's power of associative work. He fixed on the ideal of about 1600 persons cultivating 5000 acres of land. The communities, called *phalansteres*, would have a group of buildings fully equipped with communal services. One made use of privacy and of communal life of the *phalange* in varying proportions to suit one's taste or tem-

perament. Fourier believed that for wholesome life man needs contact with the soil. His utopia is based not on industry and engineering, as in Saint-Simon, but on agriculture where it is verily pursued as a *culture*, i.e., as intensive or garden cultivation. Then again, there would be various manufactures, like weaving, and services, like teaching, in the *phalansteres* to cater to the manifold needs of the *phalange*. It was an essential part of Fourier's views that none should be confined to a single occupation, made a *detail-worker*. Men should move from occupation to occupation and the goods produced, being not for trade or profit but for use, should be beautifully made, with an eye on durability. There should be joy in making, and satisfaction in using; shoddy goods mean not just waste of material, but negation of life. Satisfying work, variety of occupations, simple wants amply met and deep friendships made through community of work would be the obvious results of associative life. It was not necessary to wait for the state or a public agency to set up or finance the *phalansteres*, voluntary action was enough.

Not by baulking man's emotions, but by cutting useful channels for them, not by dissociating man the citizen, the consumer, from man the worker, but by treating man as engaged in a common process of production-*cum*-consumption, does one build for good life. Variety in work, beauty and durability of products, associative ownership of tools, work as not merely a means to livelihood or leisure but as a meaningful aspect of life, were sought to be achieved by Fourier in his agricultural communities. Against industry, he favoured agriculture, against large-scale factories, crafts associatively organised, against domination by experts, the democracy of "multi-purpose" individuals, against work conceived in terms of efficiency and productivity, he thought

of work as a source of beauty and joy and a pride in durable goods. Man is not an ill-made machine to be set right by an engineer but a person with vagrant desire, who in a well-organised society can be the means of both wealth and weal. The innovating impulse in man represented by the passion *cabaliste,* the desire for intrigue, for contriving, and the passion *papillonne,* the love for change, is balanced by the passion *composite,* the desire for union.

The advocates of industrialisation countered by saying that this vision could be realised not by blocking the progress of industry but only through its fullest growth. As Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) put it: "As the contrast between the militant and the industrial types is indicated by the inversion of the belief that individuals exist for the benefit of the state into the belief that the state exists for the benefit of the individual, so the contrast between the industrial type and the type likely to be evolved from it is indicated by the inversion of the belief that life is for work into the belief that work is for life."

THE COMMUNITY BUILDER

The Industrial Revolution came earliest and advanced farthest in Great Britain. Robert Owen (1771-1858) was one of the successful industrialists, with this difference that his cotton textile mill at New Lanark was not just a source of profit but was his school, as well as his laboratory. Owen's observations and experience taught him that all men were capable of goodness provided they were given a fair chance and a right lead. A man's character is shaped not so much by his will as by his environments. Owen therefore rebelled against the general acquiescence in the horrors of the factory system, the slums, the deadening of men and their lives. In his mills, he was able to demonstrate that better treat-

ment and humane relations did not mean bad business. His experience led him to view "the formation of character" in a new light: "Any character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any *community*, even to the world at large, by applying certain means; which are to a great extent at the command and under the control, or easily made so, of those who possess the government of nations."

The first pre-requisite to accomplish this end is the abandonment of unregulated competition. The best solution lay in associative labour. Owen's solutions were empirically drawn, not speculatively formulated.

To prevent his workers being thrown out of work, because of shortages of cotton, Owen had settled some of them, for a while, on land to grow their food etc. With the growth of general unemployment, after 1815, he came forward with a developed version of the same idea: he recommended that the unemployed be set to work in "villages of unity and co-operation" — where men would work in co-operation, and live in communal harmony. Owen, ere long, saw in such communities the embryo of the new social and moral order. In 1824 he left England and settled in the United States to experiment with his colony of New Harmony.

Owen, like Fourier, favoured intensive agriculture but he also desired balanced development of industry. If Saint-Simon was industry-intoxicated, Fourier was satisfied with intensive farming and domestic crafts. Owen, on the other hand, desired to construct co-operative colonies where agricultural and industrial activities would both be pursued with up-to-date methods. "The cultivation of soil," he wrote in 1837, "is capable of being made a beautiful chemical and mechanical process, conducted by men of great science and highly educated minds."

His American adventure failed and he returned to England by 1830. Though he failed to build a utopian colony, he returned with the conviction that the new community can be built within the very bosom of the old. Industrial workers had started organising themselves into trade unions. Why should they not go forward and strive to establish, through co-operative efforts, their own system of production and distribution? He first approached the building workers, who were harassed more by grasping contractors than by mechanical invention, to come together and supersede private contractors through a Grand National Guild of Builders. Wider projects of co-operative production and trade were simultaneously being worked out.

Why should not craftsmen in different trades, various co-operative producers, exchange their products directly, without the intervention of middlemen and the market? Owen, therefore, established a National Equitable Labour Exchange at which products of different trades organised in Co-operative Producers' societies could be exchanged at values determined by the "Labour Time" involved in their production. Such Labour Exchanges developed in important towns, and Consumers' Co-operative stores opened at many places to cut down distributive margin and to accumulate "dividends" for further advance of the co-operative movement. Owen thus became a community builder of a new type: his utopia need not await a New Atlantis, it was set in the midst of bustling towns and busy villages. The secret of association can be discovered and developed in the very heart of the sick world.

By 1834, under Owen's leadership the trade unions came together and formed a mighty combination of theirs called the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union. Could not this massive organisation at one blow establish a co-opera-

tive commonwealth? Is co-operative commonwealth the result of the bee and beaver-like work at community building or can it be brought into being by the militant upsurge of the united working class? The strength was inevitably used, and was ultimately broken by the combined might of the government and the employers. The tactics of assault may have failed, but the strategy of community-building through trade unions and co-operatives has flowered into the successful social democracy of North Europe.

William Thompson (1783-1833) conceived trade unions as organisations of co-operative activities, while Thomas Hodgskin (1783-1869) conceived them as organs of class struggle. The passage of years and the growth and complexity of industry thus shifted the emphasis. Progress of industry inevitably brings about a change in social attitudes and outlook. In England, Charles Hall (1740-1820) wrote just when industrialisation was beginning. In his book, *The Effects of Civilisation*, he upheld the virtues of simple living on land, he deprecated the development of manufacturing system and saw in "civilisation" concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the possessing few and the intensified exploitation of the multitude of property-less. The root of the evil lay in private property in land. The remedy was to convert land into public property and confine industrial production within narrow limits, just to meet the frugal requirements of the peasants. Hodgskin, representing a later phase of revolt against capitalism, thought more in terms of industry. He wanted industry to grow but he wanted the labourers to receive the whole product of labour without the holders of property, of the means of production, skimming off the surplus over their subsistence needs. This could be changed only through the militant action of the trade unions; political action was deemed valueless.

The Militant Tradition

The father of the militant tradition in socialism was "Gracchus" Babeuf (1760-97). He came to the rescue of those who felt disenchanted with the Revolution of 1789. The peasants had got lands when the feudal estates were broken up, but the urban poor found no improvement, merely the continuance of unemployment and hunger. Babeuf sought to carry forward the revolution, to complete the circle of change till communism is established. To the cry of "liberty," he added, through his *Conspiration des Egaux*, the vision of equality: "The aim of society is the happiness of all, and happiness consists in equality." The soaring vision was converted into a social movement, a determined conspiracy to overthrow the established and inequitous order. Lands as well as industries were to be expropriated, economy was to become a vast public property. Education was to be free and universal; incomes were to be equal; all administrations, political and economic, were to be democratised. These vast changes demanded an immediate *bouleversement* of the existing society and *that* the conspiracy aimed at. The conspiracy failed, its leaders, Babeuf and Darthe, were executed, but a new mode of asserting the "Social Question" had emerged.

The militant urge and the revolutionary fervour were shaped into a policy by Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-81). Of his seventy-six years, full thirty-four were spent in prison; with him *emeute* became a routine political weapon. He was the exponent, *par excellence*, of *minorite consciente*. He had little faith in the general mass of the people. Long subjected to the control of reactionary forces, people would not know freedom, much less would they fight for it; only a determined minority can capture power and then through education and persuasion liberate the majority. If his fa-

vourite strategy was *coup d'etat,* his chosen instrument was a party of revolutionary *elite.* A conscious, highly organised minority through armed insurrection and a period of political tutelage alone can introduce communism. The core of this belief was that community-building and constructive work after Fourier and Owen were incapable of transforming society, because political power remained outside, and against them. By the middle of the nineteenth century, distrust of and indifference to political power began to disappear from certain sections of the socialists. If Blanqui thought that political power had to be conquered, others thought that it could be gained by peaceful means.

The Chartist movement that developed in Great Britain between 1838 and 1848 was a reaction against the failure of the co-operative *cum* trade union upsurge of 1832-34 discussed before. Men turned their attention to the Parliament and felt that through wider franchise and political reforms economic ills could be cured. The six-point People's Charter demanded Manhood Suffrage, Secret Ballot, No Property Qualifications for M.Ps., Payment to M.Ps., Equal Constituencies, and Annual Parliament. The demands were all constitutional, but the motives behind the agitation were mainly economic, and the force of the agitation came from economic distress of the working people. "Chartism," as one of the protagonists declared, "is no mere political movement, it is a knife and fork question."

The leaders of the Chartist movement were sharply divided in their beliefs. Lovett (1800-77) and Hetherington (1792-1849) were essentially Owenites, who looked forward to a gentle co-operative transformation of the social order; on the other hand, J. Brenterre O'Brien (1805-64) and Feargus O'Connor (1794-1855) were *babeuvists.* O'Brien had translated into English Buonarrotti's first-hand account of

the Babuef conspiracy. They were revolutionaries rather than radical reformers. They were scornful of middle-class politics, and their tactics were not Owenite but proletarian. The Physical Force groups of the Chartists went, in fact, much deeper — the differences related to rival conceptions of socialism.

Characteristically, between O'Brien and O'Connor there were further and sharper differences. O'Connor, as Ernest Jones (1819-69) after him, thought largely in terms of agrarian rather than industrial socialism. He was an advocate of peasant proprietorship, and like Fourier he had great hopes in intensive cultivation of land. He was opposed, for reasons advanced in his book *the Management of Small Farms*, to collective cultivation. His land settlements envisaged collective purchase of lands and the selling of plots to individual settlers who might pay in instalments. Along these lines, he organised colonies, such as Charterville and O'Connorville. From 1842-48 O'Connor was the outstanding leader of the Chartist movement and under him it sought solution of economic distress and unemployment of industrial workers in land colonies.

O'Brien was a proletarian socialist. He was wholly averse to O'Connor's land schemes which he had denounced as snares of usurers. He characterised the "working classes" as "the slave population of civilised countries" and advocated a social convulsion for their emancipation. In 1850 he organised the National Reform League. Its "Propositions" included state purchase of land for Owenite as well as O'Connorite settlements, gradual nationalisation of mines, fisheries and minerals and advocated the establishment of a system of public education. He favoured Labour Exchanges and asked for the nationalisation of public utilities. Though

it was a somewhat omnibus programme drawn up to rope in the League's diverse elements and groups of reformers, the fact remains that it sketched a programme of evolutionary socialism for which the control of the state becomes of crucial importance. A new motto, "political power our means, social happiness our end," emerged as a focus of men's endeavours.

Evolutionary and Statist

The new attitude, the new version of socialism is best expressed by Louis Blanc (1811-82). He was an early, yet authentic, voice of evolutionary socialism. He assigned to the state a central position in his thought: the state was to plan economic development as well as welfare services. He looked to universal suffrage to transform the state into an instrument of progress and welfare. He appealed to the overriding social solidarity that evokes allegiance from all men as the final sanction of his reforms. Because of his faith in the community as a whole, he appealed to good men of all classes. He believed in the March of Mind and hoped that enlightenment would ensure reforms: "Weakness is a creditor of strength; ignorance of learning. The more a man *can*, the more he *ought*."

He saw the root of social ills in capitalist ownership and "the cowardly and brutal principle" of competition that leaves "every man free to ruin himself so that he may ruin another." Only by eradicating them can social weal be realised. It was the responsibility of a democratic state to undertake that task. He believed that national workshops — *ateliers nationaux* — organised by the state and operated by the workers would hasten the transformation.

The ideas of democracy that had triumphed with the Revolution of 1789 had to extend, for their success, to

economic life also. Citizenship could be meaningful only when the Natural Rights were buttressed by a basic social right—"the right to work." All he wanted of the state was help, mostly through provision of credit, to set up national *ateliers* and leave it to the association of workers to run them. He confidently believed that the right to work with a guaranteed minimum wage, good conditions of employment and industrial self-government would induce the best workers to flock to the national workshops and thereby slowly undermine, and eventually destroy, the competitive strength of the capitalists. It was to be a revolution by example and consent. To *droit au travail,* he therefore added the claim of *organisation du travail.* Blanc always insisted that the *ateliers* should use the most developed technique.

Later Blanc elaborated his ideas. He advocated the reorganisation of agriculture through rural *ateliers,* beginning with one per *department* and spreading by the contagion of example and success. The rural *ateliers* were to be at once collective farms and centres of rural industry. In urban areas, he envisaged the extension of the national workshops into community establishments, where the workers could live together, enjoy communal services and continue in normal life the community of work established in the *atelier.* He dreamt to "wed industrial work with agriculture."

Blanc wanted the state to frame the necessary laws and provide facilities needed for the *ateliers.* The detailed organisation he left to the associative efforts of workers themselves. After his disillusioning experience particularly with the Luxembourg Commission (ostensibly set up to resolve the various *questions ouvrieres*) and with the revolutionary government (1848) in general, Blanc turned to co-operative efforts as the principal means of assertaining the *droit au travail* and achieving the *organisation du travail.* During his

exile in England, he looked with hope towards the developing trade union movement and the growing movements of consumers' and producers' co-operatives. He saw in them the sturdy soldiers of his campaign for "full employment."

Germany Moves in Line

Political and economic developments lagged behind in Germany. The pattern of thought sketched in France was reproduced in an involved manner in Britain by 1848; it was repeated in Germany in 1850-65. "Socialism emerged from the convulsions and ferment of these years (1848-50) as a fresh goal of popular aspirations. It was socialism that remained after the earthquake, the tempest and the fire had passed away."[2]

The early lisping of socialism in Germany was the teachings of what are known as the "true socialists." The trio that made this group consisted of Bruno Bauer (1809-82), Moses Hess (1812-75) and Karl Grun (1813-87). Their socialist speculations were unrelated to social and economic realities around — they were premature, like the early foam in the boiling cauldron.

They inevitably prided on keeping their socialism pure; their glory lay in their refusal to compromise. The four main ingredients of their uncompromising purity can be easily enumerated:

(i) They opposed partial reforms, piecemeal improvements, because it meant, in effect, the acceptance of the prevailing unjust order. Such an order has to be uprooted, it cannot be improved bit by bit and slice by slice.

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2. W. H. Dawson: *German Social Democracy and Ferdinand Lassalle*, p. 33.

(ii) They looked with suspicion on actions spurred by "interest," for no real improvement can come by appealing to self-interest or group interest of men. A good action is free from the tentacles of "interest"; it is rooted in reason alone.

(iii) The only sure means of human improvement is enlightened and rational goodwill of men. They disliked and distrusted rough means for noble ends, because the means would inevitably subvert the end. They entertained an absolutist theory of ethical values, because they feared that socialism won by force would develop into an oppressive and egoistic authoritarianism.

(iv) Their fourth assumption was against meddling in politics. The immediate task of socialists is to educate the people; politics may come, if at all, when the time ripens for socialists to think of power. The birth-cry of socialism, whenever the idea emerges in any country, is of purity and perfection. The ethical ideal gets compromised and contaminated as it proceeds to become actual; in blossoming it gets soiled. As Charles Peguy (1873-1914) taught in his *Cahiers*, degradation of the mystique into *politique* is a general law of modern industrial society.

Denied political rights and baulked in their revolutionary efforts in 1848, the radicals in Germany turned to co-operative movement, and inculcated the doctrine of "self-help" as against "state help." The leader of the movement was Schulze-Delitzsch (1808-83) under whom, by 1860, 200,000 members were enrolled and business of nearly £10 million transacted.

A new turn to the thought and movement of the working men was given in 1862 by Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-64). The growth of the factory system had made the workers

potentially the most powerful force in the state. Lassalle was anxious to make workers legally the most powerful factor by instituting complete democracy. That would set the proletariat on the road to power — at whose end stood the final emancipation of mankind! Lassalle did not share the indifference, much less the hostility, to the state, which was a general characteristic of the early socialists. On the contrary, he conceived the true function of the state to be "to help the development of the human race towards freedom." Co-operation, in so far as it applied to distributive trade, was of little value to the working men, because "as before the gendarmes, so also before the sellers, all men are equal — if only they pay." The source of workers' suffering was that as producers their self-help could achieve little. Lassalle wanted workers to be their own producers so that they could appropriate the full value of their labour, but with provision of credit by the state. State as "the banker of the poor" became the keystone of the Lassallean arch.

To appropriate the full value of their toil, the workers must organise productive societies of their own; they can do that only if the necessary credit is made available by the state. The state would do it only if it was influenced and controlled by the workers. To that end "the working class must constitute themselves an independent political party and must make universal, equal, and direct suffrage their watchword." Lassalle devoted the last years of his young and ardent life, prematurely plucked by death, to the building up of such a party. The immediate objective of the party and the workers' movement behind it was the introduction of universal franchise: "Thus, it appears that universal suffrage belongs to our social demands as the handle to the axe."

The British Chartists had made manhood suffrage and other allied *political* demands the spearhead for *economic* discontents. Lassalle, twenty years later, made similar political demands the "handle" to the "axe" of social demands. *Politicalisation of the Social Question* is a part of the recurring rhythm that Socialist Movement follows in country after country.

THE DISTRIBUTIONISTS

Lassalle, like Louis Blanc before him, not merely turned to the state but appealed to the working class to achieve social transformation. It was an appeal to a class; but within the democratic framework.

But what about the dominant group in society — the peasant? In Prussia, because of the persistence of feudalism, the peasant could not emerge as a social force. But in France where the Revolution had shattered the feudal relations the peasants had developed "wills of their own." Louis Blanc and other French socialists philosophised in and around Paris; Lassalle's triumphal march in 1864, his "glorious review of the army" (of working men) was confined to industrial towns like Cologne. Beyond these towns sprawled the countryside, where the peasant lived his traditional life and dreamt his dreams. Proudhon, coming from their stock and passionately loyal to it, became their philosopher, expressed their inarticulated urges and hopes.

Marx has described Sismondi and Proudhon as *"petit bourgeois"* socialists. It may be true that in their teachings is "poverty of philosophy," but it cannot be gainsaid that it was a philosophy of the peasant.

Sismonde de Sismondi (1773-1842) was more than an economist, he was an *encyclopaedist*. He questioned the in-

articulate major premise of economics that pursuit of the largest possible aggregate of production necessarily coincided with the greatest possible happiness of the people. The method of production, and the manner of distribution are as relevant as the aggregate *quantum* of production. He was opposed to all monopoly, including that in ownership of land. He, likewise, opposed unrestricted capitalism and saw in it the source of widespread unemployment and misery. He advocated the state's intervention in favour of the worker to assure him a guaranteed wage and social security.

The fundamental reform that he desired was a wide diffusion of property in the means of production among their actual users. The norm was provided by the small peasant, owning his land and cultivating it freely, thereby achieving freedom and security. For towns, he desired similar conditions: he wanted them to complement the production of neighbouring family-holdings. If this balance is allowed to be upset, there would be a crisis of over-production. Sismondi was the first to discover the danger of "under consumption" implicit in capitalism. His solution lay in the state regulating economic conditions in the interest of the small producers. The worker can get his full due only in an economy built round peasant proprietors. The worthwhileness of his vision can be seen in the social and economic developments of his country — Switzerland.

Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854) believed in universal franchise because then alone would it be possible for producers to create conditions for their unfettered progress. He desired diffusion of property and provision of state credit. He then looked for progress to "associations" like co-operatives and trade unions; concentration of property in the state would be as obnoxious as concentration in a few hands. The proletariat can be emancipated not by abolishing private pro-

perty but by *universalising* it. Any other system, not excluding state socialism, would lead not to freedom and brotherhood, but to the "re-establishment of castes" — the governing caste set over an enslaved people. The greatest danger for society lay, in the expressive words of Lamennais, in apoplexy at the centre and anaemia at the extremities.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-65) was ardently attached to the concept of individual freedom, and justice was his criterion of socialism. To reconcile liberty and justice, he sought "reciprocal liberty" as against "limited liberty"; for him "liberty is not the daughter but the mother of order." Proudhon saw the source of exploitation not merely in capitalist concentration of capital and ownership but in the division of labour implicit in capitalist process of production. Proudhon saw in large-scale production — in developed industrialisation — a threat to liberty. Likewise, he shied away from all organisations, except freely and organically achieved associations, because there is an ineluctable urge to suck all power at the apex; the individual gets submerged. He therefore rejected not merely the limited liability company —the *society anonyme*—but other associations, like trade unions and corporations. The natural unit of labour, as of life, is the family.

Universal franchise was for Proudhon mere atomisation of society. Democracy is meaningful only where it is built on "organising principles" such as localism and federalism.

On another important question, Proudhon's views were equally pronounced: "It is not the *organisation of labour* (i.e. state workshops of Louis Blanc's conception) that we need at this moment. The organisation of labour is the proper object of individual freedom. He who works hard, gains much. The state has nothing further to say in the matter

to the workers. What we need, what I call for in the name of all workers, is reciprocity, equity in exchange, the *organisation of credit*." The credit was to be interest-free. With gratuitous credit, individual producers, peasants or craftsmen, using such forms of voluntary co-operation as are deemed useful and necessary would be able to get the best of production and social well-being.

Men have an irresponsible urge for self-expression and an equal gift of social organisation. The spontaneity and creativity in man remain only if his life is conceived in terms of small-scale economic activity and small-sized groups. He had in mind mainly peasant families cultivating their own farms, or individual craftsmen carrying on small-scale production, and he regarded large-scale industry as both the source and the result of economic inequality and social unbalance.

In Proudhon's paradise, the state need survive only as a constitution-making body — as the organiser of the framework of rights. A state of producers, and not of politicians, was his ideal. Politics to him always meant centralisation, and man's creative abilities get expressed only in small organisations where the complexities do not exceed the range of his understanding and immediate experience. Men's vision and sentiments operate best within short radius. He saw in the peasant, the craftsman, the shopkeeper — and not in the proletariat — the architect of man's social emancipation. His *anti*-capitalism was stubborn, but it was a part of his opposition to all centralisation—all *large* organisations are in Hobbes' words, "the *great* Leviathan made up of *little* men," — and that meant opposition to industrialisation, and apotheosis of family farming.

Lamennais had declared: "Who says liberty, says association." To that Proudhon added: "Multiply your associations and be free."

Within five years of Proudhon's death, the grape-shot of the proletariat and the guns of the *bourgeoisie* were sketching the gory history of the Paris Commune. Proudhon with his *mutuellism* — "a decentralised economic society based on a new principle of right, the principle of mutuality" — came too late for France, for the whole of Western Europe.

The Fork

The medieval world has its securities as well as its inequities: man was assured of a defined place in society, of some status, yet was hamstrung by many checks and oppressed by hereditary privileges. There was a widespread demand to break out of the old order and usher in the new. Capitalism was achieving the needed transformation. The process spelt uprooting of family ties, disintegration of villages, displacement of craftsmen, atomisation of ancient securities. Here socialist thought branched off into two directions: the first welcomed these developments, saw in them the liberation of the individual, the fostering of economic forces that would ultimately assure abundance. The assumptions were (1) the organisational character of history, and (2) the self-sufficing *stability* of the discrete individual. The other opinion was that man achieves meaningfulness only through social relations. Capitalist development was using up the old social ties. Their disruption might augment production but not social well-being. The old ties needed to be substituted by new forms of associations, equitable and just social relations. Feudalism needed to be substituted not by capitalism but by some form of associative life. The disruption caused by capitalism would not lead to socialism, but

to the isolation of man and the omnipotence of the state. Bypassing of capitalism and integration of free man in an associative society alone could lead to socialism. The divergence was not always sharply and clearly indicated, but the drift of the two opinions was obvious. This deep-seated fork in socialism continues, and the inability to understand it leads to much confusion. The divergence, inevitably, assumes sharper form in the early phase of transformation, in the first flush of change from the traditional feudal life. Therein lies the relevance of the fork to Asia today.

Owen, Fourier and Proudhon held the ideal of free association wherein the human personality would have full scope for development. They were the precursors of "personalism." Self-government, localism and federalism were the chief characteristics of the early socialists. There were, however, other socialist pioneers who were system-builders, whose utopias were of the "closed society." The visions of Babeuf and of Etienne Cabet though so dissimilar in their political approaches, their methods of realisation, were curiously alike in their detailed elaboration. Economy, education, attire, every activity and aspect of life was to be planned. If Babeuf worked for a dictatorship, Cabet yearned for it. In his *Icaria* there was to be no newspaper or other organs of public opinion because mass-indoctrination was deemed to be a better alternative to democratic ways of crystallising opinions.

Saint-Simon was not concerned with the *minutae* of any utopia, but his teachings had the sweep and the relentlessness of science, of nineteenth century physics. His was the vision that had to be shared *en masse*. An individual was thus either imprisoned in the paternalist particulars of a Cabet or gathered up into a mass to be propelled along a "macadamised road" to social weal.

Both groups of the early socialists, Fourierists as well as Saint-Simonians, were indifferent, if not contemptuous, of politics and politicians. The former with their emphasis on local communities, self-government and loose federalism swore by direct democracy, where the "brokers" in politics, as in most other matters, could be dispensed with. The Saint-Simonians, Icarians, *etc.*, had no sympathy with the bunglings of democracy, they wanted the rule of the trained, the technicians, *les savants*. For wholly dissimilar reasons the socialist pioneers were hostile to politics.

Another significant difference was in attitudes to social change. Some saw it as coming imperceptibly as a branch blossoming, growing with the efforts of community-building — a colony, a co-operative, a trade union — as leaven changing the lump. Social revolution, as Owen put it, "will come upon the society as a *thief in the night*." Others saw in the barricades the necessary womb of socialism. This difference, however, cut across the earlier differences. Cabet, for instance, had said: "If I held a revolution in my hand, I should keep that hand closed, even if that meant my being blown up." All these differences melted away before the common objective — *the state must be sloughed!*

Marx, in one of his *Theses* on Feuerbach had said: "The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing and that, accordingly, changed men are the products of changed circumstances and of changed upbringing, forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated." Few socialist pioneers were guilty of this materialist error. Even the imperious, science-intoxicated Saint-Simon dreamt simultaneously of his new society and of *nouveau christianisme*. "Religion must aid society in its chief purpose, which is the most rapid improvement in the lot of the poor." The socia-

lists while mainly concerned with the problem of new social environment did not neglect the problem of education. In approach to education, each differed according to his ideology. For Owen, education was meant to profoundly modify human nature. Fourier believed in guiding children, and adults as well, to do spontaneously, with pleasure in doing, what their own desires as well as the good of the society demand. His educational theories were suffused with his libertarian outlook. Fourier, with his roots in agriculture and rural crafts, regarded apprenticeship, vocational training, as the most important part of a child's education, while Owen, with his "nurture" of the textile industry, was uninterested in vocational training.

Naturally, all socialists believed in social solidarity. Most early socialists dwelt upon human solidarity: with the League of Just, they would have put on the portals the enduring inscription: "All men are brothers!" The new environments, a reformed social order that they sought to create, was to bring out and foster the hidden yet indestructible sociality in men. With the advance of industry, the proletariat grew in number and strength, at least in metropolitan centres like Paris and London, and some socialists began to address their appeals to the workers rather than to all men, they emphasised class solidarity over human solidarity. The prophet of class war was Karl Marx (1818-1883) who ended the *crescendo* of his famous *Manifesto* (1848) with the ringing words, "Workers of the world, unite!" Workers *qua* workers, not as men, were appealed to.

There are two implications of this shift that deserve further consideration: one, practical, the other theoretical, yet of profound significance.

As soon as the workers were made conscious of their class strength, of the crucial position in society that economic development had assigned to them, they began to think in terms of General Strike. As early as 1834, a Trades Union Gazette wrote: "There will not be insurrection; it will simply be passive resistance. The men may remain at leisure; there is and can be no law to compel men to work against their will. They may walk the streets and fields with their arms folded, they will wear no swords, carry no muskets, they will present no multitude for the riot act to disperse. They merely abstain, when their funds are sufficient, from going to work for one week or one month; and what happens in consequence? Bills are dishonoured, the *Gazette* teems with bankruptcies, capital is destroyed, and revenue fails, the system of government falls into confusion, and every link in the chain that binds society together is broken by this inert conspiracy of the poor against the rich."

The practical implications ranged from peaceful non-co-operation to violent opposition made increasingly devastating with every increase in the complexity of the industrial civilisation. Fourier or Proudhon, with his socialism, federalism and self-government had no occasion to envisage these possibilities; for Owen, with his vision and his teachings oscillating between agrarian-oriented and industry-oriented social *milieu*, there was scope for education and community-building and also for various forms of class struggle. With the development of industry, with the unfolding of the Saint-Simonian vision, class struggle became, as with Marx, not just important but crucial.

The theoretical implications are even more far-reaching. The emphasis shifted from the individual; in the words of Professor Cole, "The class, not the individual became the vital historical category." Shared opinion of men counted

little before the shared experience of a class. Class as a category transcended and at last folded up the myriad erratic individuals. Philosophy based upon the concept of individual's volition and resistance, of *individual* merit and guilt faded before a new philosophy of *historical* merit and guilt, of movements and processes of history. A century of developments and experience has not made the implications clear. Even in rigid utopias, like that of Icaria for instance, there is functional democracy, but in a class-comprehended world, no chink of individuality escapes.

The socialist pioneers usually thought of man by himself, apart from the social groups, like nation or class, that encompass him. Their robust rationalism led them to believe that the whole humanity would, ere long, accept their vision and renew itself through it.

Later, with the emergence of the proletariat as the key figure of socialism, class solidarity overwhelmed considerations of other group loyalties. Nationalism emerged and developed almost simultaneously with socialism, and has shown an equal fecundity of expression. Nationalism of Bismarck (1815-98) differs as fundamentally from nationalism of Mazzini (1805-1872) as socialism of Saint-Simon or Babeuf differs from that of Fourier or Proudhon.

Two-fold results have followed from the neglect of understanding the various group loyalties and ignoring the task of achieving a fruitful adjustment between them. Such neglect is wont to take revenge.

Socialism, unconcerned with other community feelings except class solidarity, tended to provoke an aggressive nationalism against it. The two emotions, as others, can get adjusted only where each sheds the arrogance of exclusiveness. The problem of the right relationship between

socialism and nationalism has remained to a considerable extent unresolved, and, if Asia is to be spared the misery that has ravaged Europe, this neglect must be set right.

An aggressive nationalism can seize and subjugate socialism to its end. Socialism in so far as it means development of centralisation, extension of governmental powers, abridgement of the initiative and autonomy of other groups, is apt to be abducted by militant nationalism: "Well may Prince Bismarck display leanings towards state socialism," observed the perspicacious Herbert Spencer. Likewise, militant socialism can appropriate, as in the Soviet Union, nationalism to its own end.

Another important shift lay in the fact that the growth of socialist ideas pushed the problems of *production* into oblivion. No one was surprised when George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) addressed the "intelligent woman," in the *very opening words* of his *Guide* as follows:

> "It would be easy, dear madam, to refer you to the many books on socialism. But I strongly advise you not to read a line of them until you and your friends have discussed for yourselves *how wealth should be distributed* in a respectable civilized country, and arrived at the best conclusion you can. For *Socialism is nothing but an opinion held by some people on that point.*"[3](Italics mine).

The problems of production were deemed to have been resolved by the march of industry. Whatever difficulties survived, belonged to the domain of distribution or could be ironed out there. Here again Shaw expresses himself unambiguously:

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3. G. B. Shaw: *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism.* p. 1.

"Mind: I do not say that these advantages are always gained at present. Most of us are using cheap nasty articles, and living a cheap and nasty life; but this is not the fault of the machines and the great factories, nor of the application of spare money to construct them: it is the result of the unequal distribution of the product and of the leisure gained by the saving of labour."[4]

The crudities and other inadequacies of the industrial civilisation can be overcome only by the further progress of industry and rationalisation of distribution. Opposition to machine, the horror of machinofacture, survived in Western Europe, by the end of the nineteenth century, only in utopias, *e.g.*, Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, where the making and even the possession of machinery is punished as a crime. From *Icaria* to *Erewhon* stretched a whole age of transformation, whose closest prophet proved to be Saint-Simon.

House of Many Mansions

We have reviewed briefly the early history of socialist thought when socialism had not become a system, and when, because various possibilities concurrently opened out in social and economic developments, thought ran freely along many alleys and angles. In the first bloom socialist ideas showed a lush growth. In our review, we have been guided by the wise words of Bergson: "I believe that the time given to refutation in philosophy is usually time lost. Of the many attacks directed by the many thinkers against each other, what remains? Nothing, or assuredly very little. That which counts and endures is the modicum of positive truth which each contributes. The true statement is of itself able to displace the erroneous idea, and becomes, without our having

4. *Ibid.* pp. 139-40.

taken the trouble of refuting any one, the best of refutations."

Different socialist ideas and theories have relevance and truth in different circumstances. The ideas are in a sense related to the situations and are also a reflection of a thinker's nature and character. As different longitudes move into the sun, the experience of the dawn, the noon and the sunset are repeated, so, as different countries face different stages of economic development, different socialist ideas become relevant. The Asian countries that have been almost a century late in economic development and industrialisation find much of interest, and many familiar ideas, in the record of early socialist thought. Carefully or quickly, the ascent of socialism has to be made by every country, every developing community.

In Western countries, some of the paths the early socialists opened up got closed with later developments. The wisdom of a Fourier or the insight of a Proudhon became irrelevant in a context of rapid industrialisation. For Asian countries now moving up the ascent of economic development, many of the hopes and promises of industrialisation have become a part of experience; they are no longer intoxicating dreams that inspired a Saint-Simon but stubborn realities that can be considered in all their different *pros* and *cons*. Enriched by the experience of a century, the Asian socialists have the opportunity to make new, more significant, judgements. Many worthwhile paths that may have been missed in West's frenzied ascent can now be explored, many a wrong turning can now be avoided.

Some ideas of the early socialists have deep vitality, they persistently reappear in different forms: like self-government in industry, a dream-child of Fourier, reappearing

as Guild Socialism in the beginning of the twentieth century, as industrial democracy later on, and as Yugoslav Communism in our own day. The Asian Socialists have an opportunity of recapturing some of the ideas of the pioneers in their freshness and unembroidered originality. It is not just an opportunity, it is a historical responsibility. Asian Socialism cannot be a carbon copy of Western Socialism, it has to be a creative re-living of the old ideas, not of the obsolete experience. Socialism needs to be viewed as a house of many mansions. It may be that men will choose different mansions according to their taste and temperament, it may be that a nation too might prefer one mansion to another. The house is, and should be, big enough to accommodate the whole humanity.

It is a negation of intelligence to treat the socialist pioneers as John the Baptist merely preparing for the coming of Christ Marx. They have a significance in their own right, by magnifying Marx as merely truncate socialism. It is foolish to expect uniformities of thought, fixedness of ideas, in socialism. It has been luxuriant in its growth, protean in its outburst. Socialism is man's new vision, his answer to the persistent, irrepressible "Social Question." A whole range of answers is inevitable, only procrustean folly can give certainty and uniformity where the very essence lies in alternatives and varying choices.

In the evening of his life, John Stuart Mill (1806-73) wrote in his *Autobiography:* "The social problem of the future we considered to be how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action with a common ownership of the raw materials of the globe, and the equal participation of all

in the benefits of combined labour." That continues to be "the social problem of the future." Because of that obstinacy and intricacy socialism has accommodated many a social gospeller. For those whose socialism is libertarian, the quest continues, for those whose socialism is authoritarian, the voyage has come to the end. For the libertarian socialist, the essence of socialism, the secret of adjustment of the individual with various groups and of the groups *inter se*, has to be discovered continuously, because that is a part of the daily discipline and the deathless wonder of their life.

PART II

UPSURGE OF UTOPIANISM

A brilliant sociologist, David Reisman, recently observed: "All over the world one can find the tragic casualties of a vain effort to deny that there are two levels of politics — the detached utopian one and the effective commitment to current political turmoils..... It is not only utopian politics but all life which appears to be lived on these two levels."[1]

Socialist thought has lived on the two levels: the ascendance of scientific socialism has unnaturally obscured the utopian level. From the point of view of richer understanding of socialism and of discovering ampler methods of welfare, it is necessary to recover the balance, to welcome an upsurge of utopianism.

The utopian thought in socialism has never been silenced. Side by side of the more successful "schools," the utopians have continued to assert the truths of their ideas. Invariably, their criticism of the social conditions has been deemed to be significant as against their positive recommendations. Their subtler insight into human life and social process has generally been ignored. Of John Ruskin (1819-1900), a recent writer says: "Although many of Ruskin's ideas were bitterly resented and attacked at the time of their appearance, most of them have been widely accepted subsequently. Among them are an emphasis on arts and crafts, university classes for workers, and public works for the unemployed."[2] The incidentals are emphasised, the fun-

1. David Reisman: *Faces in the Crowd.*
2. Newman: *Development of Economic Thought,* p. 320.

damentals are lost. Ruskin's prophetic insight into the social process around him as seen in his opposition to the prevailing political economy, his elevation of the *artisans* to the level of the *artist,* his advocacy of the chivalry of labour, are wholly ignored. Against such a systematic emasculation of utopianism, the utopian thought has remained fecund. Till our own time, even in the West, the stream of utopian thought continues to flow on.

Though Engels made utopianism a term of reprobation and ridicule, both he and Marx were of the seed of the prophets. The utopian vein was deep in them, they had an incandescent vision of man's destiny. "In the higher phase of Communist society," wrote Marx, "after the enslaving subordination of individual under the division of labour has disappeared, and therewith also the opposition between manual and intellectual labour; after labour has become not only a means to life, but also the highest want in life; when, the development of all the faculties of the individual, the productive forces have correspondingly increased, and all the springs of social wealth flow more abundantly — only then may the limited horizon of capitalism might be left behind entirely, and society inscribe on its banners: 'From everyone according to his faculties to everyone according to his needs.' "

The full emancipation and the blossoming of humanity in man are viewed as the end-product of the social revolution, the final leap of history's synthesis. Against such neo-apocalyptics the normal utopian argues that we must create here and now the space *now* possible for the thing for which we are striving, so that it may come to fulfilment *then:* he does not believe in the *post*-revolutionary *leap* — from the realm of necessity into that of freedom — but in revolutionary *continuity.* He believes that "the two levels" of life and

thought must be linked, if serious dislocation is to be avoided. A *post*-revolutionary utopia, for him, can emerge *only* through a *pre*-revolutionary utopianism.

Utopian thought has continued throughout the last century and more, but inevitably with the growth of industrialisation and its social concomitants it has gradually lost its relevance. The very evils it sought to avoid had already come up. Organic growth and richness of structure in society that it deemed to be of cardinal significance were virtually lost in developed society. Where economy and social life are moving forward from the traditional agricultural-handicraft level, utopianism achieves a fresh, immediate relevance. In most countries of Asia utopian thought flourishes, and rightly viewed can become fruitful.

In the preface to the first volume of the *Capital*, Marx wrote: "The industrially developed country only shows the less developed country the picture of the future." To a large extent that proved to be the case with the Western countries. France, Germany, America, Italy virtually shaped themselves in the image of industrialised Britain. Only the time span was shortened. Asian countries, if they so desire, can follow them and strive to imitate the West in order to overtake it.

In the United States, Du Bois observed half a century ago, and Gunnar Myrdal confirmed it now, that Negroes copy white behaviour of an earlier and vanishing generation. Asia coming late in the process of economic development faces today some of the tensions of earlier Europe. Either they can be brushed aside, as the Europeans did in their time or better still as the American Negro does constantly, or these tensions are viewed in the wider framework of understanding that a century of development in Europe pro-

vides not only to Europe but to the world. The American Negro has perhaps no such choice, because he has to live in, and hence has to adjust himself to, the world of the Whites. Asia has no such need to adjust to Europe. The ancient continent, if it so chooses, can adjust its life to its own needs, urges and understanding.

For India such an adventure in faith is imperative. The knocking on her door has been prolonged and insistent. Gandhi and Vinoba are not marginal phenomena, mere odds and eccentrics in the social process, but the very core and substance of her recent history. And in these two great Indians, the utopian socialist thought has reached its highest watermark. For the Asian countries, guided by these dreamer-rebel leaders, a different path than the one taken by Europe in the middle of the last century becomes possible. Whatever choice is made, it needs to be made *deliberately* and not come by *default*. The relevance of utopianism to Asia is thus obvious.

Full Co-operatives

That a pre-Marx socialist is not necessarily a utopian, in the sense of having an understanding of the organic filaments of society and of its associative core, is shown by Saint-Simon (1760-1825). For him *industry* was "the basis of liberty" as also of harmony. "The object of socialism," he wrote, "is to set up a new system of society based upon the workshop as a model. The rights of society will be the customary rights of the factory. Not only will socialism stand to benefit by the existence of the industrial system which has been built up by capital and science upon the basis of technical development, but it will gain even more from that spirit of co-operation which has long been a feature of factory life, drawing out the best energy and the

best skill of the workman." The earliest authentic embodiment of the modern *geist* was Saint-Simon. That he should have emerged at a time, and in a country where industry was only just developing, is a tribute to his prophetic powers.

Robert Owen (1771-1858), not a bard of industry like Saint-Simon, but an eminently successful industrialist himself growing up in the heyday of Britain's industrial ascendance, yet becomes the true source of utopian socialism.

In his New Lanark Mills, Owen found 2,000 employees, 500 of whom were pauper children, between five and ten years old, who worked twelve hours per day. Owen sought to create a model factory and a model community. He discontinued the recruitment of pauper children, raised the minimum age of employment to ten years, reduced the working day to 10¾ hours. "He offered his employees high wages, payment during slack times, sickness and old age insurance, good homes, food at cost price, and educational and recreational facilities. Owen won both world fame and good profits."

"Like you," he wrote in his *Address to the Superintendents of Manufactories*, "I am a manufacturer for pecuniary profits." He went on to say that every manufacturer realised the need for getting the best machinery and taking the greatest care of it. "If, then, due care as to the state of your inanimate machines can produce such beneficial results, what may not be expected if you devote equal care to your vital machines, which are far more wonderfully constructed?"

Improved factory conditions undoubtedly yielded better profit, but they did not lead to a better community. Better environment *plus* education alone can impart to the community a healthy character. He soon discovered that improved

environment needs to be approached as an aspect of education. In that sense, education became "the corner-stone of his constructive work."[3]

When he was at the helm of an insurgent trade union movement, Owen pulled up his two principal lieutenants, Morrison and J. E. Smith, for writing in the *Pioneer* and the *Crisis*, the organs of the movement, articles calculated, in his view, to stir up class hatred: "All these individuals now living are the suffering victims of the accursed system, and all are objects of pity; you will, therefore, effect this great and glorious revolution," admonished Owen, "without, if possible, inflicting individual evil — without bloodshed, violence, or evil of any kind, merely by an overwhelming moral influence which influence individuals, and nations will speedily perceive the ,uselessness and folly of attempting to resist."

The *locale* for such an irresistible character, he placed in his Villages of Co-operation. These were "founded on the principle of united labour, expenditure and property, and equal privileges." His villages were to have agriculture with manufacture as an appendage, an agriculture based upon "spade culture" rather than "plough culture." In such villages, "minute division of labour and division of interest" would be ended: "Instead of an unhealthy pointer of a pin, header of a nail, piecer of a thread, or clodhopper, senselessly gazing at the soil or around him without understanding or rational reflection, there would spring up a working class full of activity and useful knowledge." In these villages, there would be no elections and representative institutions, source of much faction and friction, but direct responsibility

3. G. D. H. Cole: *Robert Owen.*

which all adults must share, apportioning among themselves the various functions.

Owen's conception of the co-operative movement was essentially *three-tiered*. The Rochdale Pioneers organised themselves in 1844 not only to sell goods to their members, but "to commence the manufacture of such articles as the Society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment." And they further ordained that "as soon as possible the Society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government; or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or to assist other Societies in establishing such colonies."

On the land, through his village colonies, through co-operatives in various spheres of economic life, and by re-orienting occupations, men can discover the secret of new life. The blueprints of *occupational* re-orientation were given in the "Proposals for the establishment of a National Association for Building, to be called 'The Grand National Guild of Builders'; to be composed of Architects and Surveyors, Masons, Carpenters and Joiners, Bricklayers, Plasterers, Slaters, Plumbers, Glaziers and Painters, Whitesmiths, Quarrymen and Brickmakers."

The detailed "proposals" of the Builders' Guild as drawn up in 1833, were as follows:

"OBJECTS OF THE UNION"

1. The general improvement of all the individuals forming the building class; ensuring regular employment to all.
2. To ensure fair remuneration for their services.
3. To fix a reasonable time for labour.
4. To educate both adults and children.

5. To have regular superior medical advice and assistance, and to make provision for the comfortable and independent retirement of the aged and infirm.

6. To regulate the operations of the whole in harmony, and secure a general fund sufficient to secure all these objects.

7. To ensure a superiority of building for the public at fair and equitable prices.

8. To obtain good and comfortable dwellings for every member of the Union; extensive and well-arranged workshops; places of depot for building materials; halls for the meetings of the Lodges and Central Committees; schools and academies for the instruction of adults and children in morals and the useful sciences.

9. And also the establishment of Builders' Banks in the various districts in which the Grand District Lodges shall be established.

"Means of Effecting the Objects of the Union"

Capital at least £15,000, in one or more shares of £15 from each member of the Union, already sufficient in numbers to effect these objects.

1. Each class of the builders to be composed of men who have served five years' apprenticeship and are above eighteen years of age.

2. Each Lodge to be governed by a president, vice-presidents, treasurer, secretary and assistants, chosen from the Lodge. Each Lodge to elect a foreman to every ten men, and a general superintendent or clerk of works where necessary, the Lodges to meet weekly.

3. The *Local Lodges* to elect their Central Committee of local management. Each Local Committee to be composed of a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and assistants, chosen from their own body.

The Central Local Committee to superintend the building business of their localities and to sit daily.

4. The Central Committee to constitute a *District*. The delegates from each Central Committee to form a District Committee.

The District Committees to meet quarterly, to receive the reports of the Local Central Committee, regulate the proceedings, and audit the accounts of the districts.

5. Each District Committee to elect a delegate to form a Grand National Committee in London.

The Grand National Committee to meet annually, to deliberate and decide upon the general interests of the Union.

6. The president of the Grand National Committee to be elected for three years (but removable if cause be seen), with power to appoint his own assistants, all of whom shall form a permanent

establishment to receive reports from the District and Central Committees, and to communicate weekly, through the medium of a Builders' gazette, every important fact connected with the building transactions of the kingdom.

7. The voting at all elections to be taken by ballot.

The essence of Owenism, as of all sound utopianism, lay in community building: it would "grow" best on land, in land colonies and community villages; but in co-operatives and crafts too there were possibilities of development provided the principles of self-government, decentralisation, and association were firmly upheld.

Mere credit co-operatives, of the type developed by F. W. Raiffeisen (1818-88) and H. Schulze-Delitzsch (1808-83) in Germany or by Luigi Luzzatti (1841-1927) in Italy, and even consumers' co-operatives did not lead to community building, because the bonds of association were so tenuous. In such limited and partial co-operation, there was no growing together, without which no community emerges.

P. J. B. Buches (1796-1865), through his journals *L'European* and *L'Atelier*, had advocated producers' co-operatives. With certain safeguards, this was a great advance, in the direction of community-building, on the rudimentary co-operatives referred to earlier. However, the ideal type is a full co-operative, where a union of production and consumption is realised. Only in such a *milieu*, the utopians have argued, the diverse personalities in man come together and get harmonised. Owen was an early advocate of full co-operation.

Principe Federatif

Economic changes were sweeping through Britain, and by 1850 conditions there had changed radically. In agriculture, capitalism was triumphing. Enclosures reached their greatest intensity from 1760 to 1820, when over 6,250,000

acres were enclosed. With the decline of cottage industry, as large workshops developed in the towns, small farmers could not eke out existence from their small plots. Nor could small holders compete with the large, efficient, heavily capitalised farms. Estimates made about 1830 showed that the typical factory had already undergone considerable growth: the average cotton mill employed 175 workers, silk mills an average of 93 workers, the average in wool was 45 workers. In Iron and Steel, some of the great establishments had from 1500 to 2,000 workers each. Between 1820 and 1860, the cotton yarn industry increased its output almost ninefold — from 106.5 to 910 million lbs. — but the number of workers was only doubled — from 110,000 to 248,000 — while the labour cost per pound of yarn fell by two-thirds, from 6.4 to 2.1 pence. Such was the measure of *capitalisation* of industry, of the transfer of manufacture into machinofacture.

"From 1820 to 1830," wrote Holyoake, "Co-operation and communities were regarded by the thinking classes as a *religion of industry*. Communities, the form which the religion of industry was to take, were from 1825 to 1830 as common and almost as frequently announced as joint-stock companies now."[4] By the middle of forties, joint-stock companies had come to dominate the economy: during the three years 1844-46 Parliament authorised 8,000 miles of new railroads at a cost of £211,000,000 when the British annual income was estimated at £200,000,000. For England, Owen's insight and wisdom came too late. It was no accident that in the last fifteen years of his life Owen had become irrelevant to his country and her course of development. Even Owen himself had not fully grasped the vital relationship

4. G. J. Holyoake: *History of Co-operation*, p. 71 (italics mine)

between land, agriculture and utopianism. It was a part of his *milieu* which looked at his ideas and utopias, in Holyoake's words as "a religion of industry." By the middle of nineteenth century, not Owen but Thomas Brassey (1805-70), with his industrial army of 75,000 employed to build railroads, iron works, rolling mills, banks, had become the representative spokesman of Britain.

In France the sweep of changes had been different. The Revolution had abolished feudalism and had distributed lands among a vast number of small-scale proprietors. France had emerged from a revolutionary turmoil as a *peasant* democracy. The trend towards industrialisation was much less pronounced in France than in England. The emphasis was on quality rather than on mass production. It is significant that, in contrast to metallurgy, where British technicians and foremen had to be taken to France, in textiles, French skilled workers were smuggled out of the country to train the British. In agriculture as in industry, small farms and factories, not far removed from handicrafts, prevailed by the middle of the century in France. It is there that, in the apt words of his biographer, "events fought for Proudhonian ideas."[5]

Proudhon came from the peasant stock of Burgundy, where local memories and loyalties were deep-rooted. He grew up in poverty and experienced the normal travail of a small peasant. Much of his education was from the books he read as a proof-reader — including a work of Charles Fourier. He has developed no system: his ideas are more in the nature of a rich quarry than a finished mansion of thought like that of Marx.

5. D. W. Brogan: *Proudhon*, P. 88.

For Proudhon the essential humanity of man lies in the diversity and contrariety in him. To iron them out into order and system is to crush the vital, organic essence in him. To preserve it and to create conditions that would nourish it formed his quest. He therefore embraced in his philosophy as well as his life "the conflict of elements, the clash of contrast," and sought to express, "the unsocial sociability" in man. It was typical of him to say that "the one thing I dislike more than persecutors are martyrs." It was likewise characteristic of him to be hostile to politics, politicians and representative democracy and still get elected to the Parliament!

The most significant feature of his time he found to be *"the dissolution."* He saw in it "the cruellest moment in the life of societies." Social life was being scooped out of its rich and complex content, of its associations and customs. The developing centralisation, at once the cause and the effect of the new system, was reducing men to mere isolates. The solution therefore lay in transforming social reconstruction into a structural renewal, an organic revival, of the society. He distinguishes two modes of structural renewal, which naturally interpenetrate: *one,* economic structure as a federation of work-groups "the agrarian-industrial federation," and *two,* the political structure, resting on decentralisation of power, division of authority and communal and regional autonomy. In both spheres, federalism, decentralisation and a "cluster of sovereignties" were the key concepts.

The juxtaposition of the bare State and the bare Individual impoverishes both; the rewarding association is that of man in his intimate connection with his various groups. That is why he was wholly averse to the dominant political ideas, such as universal suffrage. In it he saw "a kind of atomisation by means of which the legislator, see-

ing that he cannot let the people speak in their essential oneness, invites the citizens to express their opinions per head, *viritim*, as atoms." It lacks "organizing principle." If the nation is not to be an agglomeration of molecules, natural groups must be discovered and nurtured. "Without them there is no originality, no frankness, no clear and unequivocal meaning in the voices.....The destruction of natural groups in elections would mean the moral destruction of nationality itself, the abolition of political life in towns, communes and departments, and destruction of all municipal and regional autonomy."

He saw in *centralisation*, one of the causes of communal disintegration and social atomisation, because it embodied the mechanical as against the organic principle. Real unity, he was to write at the end of his life, "was in inverse proportion to size; so, in every collectivity, organic power loses in intensity what it gains in extension and reciprocally." He applied the law to politics and he saw in France thirty submerged nationalities which could flower only through autonomy and federation. He fought against the overarching influence of Paris where the administrative, financial and educational life was concentrated; France could not be free if she was swallowed up by the metropolis!

Proudhon fought against the uniformalising and centralising trends ingrained in the French Revolution. He would have undoubtedly agreed with the following assessment of Benjamin de Constant (1767-1830): "It is remarkable that uniformity never met with more favour than in a revolution raised in the name of the rights and the liberty of men. The systematic spirit at first went into an ecstacy of symmetry; the love of power soon discovered what immense advantage this symmetry gave it. Though patriotism exists only as a lively attachment to interests, manners and cus-

toms of locality, our self-announced patriots declared a war on all these things. They dried up this natural fount of patriotism.... The interests and memories which are born from local habits contain a germ of resistance which authority only reluctantly endures and hastens to uproot. It has an easier road with individuals: it rolls its enormous weight over them as easily as over sand."

In economic affairs, he warned the world with his famous thesis, "Property is theft." Only that property is just which is shared by all, not collectively and impersonally, but directly and individually. The workers need come together only in so far as "the demands of production, the cheapness of product, the needs of consumption and the security of producers themselves require it." Such free co-operative societies can develop into vital *foci* of production if they can be self-financing, that is, capable of obtaining *gratuitous credit*. To this end Proudhon developed his plan of a people's bank, issuing exchange notes based on commodities and charging no interest. He also advocated the establishment of warehouses empowered to issue warrants for goods deposited. Labour can break out of the bonds of Capital only if it is able to take over the functions of ownership and financing. Organisation of credit, cheap credit, therefore becomes a crucial socio-economic quest.

Proudhon had no use for the National Workshops that Louis Blanc and Lassalle had ardently agitated for. In them, the state would overwhelm the worker. Proudhon had seen the state, in 1849, dispersing the National Workshops and asking the 1,20,000 men employed in them to choose between the alternatives of entering the army or leaving Paris. It was a Proudhonian idea that Otta Von Gierke (1841-1921) later made the foundation of his work. "Only free association can create communities in which economic free-

dom persists." Co-operatively owned and operated workshops need to be federated together. "The real problem to be solved for federalism is not political, but economic." He believed that the railways, then under construction, would counter centralisation and help economic dispersal.

The ideal of freedom and justice he sought to make real by combining the twin principles of local autonomy and *du principe federatif*. That way alone could extension be achieved without sacrificing organic unity. It was the internal initiative, autonomy, which for him was the creative social core. "The workers never became for him a homogenous class of which any thousand were worth any other thousand: their salvation *must* come from within. Any leadership from the outside, no matter what were its claims to superior knowledge or disinterestedness, was simply another form of tyranny. There were more modes of exploitation than those created by formal property relations."[6]

Alike in political life as in economic organisation, small size and direct, democratic control became for Proudhon the meaning of freedom and justice. He had no use for politics and parties, both tended to estrange men from their immediate affairs. No useful purpose is served in striving to render harmless what is essentially harmful, the authoritarian state. He therefore had a profound suspicion of that modern monster, *raison d'etat*. "Every state is by nature annexationistic" and it continuously encroaches upon society, where alone social *tissues* generate and grow. Only a fragmented state, that is a federal union, can have power under the control of the people. In such a state, a republic of cantons, politics and parties of today would be redundant.

6. *Ibid*, p .14.

Other big organisations, like the trade unions, had also inherent in them the evil of centralisation. And trade unions emerge only where production becomes large-scale and the workers and the means of production get dissociated. Trade unions thus stemmed from a conglomeration of many social evils.

Small states or communes, directly ruled by free men, who were economically equal, each a master of his trade, of his farm, and of his family—that was Proudhon's ideal community. All that was needed was that these autonomous social organisms be linked together by the *principe federatif.*

His deeply-felt opposition to capitalism and privilege enriched its content by opposing alike centralisation and all forms of organised exploitation, such as church, state, political parties etc. He inevitably became, as Brogan has called him, a preacher of "socialism for peasants." He undoubtedly articulated the feelings of the small men, the doomed men whose wriggles under the harrow of capitalism, as Marx had sardonically described in his critique against Proudhon, had no permanent historical interest and were powerless to arrest the social movement. But events showed that even the workers accepted his ideas. *The Manifesto of Sixty,* the only one of the four Manifestos published in revolutionary France* by the workers themselves, came very close to Proudhon's formulations. What the proletariat had declared in the Manifesto in 1861, they acted upon in the great moment of history in 1871. The Paris Commune, even in its very name, had the Proudhonian ring. His ideas were powerful in giving the patriotic and social indignation of the Pari-

* The other three Manifestos were: *Manifesto Des Egaux of* Babeuf; Considerant's (1808-93) Fourierist *Manifesto de L'Ecole Societare,* (1841); and, Marx and Engels' *Communist* Manifesto (1848).

sian workers a federalist form; and the commemoration of the martyrs of the "Wall of the Federalist" is a tribute to one side of Proudhon's teaching. In Proudhon's thoughts were thus mirrored the dreams of varied sections of the people—peasants, *petit bourgeois* and the workers. He was a prophet of the people in one of its most hopeful moods — "All associated and all free."

Crushed in the Bud

Marx (1818-83) had no patience with community-building. For him "the organising activity," that is the reconstruction of society, would only begin after the complete overthrow of the state — whatever organising activity preceded the revolution was only organisation for the struggle. The efforts of Owen and Fourier were "little experiments, inevitably abortive." He accused Proudhon and Blanc of "doctrinaire experiments, exchange banks and workers' associations" and reproved the French proletariat for its support to a "movement which having given up the struggle to overthrow the old world despite all the means at its disposal, prefers to seek its own salvation behind the society's back, privately, inside the narrow framework of its existence, and which will thus necessarily come to grief."

The Paris Commune, as a revolutionary upsurge, received Marx's unqualified approval to the concept of the Commune. The unique fact of the Commune, "its true secret" was that it was "essentially a working-class government" — a government actually and factually exercised by the workers, "the self-government of the producers." Born of universal suffrage, governed by recall and mandates, the Commune was not a parliamentary but a working body, executive and legislative at the same time. If such Communes had grown up all over France, only a few functions

would have been left for a Central Government. "The communal constitution would have rendered up to the body social all the powers which have hitherto been devoured by the parasitic excrescence of the 'state,' which battens on society and inhibits its free movement. By this deed alone, it would have brought about the regeneration of France."

Marx thus wanted the decentralisation of power, curbing of the proliferation of authority, not merely after the revolution, but even inside the revolutionary action itself. He however felt no need of such efforts, of associative endeavours, *before* the revolution. He saw no need of organic continuity, in fact he was constantly haunted by the fear lest constructive work should sap the strength of the revolutionary impetus. That fear led him to denounce the plank of producers' co-operatives in the Gotha Programme of the German Social Democratic Party — he ridiculed it as a "specific miracle-cure," and a "sectarian movement." In 1886, Engels advised Bebel (1840-1913) to demand leasing of agricultural lands to workers' co-operatives for tactical propaganda reasons, not for constructive effort. In 1892, the German Party Congress decided that the Party "could only approve the founding of co-operatives in so far as they were designed to enable comrades on whom disciplinary punishment had been inflicted in the political or trade union struggle, to live a decent social life, or in so far as it served to facilitate agitation." For the rest "the Party was opposed to the founding of co-operatives."

Co-operatives could enable comrades in distress to lead "a decent social life," that means that they had in them socially rehabilitating powers, but they were not to be used for wider good — such was the deliberate decision of the German Social Democratic Party. The prophecy of Marx had come true. He had written to Engels, on the outbreak

of the Franco-Prussian War, in July 1870: "The French need a thrashing. If the Prussians win, the centralisation of state power will subserve the centralisation of the German Working Class. German domination would furthermore shift the focus of the Western European Workers' movement from France to Germany, and you have merely to compare the movements in the two countries from 1866 upto now to see that the German working class is superior both in theory and in organisation to the French. Its supremacy over that of the French on the world stage would at once mean the supremacy of *our theory* over Proudhon's."

And the Germans did triumph, because industrial development was poised for greater advance there. As Marx derisively put it, the "best world" that Proudhon constructs is already "crushed in the bud by the fact of the onward-marching industrial development." And Marx welcomed that onward march.

Quest for Community

Utopianism is fundamentally what Robert A. Nisbet has recently called "a quest for community."

From Hobbes (1588-1679) onwards the effort was to free from his various group allegiances, whether family, clan, guild, village or church, and to give him the state as the sole focus of allegiance. Under Rousseau (1712-78) the effort reached its final culmination. "Rousseau is the first of modern philosophers to see in the state a means of resolving the conflicts, not merely among institutions but within the individual himself."[7] For Rousseau freedom meant withdrawal from the corruptions and oppressions of

7. Robert A. Nisbet: *The Quest for Community*, p. 140.

society. Traditional social ties he viewed as chains of existence. To emancipate the individual from the chains, to restore to man caught in gross inequalities, his state of nature, Rousseau suggested: "Each citizen would then be completely independent of all his fellow-men, and absolutely dependent upon the state: which operation is always brought by the same means; for it is only by the force of the state that the liberty of its members can be secured." From Hobbes to Rousseau, the Social Contract meant contract against all groups and exclusive predominance of the state.

Freedom meant conformity to state's will: "If it is good to know how to deal with men as they are," wrote Rousseau, "it is much better to make them what there is need that they should be. The most absolute authority is that which penetrates into a man's inmost being, and concerns itself no less with his will than with his actions. Make men, therefore, if you would command men, if you would have them obedient to the laws, make them love the laws, and then they will need only to know what is their duty to do it.... If you would have the general will accomplished, bring all the particular wills in conformity with it; in other words, as virtue is nothing more than this conformity of the particular wills with the General Will, establish the reign of virtue."

The theory of General Will thus became at once the exponent of freedom as of authoritarianism — a classic basis for the French Revolution, *of 1789 as well as of 1793*. It demanded, and as actually happened during the Revolution, a general sterilisation of associative allegiances that were not of the state, a subtle transmutation of social statuses into political status, and a general assimilation of human purposes and devotions into the single structure of the people's state.

Statism and Capitalism drew strength from the same impulse: an isolating and separating process that stripped off the historically grown layers of custom and social community, leaving only levelled masses of individuals. The older relations were disrupted and destroyed, new relations were always subordinated to the state. The new society, notwithstanding its democratic assertions, has been characterised by institutional vulnerability. The transformation was described by a German sociologist, Tonnies, as a continuous weakening of the ties of *Gemeinschaft*, the communal ties of family guild and village, and a constant maximisation of the more impersonal, atomistic and mechanical relationships, of what he called *Gesellschaft*. The same fact was emphasised by a French sociologist, Durkheim (1858-1925) the exponent of the philosophy of Solidarism. "What is in fact characteristic of our development is that it has successively destroyed all the established social contexts; one after the other they have been banished either by the slow usury of time or by violent revolution, and in such a fashion that nothing has been developed to replace them."

These developments were viewed as freedom, progress, a process of individualisation of man. He was viewed as a self-sufficient, stable, discrete being, who needed to be freed from the web of custom and community to pursue his interest and discover thereby social weal. Man's true estate was citizenship — his basic relationship with the state. The political man became the acme of human evolution. The astounding development of techniques buttress the transition from organic life to organised life.

Liberalism and much of socialism embodied this urge and understanding. It was against them that utopianism had fought its way. "The individual is more human," wrote Leon

Duguit, "the more he is socialised." And he is socialised only through functioning in a great number of groups.

The theory of utopianism was developed slowly by the efforts of many men, the more outstanding among whom were Dr. William King (1786-1865), Philippe Buchez, Proudhon, Kropotkin (1842-1921), Landauer, Buber (b. 1878) and each one of them has enriched the thought of his predecessors. The essence of utopianism is not in any schematic fiction, nor even in social architecture, it lies in the concept of organic relationship and growth. Their approach is far more empirical than speculative; it is essentially an earthy, rooted, organic thought.

According to them, man's quest for freedom and fullness of life can be realised only when he lives in, and becomes a part of, a *structurally rich* society. A society can be called structurally rich to the extent that it is built up of genuine associations, *i.e.*, a living and life-giving collaboration, autonomous consociation of human beings, shaping and reshaping the cell-tissues of the society from within. Society is naturally composed not of disparate individuals but of associative units and association between them. Only in the web of such associative relationships is a man nourished and cherished.

"Under capitalist economy and the State peculiar to it the constitution of the society was being continually *hollowed out*, so that the modern individualising process finishes up as a process of atomisation."[8] The bonds of feudalism, the stranglehold of the manor and the guild over man, had undoubtedly to be broken. But great dangers and terrible

8. Martin Buber: *Paths in Utopia*, (italics mine).
I am greatly indebted to this original and stimulating writer.

tragedy lay in tearing the mesh of feudalism and then to live in isolation. Such isolation, if allowed to develop, would lead to the most terrible of all life — life of mass or collective loneliness.

A great Frenchman, Royar-Collard (1763-1845), had presciently summed up the whole position: "We have seen the old society perish and with it the great number of local institutions and independent tribunals which formed part and parcel of it. These were powerful symbols of personal privileges, true republics within the framework of the monarchy. These institutions, these tribunals, it is true did not share the prerogatives of sovereignty; but they set limits to it. Not one of them has survived, and no new ones have been put in their place. The Revolution (of 1789) has left nothing standing but individuals.....Indeed, where we have nothing but 'individuals," all matters which are not properly theirs are public affairs, affairs of the state..... This is how we become an admonished nation."

The greatest need, therefore, was of *restructuring* the society, of rebuilding its organic cells — "not a sum of isolated individual atoms but an organic cohesion that only wants to expand — and, out of many groups, for a great throbbing community." (Landauer) This is not a political task, but social growth. It can no longer be a matter of substituting one political *regime* for another, but of emergence, rather fostering, in place of a political regime grafted on society, of a *regime* expressive of the society itself.

The movement of freedom from feudalism was leading to the omnipotence of just one association-state, and deflation and destruction of all other associations, other social relationships. A situation had developed indeed where, as Hobbes' title page put it, the state had become "the great

Leviathan made up of little men," little and isolated men! Hobbes' whole philosophy was essentially *hollowing:* his picture of society is of men estranged, insecure, concerned only with gain and power. There "the Absolute State faces the Absolute Individual." "The sovereign state and the sovereign individual," wrote Otto Gierke, "fought to define their natural and lawful spheres of existence; all intermediate associations were degraded — and at last exterminated." In the end, nothing remains except the state threatening to devour everything living.

The only alternative to the state are communities small in scale and dense in structure. They are the very beginning of a social rejuvenation because they respond to fundamental human needs: to living together, to working together, and to experiencing together. They can grow organically from elementary aspirations and they do not demand pompous organisations. We must start again at these grass roots of existence.[9]

Such live tissues of society one builds by consciously entering into social relationships; free associations are the cells of a rich community. There are two forces at work constantly eating up the substance of associations: they are the principle of centralisation and the principle of paramountcy. Centralisation sucks away initiative, authority and vitality from the members, builds the apex at the expense of the whole cone. Not only in the state, but in all associations this pernicious principle is at work, modifying their structure and their whole inner life, and thus politicalising them. The principle of paramountcy lifts up *one* association, nation or church or party, usually the state, to an overarching position and reduces all other associations to the status

9. *cf.* E. A. Gutkind: *Community and Environment.*

of satellites, thereby "de-souling" and de-substantiating society. Decentralisation and pluralism therefore become the pre-conditions of freedom.

The rich restructuring of society has to be achieved by men through their modes of living, through their feelings and faith. Utopianism is therefore not a network of ideas but a web of life. It is, in the words of Buber, *topical* and *topographical,* it needs a now and a here to plant its roots and for its buds to blossom. "Those who have given themselves the most concern about the happiness of peoples," wrote Anatole France from the depth of his wisdom, "have made their neighbours miserable." The Utopians therefore believe in learning to live co-operatively and creatively with neighbours — that is the alpha and omega of "the happiness of the peoples."

The discipline and delight of association can come through man's immersion into his local, regional commune, his work, trade commune, and other voluntary associations. In all of them there should be less of representation and more of self-government. Joseph Paul-Boncour's observation in his book, *Economic Federalism,* that "there exists among members of the same profession a solidarity more real than that between inhabitants of the same commune" represents a large segment of opinion.

Co-operatives offer the most classic form of a vitalising association. But by co-operating for a specific or limited function, such as purchase or sale or credit, one merely gains in efficiency, not in associative warmth. Consumers' co-operatives are merely a tangential form of association, there is greater comfort and creativity in producers' co-operatives. But the satisfying and fruitful co-operation is found in full co-operation where the functions of production and con-

sumption are combined; such co-operation needs, in the words of Kropotkin, *"territory,"* that is, its fully blown form is the Village Commune — "where communal living is based on the amalgamation of production and consumption, production being understood not exclusively as agriculture alone but as the organic union of agriculture with industry and with the handicrafts as well." (Buber).

Socialism cannot be established in abstract but in a concrete multiplicity, and that too, as Landauer insisted, only in the "conditions of soil ownership." "The struggle of socialism is the struggle for the soil." Man fulfils himself only in rich associations with his fellow-men, and in deep intimacy with the soil.

To establish this two-fold relationship, with soil and with men, is to counter the structural pauperisation of capitalism and the hypertrophy of the state. It is a positive, *direct* socialism in which every man can participate. But as one must not remain in isolation so no group must remain isolated. The arch principle of reconstruction is federalism. "The principle of Federalism derives quite naturally from the idea itself, which is the foundation of the co-operative system. Just as the co-operative society unites people for the common satisfaction of certain needs, so the various cells unite one with another."[10]

Even the co-operatives, the village communes, can become social shells, drained of spirit. Kropotkin, for instance, pointed out that the modern Co-operative Movement which originally and in essence had the character of "mutual aid," has often degenerated into "share capital individualism" and fostered "co-operative egoism." Isolation from one another

10. Mladenatz: *History of the Co-operative Theories.*

and isolation from society need to be avoided. But a group, a commune, remains free, fresh and fecund only if it takes the precautions that the founding fathers, King and Buchez, had suggested. A co-operative must remain an association of *worker-owners*, and never allow the two functions to get dissociated. When a co-operative grows it must split up but its organic unity must remain within the range, the "radius," of its average member. Only such organisation will have "the power of remote effect" of drawing towards it not individuals but of radiating the inspiration to others to build their own associations. Organisations when they grow old or big develop *stasis*. "*Stasis* is what comes to pass *when organisation hardens* in whole or in part into hierarchy, and any of the diverse movements of human life are halted, dammed and immobilised."[11]

Only an enlivening spirit can be the solvent of *stasis*. The crucial fact of utopian socialism is the *will* to have it. As Landauer put it: "Socialism is possible and impossible at all times; it is possible where the right people are there to will and do it: it is impossible where people either do not will it or only supposedly will it but are not capable of doing it." Utopianism therefore does not look to a class or to a nation for its realisation — it looks to all men, and above all to the few who are intoxicated with the new vision. It is essentially, a "Socialism of the Few," where the pioneers, through their associative work, remove the hiatus between the objective and the actual. All great movements of change in life as in spirit have always turned to pioneers, *mujaddid, Chaluzim*. Their in-dwelling truth has to harmonise the "mighty tensions within the spirits of individuals,"

11. Horace Kallen: *The Liberal Spirit*, p. 48.

to sprout green shoots in "the masses uprooted and drifting like dust."

A streak of mysticism inevitably resides in utopianism. The real "transformation of society can only come in love, in work and in stillness." "In the fire, the ecstacy, the brotherliness of these militant movements," wrote Landauer in his book, *The Revolution*, "there rises up again and again the image and feeling of positive union through the binding quality, through love, which is power, and without this passing and surpassing regeneration we cannot go on living and must perish." Landauer's life-thought was summed up in one key sentence: "Socialism is the attempt to lead man's common life to a bond of common spirit in freedom, that is, to religion." "There is nothing orthodox in this religion, it is in the words of Gurudev Tagore (1861-1941), "The Religion of Man."

The spark and the spirit first thaw the hard crust in the heart of man. "Such is the task of the socialists and of the movements they have started among the peoples; to loosen the hardening of hearts so that what lies buried may rise to the surface, so that what truly lives yet now seems dead may emerge and grow into light." Only a renewed man seeks sources of life, the vestiges of communal spirit, in the hard and harsh life around. It then becomes his duty to discover and foster the springs of community wherever found and, through the forms of his life and work, provide new healthy cells, live tissues, for the stricken society. Utopianism is, in the original and non-political sense of the word, conservative.

The great danger of modern society is the rootless drifting of man in a social vacuum. The fate of *a terrible simplificateur* can be avoided only by man consciously entering

into vital relationship and creating round him a rich complexity, a gossamer web of associations. Organisations are imposed, associations are created; in the former men are objects, in the latter they are the subjects. Or, to put it in the words of Berdyaev: "For man society is an object, determining him from without. He must transform it into subject which, from within, will determine his own communal and social character."[12]

Proudhon had seen as early as 1860 that "Europe is sick of thought and order; it is entering into an era of brute force and contempt of principles." Next year, he had pointed to the sad fact that "men were weary of the vestiges of freedom that yet remain to them and were only longing to be rid of them." What was the cause of this "fear of freedom"? Proudhon saw the developing hunger for authority in the retreat from self-government. The obvious cure lay in organising forms of life that would strengthen self-government. Only associative life could be a life of freedom, and such a life needs live links with the soil: roots in the soil alone can provide sap for the growth.

Village communes, with their mesh of agricultural and handicraft-cum-industrial activities, co-operatively owned and worked, such communes endlessly proliferating and federally associating — that is the vision of the utopians. The "totality of independent units which all interpenetrate" to form "a society of societies," all suffused with self-government, that alone can be the *locus* of healthy men and rich community. Man is not free in the formless, substanceless world, his very freedom, warmth, wealth lie in the form, pattern, balance, he creates with his own efforts. Through

12. Nicolas Berdyaev: *The Realm of Spirit and the Realm of Caesar*, p. 58.

social efforts and spiritual understanding man recognises the *limes* and limits and thereby learns to transcend them.

The Utopian Stream

Different aspects of utopian socialism continued to interest and absorb the energies of the people in Western Europe, even after the triumph of the industrial revolution. Naturally, the achievements were greatest in small countries like Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Switzerland. But elsewhere too the spirit remained astir.

Consumers' co-operatives, by 1939, embraced a fourth to a third of the population in different countries of northern and western Europe. Normally ten and in rare cases upto forty per cent of the retail trade was handled by the co-operatives. In Basel, Switzerland, four-fifths of the citizens were members of co-operatives, and their needs were supplied by 250 outlets in the city and its surroundings.

The twentyeight Rochdale Pioneers, all of them artisans and most of them weavers, had planted a sapling that grew into a veritable wood! In Great Britain, the co-operatives claimed 7.5 million members and annually transacted business which exceeded a *billion* pounds sterling. In 1873, the co-operatives entered the field of production, and in fifty years the annual worth of the output reached £34.6 million.

France is the home of two famous experiments. *La Familistere,* a workers' productive association founded in 1879 at Guise by Jean Baptiste Godin (1817-88), remains, despite two world wars, a flourishing co-operative of founding and metal-casting. A *regional* co-operative has grown up at Charente. In 1873, the Charente Department produced about 180 million gallons of wine. Seven years later, primarily because of the grape phylloxera which ravaged the vine-

yards, the yield had dropped to less than two million gallons. The crisis was overcome by developing dairy farming, cognac, distilling and marketing, flour-mills and creameries as also the supply of credit on co-operative basis.[13]

Swedish co-operatives developed many new lines and patterns. They fought and broke monopolies — in flour-milling, galoshes and electric lamps. The *Konsumer Forbund* (whole-sale co-operative society) developed a new, unique, anti-monopoly measure, not by court or administrative actions, with their cumbersome and dilatory procedure, but by a direct, *productive* action. The *Luma* lamp has lighted a new path!

Rural electrical co-operatives is another new form of co-operative enterprise developed in Sweden. The most significant developments have, however, taken place in that small agricultural country Denmark. Her economic staple was export of grain. Her soil was being depleted through continual grain growing, and the export markets were closing. Denmark converted her economy to dairy-farming and built it in a co-operative framework. With a population of less than four millions, Denmark had approximately 8,000 local co-operative societies of various kinds, — 2,000 consumers' co-operatives, 1,400 dairies, 1,400 fodder purchasing co-operatives, 1,500 fertiliser co-operatives and 61 bacon factories. Co-operative purchasing, processing and sales organisations handled between 25 to 90 per cent of different agricultural activities. The co-operative network extends to marketing, packing, banking, insurance, power plants, ma-

13. In the post war years in France a score of communities at work have been organised where producers-cum-consumers co-operatives have been fully developed. For a detailed and exciting report on the mid-twentieth century utopianism, cf. Clair H. Bishop: *All Things Common.*

chine tools, breeding associations and creameries. Over 90 per cent of the Danish farmers belong to at least one co-operative organisation.

This stupendous achievement was made possible because the Danish peasants owned not only their lands but their state. Denmark was a free, peasant democracy. And the people had in them the community spirit. The folk-schools initiated by N. F. S. Grundvig (1783-1872) were the yeast. Grundvig was characteristically a pastor, poet, historian and an educationist and in his adult schools interest in labour and in literature, training in history and community living, were harmonised. It has been estimated that one-third of the adult population passed through these schools, and thereby imparted the folk-spirit to the co-operative efforts. Denmark is a classic *pendant* of utopianism that survives in the "scientific" West.

As in the field of achievement, so also in the realm of thought, utopianism has continued to exert its pull.

Italian socialism, for instance, belatedly discovered utopianism in the precarious "Indian Summer" of its renaissance after 1924. Its unfolding vision is limned in the life and writings of Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924), Piero Gobetti (1901-26) and Carlo Rossetti (d. 1937). If Gobetti's ambition was to be "the liberal conscience of communities," Rossetti's gospel was *socialismo liberale.* Gobetti's ardent, impetuous youth was radiant with a catholic understanding and a deep-thrusting eclecticism that are characteristic of utopians. In the workshop and the commune he saw the real *foci* of socialism. Rossetti advised his countrymen in exile to "pigeon-hole their party membership cards" and to concentrate on "Justice and Liberty." The echoes of Proudhon's voice continue to reverberate!

After 1870, the west European countries had decisively taken the different turning, and the possibility of development on the utopian lines was left for east European countries, above all for the great colossus, Russia.

In Russia, tentatively and never very clearly, the dispute between utopianism and Westernism went on. Could the Russian village community become the seed of a co-operative state, or was it doomed to disintegrate and disappear before the hammer-blows of capitalism? This vital, fate-laden question Vera Zasulitch asked Karl Marx in 1881. Marx points out in the various drafts of his reply that the "historical fatality" of capitalist development he had expressly confined in his *Capital* to Western Europe. In Russia, the village communities might "gradually slough off its primitive characteristics and develop as the direct basis of collective production on a national scale." If the village community, the peasants, could elect its own economic and administrative organ, and, further, if the isolation of the village communities, their circumscribed community-consciousness, could be extended, that is, if they could be enlivened with the federalising impulse, Russia would discover a new road of development. "For the Russian commune to be saved," however, "a Russian revolution is needed." The revolution must come in time and it must "concentrate all its powers on securing the free rise of the village community." The reply *actually* sent was not so rich in content, it was more an oracle than an answer.

The Populists advocated small-scale enterprise, the co-operative, as "the sole approach to grace." But the policy of the autocratic Czar ran in the opposite direction as Nikolayon pointed out: "Instead of keeping to the tradition of centuries, instead of developing our old inherited principle of a close connection between the immediate producer and

his means of production, instead of usefully applying the scientific achievements of West Europe to their forms of production based on the peasants' ownership of their means of production, instead of increasing their productivity by concentrating the means of production in their hands, instead of benefiting, not by the forms of production in Western Europe, but by its organisation, its powerful co-operation, its division of labour, its machinery, *etc. etc.*, instead of developing the fundamental principle of land-owning peasantry and applying it to the cultivation of the land by the peasants, instead of making science and its application widely accessible to the peasants — instead of all this, we have taken the opposite turning. We have failed to prevent the development of capitalist forms of production, although they are based on the expropriation of the peasants; on the contrary, we have promoted with all our might the upsetting of our entire life."[14]

The Russian peasant, lacking freedom and political power, could not arrest the disintegrating development, and at the overthrow of the Czar, the peasant's fleeting freedom was overwhelmed by the Bolshevik avalanche.

The "lost dream" of the Russians was carried over by the Jews to Palestine. It is in Israel, that corner of ancient Asia where Europe has returned foot-sore from many wanderings, that through "trial and error," the utopian experiment has grown. The Jews of the Diaspora foreshadowed the rootless mankind of today. They were homeless, because they were landless, these money-changers of the world.

A National Home could grow only *ground upward:* in Palestine the soil was ravaged and poor, it was as hollowed

14. *Outlines of our Social Economy* (1891), p. 322.

out as the substanceless society of today. As society has to be restructured, so land had to be rebuilt. The people who came in from all corners of the world, after many barren and restless centuries, had to learn what the land will ask of them and what the land would give them. *Chovath Zion* had to love and tend the land too. "We know that the land responds to work and to selflessness. It does not give itself in the same way to greedy hands or to rapacious hearts," observes Joseph Baratz in his story of *A village by the Jordan.* And that is what every *Halutz* (pioneer) learnt.

Palestine had to be claimed as a National Home for the Jews — and that was a task that transcended politics. As Chaim Weizman (1874-1952) has put it: "The second or practical school — ours — took what I have repeatedly called a more organic view of Zionism and of historic process— they sought to impress upon the Zionist world the obvious truth that political activity alone is not enough; it must be accompanied by solid, constructive achievement, the actual physical occupation of land in Palestine which in turn would be accompanied by the moral strengthening of the Jewish consciousness, the revival of the Hebrew language, the spread of knowledge of Jewish history, and the strengthening of the attachment to the permanent values of Judaism."[15]

The Zionists who succeeded in winning a state for the Jews in Palestine were not "dogmatic, *borne,* doctrinaire," but organic in their outlook. The Jews, traders and money-changers of many lands and for many centuries, could settle down and win not merely the National Home but also the community consciousness only if they made agricultural colonisation the backbone of work. "It is in the village that the real soul of a people — its language, its poetry, its lite-

15. Chaim Weizmann: *Trial and Error, P.* 157.

rature, its traditions — springs up from the intimate contact between man and soil. The towns do no more than "process" the fruits of villages."[16]

The conditions in Palestine as well as the teachings of Zionism led the pioneers to build up village communes of full co-operatives. These communes, as they grew, split up and proliferated and remained united in federal ties. Inside the *Kvutza,* the intimacy of shared life and work grew up and gave substance to the community idea. A real community does not consist of people who are perpetually together but of comrades who have mutual access to one another and are ready for one another. It is the outward movement together, in the same direction.

Israel has grown through genuine trial and error, tireless search at community life, the critical awareness as well as the creative outflow of the emergent community feeling. The authentic and inspiring protocols of the Elders of Zion are to be found in the *Kibbutz* and *Kvutza.*[17] Zionism and

16. *Ibid.*, 246.
17. Cf: "I have often wondered, for example, why the Kibbutz has succeeded, where Brook Farm, for all its Emersonian ethic, Robert Owen's New Harmony, for all its socialist idealism, and the various religious collectives in North America, ranging from Shakars to the Ephrata and Amana communities, all disintegrated. The unusual aspect of collective living is, of course, the internal structure of the community, and communal aspect of property and consumption. All other things are dependent on this structure. This is a sharing of life as in a family. It means voluntarily giving up a great deal of one's individual authority to a group with which one's ties are incomparably more tenuous than in a family. The centrifugal forces militating for the disintegration of such a community are powerful, and none of these communities seems to have been able to withstand them. There must be an overpowering reason, a reason which can become personal, which will make a person be willing to live this way with people with whom he has had no previous intimate relationship. In the Kibbutz it is the Zionist vision of the Jewish future which has supplied this reason."—Murray Weingarten: *Life in a Kibbutz,* p. 155.

Israel can provide many hostages to criticism, but none can gainsay their utopian origin and their enriching of that tradition with new ideas, forms and achievements.

GANDHI AND VINOBA

Asia is acquiver with utopianism; of India one can say it with knowledge and confidence. There, for over a century, a long line of utopians have lived and worked. Of them Gandhi (1869-1948) is the greatest. In him utopianism is epitomised at its highest and the best.

The saga of Gandhiji's life and thought cannot be easily distilled into a few paragraphs. The quintessence of his teachings he offered in his very first book, the *Hind Swaraj* (1907). His basic concepts were *Swaraj, Swadeshi* and *Sarvodaya.*

Swaraj meant self-government and Gandhiji made it his key *mantram,* not merely in its broad, national liberation sense but in its immediate, personal connotation. Swaraj means *Swa-raj* too, self-government can and should mean control, rule, over self also. This government must grow in concentric circles: a disciplined person seeks *swaraj,* self-rule, in his immediate environment, the village. Free villages, revivified villages, alone can become the real foci, the live cells, of an expanding, aspiring, abiding *swaraj.*

Swadeshi means made in one's country; but here again the emphasis should be on the produce of the immediate proximity. The self-sufficiency of a person, of a village, of a region, of the nation as a whole, form the fan-like spread-out of a rich, full, and luxuriant life. To weave one's own cloth, to use local goods, to encourage not regional specialisation but maximum diversity and multiplicity of production and occupations, became the enriched conception of Swadeshi.

Sarvodaya was the whole philosophy, suffused through and through with organic understanding: *sarva* means all, and *udaya* means emergence, growth. The sense of growth, organic unfolding, is central to Gandhi's entire teachings. And where "growth" is the kernel and the core, land becomes the basic assumption. Gandhiji's vision was land-locked, and he knew that the peasant can be happy only when he not merely owns his land but has a variety of other occupations, a whole complex of village industries. Intimate relationships between agriculture and handicrafts alone create a balanced economy and healthy community.

Sarvodaya also meant social rehabilitation: the maimed and the diseased parts of the society must be made healthy and whole again. Gandhi's emphasis on the eradication of untouchability was an instance of this kind. The untouchables forming an eighth of Indian population constituted, not merely economically but socially, the most depressed section of the society. Their economic uplift and social assimilation thus became the simple discipline of every Indian's effort at *Sarvodaya*. To mend a tear, to heal a wound, is the restless urge of an organic, truly human outlook, everywhere it searches for the delicate tendrils, the tiny green shoots of growth.

Gandhi made constructive work, the sustained effort of economic rehabilitation and social regeneration, the grammar of politics. He added and enriched the concept of community-building as the road to social liberation.

What was distinctive in Gandhi was that he united constructive work to struggles against injustice. The unique amalgam was his *satyagraha*. Social evils and injustice must be resisted, to co-operate with them is to accept them and get assimilated to them. A free man not only constructs but

fights injustice. The first gives him roots, the dark, nourishing embrace of the soil, the latter is his communion with the sun, with the central source of all energy — *agraha* is insistence, and *satya* is truth. That is how the *proximate* and the *ultimate*, the environment and the objective, meet and fructify. The strength drawn from constructive work helps *satyagraha* and that in its turn gives meaning and direction, imparts to the gropings a goal.

All community-builders have been educationists, and Gandhiji was no exception. As important as his *ashram*, the centre of rural work, was his basic school. It was training round work and handicraft, it was learning in the setting of life. His *Nai Talim* sought to restore man, on a heightened plane of awareness, to his natural and social milieu, to red-integrate him therein as a conscious collaborator.

All the nation-builders of India from Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1832) onwards have been educationists. The break comes with Nehru (b. 1889) who has become a state-organiser. The utopian, nation-building heritage has passed on to Vinoba.

Vinoba Bhave (b. 1895) is the greatest living exponent of Gandhi's philosophy. He shares his Master's simplicity, integrity and fecund originality. Poetry drops in his philosophy, and his ideas come in loops of rural imageries of exquisite beauty. Like Proudhon, Vinoba revels in philology, and he unlocks out of words welled-up social understanding.

Lessing called History, "education of mankind." By the same token one might call mythology "the cradle of the people." Vinoba teaches the people in the language of the cradle. He revives the timeless memories. In Vinoba, as in Gandhi, there is nothing opaque; the transparence of thought makes understanding *direct*.

Goodness is like a fire: it can irradiate light far but warmth is confined to the immediate environs. So a man must have a place, a *locus,* to work and grow; there needs must be a limited locality of intensive work: the seed-bed from which the wider cultivation of life may be attempted. When you dig a hole, there is a heap on one side and a hollow on the other — so every accumulation simultaneously produces want elsewhere. A vital person is he who is never tired of his co-mingling. And so forth, Vinoba's parables flow on. Ideas, according to him, do not spread by clash with other rival ideas but by the contagion of example. The truth of an idea is best expressed in its quiet living, in its silent majesty. When it is given over to words it breeds violence, and violence mauls and mutilates truth. The Central teaching of Vinoba, as of Gandhi, has been that the fire of truth is invariably destroyed in the outflow of violence. Violence is the fundamental negation of the organic, the living, the aspiring.

Against the familiar concept of safeguarding "my right is my duty," Vinoba counterposes "performing my duty is my right." And out of the counterpose has come *bhoodan,* the most recent and fascinating upsurge of utopianism.

Bhoodan, or the land-gifts movement, is a remarkable effort at organic readjustment of society. *Bhu* means land, and *dan* means both gift and division. *Bhoodan* seeks through gifts to divide, redistribute, lands. Rich and poor alike are invited to give land, at least one-sixth of their holdings, treating the landless as yet another co-sharer, brother, in the ancestral property. Over 24,00,000 acres of land have been collected for redistribution within a short span of thirty months.

The rich potentiality of the movement is seen in the following:

(1) land gifts create an atmosphere where land redistribution gets facilitated;

(ii) because small peasants too give away land, a new attitude to ownership, and ultimately to property, emerges;

(iii) land loses market price and thereby eases the problem of compensation;

(iv) as the landless get land as a gift, it becomes easy to induce them to join a farm co-operative;

(v) because the gifted lands are distributed through village meetings, mostly on the suggestion of the landless themselves, not merely the danger of nepotism and corruption disappears but democratic awareness achieves grass roots;

(vi) because land distribution is viewed from the standpoint of every landless person getting a minimum holding of five acres of dry land or one acre of wet land, the question of ceiling on holding gets resolved;

(vii) the scope for evasion, through land transfers inside the family or other similar *benami* transactions, that is common under land distribution legislation, does not exist.

Instead of sharpening antagonisms and breeding sectional solidarity, Vinoba's gentle approach unlocks humanity from every heart and brings to the parched society the needed moisture of understanding and sympathy. Redistribution of land, through *bhoodan,* revivifies the whole society. Vinoba does not propose to stop at land redivision, he wants *gramikaran,* the "villagisation of land," that is, co-operative ownership and cultivation on the basis of a village commune. Then again, the village has to be so planned that it is able to achieve its simple abundance and sufficiency. Each village through its administrative autonomy and economic diversity

must strive to be a miniature republic, a microcosm endowed with much of the substance of the macrocosm.

Vinoba has already extended his movement to other aspects of life: *sampattidan*, the redistribution of wealth, *buddhidan*, the gift of knowledge, *shramadan*, the comradeship of labour. In giving, as in mercy, is one doubly blessed. Through these "gifts," Vinoba hopes to unfreeze and restore to society the *quasi*-rents earned by "gifted" individuals in the manifold spheres of life. Not the market place, where men meet only as sellers and buyers each intent on his own interest and advantage, but in the broad concourse of life where people are intent on giving and sharing do men enrich and fulfil themselves. Vinoba would gladly endorse St. Thomas Acquinas' stewardship concept of property and even more Jacques Maritain's gloss on it. "Society cannot exist without the perpetual gift and perpetual surplus which derive from persons, without the well-springs of generosity hidden in the very depth of the life and liberty of persons, and which love causes to flow forth." Maritain, likewise, believes that the *first essential* characteristic of the common good implies a *"redistribution."*[18]

Gandhi and Vinoba may not have solved the stubborn socio-economic problems that socialism yearns to resolve but they have brought to their solution a new insight, an inspired method, an organic relatedness between the means and end. To philosophic anarchy that is the ultimate objective of *all* socialists, utopian as well as scientific, Gandhi and Vinoba offer a constantly foliating approach.

Asia big with a Dream

Asia's large population, limited resources and retarded development make utopianism not a mere adventure in faith

18. Jacques Maritain: *The Rights of Man*. p. 23.

but the only hopeful avenue of progress. Loving care of ravished land, devoted dovetailing of men's labour alone can compensate for the gaping scarcity of capital. The whole approach has to be *intensive*, small in area but deep in effort, not extensive as in new and virgin worlds. Where not the might of a giant but the finish of a jeweller is needed, work has to be a species of the genus of love.

The social fabric of Asia survives at many places. Administration and jurisprudential system in parts of Asia are not yet imposed from above but are woven in the social substance of the people; witness *dharmathat* in Burma and *adat* in Indonesia. Through their resuscitation justice can get decentralised.

The economic imperatives and the social heritage are buttressed by the traditional ideology: "Generally speaking, civilisations in South-East Asia have been founded on a profound appreciation of Nature and a consequent harmonious relationship between man and Nature. Accordingly, their attendent cultures are not restricted solely to the field of art but also concern the growth of man in his intrinsic relation to Nature. The South-East Asian art of living is man's realisation of his interdependence with Nature, so that he may live in peace with his fellowmen and with himself. In South-East Asia, the close affinity of the human order with the natural order is characteristically expressed in folklore, literature, architecture, political and everyday life. For example, the topographical position, physical lay-out, and sculptural decoration of the Khmer capital of Angkor Thom, completed by the Buddhist king Jayavarman VII in the late twelfth century A.D., was a microcosmic replica of an idealised macrocosmic edifice..... A large scale, planned exploitation of natural resources seems to be primarily a Western practice, based upon a masterful attitude towards

Nature and a consequent separation of man from Nature — in philosophical and religious contradiction to the South-East Asian traditional attitude and custom. Once the human order is divorced from the natural order, politics loses its religious expression and religion loses its political efficacy, living standards are evaluated primarily in economic terms, and the cultural arts face the choice of either enhancing or criticising social ideals. Communism, if established, would climax this Westernised bifurcation of man and his natural environment and would thus repudiate the South-East Asian correlation of the physical and human orders as an integrated way of life. In this part of the world, Nature has been exceptionally kind and beneficent to man; he should not therefore forsake her, and in consequence forsake his own heritage, by exploiting Nature."[19]

The covenant between Nature and Man is the core of Asian culture. All development must base itself on this asset. If there is neglect, the desideratum is the will, the informed consciousness, the enlivening of the tradition with a comprehensive and purposeful awareness. Contemporary Western ideas, the dazzle of their achievement, divorced from the brooding void and want they produce, prove a lag, a serious handicap, in effective understanding and amelioration of Asia. It becomes necessary to grow, as it were, *in the reverse*. The present writer in his very first publication, in 1934, went wrong by confusing the conservative classicism of Gandhi's thought with reactionary romanticism. It has taken him twenty years to unlearn.

The greatest voyage of readjustment, however, has been made by the doyen of Indian socialists, Jayaprakash Nara-

19. P. W. Thayer (ed): *South-East Asia in the Coming World*, pp. 150-52.

yan (b. 1902). In 1935 he wrote *"Why Socialism"* which was an annihiliating *expose* and *critique* of Gandhi's organic ideas. In the next fifteen years "J.P." has been re-discovering and adjusting himself to the realities. It is interesting to find that his last knot with Marxism to snap was Dialectical Materialism, the most subtle and remote from reality. Slowly he has been converted to constructive work, to non-violence, to the primacy of agriculture, to aversion of accumulation and control not only under capitalism but in all social life, because an ineluctable, inalienable evil is inherent in centralisation *per se*. He hungers for roots, for a definite *locale* and limits for his work, for intensive endeavour. The seed of understanding seems to sprout more in silence and work than in words and controversy. All organisations, excepting associations creatively entered into, appear burdensome. For him, abiding and real progress is in terms of *growth*, on land, from land, around land. A determined foe of all injustice and social evils, he still strives, now almost by the twist of his nature, to understand and harmonise. The political party that he leads with obvious distinction appears to him "a conscious partiality," something to be overcome, not apotheosised. Sweeping changes for altering the social macrocosm appear to him to be unreal without the most devoted attention to the rehabilitation and growth of the ultimate microcosm, man, and his indescribable intimacy with the soil.

This return of the rebel, after a prolonged detour of Communism, Marxism, Democratic Socialism, to the utopianism of Gandhi demonstratively symbolises the need for a transfigurating response from the intellectuals in Asia. That "J.P's" response is authentic is known from the visible harmony, the deeper integrity he has found, as also in the

simple, pellucid, unfeigned expression and texture of his thought today.

Elsewhere, too, the sprouts of such an understanding are to be seen. Ba Swe, the dean of Burmese socialists, describes his socialism as two-layered: the lower, material, being Marxian, the upper, spiritual, being Buddhist. All that the gallant leader needs to discover is that this sagacious division between a Marxian man who will inherit the earth and his believing double must lead to a split-life, to schizophrenia, for each obedience is alike ultimate and absolute; the two layers, linked together, conjure up utopian socialism. And then the waste-lands and the paddy-fields of his beloved Burma would uncover their own authentic accents of *bhoodan* and *Kibbutz*. Not Israel, not India, alone, but almost the whole of Asia is big with the dream of utopianism.

I have tried to free utopian socialism from the obloquy into which it is usually thrust. The favourable colours in which I have drawn its picture is somewhat to restore the balance. It does not however mean that with its acceptance Asia's quest for socialism comes to an end. In agrarian countries with pressure of population and paucity of capital, utopian socialism has much to teach, but its neglect of industrialisation makes it a partial solution. In later studies I have redistributed emphasis in a manner that, in my opinion, provides the ultimate balance.

PART III

Proletariat plus Philosophy

Among the many definitions of socialism given by Lenin, one was "proletariat *plus* philosophy." While ideas have inevitably differed on the content of "philosophy," in the ranks of the socialists there has been a general agreement on primacy of the proletariat. "The Proletariat is the rock," Lassalle had said, "on which the Church of the future will be built." Jean Jaures, after his wont, had formulated the proposition in challenging terms: "To the ever more pressing question, 'How shall Socialism be realised?', we must then give the preliminary answer, 'By the growth of the proletariat to which it is inseparably joined.' This is the first and the essential answer; and whoever does not accept it wholly and in its true sense necessarily places himself outside the Socialist life and thought." Marx gave the idea a majestic form: "Philosophy cannot realise itself without the abolition of the proletariat, the proletariat cannot abolish itself without realising philosophy."

That the proletariat was the sole carrier of socialism was accepted as axiomatic. The result was that where the proletariat was weak, a larger dose of philosophy was needed to counterbalance the weakness. In Britain and the United States, besides the Anglo-Saxon temperament and traditions, the strength of the proletariat made the need for philosophy negligible. In Germany, rapid strides in industrialisation and her outstanding leadership in the *second* industrial revolution that synchronised with the forging of the German Empire in 1870, partially reduced the role of philosophy.

In France, Italy and Russia, philosophy strove to make up the lack and the lag of the proletariat.

Class Struggles in France

In France, after 1850, industry picked up momentum: between 1850 and 1870, the number of steam engines increased by 400 per cent. France's defeat by Prussia (1870) gave her economic development a setback. The French economy remained balanced and less developed than the highly industrialised countries: by 1913, only 9 per cent of the occupied persons in England were engaged in agriculture, but in France the parallel figure was 43. Even the French "big business" was small in comparison to German giants: the twentytwo leading French enterprises had a capital of 585,000,000 francs, while just *two* German companies, Gelsenkirchen and Krupp, had the same capital.

Not only France's industrial development was on a modest scale, its direction too was somewhat different. According to an interesting study on types of industrialisation, the value of the output of the French textile industries during the period 1861-65 accounted for 31.8 per cent of the total industrial output of France; by 1896 it had fallen to 13.8 per cent. The garment industry, in contrast, accounted for 2.3 per cent of the total output in the earlier period, and 15 per cent in 1896.

The French proletariat was politically turbulent but not influential. Its revolutionary forays began from 1789, when Marat questioned: "What are you doing? Why are you going to seize the Bastille, whose walls never prisoned a working man?" The workers took a prominent part in the Revolution of 1830, risings occurred at many places in 1832, in Lyons in 1831 and again in 1834; a miners' strike at Saint-Etienne in 1844 assumed the proportion, in the words of

historian Levasseur, of "an insurrection." In 1848, the Paris workers threw up barricades and in four days' fighting with the army 16,000 workmen were killed. In March 1871, after France's defeat in the War, the workers of Paris declared a Commune. The Versailles government had to obtain the release of French soldiers taken by the Prussians at Sedan and Metz, in order to crush the Commune. In a week's bloody street fighting 20,000 Communards lost their lives. Class struggle was thus a live experience in France.

In spite of its militancy, the proletariat's influence on the French state was limited. The state was far more amenable to the pressure of the peasants and the *bourgeoisie:* Trade unions were not legalised till 1884. Free primary education was unknown till 1882. Factory legislation and social insurance made slow progress: the first Workmen's Compensation Act was passed in 1898; effective and comprehensive old age and sickness insurance law came only in 1928.

The structure of the French trade unions favoured militancy. In Great Britain, unions were organised craft-wise and they brought within their folds, till the famous upsurge of 1889, only the aristocrat of labour, the highly skilled workers. The mind and mood of the British trade unions is seen in the overwhelming *rejection* by the Trades Union Congress, in 1882 and 1883, of the proposals for universal manhood suffrage.

In France, the unions were organised industry-wise, their central organisation was the C.G.T. The local units were brought together in their respective localities in *bourses du travail,* which also functioned as some kind of employment exchanges. The trade unions not merely defended workers' interests but spearheaded anti-military and anti-

national propaganda and led strike waves. The trade unions faithfully reflected the restlessness of the workers, not conditioned and politicalised as in Britain and to a lesser degree in Germany.

Italy and Russia, with the inevitable national variations, reflected the French picture.

Colonialism on the March

Though colonialism had emerged in Europe in the eighteenth century, it was only in the last lap of the nineteenth century that it reached the stage of heady intoxication, i.e., imperialism: "Though, for convenience, the year 1870 has been taken as indicative of a beginning of a conscious policy of Imperialism," wrote the pioneer chronicler and critic of imperialism, "it will be evident that the movement did not attain its full impetus until 1884."[1]

Vast colonies, undoubtedly, had been conquered earlier, but there was yet no *mystique*, elemental *elan*, on the contrary a certain unselfconsciousness about them. In the familiar words of Seeley, "We (the British) seem, as it were, to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind." A host of writers simultaneously imparted consciousness to the phenomenon.

The sociologist Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838-1909) discovered a "social law": The "most natural tendency of states is incessant increase of power and territory." "So necessary and so strong is the tendency to foreign conquest that no state can escape it whatever be the feeling of the ruler at the time." Another sociologist, Franklin Giddings (1858-1931), put new ore into the vein: "The combination of small

1. J. A. Hobson: *Imperialism*, p. 19.

states into large political aggregates must continue until all the semi-civilised, barbarian and savage communities of the world are brought under the protection of the large civilised nations."

Sir John Seeley (1834-95) saw in the British imperialist mission "a manifest destiny." Another English historian, J. A. Cramb (1862-1913), pronounced the British to be a race "dowered with the genius for empire," and such a nation "is compelled to dare all, to suffer all, to sacrifice all for the fulfilment of the fate-appointed task."

English writers Seeley, Dilke, and Froude were inclined to say much about the Empire as a going concern and relatively little, compared with German and American historians, about the dynamics of imperialism.

Other nations were not slow in discovering an imperial genius in themselves: Heinrich Von Treitschke (1834-96) found that Providence had entrusted the Teuton nations with "the mission of conducting the political civilisation of the world." H. S. Chamberlain foresaw "Germany within two centuries" getting "to the point where it might govern the whole earth." In France, Maurice Barres (1862-1923) and Charles Maurras sang paens of an aggressive *"nationalism integrale."* In Italy, Gentile and Gabriele D'Annunzio (1864-1938) developed and rhapsodied over the cult of *"sacro egoismo."* Every West European nation was acquiver with a sense of its imperial destiny.

After 1870, a frenzied scramble for colonies began. The will was there, alert and sharp-pointed. The economic needs of industrialised nations — for markets, raw materials, investments — and the political advantages of a far-flung dominion — with its varied fruits of earth and fodder for

cannon—buttressed the expansionist urge. The following table sums up the position of colonial empires in 1914:

	Number of Colonies	Area (Thousands of sq. miles) Mother country	Colonies	Population (thousands) Mother country	Colonies
U. K.	55	121	12,044	46,053	391,583
France	29	207	4,110	39,602	62,350
Germany	10	209	1,231	64,962	13,075
Belgium	1	11	910	7,571	15,000
Portugal	8	35	804	5,960	9,680
Netherlands	8	13	763	6,102	37,410
Italy	4	111	591	35,239	1,396
U.S.A.	6	3,027	126	98,781	10,021

The impulse for expansion and sacred egoism did not seek outlets overseas alone; in Europe itself the *elite* spirit found expression in various *pan*-movements and in racial theories. A high priest of racial arrogance, Count de Gobineau (1816-82), wrote: "Gradually I have become convinced that race overshadows all other problems in history, that it holds the key to them all..... everything great, noble, fruitful in the works of man on this earth, in science, art and civilisation belongs to *one* family alone." The Teuton, the Slav, the Celt, the Latin — each dreamed to be *the* "one family." "It was 'natural,' and to some it was essential to human progress, for strong nations to struggle for aggrandisement, and for the superior 'races' to prevail. Given this biologic urge on the part of healthy races, and the presence of accessible 'backward races' the logic of imperialism is inescapable."[2]

Cramb had enunciated a new law of motion: "The empire which has ceased to advance has begun to recede."

2. F. M. Russell: *Theories of International Relations*, p. 264.

Like *Alice's* Red Queen, it must run faster and faster to keep at the same spot! A movement of ever-growing frenzy must some day endanger, "conquer" its own base, "colonise" its own homeland.

SYNDICALISM

Workers experienced similar verve and *elan.* Their movement got informed with the prevailing intellectual climate of separating fact and standard, will and norm.

"The object of socialism," Saint-Simon had said, "is to set up a new system of society based upon the workshop as a model. The rights of the society will be the customary rights of the factory." With the progress of industry, society, in fact, became, in Sorel's words, "a workshop created by capitalism." Not only had the society become a workshop but "all classes of society," as W. S. Jevon (1835-82) had pointed out, had become "trade unionists at heart, differing chiefly in boldness, ability and secrecy with which they pushed their respective interests."

Syndicalism was the version of socialism in a society turned workshop.

The syndicalists believe that all human groupings the *syndicat,* i.e., trade union, is the most fundamental and permanent because men in society are interested above everything else in the satisfaction of their economic needs. A worker enrolling in a *syndicat* is not entering a party, not subscribing to a platform, not accepting a creed. He is simply entering into a relation which is forced upon him by his very position in society. The worker, as a denizen of the workshop, knows no "ties of tradition,"; "a common intellectual and moral heritage does not exist for him." For him what exists is the class *nexus,* the solidarity of the *syndicat.*

The class solidarity is to develop class struggle: it assumes central, exclusive importance. The class struggle is to be ceaseless and relentless, though it might assume different forms: strike, sabotage, *Ca canny*, boycott, are among the various forms and gradations of the struggle. Simmering struggle needs constantly to erupt into open conflict. Direct action becomes the chosen expression of syndicalism.

"A strike clears up, as if by a flash of lightning, the deep antagonism which exists between those who employ and those who work." After quoting these words, Harry Laidler adds: "Strikers should endeavour to win their battles through *Sturm and Drang*." Syndicalism was therefore socialism of "blood and iron."

The strike wave should lead to, at least should be aimed at, the general strike. Thus strikes toughen workmen, discover the inflexible *elite* leadership, create a climate of crisis where even the apathetic get activised. The worker is sucked into the vortex, and all his ties and traditions are "ruptured." "Rupture" is a favourite expression of Sorel, for only the deracinated develop a fixation for conflict.

Syndicalism, as developed by working men from their own experience, had these features. It was the worker, Fernand Pelloutier (1867-1901), who had coined the supreme weapon of the general strike.

Philosophical elaboration was provided by Georges Sorel (1847-1922) a brilliant intellectual who saw the workers imperilled by a creeping "dictatorship of intellectuals." He wanted the proletariat to live in violence, to steel themselves, to stamp out all inclinations for compromise. Violence as "the clear and brutal expression of class war" was a necessary discipline of syndicalist socialism. Nay more:

"Proletarian violence not only makes the future revolution certain but it seems also to be the only means. The European nations — at present stupefied by humanitarianism — can recover their former energy."[3]

Strikes and violence slice away and annihilate the inequitous society and toughen the moral fibre of the proletariat. In the crackling furnace of strikes and skirmishes a new concept of "honour" replaces the enervating concept of "justice." For Sorel a revolutionary stance on the part of the proletariat was a moral end in itself, apart from any immediate practical results. He foresaw, and feared above all, politics of compromise, which he felt led to moral flabbiness: "Only reforms gained and upheld through violence are real."

Sorel wanted violence to be carried on without hatred or revenge, it should have about it the dimension of heroism, of a fate-appointed task. Sorelian violence, in its sublimity and purity, has the chaste simplicity of Lokamanya Tilak's (1856-1920) interpretation of violence. Such undefiled violence is assumed to be morally cleansing, fortifying, uplifting.

Sorel's socialism was outspokenly anti-democratic: he had no opinion and little use for the ordinary people; "majority," the mass, was merely a halter round the neck: "The effect of political majorities, when they do make themselves felt, is to hinder advance and suppress the progressive, active, and more developed minorities." The *elite* principle was at work in the working class too. The mass of working men "benefiting by the struggles of the minority cannot but submit to its initiative and leadership."

3. Georges Sorel: *Reflections on Violence*, p. 90.

The general strike has a teleological significance, it makes all the preceding efforts at various forms of direct action meaningful. The general strike may come about or not, its chief value is *evocative,* or as Sorel put it, the general strike is a "myth." *Myth* he defined as "a body of images capable of evoking sentiment *instinctively.*" Myths "are not descriptions of things, but expressions of a determination to act," and therefore beyond reason and refutation.

Sorel subtly distinguishes *myths* from *utopias:* the former are unanalysable since they are identical with the convictions of a group, the latter not only can be discussed, compared, but need the establishment of models to which existing societies can be contrasted.

Syndicalism is a commitment to strike, to action, a flight from reason and restraint into the embrace of an insurgent life. It is plunging into the *'magnum mare"* of which Burckhardt wrote with forebodings. Class struggle, instead of being a means to a social end, becomes the cherished objective. Syndicalism, at least as elaborated by Sorel, empties socialism of all content, it survives as a sheath for violence, for the irrepressible *elan* of an *elite* of class-conscious workers.

"Under the species of syndicalism..... there appears for the first time in Europe a type of man who does not want to give reasons or be right but simply shows himself resolved to impose his opinions. This is the new thing: the right not to be reasonable, the 'reason of unreason.' "[4]

The syndicalist effort at making the trade union a qualitatively different grouping has no basis in fact. Like all other social organisations, it is subject to surges of enthu-

4. Jose Ortegay Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses,* p. 80.

siasm and *ennui*. Its capacity to evoke active allegiance is no greater than that of other groupings. The studies of Mirra Komarovsky have shown that only about *two* per cent of unionised workers voluntarily take part in routine union affairs and a slightly larger per cent in community affairs of some sort.

The accent on violence and unreason is not native to the worker. That is something superimposed by the intellectuals — a proffered protection against their insidious, encroaching "dictatorship." The industrial worker, with all his alienation from community and soil, has still some ties and traditions, and nostalgic memories of more; only the intellectuals are wholly emancipated, stripped of all social roots and responsibilities, free to devote themselves to refinements of philosophy.

Dissolution—The Causeway to Socialism

Marx's penetrating analysis of capitalism showed it relentlessly disrupting all self-sufficient societies. Natural economy and simple commodity economy had to be seized and shattered. In detail, capital in its struggle against natural economy, first at home and then in colonies, pursues the following ends: (1) to gain possession of important sources of productive forces, such as land, game in primeval forests, minerals, product of exotic flora, such as rubber, *etc;* (2) to liberate labour power and coerce it into service; (3) to introduce a commodity economy; and, (4) to separate trade and agriculture.

Capitalist development demands the tearing up, thread by thread pulling apart, of the traditional social fabric. Social structures have to be smashed, man is to be "liberated," separated, individualised, and the productive forces gathered up in the coils of capital. The basic and the universal of

productive forces is *land,* its hidden mineral treasure, its meadows, woods and water, flocks and herds of various animals. To appropriate these sources of wealth, to isolate them from the men who own and work them, the enmeshing social organisation has to be destroyed.

Capital, in its quest for accumulation, cannot be content with *natural,* internal disintegration of non-capitalist socio-economic formations. It must hasten the break-up. Covert or overt violence becomes a necessary means to capital: accumulation of capital, seen as a historical process, employs force not only at its *genesis* but as an integral part of its *growth.*

Every heap causes a hollow somewhere. Accumulation of capital creates a social hollow. The enclosure movement consolidated lands and rendered farmers landless, homeless, workless, that is rootless. Capitalist production, with its technological innovations, undercuts and undermines the producer integrated through his handicrafts with his *milieu:* a British handloom weaver in 1797-1804 earned 26s. 8d. a week; during 1825-32, his earnings fell to 6s. 4d.

To pull away, tear away, man's social coverings is the essence of capital accumulation. *Disrobing of Draupadi* becomes the arch symbol of our age!

Not the social sheath alone but all meaning and magic is robbed of man's life: "The *bourgeoisie* has robbed of their halos various occupations hitherto regarded with awe and veneration. Doctor, lawyer, priest, poet and scientist have become its wage labourers." (Marx-Engels: *Manifesto*). Everything is profaned, vulgarised, disrupted, hollowed out and "de-haloed." The searching fingers of capital strip man of his social coverings and connections, reduce him to a state of social and spiritual nakedness and isolation.

Reformation, the first assertion of modernism whose outgrowth was capitalism, had rejected the whole secure "shell," which Catholicism gave to the faithful, with its varied sacramental, intellectual, and psychological supports and consolations. The Lutheran and the Calvinist prefer to face God alone: *Soli Deo Gloria!* They had nothing but scorn for the intensive, all-permeating, pantheistic cultural *milieu* of the medieval Catholics, they firmly believed in man facing the *mysterious tremendum* as a naked soul. The unsheathing initiated by Protestantism was carried forward with grim devotion by capitalism, as Marx has described in his unforgettable pages. *Now Marx wants the proletariat to continue the process, strip off all ties and foster dissolution, as the sole causeway to socialism.*

Out of its great suffering, the proletariat mines the rare ore of new life. Its total disinheritance becomes dialectically the source and sanction of its ultimate triumph. The dizzy dialectic was the *prolegomenon* of Marx's thought. As early as 1844, he had written: "What, then, are the practical possibilities of German emancipation? Here is the answer. They are to be found in the formation of a class with radical chains, a class of civil society which is the dissolution of all estates; of a sphere which is endowed with universal character by the universality of its sufferings; one which does not lay claim to any particular rights, the reason being that it does not suffer any one specific injustice, but suffers injustice unqualified; one which can no longer put forward a historically grounded title, but only a general human title; one which is not in any sort of one-sided opposition, but only in a general opposition to the pre-supposition of the German political system; and, finally, a sphere which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other spheres of society — one which, in a

word, has been completely deprived of its human privileges. This dissolution of society as a particular state — is the proletariat."

The proletariat which "represents the dissolution of all classes and nationalities in contemporary society" wherein "the human being has lost himself," "cannot emancipate itself without first emancipating itself from all the other spheres of society." *That is the quintessence of Marxism,* the great lightning flash that traverses all works of Marx.

"It is as a Hegelian transformation of Christianity," commented Jean Jaures, "that Marx pictures the modern movement of emancipation. Just as the Christian God humbled himself to the lowest depth of suffering humanity in order to redeem humanity as a whole; just as this infinite abasement of God was the condition of the infinite elevation of man, so in the dialectic of Marx, the proletariat, the modern Saviour, had to be stripped of all guarantees, deprived of every right, degraded to the depth of social and historic annihilitation, in order that by raising itself it might raise all humanity. And just as the Man-God, to continue his mission, had to remain poor, suffering and humiliated until the triumphal day of resurrection, that single victory over death which has freed all humanity from death, so the proletariat is only able to continue its mission in this logical scheme by hearing, until the final day of revolt, the revolutionary ressurection of humanity, a cross whose weight is ever increasing, the essential capitalist law of oppression and depression..... Hence a sort of joy Marx feels mixed with an element of dialectic mysticism, in summing up the crushing forces that weigh down the proletariat."[5]

5. *Studies in Socialism,* p. 71.

The proletariat to emancipate itself, and thereby the entire humanity, must first be stripped, ruptured from all relations, not for a brief period, but till the revolutionary triumph of the proletariat.

To qualify the proletariat for its historic mission, Marx helped the workers to rid themselves of protecting illusions, interests, associations. Religion, noted by Marx as "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feelings of a heartless world, the spirit of unspirited conditions," was dismissed as "the opium of the people." Capitalism was dissolving the sustaining ties of family, such as affection and fidelity; property was the sole social ganglion: "All family ties among the proletarians are already torn asunder." All other social institutions are similarly corroded by capitalism.

"The spirit of law," said Marx derisively revising Montesquieu, "is *property*." Every social idea, organisation, is relative, with a mark of doom on it. Capitalism was a dissolving acid, and Marxism a debunking creed — between the two everything becomes a flux. Where property conditions everything, no norms, standards, universal values can exist. The fathers of scientific socialism were clear about the euthanasia of the Absolute: "We reject every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatsoever as any eternal, ultimate and for ever immutable moral law on the pretext that the moral world too has its permanent principles which transcend history and differences between nations..... Morality was always a class morality..... A really human morality which transcends class antagonisms and their legacies in thought becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class contradictions but has also forgotten them in practical life." (Engels). It was this teaching that led the French socialist leader, Jules Guesde, to declare "Law and honour are mere words."

There was the same relentlessness towards feelings of humility, inadequacy, acquiescence, that complexity and mystery of life evoke in men. The tragic tensions were dismissed as "the attributes of the *canaille*." The proletarian has to be a heroic man, *sans* pity and without weakness, wielding the hammer of destiny. Marxian attack on utopianism is not only on grounds of science, but on that of "toughness" too. "Science" might give the *laws* of Marxism, its *lees* is *"toughness."* The fear of softness, of being *"petit-bourgeois,"* has made many to fall for this kind of ruthlessness towards the contradictions and complexities of personal and social life. Hate replaces charity.

The profound humanism of Marx, his deep mysticism, his excruciating allegiance to the oppressed, his supreme erudition, his soaring vistas, were set in a framework of relativism, antipathy and a kind of ethnocentrism. Therein, even he became a child of his times.

MARXISM

In his posthumous work, *Ceasarism and Christianity*, Proudhon had said: "All principles are contemporaneous in history as they are in reason." Their varying strength, we would like to add, depends upon the different sets of eliciting factors in the environment.

In Marx's time, of capitalist enterprise and industrial progress, the preponderant ideas were about alienation, egocentrism, conflict, dissolution, set in a frame of robust optimism. Everyone seemed to share the belief in man's simian origin and his angelic future. Belief in social *telesis* being superior to natural genesis was widespread.

The Positivist separation between fact and standard, will and norm, with emphasis on and approval of fact and will,

was characteristic of the period. Ethics disappeared, or as with Comte (1798-1857) became manipulative. This attitude led to the Pragmatist assertion, "*the true* is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as *the right* is only the expedient in the way of our behaving. (William James, 1842-1910). The scientific outlook made validity of an idea "the process of its validation." Success sanctified!

The new sociology was grounded in conflict. Franz Oppenheimer's analysis of the state assigned sovereign role to force and aggression. Gumplowicz endowed every group with aggressive designs and exclusive pretensions: "The struggle between social groups, the components of the state, is as inexorable as that between hordes or states. The only motive is self-interest." On this concept of group *hedonism* was raised a new code of ethics, from which considerations of individual responsibility and universal validity were removed, and it was *a priori* assumed that group cupidity inhered good of the community. Nay, more. Each group considers itself not merely as a means to a common end but an end in itself. The hierarchy between groups is measured by their weight in potential or actual conflict. From it arose a new phenomenon — that of ethnocentrism. *Ethnocentrism* is based on a pervasive and rigid ingroup-outgroup distinction; it involves stereotyped negative imagery and hostile attitudes regarding outgroups, stereotyped positive imagery and submissive attitudes regarding ingroups, and a hierarchical, authoritarian view of group interaction in which ingroups are rightly dominant, outgroups subordinate. The alienated man resorted to the mechanism of *projection* by which much of what cannot be accepted as a part of one's ego is *externalised:* one's own weakness leads to an exaggerated condemnation of all that is weak; one's own weakness is thus fought outside instead of inside.

Individual conflict, group collision, class struggle, national wars — man was seared and scourged by conflicts.

Social regeneration was sought in upsurge of violence. Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) wrote: "The use of force is indispensable to society; and when the higher classes are averse to force, because of their skill at chicanery or through stupidity and cowardice, it becomes necessary, if society is to subsist and prosper, that the governing class be replaced by another which is willing and able to use force." "Lions" must oust "foxes" to replenish the fire in the furnace of violence.

Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844-1900) paranoic outbursts merely exaggerate, unconsciously caricature, the general uncoiling of the *Kundalini*, "the will to power."

The design of the development becomes clearer if attention is focussed on a single segment of thought. The unfolding of the *zeitgeist* may be traced in the development of law: Rudolf von Ihering contended that back of legal rights were interests which it was the purpose of law to protect. Rights were neither above nor anterior to the state. Georg Jellinek lowered all barriers of right and wrong, justice and injustice. For him "the potential power of the community is greater than its actual power. Through auto-limitation it achieves the character of legal power." Hans Kelsen discounted the discipline of 'auto-limitation' and stated: "Any content whatsoever can be legal; there is no human behaviour which could not function as the content of a legal norm.... Every act of State, is a legal act." Josef Kohler took the next step and declared: "Human rights are not advantageous to every development.... The sacrifice to culture is the highest sacrifice that the individual can make; but it is also one that he should make." Erich Kaufman

substituted *power* for culture and defined "the essence of the State" as the "development of power." Carl Schmidt introduced "the specifically political distinction .... between *friend* and *enemy* .... Just as the contrast between good and evil (in ethics) is not identical with, nor reducible to, that of beautiful and ugly (in aesthetics), or useful and harmful (in economics), it must not be confused with any of these contrasts." The development of law thus led to irresponsibility on the part of the state and the individual. Law survives as an empty form; the sole enlivening reality is *power*.

The intellectual climate was of debunk, disintegration, dissolution. Ibsen and Strindberg debunked morality, Proust and Gide wrote of decomposed man, of his fragments and functions. From art and literature the magic of transfiguration was banished; in a welter of fragments no *gestalt* survived.

No man of his century was more conscious of these facts and tendencies and felt them more profoundly than Marx. His epic resentment against the social ills and its source "the capital" sprangs from his realisation that capitalism was making the worker "an appendage of the machine." His indignation was at man's oppression by the things born of his work and *himself reduced to a thing*. It was against the forces of dissociation, disintegration of man, that Marx developed his Communism.

The origin of Marx's communism was not economic, as it was in the case of Engels, but philosophical. Man's alienation from himself and his work was the result of capitalism and of religion — both determined by property relations. Marx offered in communism a *total* emancipation. The full vista was unveiled in the following majestic words: "Communism .... being an achieved naturalism .... is the real

end of the quarrel between man and nature, and between man and man, the true end of the quarrel between existence and essence, between objective and subjective, between liberty and necessity, between the individual and the species. It solves the riddle of history and it knows that it solves it."

Such an all-comprehending vista, a superhuman self-awareness, developing in the midst of a dissolving desiccating society, became the majestic mansion of Marx's thought.

Marx envisaged the great movement of emancipation as unfolding from the interaction of the individual and society.

Marx recognised the prevailing hedonistic, Hobbesian concept of man where no *nexus* other than that of self-interest prevails between man and man. Marx also recognised the natural man of Rousseau, lusty in his simplicity, natural in his goodness. It was the task of the proletarian movement to transcend the one-sidedness of the two "men" and evoke the free, mature man.

The movement of history, the unfolding of the social process, needs to be intelligently grasped and progressive impulses fostered to achieve the emancipation. In comprehending the movement and furthering the process, Marx was guided by the dialectic of Hegel (1770-1831). The dialectic conceives reality and thought as dynamic, every stage evolving through a clash with its opposite to a synthesis, which in its turn moves onwards. Spiral progression through struggling polarities is the inalienable, irreducible quintessense of truth. In all realms — nature, life and thought — development is through a labyrinth of disintegrating triads.

Marx *grasped* the dialectic, but grounded it in matter: reality belongs to *thing*, not to *thought* which is merely its

reflection. Marx-Engels prided on their being "probably the first to impart the well-known dialectic of German Idealist philosophy into materialist view of nature and history." Once the fundamental transposition was made, a new relationship, a new field of understanding, emerged: "In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production, their manner of gaining a living, they change all their social relations." Expanding productive forces alter the mode of production and create conditions for a liberal social order.

The process of liberation works out through a conflict between those who benefit from the prevailing mode of production and those who are its victims. The expanding force of production gives the victims an assurance of success. Thus emerges class struggle as the force that would end the attritioning polarities and ensure the final emancipation.

Capitalism converts human labour into a commodity. Human relations in the foundational processes of production get masked: the relations between men appear as relations between things — a phenomenon that Marx called *Verdinglichung*, or reification.

The *reification* of human labour, its commodity status, creates two levels of exchange, of equity: worker's wage equals his *labour*, the employer's gain equals the *labour power*. The dissociation of the labour power from labour yields *surplus labour* and generates exploitation and misery as well as accumulation of capital, development of economy and its ultimate constriction.

The augmenting surplus value results in simultaneously expanding the economy, narrowing the group of successful *entrepreneurs*, and in growth of workers' misery and their enforced socialisation: "Centralisation supplements the work

of accumulation, by enabling .... the comprehensive organisation of the co-operative labour of the many .... into socially combined processes of production."

The strength to overthrow the capitalists comes to the worker by his becoming a *"collective labourer"*; only in a "squadron" he develops the "offensive power." Marx makes *factory* at once the moulder and model of the "collective labourer": a hierarchy of functions, organised together interdependently.

The inner contradictions between the force of production and mode of production, between the mode of production and system of distribution, between economic expansion and increasing misery, between capitalist concentration and collectivisation of labour, reach "such a degree that a revolution .... must take place .... or the whole society will fall."

Revolution puts the relations of production and distribution in harmony and removes the hiatus with the forces of production.

The overthrow of the bourgeoisie is followed by a transitional period of dictatorship of the proletariat. As the proletariat was the *base* of all exploitation, its victory and dictatorship render the state, ever an instrument of coercion of the ruling class, "the real representative of the *society*," and consequently "renders *itself* unnecessary." "State interference in social relations become, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself."

From the vast travail of history emerges, at last, the classless society — man's first *human* estate: "The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man and which hitherto ruled man, now comes under the domination and control of man." The liberation from the enslavement of man

and nature is not the outcome of some *deux ex machina* but the full unfolding, the negation of all negations, of elements already embedded in society, actualisation of the implicit through gigantic social gyrations, through the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat enlightened by philosophy.

The truth of an idea, validity of an action, is to be ascertained in life through practical work. Critical analysis and functional synthesis *conjointly* move forward: "By acting on the external world and changing it, man at the same time changes his own nature."

Marx's majestic thought thus reduces everything to a flux. The dialectic postulates realisation of reason through social and political institutions. The harmonised world of fixed objects posited by common sense gets dissolved and reason itself joins the general flux. Everything becomes a sheer movement, an eternal becoming. Thorough-going relativity of knowledge and revolutionary evolution interpenetrate.

The pervasive contradictions added to the general climate of dissolution. Life and thought became a quivering tension between acquiescence and activity, where ever-shifting emphasis alone saves from the fatal embrace of either extreme.

This philosophy undoubtedly sharpened the disruptive movement. It frustrated stabilisation and tended to overlook achievement and consolidation. Its great flexibility is gained by draining reality of resilience. A classic instance is provided by Engels' book: *The Condition of Working Class in England in 1844*. He describes the grim, excruciating misery of the workers and points to revolution as the sole avenue of escape. Reform, howsoever small, was deemed to be impossible because either the system could not afford it or its acceptance would set up a whole chain of disturbing

forces. Witness the comment on the Ten-Hour Bill: "The political economy arguments of the manufacturers that the ten hours Bill will raise the cost of production, that English industry will not be able to struggle against foreign competition, and that wages will necessarily fall are half true.... Naturally, if the ten hour Bill becomes the law, England would be immediately ruined, but because this law would necessarily lead to other measures that would force her into a course of action diametrically opposed to that which she has pursued hitherto the law would be a step in advance."

Society was credited with small elasticity, men with no urge to settle and stabilise. When after fifty years, in 1892, Engels republished the book he never asked as to why events had falsified his prognosis, proved his revolutionary hopes as dupes, and his doubts of reforms as phantoms of disbelief.

Another illustration is provided by Engels' treatise on housing, published in 1872 and again in 1887. He announced as impractical all plans and reforms for enabling workers to own their homesteads, to build municipal houses, or encourage co-operative housing colonies. Any such reform will end up with deflating the workers' standard: "The savings of the worker invested in his little house come to be a kind of capital, *not capital for him but capital for capitalists who employ him.*" Under capitalism the only reform possible is to shift the slums, the slums cannot disappear. Capitalist society intensifies the antagonism between the city and the country and thus makes the solution of housing problem impossible.

Engels was likewise convinced about the social meaninglessness of the co-operatives. Within the framework of capitalism there was no scope for change and improvement.

Only the overthrow of capitalist society could free the worker from the rack.

Social legislation, in his opinion, tended to divide the working class into a favoured section — which would have an interest in the existing regime — and a neglected class, and estranged the better-off section of the working class from a revolutionary policy.

Lack of faith in social elasticity pushes understanding to an extreme of *intransigence* which provokes and consolidates counter-*intransigence:* polarisation is sharpened: prospect of success is improved by enhancing the danger of defeat.

Class became the key actor. Class involves no organic relationship between individuals but is the name for certain similar ways in which men act. If men can be gathered up in "class" and get a new dimension, they can likewise be gathered up into a nation, a party, a race. Group mysticism reaches a new height.

The harbinger of emancipation was the *"collective* labourer" — a man's absorption in the mass. Marx's deep sensitiveness to the loss of freedom produced by wage slavery and the resulting de-humanisation leads him to social revolution; in collective life and collective work alone man overcomes his alienation. Marx, thereby, joined the great "rush" of his time: of unlocking the dynamism of social collectivity. When the individuality, unity, of man was under siege, emphasis needed to be put on his wholeness, openness, communion — orientation. Marx threw his mighty, messianic, weight in the scales of the collective. In the face of the asserting tendencies of dissolution and collectivism an adequate social philosophy needs an ethic of imperatives, a discipline that would strengthen man's power.

as it were, to dilate man to the world, to concentrate the world in man. With it as the *desideratum,* the individual gets dissolved in society, is gathered up in a nation, class, or party, and society gets devoured by the state. In the place of the yearned-for liberal life emerges a servile state.

Socialism of Blood and Iron

When Bismarck came to power in 1862 he pronounced the *credo* of the age: "The great questions of the day will not be decided by speeches and parliamentary majorities, but by *blood and iron.*" After 1870 that boot tread was heard in every walk of life.

Marx had found that accumulation, expanding and accelerating, became the end and objective of capitalism. The fever of accumulation, in fact, affected all life; a never-ending process of accumulation set in, not in riches alone but in strength and power, the real goal behind the pursuit of riches, as Luther had attested and Marx had concurred. Affected by the spirit, men began dreaming in terms of continents and feeling in terms of centuries.

Under the contagion of imperialism, not only surplus goods and capital but surplus energy and men found "markets" in the colonies. Restless, aggressive men found scope for their erupting, undisciplined energy in the colonies. There, in a surfeit and superfluity of men, the *regime* of "blood and iron" developed without any restraint. Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), King Leopold II (1835-1909), E. B. Cromer (1841-1917) found in backward countries conditions eminently suited for their enterprise on grand scale. Colonial people became the superabundant resource available for lavish use to produce scarce goods like minerals and commercial flora.

A feeling of national superiority and racial arrogance protected the *compradores* and pro-consuls from sentiments of guilt or sympathy. In colonies, patterns of behaviour, unthinkable at home, became normal. The colonials were, after all, "lesser breed beneath the law." Not science alone but the vast superfluity of men — a Pharaohan indifference to human beings — made any scale of effort possible.

For Britain colonies kept growing, absorbing all outflow; at no time did "the breakers of law" in the colonies return to become, as Burke (1729-97) had feared and fought against, "the makers of law" at home. Other countries were not so favourably situated; some of them even despised overseas, hence tenuous, expansion. Germans of Prussia, as of Austria, and the Russians dreamt and worked for landlocked empires. They thought themselves as "continental people" and aspired to achieve "continental states." The *pan*-German and the *pan*-Slav movements developed a new power-complex wherein were coalesced the sentiments of nationalism, imperialism, racialism — and every sentiment was soaked in "blood and iron." No wonder that astute conservatives saw in pan-Slavism a revolutionary movement in disguise.

As "continental people," the pan-Germans and the pan-Slavs had to look for colonies *on the continent,* to expand in geographic continuity from a centre of power. Against "the idea of England expressed by the words, 'I want to rule the sea' (stands) the idea of Russia, 'I want to rule the land'; (eventually) the tremendous superiority of the land to the sea, the superior significance of land power to sea power" would become obvious.

Russia's favourable position enabled her to expand across vast borderlands beyond her central, populous, indus-

trial regions. As Lenin put it, "In Russia the most modern capitalism-imperialism is interwoven, so to speak, with a thick web of pre-capitalist relations." Germany's central European position and the fact that the Germans formed *enclaves* in neighbouring states resulted in pan-Germanism rocking the whole continent.

There were, however, certain marked differences between land-locked and oceanic empires: the concept of cohesive expansion, integral to continental empires, does not allow for geographic distance between the methods and institutions of colony and of the nations. The differentiation between the *elite* and the mass, conveniently *externalised* in oceanic empires, had to be worked out in the nation or its neighbours. Continental imperialism transplants colonialism at home: its dividing line between the imperial and the colonial being intra-continental and sometimes even intra-national became subtle. Behind national consciousness, a stronger tribal solidarity emerges. As Austrian socialist, Karl Renner, later pointed out, a new phenomenon, *Volksimperialismus,* developed.

A healthy political society is built round co-operative efforts of the people: the communion has both a *locus* and a *focus,* object for a task to be done. Only then is man surrounded and upholstered by meaningful relationships.

The new social solidarity lacks two balancing features: it absorbs the individual in the tribal folds as an escape from human loneliness, an abandonment of man's estate as a *self-conscious,* aspiring being. The community slowly degenerates into *zusammen marschieren,* or "marching together." The boot tread ends as hoof beats! Lacking an inner object, it maintains its ranks by constant discovery of enemies. Carl Schmidt provided theoretical formulation

to the new tendencies, and explained that political unity implies triple essence: *State,* the *Movement* and the *People.* Society is pulverised and whirled into a "Movement"; the social triad that had man as the apex, state as the base, and society in between, is inverted: the apex of the whirling pyramid is the *Fuhrer,* leader of the State as also the sole focus of the "Movement." Schmidt, in fact, equated *der Staat* with *und volktrangende Fuhrungskorper.* The Nazis thus completed the process of dissolution. The stubborn fact remains that the Nazis called themselves not merely a national and German but *socialist* and workers' party. An affinity, fundamental to be covered up, exists between blood and iron nationalism and blood and iron socialism.

Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) was not only schooled in the socialist movement but was a leader of the Party before he forked off to Fascism. In his youth, he wrote a study of John Huss of the Taborite movement, in whom significantly both Masaryk and Hitler found inspiration! Mussolini studied under Pareto at Lausanne and found his theory of morally relative power politics by *elite* as "probably the most extraordinary conception of modern times." In *Preludia al Principe,* he underscored the fact that to "Machiavelli's mind any antithesis between the prince and the people, the State and the Individual, is fatal." It led him to formulate his *credo:* "All in the State, nothing against the State, nothing outside the State." The impact of Gentile's philosophy of "actualism," of "Pure Act," ruptured the umbilical cord between thought and action; Mussolini's relativism and cynicism made him dissolve the landmarks of words and their meaning, thereby disintegrating thought itself. He proudly announced himself to be simultaneously "an aristocrat and democrat, revolutionary and reactionary, proletarian and anti-proletarian, pacifist and anti-pacifist."

Fascism was "no ordered expression of doctrine, but a series of aphorisms, anticipations, aspirations." Fascism having pulverised life and thought became an unbridled *volontarismo*.

It is obvious that Marx has no responsibility for these excesses and *extravaganza* of the *anti*-Marxists. The fact remains, however, that the basic tendency of his time, the driving impulse of capitalism, was dissolution. Nazism and Fascism were the culmination of the tendency, the final "revolution of nihilism." Marx failed to provide countervailing forces in his philosophy, nay more, his relativism and messianism furthered the tendency of the time. War and economic depression that became the cradle of Fascism, were to Marx the chrysalis of socialism. That war and depression and their disrupting aftermath destroy social relations and damage the human potential was not acknowledged. The plea that vital, vibrant social relationships demand constant social *regeneration* through community building and an ethic of individual evolution was dismissed as utopian in the name of science.

Marx's teachings somewhat mellowed in the evening of his life. They, as also the Socialist Movement, were affected by the phase of consolidation that passed over Europe in 1880-1910. Of that adaptation we shall speak later. Marx's ideas, in their original *elan*, were carried out in Russia, where in 1895 conditions approximated to Germany of 1845. Lenin's Bolshevism was Marxism in its early effervescence. For both, the Paris Commune was the fount of light. But while Marx felt in it the needs and possibilities of decentralisation, saw the commune as a *social cell*, Lenin viewed it as a *political weapon*.

Russian Revolution

The Russian Revolution of 1917, as of 1905 before, was proletarian "not only in the sense that the proletariat formed the advance-guard of the Revolution, but also because that specifically proletarian weapon 'the *strike*' was the chief means used to stir up the masses and was the outstanding characteristic of the wave-like progression of the decisive events."

The Revolution was the aftermath of the breakdown of Czarism under the hammer-blows of the War. In the initial period of the "dual power," the Provisional Government represented the element of *continuity*, the Soviets of dissolution. Hence Lenin's demand, "All power to the Soviets!"

The *Soviet* was the specific form of the Russian Revolution. Lenin proclaimed the Soviets to be "a power *of the same type* as the Paris Commune" — a power whose source was "not a law previously discussed and passed by a parliament but a direct initiative of the masses from below and on the spot, a direct *"usurpation."* "All Russia," said Lenin in April 1917, "is already overspread by a network of local organs of self-administration." The revolution was viewed as progressing "in the form of local *communes*."

The revolution spread, erupted, from below: peasants seized estates, workers took over factories, armies melted away, and administration crumbled. Social and political power was atomised through a vital upsurge of the oppressed. The *local* Soviets took their power seriously, and, even after the Bolshevik seizure of power, Lenin had said: "From now on your Soviets are organs of state-power, fully authorised to make all decisions." As Trotsky (1877-1940) later pointed out, "The ideal of 'local Government' took on an extraordinarily diverse aspect in the early period." The

army, too, was sought to be localised. The ideal of the revolution, its *organising principle,* was *localism:* "a State without bureaucracy, without police, without a standing army."

For Lenin, localism was more a tactic than a principle, a dissolving rather than an organising impulse. He encouraged the Soviets to "take *the whole* of life into their own hands," and simultaneously admonished the Bolsheviks: "We have clung to the Soviets, we have not *grasped* them." When the "two tactics" were carried out, the Bolsheviks, inevitably, "grasped the whole of life" of the Russians.

It is interesting to sketch the pattern of the progressive "usurpation" of power.

The Constituent Assembly, organ of people's sovereignty, was unceremoniously dispersed. Cromwell had *himself* gone to the Parliament to dismiss it: in Russia the commander of the guards closed the Assembly "because the guard is tired"! "Not by speeches, but by blood and iron"—the refrain recurs: Bolshevism revelled in "blood and iron"; it anathematized *"legitimacy."*

The All Russian Congress of Soviets, the new sovereign organ, could not, because of its unwieldy membership of over a thousand, govern the country directly. Its powers were delegated to its Council, VTSIK, and to the Cabinet, the Sonvarkom. The Congress, however, was expected to meet every three months to supervise and direct. After 1918, the practice was abandoned in favour of annual sessions. When the Congress met, neither VTSIK nor the Sovnarkom thought it necessary to submit any report of their work.

The VTSIK was expected to be in permanent session. The erosion of its powers was brought about by: (1) in-

creasing its membership from 200 to 300 and thus diluting the body; (2) introducing a new organ — Presidium — to which powers got delegated: (3) reducing and limiting the meeting; but above all by (4) the Sovnarkom usurping *legislative* powers. The same fate befell provincial and country Congresses of Soviets.

The All Russian Congress of Soviets had directed that local matters be left to local Soviets. Through its monopoly of finance, with its control over advances and subsidies, the Sovnarkom was able to assert over them the authority of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs. And Lenin never faltered in his advocacy of centralised public finance.

The last round of the battle was fought out in the drawing up of the Constitution of the RSFSR. The controversy took three forms which are barely distinguishable: it was a conflict between those who sought weakening and those who sought strengthening of the state power; between those who desired dispersal of power and authority through local authorities, and those who desired concentration of authority at the centre; between those who desired a federation and those who sought "one and indivisible" republic.

The Marxian theory of state, in the light of which the controversies were resolved, has no use for either separation or limitation of powers. The doctrine of separation of powers, according to Marx, was a relic of an age where "the royal power, the aristocracy and the *bourgeoisie* are struggling for supremacy." The Bolshevik state, as an "autocracy of the people," needed no limitation, no circumscribing of authority, because it had emerged not through balance and bargain of conflicting forces but by a revolutionary *tour de force*. It was a deduction from this view that the Soviet constitution recognised no constitutional safeguards, nor any rights of individual citizens against the State. The Constitu-

tion made no specific provision—for the exercise of the judicial function — it was assumed to be subordinate to the executive. Every function of government was one; it should be exercised for a single purpose by single authority.

As a concession to "the National Question," the federal form of Constitution was adopted. It led to what Prof. Carr has called "the curious fact": "While the RSFSR was freely referred to as a federation, and while the word 'federal' appeared in its title and in the initial chapters of the Constitution devoted to the general principles, the word nowhere recurred in the body of the Constitution. The extent and composition of the federation, as well as much of its constitutional machinery was undefined."[6]

In the first flush of the revolution, an attempt was made, on the assumption of a division of competence between political and economic affairs, to build up a pyramid of economic councils to parallel the Soviet structure. In practice, Vesenkha (Supreme Council of National Economy) was subordinate to Sovnarkom, and the provincial and local Sovnarkhozy (Councils of National Economy) were subordinate to appropriate Soviets: "The idea of economic Soviets was still-born. What had been created was a central economic *department* with local offices."[7]

There was a parallel development of centralisation of authority in other social organisations, as also of *etatisation*, i.e., the extension of state power.

In factories, workers had asserted their control through factory committees. Of it, Lenin said: "Here all citizens are transformed into the hired servants of the State, such as the

6. E. H. Carr: *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol. I, p. 139.
7. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 77.

armed forces: *all* citizens become employees and workers of *one* all national State *syndicat*. Workers' control, which by its nature was exercised "on the spot" was, in the words of Milyutin, "united into one solid state apparatus"!

The All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions, in the course of a resolution, stated: "In their developed form the trade unions should, in the process of the present socialist revolution, become organs of socialist power... In consequence of the process the trade unions will inevitably be transformed into the organs of socialist state." By March 1918 the fusion between Soviet and trade union organs had proceeded far.

This etatisation was accompanied by what Trotsky characterised as "the right of the workers' state to subordinate the will of the working man and woman to the working class and its economic tasks." Under the flag of "self-discipline" piece-rates were reintroduced, work-day lengthened and "scientific and progressive (parts) in Taylor system adopted."[8] In 1921, according to Andreev, 102 strikes involving 43,000 workers had occurred; after that, though *unemployment* increased — 1,000,000 in 1924; 2,000,000 in 1927 — not only the right but the possibility of strike was gone.

A similar fate overtook the co-operatives: before the revolution, the Bolsheviks had little concern with the co-operatives, with the result that in 1917 the bulk of the rural co-operatives — producers' and credit — were with the Social Revolutionaries, and consumers' co-operatives, generally urban, were mostly with the Mensheviks. Vensenkha announced that "the activity of the co-operatives must be

8. *The System of Taylor* was published in Moscow in 1918.

co-ordinated and brought into close connection with the activity of Soviet organisation." In December 1918, the Moscow Narodnyi Bank, central bank of the co-operatives, was merged in the State National Bank. In November 1919, it was noted that the "difference of principle between Soviet organs and co-operatives is falling off," that the co-operatives could be regarded as part of the "state apparatus." The prime *organ of association* was converted into a *cement of organisation.*

The ruling party had no constitutional position, nor a legal link with the state. The Fascist Party in Italy was defined as "an organ of the state" *(un organo dello Stato)*, without being "a part of the state" *(organo statale)*. No such distinction was sought to be made in Russia. "In all Soviet organisations," it was ordained, "it is essential to form party fractions strictly subordinate to party discipline. Into these fractions all members of the Russian Communist Party working in a given Soviet institution must enter." Lenin had exhorted the Party men, "to *lead* the activity of the Soviets, but not to replace them." Thanks, however, to centralisation and *etatisation*, to the enveloping crisis created by wars of intervention and the civil war, and to the liquidation of rival parties, Lenin had to admit in 1921, "As the governing party we could not help fusing the Soviet 'authorities' with the party 'authorities.'"

In the Party, centralisation of control developed a little slower than in the Soviets, but on the same model. The Party Congress lost power to the Central Committee; it, like the VTSIK, failed to retain power which was soon sapped by smaller and more effective organs like the Politburo, Orgburo and the Secretariat. The supreme power passed to the few men who were members of the Sovnarkom as well

as the Politburo. *This process had been virtually completed by the time of Lenin's death.*

If society had been devoured by the state, it, in its turn, was absorbed by the Party. Inevitably, the attitude emerged, as expressed by Trotsky, "My party, right or wrong." Party membership rose from 23,600 in February 1917 to 115,000 in February 1918, to 1,200,000 in 1927. But of them, half, 600,000 were State employees and officials of all kinds! In the Party Committees charged with taking decisions, only a tenth of membership consisted of actual factory workers.[9] The party was lost in its entrails!

These developments resulted from a variety of factors; the chief among them were the conception of organisation and the social *milieu* in which the Bolsheviks worked.

The organisational pattern was hierarchical; the discipline of small groups freely coming together and learning through their limited surrounding and the experience they could understand and organise, was disapproved: "We must break with the tradition of workers' or trade union type of social democratic organisation down to the factory group *inclusive*. The factory group or factory committee must consist of a very small number of *revolutionaries*, receiving direct from the Central Committee orders and powers to conduct the party work in the factory. All members of the factory commitee must regard themselves as agents of the Central Committee." (Lenin). The basic belief was that human wills can only be *substituted*, the strong replacing the weak, they can never be *fused*. Not concord, but subordination.

9. A. Rosenberg: *A History of Bolshevism*, p. 195.

The *milieu* desired was one of instability. "Their fighting slogan," Marx said, "must be 'permanent revolution.' " During the war, Lenin detested the social-pacifists as much as the social-chauvinists because he sought civil war, not peace: "While the democratic petty bourgeois wants to end the revolution as rapidly as possible, our interest and our task consist in making the revolution more or less permanent."

The highly skilled and unionised workers, like printers, railwaymen, steel-workers in the modern industrial centres of the South, were generally Menshevik; the Bolshevik support was mainly drawn from the relatively unskilled workers of the old mass industry of the Petrograd region and Moscow. The Comintern and the Profintern later tried to divide the workers in the Western countries on similar lines. Bolshevism's greatest attraction was for the rootless, floating worker. To create a rootless *milieu* was a fundamental Bolshevik strategy, and "permanent revolution" was an essential part of it.

The Communist cells, despite the name, were not *organic* but parasitic. They functioned in other associations where men's coming together has created some social substance. To atomise society, to render it structureless, is absolutely necessary for any system that pursues power. And Bolshevism has been no exception.

Freedom in such a context becomes a *good*, ceases to be a *value*. Under the Constitution of the RSFSR, freedom of opinion was assured to the workers by assuring them of "all technical and material means of publication"; freedom of assembly by putting at the disposal of workers "all premises suitable for holding public meetings with equipment, lighting and heating." The welcome gift of *material* facilities

was to be obtained by surrendering *spiritual* freedom — the right to differ, dissent, nonconform. "The new man," exultantly wrote the *Pravda,* "is not made by himself; it is the Party" that makes him. Freedom, and man too, are devoured by "thingification." And there the Communist stream becomes indistinguishable from the capitalist stream of *reification.*

LENINISM

Lenin (1870-1924) was the real heir of Marx. He refreshed with new flexibility the *corpus* of Marx's ideas and his method, and enriched them by further development. The structure of his thought and work was raised on the proud mansion of Marx.

Lenin saw in Marxism an incubator of history that could accelerate the movement of the final liberation. His enrichment of Marxism was achieved, by the same matchless method of dialectic: in him, therefore, is the same adherence to revolutionary evolutionism, to the struggle of the polarities, to perennial interpenetration.

The dialectical edge of Marxism was blunted in Western Europe after the death of the Master. In the vast backward autocracy of Russia, Lenin saw the opportunity to give the edge a new sharpness.

In Russia, growth of capitalism was inevitable. But because the requisite pre-conditions were weak or non-existent, its growth was likely to be sickly. The proletariat of such a capitalism would experience more misery, but possess greater *manoeuvrability.*

Lenin did not ignore the looming peasant, nor did he succumb to him. He accepted the peasant as the third, *intermediate,* class, lacking inner orientation, oscillating between

the *bourgeoisie* and the proletariat. To neutralise the peasant, to win his support, becomes the principal strategy of the proletariat.

Social evolution is inexorable. No stage of development can be bypassed. What was possible was to shorten the period of ripening in the hot-house of revolution. A feudal-capitalist society *has* to pass through the bourgeois stage. Proletarian wisdom lies in shortening its life span. Blanqui's famous saying, "We do not create a movement, we divert it," was modified by Lenin to read, "We create a proletarian movement, and divert the bourgeois revolution."

Social evolution unfolds through "intervals of gradualness" and crests of surging strength. During this rhythm, contradictions accumulate, mature, and reach the breaking-point. The *acquiescence* and *activity* of the Communist must synchronise with the rhythm, but should be one step *ahead* in activity, two steps *behind* in acquiescence.[10]

Capitalism, unless challenged by the proletariat, grows in ever-widening *loops*. Imperialism is their global contortions: competition between capitalists develops into competition between states turned capitalist and this leads to armed conflict. War develops forces of production, weakens the mode of production, and thus accentuates the inner unbalance.

In imperial states, the discontent of the colonial people against subjection, of the peasant against manifold exploitation, are edges of different contradictions. The proletariat must sharpen them in order to weaken the enemy and make its own thrust decisive. Pacifism, like reformism, muffles the

10. cf. T. B. H. Brameld: *A Philosophic Approach to Communism, passim.*

contradictions where the need is for accentuation. Proletarian peace comes only through the anti-thesis of war, *i.e.*, civil war.

Lenin advocated and carried out the complete fusion of politics and strategy. His politics was all-enveloping: "If we do not possess all the means of struggle we may suffer a heavy, perhaps a decisive, defeat..... We must have 'our own men'..... everywhere among all social strata, and in all positions from which we can learn the inner springs of state mechanism."

The great movement forward takes place through theoretical analysis, plans and preparations, operations and actions, to be succeeded by refinement of theories, revision of plans, exploration of alternatives. The proletariat can attempt this 'heave of history' only as a steeled organisation; only as iron battalions can the proletariat be one step ahead of the possibilities. Every situation, each concrete fact, has to be analysed, alternatives weighed, before a lunge forward is achieved. The organisation has therefore to combine utmost co-operation with sustained individual initiative.

Such, in brief, is the enrichment of the dialectic achieved by Lenin, and with it he became the greatest engineer of revolution, the foremost spokesman of the proletarian world.

The dialectic, great as it is, is uncommonly difficult, like keeping a sheaf of knives rotating in the air. There is the constant danger of confusing a segment for the whole. Every stage of development, every level in the unfolding, is not just a part of the coiling movement but the *whole* movement *at that point of maturity*. The danger of overdwelling on a stage or of prematurely abandoning and attacking it constantly arises. Communist policy develops through oscil-

lations, the swing each time going too far before it is dramatically reversed. Each nuance of change inheres vast possibilities of alterations, like a slight shift in rails leading to a wholly different destination. "Opportunism" becomes an endemic phenomenon.

The protocols of the Russian Revolution, full of gyrations, show the failure of *every* single colleague of Lenin to handle the dissecting-conjointing technique, to achieve the needed assessments. The complexity of historical forces, the configuration of class antagonisms, the crucial point of irritation and discontent, were never rightly judged. The dialectic thus emerges as the most delicate, refined, of all instruments. It suggests no course, it invites evaluation of alternatives, to discover the most helpful rhythm of acquiescence and activity. Dialectic is not a magnetic needle ever pointing to the pole-star, but a thread of mercury that constantly shifts and quivers. Judgements become *a posteriori:* he knows dialectic who succeeds!

Dialectic with its blades of aggression and accumulation is a matchless weapon of disruption, of revolution. But from positions of power, it shows serious limitations. Lenin conceived man as having a dialectic of human traits; a thesis of free, equal, peaceful nature (the Rousseauan man), an antithesis of insurgent, greedy, exploitative nature (the Hobbesian man), and the synthesis of freely equal, social man. Now, dialectic with its basic disbelief in concord and fusion, its faith in assertion and subjugation, propels and feeds upon the aggressive qualities. The iron battalions of the Hobbesian overwhelm the yielding substance of the Rousseauan. That is why Lenin's Revolution, after victory, turned out to be the very antithesis of his hopes.

From the seat of power, dialectic tends to prove right whatever happens. The real becomes the rational: if Finland

gains freedom, the Finnish *bourgeoisie* are deemed to be ripe; if Georgia gets defeated, Georgia's need and right for freedom are forfeited. *With the achievement of power, dialectic becomes Hegelian over again.*

Dialectic prevents post-revolutionary stabilisation, it continues the revolutionary whirl and when necessary artificially incites it. The quest of accumulation of power goes on. The sole point of stability is the supreme leader, the "Tsar of the revolutionary class," as Lenin had wished for in 1905.

The incandescent stream of dialectic carries socialism in power into the turbulent sea of Mass politics.

Mass-Politics

Early in the *nineteenth* century, Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), an Austrian playwright, had protested against Metternich's outlook as lacking in grandeur, "narrowly fastened upon Cabinets and unaware that the time of *Volkerpolitik* has arrived." Mass-politics sucks masses into the vortex, not as interested parties nor as opinion groups, but as a *force*. It broke up the *systemzeit* and began the "era of movement." All that matters get embodied in the movement; every idea, every value vanishes into a *pseudo*-immanence. The tendency was described by the Swiss historian, Jacob Burckhardt (1818-97) as oblitering the boundary line between the state and society, "at the same time everything will be kept in a state of mobility and indecision."

A state of constant movement can have no structure and no substance. The characteristic of mass-man is his isolation and lack of normal social relations. The super-industrialised society of the United States, Reisman describes as "the Lonely Crowd." Even in the midst of the *blitz*,

when Britain was deeply stirred, Prof. Cole was constrained to observe: "In this huge, scurrying, uprooted world of ours, companionship is very hard to find..... Man grows solitary in his multitudinousness: 'the more we are together, the *lonelier* we shall be.'" George Simmel, the German sociologist, has shown that urban contacts, by their massiveness, become impersonal, drained of *effect*. The mass-man is thus the product of an atomised society, and its concomitant loneliness of the individual.

Mass-politics carries the tendency that has produced the mass-man to its culmination: as we saw earlier, both Fascism and Communism work to make society structureless, atomise its battered social edifice. Man is torn from all communal bonds and social attachments, no interest or association survives as innocuous. Every group, even the most elementary, functions as a vassal, a mandatory of the state. To snuff out all autonomous activities whatsoever becomes the dominant political purpose. Abraham Kardiner distinguishes between "primary" and "secondary" institutions of society: "primary" institutions, like the family, have direct, face-to-face contact: "secondary" institutions, though not derivative, yet inevitably farther removed, have less of intimacy and spontaneity. The nation-state had begun with interfering and encroaching upon the secondary institutions; in mass-politics the privacy and intimacy of the primary institutions are invaded, nay, the very inner life of man, his ultimate individuality, is sucked into the statist whirl.

From his eyrie in Switzerland, Henri Frederic Amiel (1804-81) has discerned, in 1852, "the dominant tendency of our epoch": "To crush the spiritual, moral, general human being, if I may say so, by turning him into a specialist, to

create no longer complete human beings, but wheels of the great machinery; to give them not conscience but society as a centre, to make the soul subservient to material ends, to depersonalise man — that is the dominant tendency of our epoch. Moral atomisation and social unity substitute the laws of moral nature (persuasion, constancy, faith); unity through uniformity, number becoming 'reasons,' always quantity instead of quality; a negative liberty which has no internal laws, and finds its limitation only in brute force." (*Diary*, p. 45)

Such atomisation, grinding society to heterodox uniformity, is necessary to win total loyalty of the subject. Primary and secondary institutions protect man, give him *foci* of allegiance and attachment outside the control of the Leviathans; their destruction, subversion, creates conditions of unrestricted, unconditional loyalty. In mass-politics, there is the claim for untrammelled, undivided, loyalty, *and* it has to be an abstract fidelity emptied of all content: "What counts is always the readiness to make a sacrifice, not the object for which the sacrifice is made." Man is left not with reason, varied nuances of reactions, but just conditioned response.

Social institutions, undoubtedly survive, but they are hollowed out and dehinged. Every institution is divorced from its social function, its sole meaning and relatedness is as a "transmission belt" between the ruling *elite* and the masses. Social order is wantonly dissolved into social confusion. It is a characteristic of mass-politics to blur lines of authority by multiplicity of control, to create a shapeless, perplexing policy. Duplication of offices and obfuscation about authority are deliberately devised: multiplicity of offices, complexity of controls, is useful for constant shifting of power, for making the polity even more complicated and the common man therefore more "lost" than he need be

otherwise. Anonymous and opaque social process makes man helpless, orientationless — "loyal." Men walk in subservience and bow to a power that they dare not defy.

The model citizens, the *aristu* of mass-politics, are the *cadres,* the indoctrined Ironsides of the Movement. Even the cadres do not study individually or in groups — Stalin had castigated infatuation for "study circles" — but in a mass. The cadres operate through a system of *front organisations,* a device creates new manipulative layers in the place of the old organic. The Movement articulates itself through a graded organisation of *elite* formations, membership and fellow-travellers: "The sympathisers in front organisations despise their fellow citizens' complete lack of initiation, the party members despise their fellow-travellers' gullibility and lack of radicalism, the *elite* formations despise for similar reasons the party membership. The result of this system is that the gullibility of sympathisers makes lies credible to the outside world, while at the same time the graduated cynicism of membership and *elite* formations eliminate the danger that the Leader will be forced by the weight of his own propaganda to make good his statements..... The *elite* formations are distinguished from the ordinary party membership in that they do not need such demonstrations and are not even supposed to believe in the literal truth of ideological *cliches.* They are fabricated to answer the quest for meaning among the masses. The *elite* is not composed of ideologists, its members' whole education is aimed at *abolishing* their capacity for distinguishing between truth and falsehood, between reality and fiction. Their superiority consists in their ability immediately to dissolve every statement of fact into a declaration of purpose."[11] The Movement grows by limiting the *elite* formations and membership by cons-

11. Hannah Arendt: *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* pp. 371-72.

tantly expanding sympathisers, till they embrace the whole population. Through this organisational device all vital elements in the society are occupied, the *cadres* gain the control of the whole life of the people, totalitarian requisitioning of man's energy is realised.

Under mass-politics, the real controls of power remain hidden — the more visible an agency, the less power it possesses. Obvious becomes spurious; the hidden secretes effective power. Thus the Secret Police emerges as the King of the Dark Chamber — never seen, yet ever present and potent.

Not only the *criteria* of art, literature and music change frequently in response to the *dictats* of the state, but history itself gets periodically rewritten. The stable past, the memories of the people, get rearranged from time to time to suit the exigences of statecraft. Dialectic reduces all things to flux, the sole source of stability is the Leader.

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) had said: "Men must either be caressed or else annihilated; they will revenge themselves for small injuries, but cannot do so for great ones." And Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) had said that small lies get detected, big lies get believed. Man is ever undone by the mass.

Mass-politics destroys all distance between the individual and the state, removes or confuses the meaning of society. It does not stop with the destruction of the *juridical person* in man, but invades the moral person. To be suspected becomes a crime; if *raison d'etat* demands suspicion, a person is not merely branded a criminal but is expected to *acquiesce in it.* Man faces a dilemma where either horn impales his moral being: he must either spy on and betray his friends and colleagues or inflict sufferings on his family.

When a man "disappears," not a trace of him survives. His friends and family must abandon him; grief and remembrance become disservice to the state. Organised oblivion overtakes not just the carriers of public opinion, the written or spoken word, but his ties with his family and friends. Non-conformism becomes a social leprosy. The cast-out and the condemned just disappear: oblivion engulfs them. His life or death becomes a mystery: his death, in a social void, merely sets the seal on the fact that he had never lived. As Burke had foretold, "He seems deserted by mankind; overpowered by a conspiracy of his whole species."

Prof. Merle Fainsod in his recent outstandingly able volume has described terror as a system of power in totalitarian countries. "For the totalitarian dictator terror functions as prod as well as a brake. The Stalinist refinement in the use of terror as a system of power involved oscillating phases of pressure and relaxation.... When the pressure becomes too great, a mirage of security and stability was held out in order to enlist the energy and devotion of the oncoming generations. It is a system which devours many of its servants, but as in the games of chance, since the winners and survivors are highly rewarded and cannot be identified in advance, the ambitions of the players are periodically renewed, and the regime bases its strength on their sacrifices."[12]

In the concentration camp, mass-politics reaches its ultimate *apogee*. There man's last glory is torn away from him: his right to die for a cause, to testify to his faith. In the concentration camp, in that world of the silent and the dead, protest loses all meaning. There is no witness, no solidarity, no testimony. As David Rousset has put it: "To

12. Merle Fainsod: *How Russia is Ruled*, p. 376.

demonstrate when death can no longer be postponed is an attempt to give death a meaning, to act beyond one's own death. In order to be successful, a gesture should have a social meaning. There are hundreds of thousands of us here, all living in absolute solitude. That is why we are subdued no matter what happens."[13] In that "other kingdom" as Bettlheim has shown, the distinguishing line between the persecutor and the persecuted, between the murderer and his victim, is constantly blurred. Beyond the silence of despotism, persecution extends to the private sanctuary of man's thought, and by forcing him to lie to his conscience, the oppressed is robbed of his last consolation beyond martyrdom and faith.

The concentration camp is the empty room in every house. Under totalitarian conditions, the category of the suspect embraces the entire population. Every thought that deviates from the officially prescribed and perennially changing line is already a suspect, no matter in which field of human activity it occurs. Men's outward conformity is no bar to what Pascal called their "mental reservation with which they judge everything," to their practice of "*ketman*." The *satellite man* might be obedient to the regime in action but not in thought. Because of their capacity to think, human beings remain suspect, and suspicion cannot be diverted by exemplary behaviour, for the human capacity to think is also the capacity to change one's mind, to nonconform. Because the intimate in man can never be *wholly* known, it has to be crushed: a never-ending swish and surge of *animus* in the endlessly fecund human life!

"Tyrannical fear is like an epidemic: the government fear the subjects and the subjects fear one another and the

13. David Rousset: *The Other Kingdom*, p. 464.

government as well, and the preventive action taken by all against the dangers suggested to them by their fears will finally culminate in a terror. Aware that it rules by force, tyranny suspects any loyalty it receives of being an unwilling loyalty, and therefore it takes further precautions against the state of mind revealed by the unwillingness of this loyalty. Such is the dialectical movement by which tyranny grows more tyrannical."[14]

Mass-politics thus ends up as an invasion on man *qua* man. It destroys social structure and substance, much of which was meaningful to men, and creates an opaque order. Dissolution of society ends in decomposition of man, the "collective labourer" gets gathered up and lost in the total state, in the voracious Movement. Where mind becomes captive, as Czeslaw Milosz has shown, Man becomes the enemy.

Terrible Simplificateur

The great adventure of Marxian socialism, where it has been lived in its revolutionary ecstacy, has ended in a flight from freedom into forgetfulness. The reasons why Marx's dreams took on nightmarish shapes are to be traced to his stubborn indifference to certain sociological and psychological realities.

"Every accumulation," Marx had said of capital, "means more accumulation." What he refused to see was that *that* is the nature of accumulation, its inner dynamism, not its capitalist perversion. Accumulation is inherently expanding and accelerating; it needs breaks and checks, stabilisation and halt. Marx's blade of activity works

14. Jules Monnerot: *Sociology of Communism*, p. 181.

well where countervailing forces of stability are strong. When activism triumphs, revolution becomes its own end.

Marx's philosophy is of power — not of the individual, but of the collective. Modern technique with its expanding control on nature and life is explosively filled with the sense of power. Marx uniquely accelerated the impulse, he led men to dream of "Imitation of God." Unless such a soaring urge is accompanied by a proportionate *inner* development of man, a terrible danger emerges: the infatuation of power overwhelms. There too, "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets" remains tragically true. The will to power ends up as the will to overpower. It is the subtle compounding of the primeval economic desire with the power impulse that needs constant vigilance.

The social co-operation that Marx envisaged inevitably involved a measure of coercion, which some social *stratum* was bound to enforce. Unless adequate checks are provided, the dominant group is apt to tilt the power to its advantage. Marx deliberately refused to provide the necessary inner moral and the external social checks needed to retard the ever contingent tendencies to oppression and injustice.

Mill had provided his evolutionary socialism with varied checks and marked emphasis on liberty. Throughout his *Principles* he underscores the great dangers in the growth of governmental powers and activity, which must be watched with "unremitting jealousy"; "perhaps the watchfulness is even more important in a democracy than in any other form of society." If man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, *his propensity to injustice makes democracy necessary.*

In his revolutionary socialism, Marx saw no need to provide checks, to circumscribe the powers of authority.

Burke's "law" — "Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere: the less of it is within, the more will it be without" — embodies a quintessence of man's social experience, his mellowed wisdom. Marx ignored the "law," and hacked away at the controlling powers in society *and* in man. The erosion left man defenceless against the totalitarian flood. The Greek tradition of treating politics and ethics as two aspects of a *single enquiry* was abandoned just when the need was greatest.

The dissolution of society that capitalism ensured, and that Marx approved, left men rootless and foot-loose. Apart from unemployment, a deeper spiritual unemployment ensued: innumerable human lives wander about lost in their own labyrinths, lacking alike *locus* and *focus*. Here sociology crosses the frontiers of psychology.

Rosa Luxemburg (1870-1919) had said of Lenin's "ultracentrism" that "the 'ego' crushed and pulverised by Russian absolutism reappears in the form of the 'ego' of the Russian revolutionary" which "stands on its head and proclaims itself anew the mighty consummator of history." Though Luxemburg would have been scandalised at the suggestion, her criticism applies equally to Marx. The "ego" crushed by capitalism plays similar tricks.

Man, with the "ego" crushed, denied of nurturance and succourance by the society, develops certain "nuclear ideas," which in their turn accentuate and assimilate certain social tendencies. Marxism favours the "nuclear ideas" of "a crushed 'ego,'" exerts ideological pressure that feeds the needs and the striving of the *deracinated*. Such men develop towards society *a diffuse, ego-alien dependence*. The relationship with fellowmen loses the character of communion and assumes the spirit of manipulation, of instru-

mentalism. Such men develop, as contemporary researches have shown,[15] an attitude of power, and tend to divide people on that basis: loyalty, admiration and *itch* for submission are automatically aroused by power of persons and institutions, while contempt is equally aroused by powerless persons and associations — the very sight of weakness might provoke an urge to attack, dominate, or humiliate. As Burckhardt had foretold, "The philistine tries with diabolic determination to eat from a big kettle; he could not enjoy the food otherwise."

The industrial man, as Nietzsche had pointed out, "is easily trained, easily broken in." In the *"forced syndication,"* as Lenin characterised it, of the industrial civilisation, man's incipient autonomy is undermined. Hierarchical tendencies in him come up: he operates with the dichotomy of the "weak and the strong," "the bottom and the top," and is obsessed with the idea of moving upwards through the help of the powerful and influential.

Such persons tend to develop *extrapunitiveness,* the tendency to blame others for all weaknesses and frustration. Their intellectual functioning gets relatively rigid, and it works better in relation to things than to people, it is primarily *extra-captive,* and gets disrupted in personal and emotional relationships. A macabre fulfilment of Engels' vision of governance of men yielding place to administration of things!

Marx had believed that the two, vast, dialectical triads — *first,* of individualistic character: primitive freedom — equality of man; capitalist anarchy — inequality; communist freedom — equality; *second,* the social triad: simple com-

15. Eric Fromm: *Man for Himself.*

munism; capitalism; socialised communism — would exactly overlap. Hundred and ten years of experience proves the assumption to be erroneous.

Marx's epic analysis of human alienation did not go far enough to uncover the fact that complexity of society, ever more anonymous and opaque social processes, make it increasingly difficult for a man to integrate the limited sphere of his personal life-experience with objective social dynamics. Man tends, in such circumstances, to seek compensation for the dehumanisation of social sphere in *personalisation,* to seek a substitute for his own social impotence in the supposed omnipotence of the State, of the infallible Fuhrer. As Hobbes had suggested, *little* men evoke Leviathan.

Industrial life favours uniformity, nay more, stereotypy. Stereotypy has the strength of numbers, because persons are ever unique and idiosyncratic and weight of numbers aggravates the basic conformism and amoralism. It was wrong to have wantonly pitchforked, after Hegel, ethics from social system — wrong for one who yearned with every nerve and fibre of his being for a free, mature, libertarian commonwealth.

In industrial *milieu* special stress needs to be given on appropriate social measures devised for man's volition, his capacity to choose goals; a personal sphere, an "elbow room," is needed, which shall be inviolable alike from state and society. To become well adjusted, mature, autonomous, man demands distance between the authority and himself. This *lebensraum* he enriches with ethical evolution and personal relationships. When social life is fabricating its "curtain," man misses the vital, inviolate fluid around him. In a world whose symbol is no longer the egg but the *onion,*

dialectic with its antipathy to fusion, its predilection for aggressive as against organic inter-play, proves disastrous.

"The mood of socialism before Marx was *operative*. Marx changed it to the *imperative*. He was not so much concerned to win the best men as to create and assemble upon a world scale a huge and invincible army for a holy war. The penalty for this change of mood was that particularism installed itself like a worm in the fruit, and rotted it from within. Marxism will long remain a doctrine of sociological predestination, as 'racial theory' is of biological predestination."[16]

On the threshold of the nineteenth century, Saint-Simon had yearned for "a new sytsem of society based on the workshop as a model." In the twilight of the fading century, the implications had become clear to the minds that cared to see. In 1897, Burckhardt wrote: "I have a premonition which sounds like utter folly, and yet it will not leave me: the military state will become one single vast factory. These hordes of men in the great industrial centres cannot be left indefinitely to their greed and want.... In the delightful twentieth century authoritarianism will raise its head again, and a terrifying head it will be.... My picture of the *terrible simplificateurs* who will overrun Europe is no pleasant one.... naked force in command and the silencing of the opposition. To get re-elected, the national leaders must win over the most turbulent segments of the masses. The latter demand that something be constantly happening, otherwise, they would not belive 'Progress' is marching on. .... One after the other, a sacrifice must be made of social order, property, religion, distinguished codes of conduct, higher learning.... People no longer believe in principles,

16. Jules Monnerot: *op. cit.* p. 156.

but will probably periodically believe in saviours .... Long voluntary subjection under Fuhrers is in prospect."

The proletariat, through the long process of stripping, through its infusion with dialectical philosophy, ends very nearly as the *terrible simplificateur*. The pilgrimage of freedom ends in a prison house of its principles.

PART IV

A REVIVAL OF REVISIONISM

U. Kyaw Nyein, the socialist leader of Burma, while in power once said, half *sotto voce* half to us, "If only some one would restate Revisionism." It was a part whimsical thought, a part serious, anxious wish. A socialist party on the threshold of power, and even more so in the saddle of responsibility, discovers a ballast and understanding in Revisionism. For it is the socialism of the phase of stabilisation. For underdeveloped countries striving to develop democratically there is a natural attraction to evolutionary socialism. Yet, as the British and the Scandinavian Labour Movements, despite their outstanding achievements, do not remove, because of the countries' long period of industrial advance, the hopes and doubts raised by the Soviet Union, so Bernstein, arguing on a different plane from ours, seems unable to quieten the hesitations that the flood of communist literature constantly provoke.

The fact, however, remains that socialists in power desire to restrain the impetuousness of the Movement and to divert it to constructive ends. The appeal of Fabianism and Revisionism becomes obvious. Somerset Maugham has said somewhere: "Prose is rococo art; poetry is baroque." One might say likewise that revolutionary socialism, which is elemental, massive, mystical, tragic, is *baroque;* revisionist socialism, which as it were prefers accomplishment to power, stability to *intransigence,* vigour to grandeur, is *rococo.* In the free countries of Asia a shift is desired from the baroque to the rococo. Here, too, in the words of King Victor Emmanuel II, uttered in

parallel circumstances, "Now the prose must follow the poetry."

Britain and Germany are the homelands of rococo socialism.

Advances in the West

In Britain, the tradition of the Magna Carta goes deep. Every upheaval, ephemeral or elemental, ends in a demand for political rights. Popular reactions to the industrial revolution did not transgress the hoary tradition. The Luddite disturbances of 1811-12 and again in 1816-17, were channelled into agitation for political reforms by Major Cartwright and Cobbett. In 1830, there was a recrudescence of machine breaking and incendiarism. In spite of savage repression, the leaders, such as William Cobbett (1763-1835), succeeded in diverting the discontent to agitation for parliamentary reform.

In early thirties, workers were restive once again: a mass rally of 150,000 held in Birmingham threatened no-tax. Nottingham castle was burnt, Bristol passed into the control of insurgents for several days, who sacked the prison, the Mansion House and the Bishop's Palace. The Chartist Movement headed the discontent towards political reforms: at Manchester, 300,000 persons assembled to cheer the *six-points* Charter. In 1839, the Chartist Convention presented a petition to the Parliament having 1,250,000 signatures. The Commons rejected it by 235 to 46 votes.

A fresh upsurge of the workers, such as that of the coalminers at Newport, gave a new impetus to Chartism. A second petition, bearing 3,000,000 signatures, was presented to the Parliament, again to be rejected. The uprisings of 1848 on the Continent were reflected in Britain in another

Charter signed by 6,000,000 citizens. Ultimately, five of the six points of the Charter were conceded and enacted. A new method of political agitation had been discovered. It is not surprising that all but one of the *British* leaders of the International resigned when Marx eulogised the Paris Commune. As Prof. Cole puts it in his work *Fabian Socialism*: "Since last echoes of chartism died away in eighteen-fifties, we English have been on the whole a quiet people." Rococo is the "style" appropriate to "quiet people."

The quietness was at once the cause and the effect of the improvements made and advantages gained by the British workers: not only political rights were won but economic melioration achieved. Not in England alone, but in Atlantic countries generally, the harshness and crudity of capitalism were changing through legislative efforts: the working week which was, in 1840, 69 hours in England, 78 hours in the United States and France, 83 hours in Germany, became 52 hours in England and 60 hours elsewhere, by 1880. Scandalously low wages improved steadily; the average annual per capita consumption of wheat went up from 280 lbs. in 1840 to 384 lbs. in 1880. The sacred rights of property that as late as 1845 came in the way of compelling landlords and house-owners to make drains into sewers progressively ceased to be sacred and less of rights. Reforms were slowly but significantly altering the contours of capitalism.

Germany's lack of political democracy was somewhat made up by a deep-seated community consciousness that spurred the country to pioneer in social reforms: in factory laws, in public education, in social insurance. The workers shared the community consciousness, the trade unions developed as "the most aggressive and powerful of reformist

forces" and hence the stabilising *slant* of revisionism appealed to them. On the other hand, "where great urban agglomerations were few, any long run success of Social Democracy was felt to depend on making some inroads into the independent peasantry and the peasant-artisan class. It was here that reformism first appeared in strength."

The *second* industrial revolution with its technological innovations and *tempo* of development, the emergence of *Finance Kapital* with its rationalising *finesse*, harmonised with the basic postulates of revisionism, with the rococo spirit. Three random illustrations show the process of streamlining: the Midland Bank was established as a joint-stock bank in 1836. During the first 53 years, it opened seventeen branches, added another ten by merger, and the deposits grew from under £100,000 to over £2,000,000. In the next thirty years, branches increased to 1,444, *of which 913 were added by merger*. The deposits increased to £400,000,000 in 1930. In Germany, in 1911, the six leading Berlin banks had 825 of their directors sitting on the boards of industrial companies: of these 20 per cent were Chairmen, and 15 per cent were Vice-Chairman of the Boards. Reciprocally, 57 representatives of industry sat on the Boards of the six banks. The Siemens brothers with their *inter*-industry and *inter*-national ramifications symbolise the new integration. [1]Werner Siemens (1816-92) pioneered in electric engineering with his firm "Siemens and Haloke"; Sir Willaim Siemens (1823-83) developed in England the open hearth system and gained a powerful position for Siemens brothers in the steel industry. Friedrich Siemens (1826-1904) invented a smelting oven and won his spurs in glass industry. Georg Siemens founded the Deutsche Bank, and Karl

1. Carl E. Schorske: *German Social Democracy*, pp. 7-16.

Siemens extended the firm's influence to Russia. The developing concentration seemed to be weaving the great veil of a socialist Minerva. The unfolding called for co-operation, not conflict *a outrance*.

The logic of the situation was driving the bourgeois state to nationalisation: in Germany, nationalisation of railways had begun as early as 1879; by 1914, almost all the railroads were owned by the states. Navigation canals were generally owned and operated by the state in France as well as Germany; telephones were taken over by the state, in 1889 in France, in Germany from the beginning.

GOING ASTRAY DOES NOT PAY !

Bismarck had shown a classic indifference to imperialism: in 1871, he had rejected the offer of French possessions in Africa and had favoured the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. Again, in 1890, he acquired the strategic island of Heligoland from the British in return for Uganda and Zanzibar. Likewise, Clemenceau had surrendered the Mosul oil lands to Britain for political advantages. It was true that the tide of the time was against the mood: in the imperialist decades, British colonial possessions increased by 4,500,000 square miles (66,00,000 inhabitants), the French by 3,500,000 square miles (26,000,000 people) and the German by 1,000,000 square miles (13,000,000 population). But the deeper currents were believed to be different as the patterns and purposes behind foreign investments, the real dynamism behind imperialism, tended to show.

British overseas investments rose hundred-fold between 1875 and 1914. On the eve of the War, annual foreign investment was almost half of the national savings. The total foreign investments were about £4,000,000,000 or a fourth of

the national wealth. Seven per cent of the national income was annually invested abroad and the accumulated investments yielded a tenth of the national income. The investments were almost equally divided between Empire and non-Empire areas. Britain was realising from experience that (1) non-Empire areas provided equally profitable fields for investment, *e.g.*, the United States: nearly a *billion* pound sterling of British investments were in the States; (2) *portfolio* investments were as advantageous as direct, *entrepreneurial*, *e.g.*, in the U.S.A. a total change-over on these lines had been usefully carried out; (3) heavy export of capital was starving and weakening the home industries.

French foreign investments amounted to less than £2,000,000,000, or one-sixth of the national wealth. French investments were usually debt rather than equity financing. The spirit of *rentier* survived all frontiers! By 1914, a fourth of the French foreign investments were in Russia, obviously political rather than financial investments, as 1,600,000 Frenchmen ruefully discovered in 1917. From 1878, however, France had pursued a policy of planned *home* investments also: Charles de Freycinet's (1828-1923) programme of public works — construction of 5,141 kilometers of railways between 1817-82, had initiated a new policy.

In Germany, home needs were sharply preferred. If, by 1914, *half* the annual savings went abroad in Britain, a *third* in France, in Germany, the share was just *one-tenth*. The total foreign investments were over £1,000,000,000, or one-fifteenth of German national wealth. Most of the German savings were absorbed in expansion at home, much of the foreign investments were actually "borrowed short" in London and Paris and "lent long" abroad. The German preoccupation with national development had resulted in her outstripping Britain in heavy industry by 1900. In the Ad-

glo-German trade rivalry Britain was at disadvantage because of her obsolete plants and antiquated techniques. Belatedly the spirit of Bismarck — his logic of non-imperialism — was asserting its validity.

In those halcyon days, hopeful men scanned these signs and believed that the world was turning to sane ways, experience was proving that going astray "did not pay." To them socialism appeared as the obvious outgrowth of the new developments.

Though Karl Kautsky (1858-1934) had warned that Social Democracy had underestimated the attractive power of imperialism, which was growing simultaneously with the increasing strength of socialism, the socialists by and large had ignored the problem.

English Socialism

Though the mansion of Marxian thought was built with the materials quarried out of British experience, Marxism has exercised singularly little influence on British socialism. It has been irrigated in its growth by the springs from the nation's past. It shares the national characteristics of a sense of *continuity*, and of the urge for *compromise*.

English socialism is little concerned with abstract principles or universal formulation. It sees socialism as the contemporary manifestation of the characteristic traditions of the British people. Edmund Burke had said: "It has been the uniform policy of constitution to claim and assert our liberties as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transferred to our posterity, as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or

prior right." British socialism possesses this character of "entailed inheritance."

As Adam B. Ulam has shown in his book, *Philosophical Foundations of English Socialism*, the roots of socialism in England lie deep in radicalism and liberalism. Its path was considerably beaten by the readings of Mill and Bentham. As a matter of fact, Sidney Webb once said: "The Socialists are the Benthamites of this generation."

Newman in his *Development of Economic Thought* observes: "Mill's picture of distribution was quite different from that painted by Ricardo. Not only are the so-called laws of distribution mutable, but the very right of property itself is relative to one granted by society." (P. 106). It was further development and unfolding of such teaching that shaped English socialism.

Unlike the countries of the European continent, in Britain there was not only no deep-seated antagonism between socialists and liberals, there was in fact considerable collaboration. As Prof. L. T. Hobhouse put it: "I venture to conclude that the differences between a true and consistent public spirited liberalism and a rational collectivism ought, with genuine effort at mutual understanding, to disappear."

The characteristic expression of English socialism was the Fabian Society. Of it Adam B. Ulam writes: "The Fabian movement acted for a long time as the general and research staff of English socialism, and it has helped to convince, for good or for bad, a large part of the nation that socialism is a refinement and the logical conclusion of democracy."[2]

2. *Philosophical Foundations of English Socialism*, p. 77.

Another student of socialism, Peter Gay, comes to an equally significant conclusion: "It is difficult to resist the temptation of describing the Fabian Society as typical of the British spirit of compromise and moderation."[3]

Engels' scornful criticism of Fabian socialism, "as an extreme but inevitable consequence of bourgeois liberalism, and hence follow tactics of not decisively opposing the Liberals as adversaries but of pushing them, permeating liberalism with socialism. As soon as they got on to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle all turns putrid" — misses the main point. In England the state has never been conceived as *Klassenstaat*, the English socialists never doubted the neutral character of the state and the grand significance of the tactic of permeation. The spirit of compromise, ingrained in the English, makes that kind of intransigence impossible. As Compton Mackenzie put it: "The English suspect a man who cannot contrive a compromise, whether it be with Almighty God or with fellow mortals."

How unorthodox and undogmatic English socialism is, is well brought in the following autobiographical fragment from Prof. Cole: "These two ideas, of the equal chance for all of the basic standard of living assured to all, led me to socialism. I think it was only later that I added to them a third — always implicit in my attitude but not fully realised at first. This third idea was that of democracy, which was inseparably linked in my mind with that of freedom, so that I think of them instinctively as one idea and not two. Gradually this notion of democratic freedom broadened out in my mind. It came to mean to me that society ought to be

3. *The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism.*

so arranged as to encourage difference and not merely to tolerate it. It takes many sorts of men and women to make a satisfactory human society; and within certain very wide limits the more men differ the better, not only in taste and habits but also in opinions. For democratic progress comes of the clash of contending outlooks and opinions."[4]

English socialism was thus typically English. It was revisionist without having to fight or shout about it. Prof. D. H. Robertson once said: "The Liberal Party should adopt once and for all as the first plank in its social policy — the word 'stabilisation.' That plank is grimly fitted in the policy of English socialism. Not just in its genesis but in its growth too, English socialism is revisionist through and through.

JEAN JAURES

The most able and ardent exponent of revisionism was Jean Jaures (1859-1914). Not in France alone, but in the socialist movement as a whole he was recognised as the foremost revisionist. The Congress of the Second International had rejected only one heresy, and that was the heresy of "Jauresism."

Jaures was a conspicuous and weighty figure in French socialism. His independence of mind, lucidity of thought and felicity of expression were universally recognised. Behind the accomplished mastery of spoken and written word were great scholarship and deep humanity. In 1881 he passed out of the *Ecole Normale,* second only to Henri Bergson. Twice he had worked as Professor of Philosophy at Toulouse; his many-sided contributions to his journal *L'Humanite* showed that in the open spaces of his thought

4. G. D. H. Cole : *Fabian Socialism,* pp. 31-33.

there was room for everything human. It came naturally to him to appreciate affinities rather than differences, to discover the common ground and indicate the common horizon, to work through sympathy and understanding.

He was a lover as well as student of his nation's past: his deepest devotion was reserved for the French Revolution. He saw the Revolution not as a sudden eruption but as the culmination of silent maturing. The new conception of right that the Revolution had unveiled, socialism adopts and makes its own. It becomes "the party of democracy and the Great Revolution." Though socialism identifies itself with the French Revolution it is not bound by it. "Only too often the bourgeois and democratic parties confine themselves to picking up a few fragments of cooled lava from the foot of the volcano, to gather burnt-up cinders from the edge of the furnace. The burning metal must flow into new forms."

He believed that the revolution was continuously broadening and deepening: from 80,000 voters in 1815 to 200,000 in 1830. France had grown, by the end of the century, to a democratic republic founded on manhood suffrage. Socialism was to be the final blossoming of this surge of freedom: it could never be dislocation, disruption. His thoughts were ever irradiant with the sense of unity and continuity. "Thus, Socialism arose from the French Revolution, under the combined action of two forces, the force of the idea of the right and the force of the new-born activity of the proletariat." The abolition of capitalism was not merely inevitable, but just.

The French socialist movement was sharply divided. At one extreme were the Broussouists, (Paul Brousse 1854-1912), who prided on being practical, "*possibilistas*": "We

split up our programme until we finally make it possible." It was a French version of the Fabian tactic: "step by step and slice by slice." At the other extreme were the Guesdists who shared their leaders' belief that "in multiplying reforms one only mutiplies shame, for all rights granted to the workers in the capitalist *regime* will always remain a dead letter." (Jules Guesde 1845-1922). For Jaures reforms were not palliatives, but preparations: "reforms which pave the way and prepare for a new social order, and by their *organic* force hasten the dissolution of the old."

For him socialism was not some "spirit moving over the face of the waters," but something incorporated in institutions, such as universal suffrage, democracy, trade unions, co-operative society. Through their development and strength, and never through any "decisive rupture," would the egalitarian objectives be reached. "Decomposition" of economic and social life was no revolution; it was "exactly counter to the revolution." Revolution is growth, steady and sure change: "It is like the silent budding of the tree in the spring."

Such an evolutionary and organic conception of revolution led him to counter forces of disruption and cherish conserving forces. He detested war. Against war he pressed the socialists to use the sanctions of the General Strike, and it was as an ardent pacifist, as an uncompromising denouncer of war, that he fell a victim to an assassin's bullet on July 31, 1914 — the first and the noblest casualty of the War. "You must know how to be popular," he once said, "but you must know how to spend your popularity."

It was his fear of the war machine that had led Jaures to plunge headlong into *L'Affaire Dreyfus*. Dreyfus was a victim of racial prejudice, of the army's corruption and

highhandedness. In rushing to the defence Jaures felt that he was guarding the democratic base of the Republic against dire threats. The tragic figure of Dreyfus was transfigured for Jaures, as for Zola, into a symbol of the lost man fighting the Leviathan. "We are not bound to put ourselves outside humanity, for the sake of remaining inside socialism."

In Jaures' internationalism, accent was on nation too. Marx's aphorism, "The worker has no fatherland," was to Jaures a lag to be overcome, not a lever to be operated. In nation he saw the *sole* "universal association that can guarantee the rights of all individuals without exception, not only those of the living, but of those who are yet unborn." He welcomed the emergence of the new nation-states of Italy and Germany: "For a long time to come the nation as such will furnish the historical setting for socialism; it will be the mould in which the new justice will be cast."

The proletariat, as the carrier of socialism, must infuse with its ideals other sections of society, above all the peasants. Flocon's warning to Engels that the eleven million peasant farmers of France were "passionate property owners" was not lost on Jaures. He believed it was unwise to break in the name of socialism the peculiarly close relationship that the peasant had formed with the land. He wished socialism to modulate its pace and form in such a manner as to enlist allegiance of the peasant: "I think it extremely short-sighted to say that if the peasants are neutral that will be enough. No social force can remain neutral when a great movement is afoot. If they are not with us, they will be against us."

As capitalism menaced all small people, the movement towards socialism became for Jaures a grand alliance with all radicals and republicans. Such a unity was especially

necessary where the gains of democracy were in peril. His high road to socialism was an alliance, at the *governmental* level, of socialists and radical republicans. That was the heresy of Jauresism.

In 1899, Jaures, with many others, felt that the Republic was menaced. To strengthen democratic forces he approved of Millerand joining the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet: the first socialist in a bourgeois government. This was *l'affaire Millerand* that shocked and rocked the socialist movement in many countries.

How did Jaures justify such a sea-change in socialism?

There was no underestimation of the evils of capitalism. The proletarian's road of life is cut by toll gates set up by capital; the toll was on the life process itself because it spelt "alienation of his individuality." He is mere "hands" with no control on the purpose or the process of his labour. "The personality of the proletarian was lessened as well as his substance." Jaures agreed with the Marxian diagnosis of the disease, but no further. Marxian prognosis was superannuated because "it proceeds either from worn-out historical hypotheses, or from inexact economic hypotheses."

Marx had argued in the *Manifesto* that only by violent revolution against the middle-class would the working class grasp power and realise communism. But the revolution had still to be a *bourgeois* revolution, because the proletariat was too weak to initiate one itself. The proletarian revolution is to be *grafted* on a victorious bourgeois revolution. Jaures contended that the proletariat's social power cannot grow by such convolutions. He warningly reproduced Miguel's words to Marx (1850): "We can perhaps give an anti-bourgeois direction to the Revolution for a little while, we can destroy the essential conditions of bourgeois production; but we

cannot possibly beat down the small tradespeople and shopkeeping class. My motto is to secure all that you can get. We ought to prevent the lower and middle class from forming any organisation for as long a time as possible after the first victory, and especially to oppose ourselves in serried ranks to every constitutional assembly. Partial terrorism, local anarchy, must replace for us what we lack in bulk."[5]

To replace "lack in bulk" in this fashion was to disrupt life and de-structure society. Jaures dismissed the idea as "a *parasite* Revolution."

And what does such a revolution achieve? Jaures analysed the programme of the *Manifesto* and showed it to be a strange mixture of "the agrarian communism of the eighteenth century and some of the elements of what we call today the programme of Millerand."[6] He was, however, appalled more by "the chaos of method" than by "the chaos of programme" in the *Manifesto*. The latter could be unravelled, the former was beyond repair.

Marx *literally* believed in the increasing misery of the worker; he had no faith in the proletariat's capacity for reforms, social melioration. In his opinion, all that it could achieve was a sense of injury and a sense of strength. To his dialectical understanding, absolute destitution was the pre-condition of the absolute liberation. And there, asserts Jaures with the whole strength of his being, "Marx was mistaken." The fundamental error lay in "giving precedence to the forces that in a capitalist society tend to lower the status of the workmen over those forces that tend to raise it." The error further lies in looking for "the sudden downfall

5. Miguel's sketch is an inspired forecast of the future tactics of Lenin.
6. Programme for unified socialist party outlined by Millerand in 1894.

of capitalism, and the sudden accession of the proletariat to power" due to a political upheaval or an economic collapse. Revolution is not sudden collapse and change, but basic transformation imperceptibly matured. Ultimately, it is *enracinement*, not deracination.

The deep springs of life that gush forth with marvellous abundance are the real sinews of socialism. The capital fact to remember was that "in all constitutions of Central and Western Europe, there are already enough democratic elements for the transition to real democracy to be made without a revolutionary crisis." Experience had proved the democratic state to be *penetrable* to workers' influence; in France especially, the proletariat was in possession of the "tools and workshop" of its destiny.

Jaures quotes with full approval long extracts from William Liebknecht (1826-1900): "The S.D.P. is a party of all the people. It ought then to turn towards the people, and, as soon as the occasion arises, by practical proposals and projects of legislation of general interest, to give positive proof that the good of the people is its only aim, and the will of the people its only rule.... We have a higher conception of the duty of the state towards the individual than our adversaries have, and we shall not lower it, even if we are dealing with our adversaries, the privileged and the monopolists."

Details of this "peaceful and harmonious evolution to bring about the transition from legal injustice to legal justice" Jaures supplied from the writings of Liebknecht himself. A fragment of these, written in the dark days of 1881 and published posthumously, were particularly underscored by Jaures. Therein Liebknecht foresaw the possibility of the socialists being called upon, as a result of either military

setback or political liberalisation, "to govern, or at least *to share in the government.*"

Such possibilities were an integral part of the great social adaptation that was proceeding apace. Those who were enemies of socialism from interest, and not from ignorance, were "almost negligible"; the immense majority was moving towards social change by the pressure of social forces. It was the task of the socialists to convert the process into a conscious effort, to convert ignorant antipathy into sympathetic understanding. In rolling prose, Jaures summed up the position. "In other words, since, by the pressure of events and the growing organisation of the Socialist Party, the proletariat have finally induced even those classes and those parties which would be naturally most opposed to them to accept the projects of social legislation which will eventually lead to Socialism; since the immense majority of the nation has allowed itself to be started in the direction of Socialism, and one might say, lifted up to the first step of social organisation, we may conclude that in the same way the immense majority of the nation can be lifted, step by step, by means of an ever more active and definite propaganda, by an ever more energetic proletarian influence, and an even more effective mechanism of reforms, to the level of our ultimate ideal."

Liebknecht had therefore defined the working class in broadest terms: "Thus, besides the wage-earners, we should include in the working class the small farmers and the small shopkeepers. . . . Some maintain that the wage-earning proletariat is the only really revolutionary class, that it alone forms the socialist army, and that we ought to regard with suspicion all adherents belonging to other classes and other conditions of life. Fortunately these senseless ideas have never taken hold of the German Social Democracy." In the

past, notwithstanding the epic heroism of the workmen of Paris and Lyons, because of this "fatal error," French socialism had to pay dear. Liebknecht's "golden rule" was "to expand, not to contract": "The circle of socialism should widen more and more, *until we have converted most of our adversaries to being our friends,* or at least disarmed their opposition." "The noblest thing about Socialism," commented Jaures, "is precisely that it is not the *regime* of a minority. It cannot, and ought not to be imposed by a minority."

For him a majority was not a mere product of parliamentary arithmetic. It was the recognition of a complex of facts: firstly "In all classes, in all conditions of life, we find active wills, forces in motion." "Everywhere the individuals have become self-conscious." Secondly, "the cutting up and sub-division of life" that the insurrectionists desired "is exactly counter to the Revolution." "Every great revolution presupposes an exaltation of life, and this exaltation is only possible when there is that consciousness of a vast unity by the ardent intercommunication of strength and enthusiasm." Parliamentary work for well defined reforms; strikes for specific and widely accepted purposes; but above all to work constructively to enable the Socialist Revolution to create new conditions and relations of production. "In 1789, the Revolution had only a negative work to perform in the domain of property. It abolished, it did not create." The scroll of socialism is concerned with creation, construction, only fugitive pages deal with destruction. It was as a Book of Life and a Song of Creation that Jaures embraced socialism.

Jaures did not believe that it is enough to try to arouse the passion for truth and justice in individual consciences,

it is necessary also to forge for the use of the working class "a tool for governing and law-making."

"Our interpretation of history," wrote Jaures in the *Histoire Socialiste*, "will be materialist as with Marx, and idealist as with Michelet. Economic life is certainly the root and source of human history, but throughout the whole succession of social forms man as a thinking creature aspires to the full life of the ideal, to the ardent communion between his uneasy spirit, hungry for unity, and the mysterious universe... There is no human being who entirely ceases to be a man and becomes a member of a class.... What is more, the classes themselves, as such, are not moved exclusively by class consciousness. Just as at different temperatures the same chemical elements form quite different combinations, so is there a moral temperature, a human temperature, which forms the most diverse historical combinations from the same human elements."

Jaures had decisively moved away from Marxism, the sole debt was the fruitful union, achieved by Marx, of the labour movement and the socialist idea. Jaures' socialism had its roots in the historical traditions of France. In the goblet of his thought sparkled the juice of native vines. Socialism he viewed as the ripening of national awakening, related as fruit to the flower. He anathematized not just the violence of war, but violence *per se*, because it damages humanity in man. Socialism, society of free and equal men, *L'Etat Social* as against *L'Etat Patron*, can come only through greater self-awareness and social integration of man. Against the ravages of prejudice he sought to strengthen reason and sympathy. This constructive *ethos*, this concept of socialism as not just the voice of suffering masses but of martyred truth never became an integral part of French socialism. His emphasis on the need for policy to evolve with

the degree of development of the proletariat was denounced as weakening the class instinct of the worker. The critics were loath to abandon the dream of "The Revolution," were unwilling to commit themselves to a routine of steady improvement in efficiency and decency of life. They who had repulsed Proudhon's home-brew had little use for Jaures' *elixir*. Only in Sorel's intoxicant they faintly recaptured the flavour of Marx.

Failure to rise to the vision of Jaures paradoxically led French socialism first to the embrace of the War and then to the folds of the Moscow International. By a two-thirds majority, in 1920, French socialism became "communist." *L'Humanite*, Jaures' *Humanite*, became the organ of communism. Jaures remains canonised: his teachings ignored, reviled; his memory, the magic of his name, used for ends he would never bless.

Bernstein and German Socialism

Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932) is known to history as the father of revisionism. He wanted socialism to be not scientific but critical, not revolutionary but evolutionary. These far-reaching changes he sought to achieve within the framework of Marxian thought.

Even in German social democracy, Bernstein was not the first revisionist. Georg von Vollmar (1850-1922) had anticipated him by almost a decade. His Bavarian background — its anti-Prussian regionalism, agrarianism, Catholicism — made him a natural critic of Marx. But because it was instructive and regional, the criticism lacked the intellectual sweep and the philosophical depth of Bernstein.

Bernstein was no solitary sparrow of the revisionist summer. Thought currents in the party were already runn-

ing in that direction. As Bebel wrote to Adler, "we have a whole lot of Bernsteins, and most in distinguished positions within the party." As an exponent of revisionism, Bernstein was merely *prime inter pares*.

The strength of revisionism came from the fact that events did not conform with the forecasts of Marx, and the divergence was widening. As Bernstein put it, "Not doctrinal criticisms but facts compelled me to correct my promises."

Marx had envisioned the development of capitalism through "accumulation of wealth at one pole, and, at the same time, accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, moral degradation, at the opposite pole." Capitalism would face growing crisis leading to a collapse. Experience belied the analysis: wealth had undoubtedly grown greatly but was not all concentrated, and misery had visibly lifted. Economic life ran smoothly and the ghost of collapse had faded. Against Marx's theory of catastrophe, life had worked out a practice of adaptation. The disinherited were recovering their lost privileges through a process of slow redintegration into the society. The pessimistic prognostications of Marx had proved wrong, and with that had to go his apocalyptic emphasis. "Social Democracy," wrote Bernstein, "does not want to dissolve this society and to make proletarians of all its members. Rather, it labours incessantly at lifting the worker from the social position of a proletariat to that of a 'bourgeois' and thus to make *'bourgeoisie'* or citizenship universal."

Revisionism believed neither in a revolutionary crisis nor in a revolutionary solution. It sought to lessen, attenuate, the capitalist contradictions. The antagonism of production and exchange was to be mollified by rationalisation of the

economy, the conflict between Capital and Labour was to be adjusted by bettering the condition of the workers and strengthening the middle classes. The contradiction between the class state and society was to be eased through increasing state control and the progress of democracy. This was not a new programme, no offspring of the brow of Minerva, but continuation and consolidation of what in fact was happening. The changes were inscribed in the very life and actions of the Labour Movement itself.

Bernstein pointed out that the objectives of the party and the trade unions had led to a basic divergence. The dominant theory of the party was politically pessimistic; that is, it reckoned with a sharpening of class antagonisms, and regarded the deterioration of the conditions as the normal, their improvements as the abnormal development. Bernstein argued that this pessimistic view of political reality was incompatible with trade union movement. The trade unions must justify their existence through the improvements which they achieve. To impose on the trade unions a tactic based on the pessimistic and revolutionary view would reduce them "to a political mass movement in trade union dress." Where the party necessarily viewed struggle as the normal condition, the trade union would always "regard a struggle as an exception and peace — or a truce extended to peace — as the rule, since otherwise it would undermine the conditions of its existence and the foundations of its successes." The conflict between these views, Bernstein thought, was unavoidable.

The party was originally anti-parliament: the parliament appeared to it as a swamp. Next, the party entered the elections and its spokesmen got into the Reichstag, but "purely for the purpose of agitation." Then they had to get into Parliamentary Committees, to vote for meliorative mea-

sures, and in 1894, the Social Democrats had to approve the Bavarian budget. In the trade unions, the adaptation was greater: one state institution after another was recognised by them; the state labour exchanges and social insurance system had forged new nexus between the organised worker and the state. The worker no longer looked upon the state official as his enemy, because in the meanwhile the state official had "become quite another person." The trade unions, from the fund of their experience, had propounded the thesis of *"neutrality."* In the words of Carl Legien (1861-1920), "Trade unions must seriously engage in social politics, but I am of the opinion that they should not engage in partisan politics."

Bernstein undertook to supply a philosophy and a coherent policy to this instinctive adaptation. Not in his work alone but in the spread of his influence too, the example of "English socialism" and the inspiration of Lassalle played a considerable part. His twelve years' sojourn in England had led Bernstein to doubt not only the wisdom but the need of a theory of social cataclysm. "No one has questioned the necessity for the working class to gain control of the government." But in a complex industrial society with organised working class, the road to power lay not through barricades but ballots. Here Lassalle, his Caesarian aberrations apart, had been on solid ground. Bernstein found Lassalle's economics antiquated, but his political philosophy had greater relevance to realities than that of Marx who thought in terms of power alone, while Lassalle intertwined power with law. If lyrical adulation of the state was wrong, so was revolutionary antagonism. Political democracy with its evolution through law was the only civilised way to social change. Likewise he welcomed Lassalle's insistence on the *justness* of socialism. Marx's historicism needed the balance

of ethical awareness. "To achieve a socialist society, Bernstein and the revisionists relied primarily upon the developing ethical sense of man."[7]

Bernstein voiced his criticisms first in a series of articles he wrote for the *Neue Zeit* from 1896 to 1898. At Kautsky's suggestion, he developed them comprehensively in book form in 1899 — and therewith touched off a raging controversy.

The growth of capitalism, Marx held, is fuelled by ever-increasing sums of capital. These accumulations find their way into fewer and fewer hands: the size of corporations grow, the number of owners shrinks. The twin forces of credit and competition develop concentration. Development and concentration undoubtedly occurred, but not of the kind envisaged by Marx. The controlling lever of credit was bringing order in the chaos of capitalist production. Banks had assumed the commanding role in finance and industry. As Rudolf Hilferding (1877-1940) was to show in his *Finanz-Kapital* (1910), "to take possession of six great banks would mean today to take possession of the most important sectors of the big industry." Here was a process of *enforced* socialisation, a stroke of pen could make the banks "state apparatus" and thus organs of socialism.

This phenomenon, Bernstein described as "Socialism-in-Capitalism": socialist institutions begin to permeate capitalism even as it grows to its zenith. The area of communal action steadily increases in size and significance. Cartels and monopolies had brought about an increase in public control and would lead to their eventual metamorphosis into public corporations. It was however necessary to give up the

7. Carl E. Schorske: *German Social Democracy*, p. 18.

concept of emancipation through political expropriation," in favour of "emancipation through economic organisation." The former becomes destructive, the latter is concerned with construction. After the Russian Revolution, Bukharin evolved a theory that the first phase of socialist ascendence is always destructive, only later does it turn to construction. It was such distortions that Bernstein had feared and warned against.

While the centralising trends foreseen by Marx had asserted markedly, side by side strongly centrifugal forces had also emerged to counteract and balance. Through the spread of share-holding, industrial property was getting diffused. The middle classes far from disappearing were growing in number, wealth and influence. Large-scale economy was creating not merely a new class of *salariat* but providing fresh scope for small undertakings and individual enterprise on its periphery and under its patronage.

The economic developments had been influenced by the growth of trade unions. Capitalism was being modified by the organisation of workers and by the growing social control. Bernstein, and Conrad Schmidt, saw labour legislation as a part of the "social control" that was modifying the crude contours of capitalism.

The classical concept of capitalism usually refers to three distinctive areas: forms of production, modes of distribution, legal relations. Only the first was yet to be fundamentally modified; the other two had already been altered under the pressure of the labour movement. The employer could no longer dictate terms of employment; conditions of work as also wages had become social matters, subject to legislation. By strengthening the role of the trade unions, by developing co-operatives — woefully ignored by Marx — the

proletariat could condition, in its favour, the substance of industrial economy.

These changes in economic life had brought about and demanded further changes in the political outlook of the proletariat. Marxian class analysis was too *simpliste*, in real life relations were complex. Marx himself had referred, in Volume III of *Capital*, to the "infinite splits of interests and positions which sub-divided all classes." It would be criminal to exploit these splits, to announce as it were, "We want you to swallow the enemy, and right afterwards we shall swallow you." Such tactics can only disrupt society. The complex class configuration should be used to foster solidarity inside the classes and to extend collaboration between the classes. Class war is a *social* weapon only within the folds of class peace.

The Party must strive to win greater support among non-workers, particularly the farmers, shopkeepers and the *salariat*. Already a fourth of the social democratic vote came from these classes, though the Party was 90 per cent working-class in membership.

For industrial society, as also for socialism, democracy was the best political vessel. "The democratic suffrage makes its possessor virtually a partner in the community, and such virtual partnership must eventually lead to actual partnership." Democracy abridges, even annuls, class rule without abolishing classes all at once. It is the "university of compromise" where classes learn to co-operate. Social democracy is federalist and decentralising: more and more power in the hands of regions and local communities, thereby dispersing the centres of power.

The proletariat would gather support and achieve results if it worked for concrete reforms rather than move

about a nebulous revolution. Men work best if they hitch their wagon to stars that are not too distant or moving too fast; if the pull of the ideal is too great the result will be disillusionment and cynicism. Revisionism sought to shift the apocalyptic emphasis to concrete and connected reforms, to bring the star and the wagon close together: "I confess openly I have extraordinarily little interest or taste for what is generally called 'the final goal of socialism.' This aim, whatever it be, is nothing to me, *the movement is everything*". There is for man, as Fichte had shown, the eternal striving, no abiding arrival anywhere.

Adjustment to changed conditions would remain precarious until Marxism was purged of its excrescence — the dialectic. The fundamentals of Marxism, according to Bernstein, were evolutionism, economic implications of history and class struggle. These valid social truths, "seduced by Hegelian dialectic," ran to extreme: "Every time we see the theory of the economy as the basis of history capitulate before the theory which drives the cult of force to the limit, we will run into a Hegelian sentence. Possibly it will be used only as an analogy, but that makes it even worse." Bernstein viewed life as governed by "organic evolutionism" — where change and adaptation are inter-related. Dialectic leads to over-emphasis on the struggle of opposites and neglect of mutual aid: "I am not of the opinion that the struggle of opposites is the basis of all development. The co-operation of related forces is of great significance as well." Dialectic breeds an over-valuation, of the "creative strength" of violence, and unwarranted stress on cataclysmic acts. Dialectic, in fact, is "unorganic evolutionism." Social evolution is a gradual growth into socialism, where class antagonisms slacken, where work *within* the state takes the place of strife against the state.

Marx's ethical relativism and economic determinism had eroded the "ought" in socialism: The materialist, with his determinism, is verily a "Calvinist without God." There is the same need of being elected to be saved, the same indifference for those "rejected by the Lord." Capitalism had, in its *laissez-faire,* imbibed the Calvinist core; unless ethics are restored, socialism would be similarly impregnated. Social advance, in fact, means modification by "ethical factors" of "the iron laws of history." "The legal and political superstructure," not merely interacts with the economic structure, but in widening areas moral elements achieve "creative character." The ethical emphasis in Kant as much as his critical approach were necessary to socialism. Socialism is not inevitable, it is desirable; socialism is not scientific, it is critical: Science is *tendenzlos,* "unbiased," it cannot serve as a guide to a social movement. "No *ism* is a science," its ends are ethically posited. With Lassalle and Jaures, Bernstein turned to the sage of Koningsberg as the philosophical fount of socialism.

Even Kautsky had said, in his book *The Road to Power* that moral integrity must be Social Democracy's response to increasing corruption. The socialists have to become "an indestructible power in the midst of the destruction of all authority."

Bernstein was not unaware of the undemocratic aspects of the Reich. In Prussia particularly, franchise, based on class privileges, kept the three chambers of legislature a closed preserve of the feudalists and the upper *bourgeoisie.* He knew that in the Reich, as it existed, his revisionism had no free or full scope. That is why he could never agree to his ideas being dubbed "English socialism," nor could he go with Jaures in his advocacy of a bloc with the Liberals. In the state of truncated democracy, he supported workers'

right to mass strike — to preserve hard-won gains and to further concrete, urgently-felt and widely-accepted reforms. It must ever be used "as an economic weapon with ethical objectives." His socialism was evolutionary, not narrowly constitutional. He fervently hoped that the forces of growth and change, vanguarded by social democracy, would get the time to triumph over restrictions and limitations. The wolves of war, however, overtook the yearnings of his hopes.

Bernstein feared war and was averse to it. Still, on August 4, 1914, he with the entire German Social Democracy voted for war against Russia. But a war with Britain appeared to him as a war against the future. As the war developed, he felt more and more out of tune with his party till, in 1916, his allegiance to peace and to amity between nations led him out of his beloved party. The high-priest of revisionism found himself with the revolutionary cast-outs of social democracy.

A short war and negotiated peace would have left conditions not uncongenial to revisionism. But the four long years of attrition destroyed much of the basis of "organic evolutionism." The war furthered socialising tendency in economy but fatally weakened the moral and democratic urges. History, later Lenin was to say, had played a strange trick: it had given birth at the beginning of 1918 to "two separate halves of socialism, side by side, like two chickens in one shell" — the economic in Germany, and the political in Russia. Bernstein recognised that under the stress of war German economy had become state capitalism, but the democratic forces were so weakened that its peaceful conversion to social democracy was well-nigh impossible. The economy sought a polity in its own image.

War, with its surcharged organisation and drive, feeds authoritarian tendencies and favours *anti*-democratic forces.

With its requisitioning of national energy, war often hatches despotism. The war of 1914 had been unusually destructive: the war cost came to $37,770,000,000, or half the national wealth of Germany; war dead numbered 2,140,000. And the War was lost! The social fabric lay shattered in the shambles of war and the ashes of defeat. The war ripped what Burke called "the decent draperies of life" from the German body politic. The Carthaginian peace imposed on Germany let loose a run-away inflation that blasted all the moorings of the middle classes. The young republic hovered between communist *emeutes* and reactionary *putsches*. The stabilising forces were in full retreat. The deracinated whirled about till economic depression sucked them into the Nazi whirlwind. Even in the trough of depression and despair, as the voting figures testify, stable forces like socialism, nationalism and Catholicism remained unshaken. It was the rootless, not in economic life alone but in thought and spirit, who drifted behind Hitler. Bernstein died just six weeks before the Nazi locusts settled upon the harvest of his hopes and life-work.

Socialism in Italy

The Italian Socialist Party was formed in 1892. Its weakness from the start was that its roots were never thrust in the rich past of the nation. British socialism not only shared the nation's "entailed inheritance" of freedom but was proud heir to liberalism, developed from Locke to Mill. German socialism drew deeply from the cultural soil of the nation, that was why Bernstein could charm the seething Hegelian maelstrom into a placid Kantian lake. Italian socialism never sought to discover its lineage with the glorious past.

The revolutionary impulse in Italian socialism had come from a Russian, Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76), its reformism from a Frenchman, Benoit Malon. The Marxian influence, however, appealed to something deep in the Italian soul. As Benedetto Croce put it: "The will never feels itself as free as when it knows that it is in accordance with the will of God or the necessity of things." Freedom as recognition of necessity stilled the turbid waters.

The intellectual climate that saw the birth of Italian socialism was "Positivist" — where, as in Lombroso, environmental factors counted far more than moral responsibility.

Italian socialism emerged in uncongenial atmosphere. "The poverty of soil made impossible a healthy industry; and *transformismo* (Italian version of "the spoils system") had *fundamentally* weakened parliamentary democracy. Democracy was anaemic, economic conditions far from healthy: Italy was closer to Eastern Europe than to the West. If social democracy was to triumph, the socialist party should have fostered conditions of well-being and prosperity. To create a democratic state and develop towards it a positive approach should have been its policy.

Between 1903 and 11, under Premier Giolitti, Italian democracy experienced its brief Indian Summer. Economic development and social legislation progressed hand in hand. The socialists were justified in rejecting Giolitti's offer of participation in the government, but towards social legislation and democratic traditions a positive, not hostile, attitude was needed.

The Italian socialists were disabled by their divisions and axioms from developing a positive policy. In 1900, the party adopted *simultaneously* a minimum programme of re-

forms and a maximum programme of revolution. Filippo Turati related them as means to the end. And there was the heart of the confusion: if reforms succeed, revolution becomes a disruption: reforms and social struggles can be combined, but not reforms and overthrow of the state. This unstable mixture of programme left the position explosive. Italian socialism lacked courage for revisionism as well as for revolution. Because it was not nourished on sustenance from the nation's past and her great traditions, no Jaures ever emerged.

In fact, the socialist movement showed much of the volatility of the people in that period of indecision. The mood was perhaps best symbolised in the poet Gabrieb D'Annunzio. His superb self-dramatisation runs like a red thread through the entire tapestry of Italian life. In 1900, he crossed the Chamber of Deputies and declared from his seat on the extreme left, "I go towards Life!" And life in his lexicon meant turbulence, irresponsibility, *volontarismo.*

During the War and after, the poet behaved with reckless irresponsibility. His colourful actions stirred the passions of the people and made responsible decisions impossible. Inside the socialist party, there were many who in their mental make-up were the constituents of the "Deputy for Beauty." His march on Fiume and the mock *regime,* his violent nationalism and his flirtations with Moscow, had only one inner consistency — revulsion of the lawful and the reasonable. With her plunge into the War, Italy was filled with self-assertion, noise, violence, irresponsible impulse for domination and action unbridled by thought, debate or procedure.

After the War, a great opportunity came to the socialists to conserve and construct. The party polled two-fifths of the

votes, and was the largest bloc — 156 — in the Chamber; it controlled 26 out of 69 provincial governments, and 2,162 communal administrations out of nearly 4,000. A strong trade union movement flanked the party. Across the frontier, in war-torn Austria, the Social Democrats were bringing peace and stability to their shattered country through a coalition with the Christian Social Party.

In Italy the situation was ripe for such an alliance. Don Luigi Sturzo's Popular Party was an "aconfessional" Christian Social party with a mass basis: it had a hundred Deputies, and social idealism still ran high in its ranks. Italians should have learnt from Austrian experience — Catholic countries with peasant masses would always throw up Karl Luegers (1844-1910). Better to have them on one's side than be deadlocked with them.

Italian socialism has ever shied away from the stubborn fact of Catholicism in the country. A negative attitude of not hurting the religious susceptibilities of the people, of working-men too, was meaningless. The Church could have been left alone, but with Catholicism an emotional and intellectual understanding was necessary.

On the eve of the birth of the Italian socialist party, Pope Leo XIII had issued the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). Though it was critical of socialism, it was critical of capitalism too. Its gravamen was really against statism and concentrationism. Its positive suggestions were in the accents of *distributionism*. Here was a bridge: in a country of many peasants, this could have become a wholesome starting point. Distributionism could have been pressed home in the *Latifondi*.

In the Popular Party, there was enough leaven of primitive Christianity to offer points of contact to an imaginative

socialist movement. Don Sturzo's main plank was regionalism. It was obtuse to have developed a conflict between political decentralisation and economic devolution close to socialist hearts. The Soviet, in theory, inhered both the qualities. In Italy, with the colourful annals of her city states, regionalism was a vital need, its satisfaction would have exerted a healing influence. A great Italian, St. Thomas Acquinas (1225-74), in his commentary on Aristotle's *Politics* had uttered a truth that was shaped by the saga of his own land: "The diversity of cities come from a diversity of ends or of different manners of reaching the same end; men create varying forms of common life and in consequence different cities." Within a common framework, such diversity alone gives substance to freedom.

But such a path, though it would have Romanised socialism, was unthinkable for men wrapped up in Marxian orthodoxy, as it was for the Roman orthodoxy.

In September 1920, Italian socialism reached its revolutionary watermark; 35,000 workers of metal industries and 300,000 workers of engineering establishments occupied and took over the country's most highly developed group of industries. The revolution knocked at the door of the socialists. But they were busy weaving Penelope's web: what the reformists wove in the Chamber was undone by the revolutionaries in the street and *vice versa*. Dazzled by the Russian Revolution, all that the Italian socialists did was to demoralise the nation and the workers, undermine their power against adventurers, dissipate the strength of the party, and splinter its solidarity. On the shambles of the revolution and on the shattered party Mussolini rode to power.

Twenty years of Fascism, of suppression and exile, have not fundamentally changed Italian socialism. It once again

refuses to be a truly stabilising force or to be frankly insurrectionist. It splits and Pietro Nenni slakes his thirst from the waters of the Volga and Guiseppe Saragat turns to the Thames, and vainly the Tiber flows to the sea.[8]

GUILD SOCIALISM

A promising development, acquiver with a lust for life and beauty, was *Guild Socialism*. It was the opening of a new seam to recover an antique ore. Guild Socialism arose as a protest against the prevailing capitalism as also the hoped-for nationalisation: in both, the disease as well as the cure, man remains lost.

In the pursuit of plenty, in the lust for profit, man had been subordinated to thing, tool had devoured the workman. Longingly, free spirits looked back to the times when, in the moving words of a great woman socialist: "Every man and woman was an artist in his or her own way.....A wealth of care and imagination went into the making of the most mundane and insignificant of articles.....Art was an essential part of life, more a necessity like bread and love and home."[9] Not only had the feeling for beauty gone out of work, but the industrial worker, shorn of responsibility and initiative, felt robbed of the throb and thrill of creation.

Against the death of beauty in utility, of the instinct for workmanship in profit-seeking, John Ruskin (1819 - 1900), Ludlow (1821-91), William Morris (1834-96) and a host of other near-socialists had protested. They were appalled at the general preoccupation with the rights and needs of the citizen, the consumer, to the universal neglect of man,

8. W. Hilton — Young: *The Italian Left, passim.*
9. Kamaladevi: *Socialism and Society*, p. 107.

the producer. Nationalisation was no solution: As Alfred Marshall (1842-1924) had said: "The postman is not made free by escaping from the control of an employer, who may be sympathetic, and coming under that of officials, who must obey orders and have no power to indulge their sympathies."

Guildsmen demanded a reorganisation of the industrial society on a *functional* basis. Man as a consumer-citizen shares uniformity but as a producer-worker he remains unique. His function assigns him a distinctive place in the society. Only a functional approach could end the industrial society's divorce between ownership and use: "The greater part of modern property has been attenuated to a pecuniary lien or bond on the product of industry, which is normally valued precisely because it relieves the owner from any obligation to perform a postive or constructive function." Such property Prof. Tawney characterises as *acquisitive*, it breeds exploitation and lust for power. The property, he said, that a man has as a result of *his* labour "turns sand into gold"; property in the labour of someone else "turns gold into sand." An acquisitive society is never a free society.

Men have no natural rights, only objective rights based upon the fulfilment of functions. This "functional" idea was propounded by a Spanish writer, Ramiro de Maeztu, and was developed by a fellow Spaniard, Semprum Y Gurrea into "a theory of functional proprietorship." Not only the *product* of one's labour, but the *process* of one's labour is wealth. Such a form of possession — of skill, of aptitude — rouses in man primordial feelings; the desire to see work well done, dignity of work. A reorganisation of society, a resuscitation of what Tawney has called "the functional vote," was behind the emergence, or rather the revival, of the guild idea.

Guild socialism owes much to the inspiration of the medieval guilds: "If the medieval system has lessons for us, they are not parrot lessons of slavish imitation," wrote G. D. H. Cole, "but lessons of spirit, by which we may learn to build up, on the basis of large-scale production and the world market, a system of industrial organisation that appeals to the finest human motives and is capable of developing the tradition of free communal service. I fully believe that, when we have established these conditions, there will come from the producer and consumer alike a widespread demand for goods of finer quality than the shoddy which we turn out in such quantity today, and that this will bring about a new standard of craftsmanship and a return, over a considerable sphere, to small-scale production. But this, if it comes, will come only as the deliberate choice of free men in a free society."

Such freedom in a free society presupposes reorganisation on the guild principle: and a guild was defined as "a self-governing association of mutually dependent people organised for a responsible discharge of a particular function of society." (A. R. Orage). Each guild was to include all those employed in a given industry, trade, or profession, managers as well as workers, and each was to have a monopoly of the particular activity it included.

The Guilds Restoration Movement of 1906 imparted the impulse that grew into the National Guilds League of 1915. In this elaboration, the basic premise that a guild has to grow round a craft and a community of craftsmen was almost forgotten. What La Tour du Pin has called "property in one's craft" demands a fairly small scale of production which the worker can comprehend as a whole, personal relationships between men working together, and a balanced *tempo*. The claims of efficiency and output have to be subordinated

to the needs of human dignity and freedom. A guild, enlivened with its true *ethos*, has to grow up, it cannot be *imposed*. It grows round the worker's *title* to his work, its enrichment through co-operative effort, and communion in good living. The neglect of these facts made many guildsmen confuse the form with the spirit. In Soviet Russia, industries were organised as national, functional organisations controlling production and prices. These giants, however, were no guilds, because the worker-producer lacked the freedom to alter his work, to plan the growth of the guild and to develop the industry. The Russian trusts, like the Italian corporations, were State-imposed. No guild without freedom, no freedom without interplay and growing together: by ignoring these *criteria* many guildsmen got swept into communism.

The diversion of the guild stream into the communist flood became easier because of the guildsmen's fatal fascination for syndicalism and its philosophy of force. Guild, as an idea, fails to bring home the truth, that to grow, it needs general stability, not endless turbulence. Legal and financial *minutae* of a guild society were neglected, perhaps as a reaction to Fabian aridity and precision-mania. But the concept of growth, inherent in guild idea, was equally ignored. Visions of power could lead the guildsmen only on pilgrimages to Moscow.

A part of the guild movement merged into the smaller eddy of *Distributionism:* that man has fallen among thieves and has lost his property is a fact. But how to make, in a complex industrial society, every man as owner-worker has never been satisfactorily worked out by the distributionists.

Social Catholic thought conceived of a qualified worker's "ownership of his job." Distributionism and Decentra-

lisation evoked a philosophy of a "cluster of sovereignties." La Tour du Pin (1834-1924) and Albert de Mun (1840-1914) sought "the reconstruction of the industrial family." Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), the exponent of *Solidarisme,* favoured decentralisation through professional organisations and considered territorial decentralisation as of secondary importance. Leon Duguit introduced into the thought stream the pluralist current: "Since man is by nature a social being, capable of functioning only within a group, his activity will evidently be greater and more fruitful in proportion as he belongs to a greater number of groups."

Guild socialism has remained a fecund idea: workers' control and functional decentralisation have been impregnated in socialist thought. But it has remained more of an attractive objective than a concrete policy. Nationalisation has taken substantial strides in Britain; industrial corporations, public and autonomous, have emerged, but the quest of workers' control remains as elusive as ever. That is perhaps due to the *naivete* of the guildsmen: they never came to grips with the two main questions of balancing the innovating with the stabilising forces in industry and of harmonising functions with the occupation as a whole, and setting them in the wider social framework.

Recessive Force in Socialism

Reviewing the history of the Second International, James Joll makes the following observation: "It could perhaps be argued that the influence of German Socialism on Social Democratic parties in the Second International was unfortunate, retarding, for example, the development of a specifically French Socialism, excluding some of the ablest men in the Third Republic from office for many years, and encouraging a rigid Marxism in the trammels of which an

important section of the French Socialist Party has been caught upto the present day. For those who like to see political issues in personal terms, Jaures and Bebel can be regarded as the protagonists not only of rival forms of Socialism but of two different ways of looking at *politics*."[10]

This divergence emerged at the very birth of the Second International. The Socialist Congress that met at Paris in 1889 had split up into camps, and rival conferences were held, "ostensibly over the question of the credentials of certain delegates, but really over the question that divides socialists in all countries today: shall socialists co-operate with other political parties or remain isolated? The Marxian dogmatists believed in isolation; the opportunists or possibilists believed in co-operating with other parties."[11]

The divergence scarcely affected England. This workshop of the world had pioneered the industrial revolution. Economic development and political freedom made revisionism the inarticulate major premise of thought of the Labour Party. J. A. Hobson had said that "the way to make socialism safe is to make democracy real." England showed the way of making socialism safe, because by the end of the nineteenth century democracy *had* become real. The controversy over "splendid isolation" of the socialists, which in Germany Von Vollmar had scathingly yet ineffectively described as a "policy of sterility and despair" could never become meaningful in England. At a conference of the I.L.P. in 1910 a resolution objecting to members of the party "appearing on platforms alongside Liberal and Tory

10. James Joll: *The Second International*, 1889-1914, p. 3.
11. Samuel P. Orth: *Socialism and Democracy in Europe* (1913) p. 69.

Capitalists and landlords" was defeated by a large majority. That was the natural temper of Englishmen.

In Germany, notwithstanding splendid organisation of workers and marked economic development — *e.g.*, the trade union membership leaped from 269,000 in 1895 to 3,000,000 in 1909 — absence of responsible government made revisionism a fitful activity.

In France, the Third Republic offered plenty of opportunities for parliamentary activities. France's industrial advance was halting, by 1911 there were just a million trade union members, social legislation was behind that of Germany and England, but the democratic system based on universal suffrage gave scope for reformers. The preservation of the democratic Republic easily became a prime passion of many a socialist.

In Germany the lines were clearly drawn from the start. Their dogmatic aloofness was most tenacious. During the years of their bitter persecution by the government they found their excuse in an isolation that was forced upon them. Von Vollmar told his colleagues, immediately after the repeal of the anti-socialist law, that the South Germans are ready to co-operate with everyone who would be ready to give them an inch. In reply to this, Bebel introduced a resolution affirming that "the primary necessity of attaining political power" could not be "the work of a moment," but was attained only by gradual growth. During the period of growth the Social Democrats should not work for mere "concessions from the ruling classes," but "have only the ultimate and complete aim of the party in mind." The Bebelian theory linked the ultimate goal with ultimate power, both to be attained by waiting and working for the flood tide.

In 1909, the ruling Bülow bloc broke up. The Conservative landlords refused to shoulder any tax burden and threw other elements in society together; various commercial and allied interests banded together into *Hansabund* against the agrarian-conservative *Bund der Landwirte* and its selfish tax policy. There opened up for a brief while a prospect *of Hansabund* and the Social Democrats working together; the idea of a bloc "from Bebel to Bassermann" emerged. But the absence of democratic government and the rigid class lines on which political life was articulated made any flowering of the idea impossible.

Among German socialists the revisionist crisis therefore primarily took a theoretical form. In France Guesde took the dogmatic position; Millerand and other Independent Socialists the opportunist position, while Jaures blazed a distinctive trail.

In 1897, France was rocked by *l'affaire Dreyfus*. The Republic was challenged and menaced. Jaures rallied to the cause of the Dreyfusards. He wrote of Dreyfus: "He is no longer an officer of the bourgeois: he is despoiled by the very excess of his misfortune of all class characteristics, he is nothing but humanity itself in the deepest misery and despair that one can imagine. In defence of Dreyfus, Jaures joined hands with all forces of Dreyfusards, socialists and non-socialists." As master of the 'Bloc' in the Chamber, Jaures became the first real head of the first French democracy. Two great reforms were undertaken: the disestablishment of the Church, carrying with it the secularisation of education and the reorganisation of the army.[12]

It was during a historic debate on socialism with Clemenceau in the Chambers that Jaures was told about his pro-

12. Samuel P. Orth: *op.cit.*, 91.

gramme: "What a terribly bourgeois programme! M. Jaures, after expounding his programme, challenged me to produce my own. I had very great difficulty in restraining the temptation to reply: 'You know my programme very well. You have it in your pocket. You stole it from me.' " The programme of all socialists was essentially evolutionary but the attitudes often remained revolutionary.

Jaures differed from the *possibilists*. Criticising Serrante he said that Serrante was wrong "when he thinks it enough to lay down the principle of democracy in order to resolve, in a sort of automatic fashion, the antagonisms of society... The enthronement of political democracy and universal suffrage by no means suppresses the profound antagonism of classes..... Serrante errs in positing democracy without noting that it is modified, adultered, thwarted by the antagonism of classes and the economic preponderance of one class, just as Guesde errs in positing the class war apart from democracy." To Jaures the problem was to "penetrate" this democracy with the ideas of socialism until "the proletarian and socialist state has replaced the oligarchic and bourgeois state." This can be brought about, he said, by "a policy which consists in at once collaborating with all democrats, yet vigorously distinguishing oneself from them."

Millerand pursued a different path. In 1898 Rene Waldeck-Rousseau, who on an earlier occasion had given trade union rights to French workers, formed the government and invited Alexandre Millerand to join it. His appointment at once became the source of renewed conflict inside the French socialist movement and through its international repercussions influenced socialist tactics internationally for a generation. If the Dreyfus affair aroused controversy over co-operation with other parties for specific and immediate aims, the Millerand case caused even more violent debates.

Between 1898 and 1900 constitutional government in Italy was in danger. General Pelloux's government sought to enact (Feb. 1899) anti-socialist legislation. However, in contrast to Germany in 1879, the Liberals and Radicals saw the danger and by 1900 their opposition brought a new Liberal Government to power. Filippo Turati raised the issue of co-operation and electoral alliance with Liberals and Radicals which was stoutly resisted by Marxists led by Ferri. The controversy kept on till 1912 when Bissolati and Bonomi broke away to form the unsuccessful Reformist Party.

The International Socialist Congress assembled in Paris in September 1900 to discuss the issue of Revisionism.

The Germans and Marxists from countries where there was a strong reformist wing—Guesde of France and Ferri of Italy — wanted an unequivocal veto on any participation in bourgeois government or co-operation with non-socialist parties. There were however many who wanted an elastic policy: Vandervelde of Belgium, for instance, said: "A coalition is legitimate in the case where liberty is threatened as in Italy; it is legitimate again where it is a question of defending the rights of human personality, as recently in France. It is legitimate finally when it is a question of winning universal suffrage in Belgium." He criticised Millerand, less for what he had done than for the way he did it, without prior consultation with his party.

The Congress adopted a resolution that said that acceptance of office by a socialist in a bourgeois government "could not be deemed the normal commencement of the conquest of political power, but only an expedient called forth by transitory and exceptional conditions."

The Congress resumed the debate in 1904. After four days' discussion, a wonderful struggle of minds and ideas,

a resolution favourable to revisionism was rejected by twenty-one votes to nineteen, and then the resolution affirming the German party's stand was passed by twentytwo votes to four with twelve abstentions. "It is significant that the people who opposed the Dresden motion, or who abstained, were representatives of those countries where liberal parliamentary institutions were strongest — England, France, Scandinavia, Belgium, Switzerland — while, with the exception of Italians, those who supported it (including the solitary delegate from Japan) came from countries where political power was unlikely to be offered to them. It was a great victory for Bebel and a great personal defeat for Jaures."[13]

Democratic articulation of socialism was smothered by those who had neither the experience nor the opportunity for democratic rule. In it they were abetted by determined Marxists like Guesde and Ferri. Revisionism was not rejected by the weight of facts or the strength of logic but by the serried support of those who had fostered socialist forces in authoritarian conditions as in Germany and Austro-Hungary.

The Third International has carried forward with characteristic ruthless efficiency the consummation of the Second International.

Prof. Arnold Toynbee in his *Study of History* has discussed aggressive and recessive forces: revisionism has ever been the recessive (hence irrepressible) form of socialism.

As John Plamenatz in his stimulating study, *German Marxism and Russian Communism*, has put it, "Marxism is a philosophy born in the West before the democratic age."[14]

13. James Joll: *op.cit.*, p. 104.
14. p. 168.

The Marxists therefore have never been happy with democracy. To deny it and where necessary to disrupt it becomes their instinctive approach. In Asian countries where democracy is struggling for strength it is easy to adopt the traditional Marxian stance, but it is far more necessary to explore revisionist re-statement where socialism becomes integral to democracy.

PART V

THE PEASANT AND SOCIALISM

The peasant is a neglected subject in socialism. Marx's well-known observation, "Property acquired by one's own labour, by one's own effort, by one's own merit. Are you speaking of the petty bourgeois, of the small peasant property which was before the bourgeois property? We do not need to do away with it. The evolution of industry has done and is daily doing away with it," generally characterised the socialist attitude. The inexorable laws of development were expected to solve the peasant problem.

For fostering revolution, the peasant could of course be supported. As early as 1849 Marx had said: "The great agricultural countries between the Baltic and the Black Seas can save themselves from patriarchal-feudal barbarism only by way of agrarian revolution which would convert the serf or bonded peasants into free proprietors—a revolution precisely similar to that which occurred in 1789 in the French countryside." But what happens after the revolution? How is the peasant to be integrated into socialist development? We have already seen the wide divergence between Proudhon's views and Marx's. Can these differences be brought to a common focus of understanding?

Engels gave two separate answers. As far as small peasants were concerned, he said: "We can win over quickly to our side the mass of small peasants only if we make them promises which we notoriously cannot keep.... In the first place.... we foresee the inevitable ruin of the small peasant, but are in no case called on to hasten it by our inter-

vention. Secondly, it is equally obvious that when we win state power, we shall not think of forcibly expropriating the small peasant (whether with or without compensation does not matter), as we shall be compelled to do with large landowners. Our task in relation to the small peasants will consist first of all in transforming their private production and private ownership into collective production and ownership — not, however, by forcible means but by the method of example and by offering social aid for this purpose."

In 1875 Engels in his article "Social Relations in Russia" wrote: "None the less it is incontestable that the possibility exists of transforming this communal form into a higher form if only it is preserved until such time as the conditions are ripe for this transformation, and if it is capable of development in such a way that the peasants begin to work the land not separately but in common; then the Russian peasant will pass over to this higher form, avoiding the intermediate stage of bourgeois small-scale ownership. But this can happen only in the event of the victorious proletarian revolution breaking out in Western Europe before the final collapse of this common property — a revolution which will assure to the Russian peasant the essential condition for such a transfer, and in particular the material means needful to carry out the revolution in his whole system of agriculture which is necessarily bound up with it."

The aim is collective property in agriculture, the means include "social aid" and "material means" to facilitate collectivisation and modernisation. Revolution in the industrialised countries of the West was expected to release streams of aid to the under-developed agricultural countries. International aid thus becomes a crucial lever of transformation, and it is against such aid that contemporary Marxists have

usually railed. Internally, too, social aid has to flow from industry to agriculture.

The Soviet economist, Preobrazhensky, has however stated candidly: "The more economically backward and petty bourgeois a country which enters upon the socialist organisation and smaller the amount of accumulated wealth which the proletariat receives from the revolution, the more is such a socialist state obliged to depend upon the exploitation of pre-socialist economic sources."

The communists have resolved this dilemma by resorting to dictatorship. It is the social democrats who have failed to offer a satisfactory answer.

The socialists remained uncomfortable in the presence of small property. Large property they understood because they could dispossess and nationalise it. But small property? "We have no use in the Party," Engels had said, "for the peasant who expects from us the perpetuation of his dwarf property." Kautsky had gone further and said: "Our policy must favour the peasant as little as the Junker."

The French reformists sought to explain the smallholding as nothing more than a tool, comparable to "the chisel of the engraver, the brush of the painter," only to be faced with the outcry against this attempt "to smuggle it in contraband, hidden among professional tools, into the domain of collectivism." Jaures' effort to show that between large property and small property there was a difference not merely of degree but of kind: "the one was a form of capital, the other a form of labour" — was not successful![1]

1. David Mitrany: *Marx against the Peasant.*

The attitudes of communist spokesmen after Marx, *i.e.*, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, and Tito to the peasant, I have sketched in my book *Socialism and Peasantry*. I shall not repeat the arguments here. In communist countries the difficulties experienced in adjusting the peasant to a developing socialist economy, of formation of capital in a process that tends to grow at the cost of rural economy, have never been freely discussed. Like other difficulties they remain shrouded in mystery. To the extent Asian countries seek socio-economic changes democratically, these difficulties and the relationship between socialism and the peasant become of seminal significance.

If peasant economy can be modernised, and/or surplus agricultural population gainfully absorbed elsewhere in the economy, there would be no problem. But these solutions postulate large-scale investments. If they come in terms of external aid, again the problem is resolved. But where the resources have to be obtained internally two sets of situation have to be prepared for: (1) that capital formation does not take place at the cost of the traditional, *i.e.*, peasant sector in the economy; (2) as the peasant's output and income have to rise and as resources for modernisation will be limited and as every section would have to bear its share in stepped-up savings and investments needed for development, it becomes necessary to productivise the traditional modes of production. To that end what institutional and ideational changes have to be worked for?

But in Asian countries, where the peasant predominates, the socialists have not worked out satisfactory relationships. Acharya Narendra Deva was, by common consent, a great nationalist and *doyen* of Indian socialists. He was unswerving in his loyalty to Marxian socialism. Yet he warned against "the danger of peasantism" in the following

words: "There is one more danger to which I would like to refer in this place. It is the danger of *peasantism*. It looks at all the questions from the narrow and sectional viewpoint of the peasant class. Its tenets derived from the ideal that our economic evolution, as the whole structure of our State, will necessarily have to retain its specific peasant character. It believes in rural democracy which means a democracy of peasant proprietors. It claims that for the destruction of the war spirit and for the peace of the world such a regime is more suitable. It would, however, give protection to labour, as labour cannot be ignored. It would also accept the representative form of government because it has found favour with many classes. Its programme is not based on any therory, nor does it confirm to any particular doctrine but is constituted of elements drawn from all existing doctrines. It has the outlook of the middle peasant who has been influenced by modern ideas, and is based on petty bourgeois economy. In its crude form it would mean a kind of narrow agrarianism and an insatiable desire to boost the peasant in all possible places. Such an outlook is unscientific and betrays a mentality which may give exaggerated importance to the small peasant . . . . The scientific outlook will be determined by the laws of social change which assign every class its proper place in the social economy of the future. It will be guided by democratic conceptions of social justice, but the process of accomplishing the object will be governed by the laws of social change. The true objective, in the words of Stalin, will be to re-educate the main mass of the peasantry in the spirit of socialism and to gradually bring the bulk of the peasantry into line with socialist construction through the medium of co-operative societies."[2]

2. Narendra Deva: *Socialism and National Revolution* (1946), p. 51.

What precisely are "the laws of social change"? How do they operate? What is the proper place of the peasant class? Who assigns the place? Why should a democracy in which peasants predominate not reflect the mood and mores of the small peasant? Is Stalinist re-education consistent with freedom and democracy? Must all peasant property and liberty be gobbled up into collectives?

The central problem of the relationship between the peasant and economic development remained disguised for socialists by the easy identification of the stresses and strains of development with capitalism. It may be necessary to describe the seamy side of capitalism, but is not economic development *per se* strewn with serious difficulties? Can such a development attempted under the aegis of Social Democracy escape these stresses and strains? This question has rarely been posed.

Rosa Luxemburg, one of the most brilliant socialists, in her book, *The Accumulation of Capital,* reaches some conclusions of fundamental importance. She writes: "The general result of the struggle between capitalism and simple commodity production is this: after substituting commodity economy for natural economy, capital takes the place of simple commodity economy. Non-capitalist organisations provide a fertile soil for capitalism; more strictly, capital feeds on the ruins of such organisations, and although the non-capitalist *milieu* is indispensable for accumulation, the latter proceeds at the cost of this medium nevertheless, by eating it up. Historically, the accumulation of capital is a kind of metabolism between capitalist economy and those pre-capitalist methods of production without which it cannot go on and which in this light it corrodes and assimilates. *Thus capital cannot accumulate without the aid of non-capitalist organisations, nor, on the other hand, can*

it tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible."[3]

Is such accumulation the exclusive character of capitalism, or in lesser or larger measure that is the inherent character of accumulation *per se*, including under socialism? This question is crucial for Asian countries, because the lack and lag in economic development have to be overcome by stepped-up capital formation and investments.

If socialists are called upon to function, as in Western Europe, after the early problems of developments have been overcome, these questions need not arise. If the socialists receive massive aid from developed countries, as Marx envisaged in the case of Russia, then too perhaps the rigours might be softened. But when socialists find themselves in power, as in many Asian countries today, with only limited external aid, the question whether the process sketched by Rosa Luxemburg is peculiar to capitalism or is endemic to early development becomes of surpassing importance.

Engels had offered even more penetrating analysis: "For it is one of the necessary corollaries of *grand industrie* that it *destroys* its own home market by the very process by which it creates it. It creates it by destroying the basis of domestic industry of the peasantry. But without domestic industry peasants cannot live. They are ruined *as peasants;* their purchasing power is reduced to the minimum; and until they, as *proletarians*, have settled into new conditions of existence, they will furnish a very poor market for the newly arisen factories." (italics in the original).

3. P. 416. (italics mine).

Are the swish and thrust of *grand industrie* peculiar to it as such, or only in capitalist context? In a democratic society why should the peasants supinely agree to be ruined and destroyed? Experts have shown that economic development and industrialisation absorb the increase in population, agricultural population thus goes down *relatively*, rarely, if at all, *absolutely*. And whatever be the benefits at the end of economic transformation, for Asia today the principal preoccupation is with the *process*, and not the *end-product*, of the transformation. And the process is never painless.

The Cocoon of the Peasant

In 1891, one of the leaders of the Farmers' Alliance in America, Senator Peffer, wrote as follows: "The American farmer of today is altogether a different sort of man from his ancestor of fifty or hundred years ago. A great many men and women now living remember when farmers were largely manufacturers; that is to say, they made great many implements for their own use. Every farmer had an assortment of tools with which he made wooden implements, as forks and rakes, handles for his hoes and ploughs, spokes for his wagon, and various other implements made wholly out of wood. Then the farmer produces flax and hemp and wool and cotton. These fibres were prepared upon the farm; they were spun into yarn, woven into cloth, made into garments, and worn at home. Every farm had upon it a little shop for wood and iron work, and in the dwelling were cards and looms; carpets were woven, bedclothing of different sort was prepared; upon every farm geese were kept, their feathers used for supplying the home demand with beds and pillows, the surplus being disposed of at the nearest market town. During the winter season

wheat and flour and corn meal were carried in large wagons drawn by teams of six to eight horses a hundred or two hundred miles to market, and traded for farm supplies for the next year — groceries and dry goods. Besides this, mechanics were scattered among the farmers. The farm wagon was in process of building a year or two; the material was found near the shop; the character of the timber to be used was stated in the contract; it had to be procured in a certain season and kept in the drying process a length of time specified, so that when the material was brought together in proper form and the wagon made, both parties to the contract knew where every stick of it came from, and how long it had been in seasoning. During the winter time the neighbourhood carpenter prepared sashes and blinds and doors and moulding and cornices for the next season's building. When the frosts of autumn came the shoemaker repaired to the dwelling of the farmer and there, in a corner set apart for him, he made up shoes for the family during the winter. All these things were done among the farmers, and a large part of the expense was paid with products of the farm. When winter approached, the butchering season was at hand; meat for family use during the next year was prepared and preserved in the smoke house. Wheat was threshed, a little at a time, just enough to supply the needs of the family for ready money, and not enough to make it necessary to waste one stalk of straw. Everything was saved and put to use. One of the results of that sort of economy was that comparatively a very small amount of money was required to conduct the business of farming. A hundred dollars average probably was as much as the largest farmers of that day needed in the way of cash to meet the demands of their farm work, paying for

hired help, repair of tools, and all other incidental expenses."[4]

The picture drawn above is undoubtedly idealised, it sketches an Arcadian life which never existed except, perhaps, for a fortunate few. It is also true that such a life had the other side, of hardships and isolation. But with all that the description contains a core of vital truth. Similar descriptions for other countries can be easily cited. The life of the peasant unites various activities together. Not only the family is engaged in multiple productive activities but the village community provides a whole complex of services needed by peasant households. The family is engaged in a multitude of activities and such families are enmeshed in almost self-sufficient village communities.

Economic development, monetisation of activities, specialisation, all disrupt the old, closely-knit relationships. The process of unsheathing and shearing is inescapable. The havoc wrought in Indian villages by the flood of British manufactures, vividly chronicled by R. C. Dutt and others, would occur whenever machine-made goods compete with village crafts. Higher technology tends to disrupt production on lower levels of technique, that is an immutable process. The crime of imperialism is that under it the benefits of industrialisation and the *debris* caused by industries tend to get located in two different countries, one in the metropolitan, the other in the colony. But inside the same country, regionally and class-wise, such polarisation does occur. Over a period of time, say, a century of development, the position ultimately evens out. Hence socialists are against the evils of capitalism. But even under socialist

4. W. A. Peffer: *The Farmer's side. His Troubles and Their Remedy.*

reconstruction these dangers are inherent. They can be guarded against by special protective measures for the villages necessitating a change not only in the *degree* but the *form* of industrial innovation. Social democracy needs to pioneer thinking in these directions.

The peasant for his own good as well as for social progress has to be freed, from the thick web of multiple activities. It might have provided Arcadian life to a few in the past, today the old relationships are breaking down and for the majority they are burdensome. The peasant cannot be allowed to face the rigours of economic development naked and alone. His production is of a type where he easily becomes the victim of a double squeeze. The following description given by C. Wright Mills is not wide of the mark: "A price squeeze was put on the farmer: as he entered the slump (of the thirties), the wholesale price of farm equipment dropped only 15 per cent while production was cut 80 per cent, but the price of the farm produce dropped 63 per cent while production was cut only 6 per cent." Price relationship between agricultural and industrial goods has therefore to be worked out, and it is significant to find that by and large such relationships have been worked out only in developed countries, where the peasant problem ceases to be acute! Unless the peasants are to be subjected to compulsory levies and the whole economy operated on a nationalised basis, as in communist countries, it will become necessary to work out the implications of stabilising price policy.

The Enlivening Spirit

One often hears of modernisation of the productive processes of the rural people. Such an effort demands tremendous investment of capital, and even if that was possible

the tiny fragments of peasant holdings and the rapid increase in population make the process largely unsuited to countries of Asia. Here, in the measurable future, the emphasis has to be on *productivisation of traditional elements.* And it is there that the teachings of the utopian socialists become relevant to Asia.

Large-scale agriculture with modern equipment often works hard on the soil. Of the United States, competent observers have said, "one-fifth of our original area of tillable land has been ruined for further cultivation, a third of what remains has been badly damaged. Another third is highly damaged." Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. can use their land resources in a prodigal manner, but in most Asian countries land is ravaged and is so scarce that its restructuring, restoration of its health, demands devoted care and labour from the peasant. This is a task that no extensive agriculture can attempt.

The utopian socialists have worked out various socio-political institutions and a set of social values suited to the needs of rural people. The utopian socialists have been as guilty as others (perhaps more) of extravagant claims and arguments, but when their ideas are shorn of these aberrations, what emerges is of vital relevance to rural reconstruction.

More important than the institutional approaches they offer, it is the *ethos* they desire that is of real value. In 1915 Sidney Webb, in the course of the preface that he wrote to Dr. John Matthai's book, observed: "We make much, in Western Europe and America of Decision by Majority Vote: the Indian village offers us, like the Quaker's meeting, a possibly higher alternative, if we believe in Government of Consent, in the Decision by the General Sense of the

Community. In England our lawyers and statesmen are still encumbered with the Austinian pedantry of a century ago which taught them obligations are just the obverse of rights, and that nothing is a right which is not enforceable by judicial proceedings, — the inference being that there can be no binding obligation to the public at large, to the village as a whole, to the craft to which one belongs, to all the members of one's family, or to future generations. The Indian village, like the early English Manor, emphasises obligations rather than rights; and far from confining itself to rights on which some particular person could take action for his own benefit, devotes himself largely to the enforcement of obligations to the public." [5]

This assessment of the Indian village was perhaps not correct, even when it was made, but in the forty years or more that have since elapsed, little truth survives in the picture. Today every villager is encumbered with the Austinian pedantry! The old attitudes cannot be evoked again. They were the products of certain social institutions and certain social climate. Both have changed and therefore the old attitudes are lost. A new spirit has to reach and revivify the rural society because only through community building can the peasant face in a fruitful manner the difficulties and possibilities that economic development, even when socialistically oriented, open out.

Before we seek the lineaments of the new spirit a basic decision needs to be reached. Should the socialists, as the communists are wont to do wherever they are in power, foment class conflict in villages even after landlordism is removed and use the wide array of tactics developed from Lenin to Mao Tse-tung to use one section against the

5. John Matthai: *Village Government in British India*, p. xii.

other? Should the sole cohesive force in the village be provided by the Party cadre? If that is the line chosen, democratic rights and socialist values cannot survive. Then must come the whole complex of communist paraphernalia: people's courts, liquidation of kulaks, forced levies and the attendant violence. The other alternative is to help the village to recover its community solidarity and foster autonomy of village community, where direct, face to face democracy becomes possible. The village and the craft become the smallest social organisms in which a man begins to learn the liberating lessons of sociality without the oppressive weight of custom or cadres. It is on that choice that relevance or irrelevance of utopian socialism, as we have defined and discussed it earlier, will be decided.

The Famine Commission (1880) had said: "India has a poor law, but it is unwritten."[6] That means around 1880 in the village there was a certain spirit of social solidarity and mutual responsibility. The Indian Irrigation Commission (1901-3) had said: "We were repeatedly assured that the maintenance of the tanks was not satisfactory, that *khudimaramat* was practically dead. Others regarded it as only moribund . . . . We are ourselves reluctant to admit that so valuable an institution is really dead and past restoration."[7] The Public Works Commission of 1869-70 had gone minutely into the question and produced a large mass of evidence to prove its prevalence. So, it was between 1870 (or 1880) and 1900 that the old communal habits crumbled.

Today everyone realises the imperative need of the revival of that community spirit. It cannot reappear in the old form of tradition and age-old habit. It has to be a

6. *Report*, Appendix ii, p. 65.
7. *Report*, part ii, p. 112.

consciously captured emotion, a deeply-felt urge that makes meaningful man's relations with soil and fellowmen. It is to that end that our utopian socialists from Gandhi to Vinoba and Jayaprakash have striven. Can rural problems be solved, can traditional elements be productivised, without the social *elan* they have sought to impart? Will the socialists insist on educating the peasant in what Sidney Webb has called "the Austinian pedantry"? Will binding obligations be only to the chosen party?

The organic needs of village community cannot be met by sharpening class conflicts or party rivalries. Devotion to community building demands an atmosphere of mutual goodwill and not of simmering hostility. Is there any alternative to the fusion of understanding with conscience, to the spontaneous acceptance of ethical imperatives? Whether the villager will accept these or not is a different question, what is crucial is whether the socialist has any alternative, any escape from them.

Village communities have generally broken down: the villages present a picture of economic *debris* and social decay. Is it possible to attempt socialist transformation without reviving the community spirit? It is true that there are marked inequalities and embedded injustices in the village; to soften them is the responsibility of the reformers and administrators. The ameliorative measures will tend to remain on paper unless in the village an atmosphere responsive to changes prevails. How to evoke that atmosphere?

In Denmark, folk schools played a vital part in activising the villages. Education, not just the three R's but of community life, has been widely recognised as a valuable social incubator. From China to Peru the need of mutual aid is recognised, but it is not yet clear whether the mutual

aid teams function in an atmosphere of social strife between the various strata of peasants, depending on their economic status or political opinions, and under the duress of economic weapons of the State, like discriminatory taxation, obligatory deliveries of grain, distribution of credit meant to "dislodge the capitalist element from the village," or by fostering in the village a community consensus.

The emphasis, in our opinion, has to be on community life. Constructive work, restructuring of the village community alone can generate co-operation and the spirit that would help the traditional elements to get productivised. Modernisation is necessary but the new spirit is needed to create a cultural *milieu* wherein it becomes possible to absorb large investments and higher techniques. This is particularly the case in Asia where the land-man ratio is low, where the pressure of agricultural population demands *intensive* effort for improved production.

Many observers have been deeply impressed with the socialistic developments in Israel. The Jewish socialists ascribe the secret of their success to the widespread acceptance of a common value system, a way to life, that has made it possible for new institutions to emerge and variations in innovations and innovators to take place. A value system that fosters social cohesion can give new meaning to self-help and universalise mutual aid.

The spirit behind *bhoodan* and *gramdan,* even if their entire programme is not endorsed, therefore possesses an enlivening quality. It breathes into the people community-consciousness and civic pride. It fosters the attitude of growing through the community and not at the expense of it.

To give to the community, as one tends the soil, is to gather golden harvest.[8]

It is essential to provide economic incentives to the peasant as also to *increase the range of his wants.* Their significance to economic development will be brought out in the next chapter. It is equally necessary to widen his horizon; he is apt, as Lao Tse pointed out, to sit on the bank of a river and never have the desire to cross it! If development proceeds at the expense of the village community, it adds to the social tensions and hardships of the villages. In so far as the changes involve community building *a new development potential* emerges.

Erosion of soil and society has to be countered by fostering conservation: not disruption but organic growth becomes the vital need of the peasant.

It might be asked if a philosophy like that of *sarvodaya,* a species of the genus of utopian socialism, would not prove a brake on modernisation? It is true that some of its ideas, like self-sufficiency of village, are unreal and socially atavistic. But taken as a whole, without such a philosophy — of ethical awareness and community orientation — the cultural milieu needed for development will not emerge. Prof. Milton Singer, a perspicacious observer, has summed up the position as follows: "I have not sought to suggest that Gandhi's reinterpretation of India's otherworldly asceticism will produce in India 'a protestant ethic' and a 'a spirit of capitalism' which will stimulate a development of industrialism similar to the European counterpart analysed by Max Weber. A book on the Indian case would more accurately be titled, 'The Hindu Ethic and the Spirit of Socialism.' I have merely

8. cf. R. P. Masani: *The Five Gifts*

wanted to show that the traditional Indian philosophy of renunciation is not a major obstacle to economic development, that it has in fact been all along functionally linked to the material side of Indian life, and that as interpreted by the religious social reformers of the last hundred years, especially by Gandhi, it is perfectly capable of providing the spiritual incentives and disciplines of a modern industrial society."[9]

The spirit is important, vital, and it has to be ethical, non-militant, essentially utopian, that is idealist — missionary. Such a spirit acts as a lubricant on the wheels of development.

The Institutional Expression

In the prevailing conditions of Asia, the village remains the basic unit of administration and economy. The pulverisation of village will be arrested to the extent the village is helped to rediscover its unity and autonomy.

Dr. John Matthai wrote: "The principal officers of the village — the Headman, the Accountant and the Watchman — though still in charge of administrative duties have become more the servants of Government than of the village community."[10] This situation needs to be redressed and reversed.

As Proudhon tirelessly repeated, a village must be given the opportunity to work with other villages — the federal impulse must be at work in constantly enlarging circles. The village as the basic social cell would grow into larger social organisms.

9. *The Annals*, May 1956, p. 86.
10. *op. cit.*, p. 17.

Village meetings — or even town meetings — of all adults have to be the basic organ of democracy. The principle of unanimity, characteristic of the panchayats in the past as Sidney Webb pointed out, is a desirable principle because it trains people in the art of *fusing* as against *replacing* wills.

In economy, insistence cannot be on collectives or co-operatives. The village must be helped to pool its resources and plan development in community spirit. Inevitably out of that various efforts will emerge but they would be enlivened with the needed spirit.

It is unwise to conceive co-operatives as a lush pasture to which an unwilling herd is to be driven. Small ownership can be a source of satisfaction and pride. Through appropriate incentives joint work, or mutual aid, can be fostered. But to disrupt the umbilical cord that unites a peasant with his plot is to invite social erosion. Through moral sanction and the attraction of example people might enter even full co-operatives, but coercive measures in that direction must prove fatal to production. Extension services democratically organised have within them considerable co-operative potential of the legitimate kind.

In developing socialist societies a new entrepreneurial type can emerge. A keen student of Israel has said: "Perhaps the most important single type of new entrepreneur is what may be called the 'institutional' entrepreneur, coloniser. He is a man who has some say in a settlement, in a co-operative enterprise, or in one of the public or semi-public economic enterprises (for instance, some of the Histadrut-owned factories). His main concern has been to maximise the scope of economic activities, the assets and the profits of his own group and organisation, through the best

manipulation of both the market possibilities and the different sources of capital, of credit, and so forth. His conception of his role has not, however, been a purely economic one. He sees himself as furthering the general social values of the society, as helping the general colonising movement and expansion of his own organisation, an assumption which usually has some elements of reality in it. While very adept at economic calculations, he sees them as subsidiary to these goals and expects other people to see his activities in the same light." The discovery and development of such a new entrepreneurial type are important: *service* co-operatives can provide both recruiting and training ground.

Certain amount of interdependence between agriculture and village crafts can be revived. But it is an effort that bristles with difficulties, particularly as on the one hand tools and techniques have to be improved and on the other, to meet the growing pressure of population on land, industrialisation has to be pushed through to provide rapidly expanding avenues of employment and increasing incomes. This takes us to the core of the problem: linking up of the peasant with economic development.

PART VI

Economics of Reconstruction

Economic ideas thrown up by the socialist movement during its chequered history have nowhere been systematically brought together. Such a study would make fascinating reading.

Socialists, particularly the Marxists, refused to discuss details of socialist society. Karl Kautsky's caustic comment was typical of their attitude: "They (opponents) look upon the socialist commonwealth just as they would upon a capitalist enterprise, a stock company for example, which is to be 'started,' and they refuse to take stock before it is shown in a prospectus that the concern will be practical and profitable. Such a conception may have had its justification at the beginning of the nineteenth century; today, however, the socialist commonwealth no longer needs the endorsement of these gentlemen."

Capitalism was doomed; to expose its contradictions and further its decomposition were the main tasks of socialists. Historical forces were inexorably working for the triumph of socialism. Hence it was wholly unnecessary to waste time in sketching any picture of socialist society. Speculation about the probable nature of the socialist society was deemed to be not just useless but harmful. "The useless and harmful thing is the making of positive propositions for bringing in and organising the socialist society. Propositions for the shaping of social conditions can be made only where the field is fully under control and well understood," commented Kautsky.

The inarticulate major premise of all socialist thinking was that the productive forces would be developed by capitalism, and only at their maturity would the socialists have to come in. The problems of *economic growth*, particularly working out the stages of transition from an underdeveloped to developed economy, were neglected by the socialists as by others. Where socialists have been in power over a period of time, as in Sweden, they have undoubtedly advanced far the frontiers of welfare, but in economic life the emphasis has been on stabilisation rather than on socialisation. Furthermore, in developed countries the problems of economic growth have no longer the same relevance as in the underdeveloped countries.

No readymade blueprints of socialist transformation exist in the classics of socialism. Marx had said: "Production, distribution and consumption . . . . all form parts of a whole, differences within a unity. Production predominates over all other factors. From it the process begins each time anew . . . . only 'vulgar socialism' revolves primarily round questions of distribution." In spite of the Master, most socialists have paid scant attention to production and have revolved "primarily round questions of distribution." That has been at once the glory and the limitation of most socialist thinking.

Engels had warned: "History is the most cruel of all goddesses. She drives her triumphant chariot over heaps of corpses, not only in war, but also in times of 'peaceful' economic development." The course of the chariot, the laws of economic growth, was never sketched by the socialists. Stalin hitched the Juggernaut and left a heap of corpses in the wake of development. But those of us who cherish democratic and humanist values have to discover methods that would contain such cruelty.

Where socialists come to power, they have to work out a policy (i) for industries, mines etc. that are already functioning and (ii) for the development and growth of economy, for augmenting the productive capacity. The first relates to taking over, the second to a "take-off." Both are interrelated and demand devoted thought and effort in overpopulated, overwhelmingly agrarian countries, as in Asia.

The first opportunity to shape the future came to the socialists of Western Europe after the first World War. As Otto Bauer put it: "The victory of democracy in Central Europe is the result of the war, the consequences of the defeat of the Central Powers.... The war has made the people poor, unspeakably poor.... The war which has led democracy to victory has also forced us on the road which leads to Socialism."

In Germany two Socialisation Commissions were appointed one after the other. Their deliberations provide a rich mine of information which has not been adequately utilised. The Commissions rejected the idea of "complete socialisation," of "socialism at a gallop," a policy that was carried out, perhaps under the stress of circumstances, by Lenin and which has since then been rigorously pursued by the communists wherever they have come to power. The Commissions favoured partial socialisation, like that of coal mines, for instance — a policy which the Labour Government pursued in Great Britain after the second World War.

During the early discussions on socialisation, as against the Socialisation Commission's proposals for nationalisation of all coal mines — that is *horizontal* socialisation, proposals for *vertical* socialisation were made; according to these proposals socialisation ought to be applied only to a section

of the mines, and include, at the same time, a corresponding portion of the iron and steel industry, the cement industry, and other coal-using industries. The protagonists of such *partial yet integrated* socialisation argued that their proposals would enable government to know the net costs of the production of coal, coke, crude iron, steel, and their products and thereby facilitate effective control of the crucial sectors of economy, including those parts that continue to remain in private hands. These proposals were rejected, and they remain consigned to the limbo of the past.

Another suggestion then made, in the economic scheme put forward by Wissel and Mollendorff, was of organisation of production by joint efforts — through self-governing organisations on which representatives of workers and of employers, as well as of trade and of consumers, would be represented. The workers' and employers' representatives, who were to have equal rights, would be chosen by the trade unions and employers' association. Perhaps these and similar schemes provided inspiration for the law of co-determination applied to coal and iron and steel industry in West Germany after the second World War.

The economic organisation suggested for socialised coal mines was as follows: "The entire German mining industry is to be transformed into a united and practicable corporation. The private undertakings as well as those of the state will be transferred to the possession of this economic body. Thus a great national coal organisation will come into existence, which will be directed by the workers, the management, and the community acting in concert. The Commission majority reject the motion of transferring the coal industry to a bureaucratic State Undertaking."[1]

1. (The Majority *Report* of the first Socialisation Commission).

Public corporation, as against departmental administration, has been the chosen instrument of socialisation since then.

It will be seen that in matters of socialisation of existing industries etc. decisive thinking has been done in the West and since 1919 little fresh ground has been broken.[2] In Asian countries, we merely tread the beaten path.

In democratic countries in Asia, where socialists have been in power, as in Burma or in Ceylon, complete socialisation has not been accepted. Partial or piecemeal socialisation has been preferred. In Asia of 1948-58 as in Europe of 1918-20, this aversion to complete nationalisation and adherence to partial socialisation continue to mark the dividing line between socialists and communists.

If we look up the early programmes of socialist parties in countries of Asia, we find (as, for instance, in the case of the Congress Socialist Party) "nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange" stated as an objective to be pursued. If such omnibus expressions are now outmoded it is time that they are consciously discarded. Limping socialisation can be as bad, perhaps worse, than galloping nationalisation characteristic of the communists. The warning given by Prof. Neurath, a German socialist, in 1919 is still valid; "Society would be paralysed if graduated steps in nationalisation were to be contemplated during the next few years, and partial anarchy allowed to exist meanwhile, for those employers who had been left alone by the policy of socialisation would be unable to make far-reaching decisions and dispositions, because they would not know

2. *cf*: Heinrich Strobel: *Socialisation in Theory and Practice* (1922), *passim*.

when their turn would come next." A constant threat of nationalisation can paralyse economy.

Discriminating socialisation is the distinctive characteristic of democratic socialism, because total or galloping nationalisation and political democracy cannot exist together. The rhythm of nationalisation, pursued by the communists, must severely restrict liberties and augment hardships.

Socialisation, however, is concerned with what already exists, is established and functioning. The real task that faces underdeveloped countries is of new construction, of transforming traditional economy into a modern, efficient economy. Here, Western socialists, unlike in the sphere of socialisation, have shown little fecundity of thought. The same Prof. Neurath, wrote: "The level of material life of the community can only be raised by means of an adequate economic policy. It is not enough to be acquainted with productive possibilities and the total social requirements. The community must be able to control the movement and destination of all raw materials and resources, men and machinery..... If we give serious attention to the task of transforming society, the first thing we need is an economic plan. What is essential is a clear survey of the movement of raw materials and resources." Prof. Ballod, another member of the Socialisation Commission, worked out in considerable details the production and consumption possibilities in a social state of Germany. These ideas, valuable as they are, sketch the designs of total planning whose fuller picture the Gosplan offered in 1928 in Russia. But for those who cannot accept total planning, as being destructive of democracy, no guidance comes from Europe. Socialist policies relevant to stages of economic growth have to be worked out by Asian socialists themselves: the changing relationship in growth of different sectors, the choice of growth-

producing sector in the economy, the varying techniques of production to be employed, the use of surplus manpower as a source of capital, the pattern of development in relation to the rate of growth desired — these are among the problems to which classics of socialism or chronicles of socialist efforts provide little guidance. Here new voyages of thought become necessary.

The Double Pressure

The urgency for development in Asia is quickened not only by the long period of neglect and arrest but also by pressure of population that threatens to grow at an unprecedented rate. As a recent study by the United Nations shows, in the next thirty years the population of the world is likely to double, and a large part of the increase will be in Asia. This rapid increase can create severe problems unless economic development runs ahead of the increasing population and thereby checks its growth or at least prevents added hardships from emerging. Growth of population leads to increasing urbanisation: for every one per cent increase of rural population, there is roughly 2.5 per cent increase of urban population, not through births alone, but mainly through migrations. In urban areas, the metropolitan centres grow even faster: at the rate of five per cent a year or more. These urban agglomerations unaccompanied by rapid economic development would spell grave consequences. These double pressures economic development has to counter.

The complications that population growth can create for economic development have been worked out by Coale and Hoover in their recent study, *Population Growth and Economic Development in India, 1956-1986*. The theory of the "vital revolution" shows that economic development brings about a striking reduction in death rates and that

the decline in the birth rates typically occurs after a substantial time lag in comparison with the decline in mortality rates. Between 1891 and 1921 the total population growth in India was little more than 5%, between 1921 and 1951 population grew by some 44%. The "vital revolution" has reached India.

Whether the fertility rate is high, medium, or low makes considerable difference. According to the projections offered by Coale and Hoover, in 1986 population under different rates could be 775, 634, 589 million respectively, or a difference of nearly 200 crores!

The difference that population increasing at a faster rate makes on economic development has been worked out by the two authors and their tentative conclusions read as follows:

"These projections show total national income rising under the low fertility assumption by a little more than 200 per cent in thirty year period, which implies an average annual increase of 3.8 per cent. The growth itself shows an acceleration, rising from about 3 per cent per annum at the beginning to more than 4½ per cent at the end. By contrast, under high fertility the national income increases by 126 per cent in the thirty years, or at the rate of 2.8 per cent per annum; and the rate by the end of the period has fallen to only about 1.7 per cent.

"In terms of *per-consumer* income the contrast is much more striking. Under low fertility, per-consumer income increases by 92 per cent during the period, and in the last five years is rising at the rate of nearly 3½ per cent per year. Under high fertility, the initial improvement of per-consumer income tapers off by 1976 and is followed by an ac-

celerating trend of actual retrogression. At no time is the consumer as much as 20 per cent better off than in 1956."

In 1986, with high fertility, national income would be 226 per cent of 1956 production (=100) and per-consumer income 114 as against 100 in 1956. With low fertility the figures would be 307 and 192.

It is therefore clear that unless development gathers speed early enough, growing population can retard further development. Again, if after thirty years' development efforts, the per-consumer income remains virtually unchanged, can stability be maintained? Stagnation and stability cannot go together. Only a rapid *tempo* of development can maintain an accelerating momentum, check fertility, raise levels of living and uphold democracy. Socialism has to beat the Stork!

Urbanisation has its own characteristics in Asia. In India, in 1951, there were 55 million urban people, in 1961, the number is likely to be 80 million. By 1986, it can be 193 millions. As high as 37 per cent of the population can be in towns and cities by 1986, as against 17 per cent in 1951. There is nothing surprising in this. In Mexico, which is not far removed in socio-economic conditions from us, 45 per cent of the population live in urban areas today.

Although the proportion of urban population for Asia, as a whole, is only 13 per cent, more than 8 per cent is "metropolitan urban." The non-agricultural labour force is roughly 30 per cent. At a similar degree of urbanisation in western countries, the United States (1850's), France (1860's), Germany (1880's), and Canada (1890's) had roughly 55 per cent of their labour force engaged in non-agricultural occupations. Of the world's 897 cities with populations of more than 100,000 persons, 463 are located in countries with more

than half the population occupied in agriculture, and 434 in industrialised countries. The total population of the first group of cities is roughly 160 million; that of the second group, approximately 155 million. Asia, for its economic development, is already "over urbanised."

In Indonesia, it was found that between 1930 and 1950-1951, urban areas that grew because of economic activities increased their population from 5.36 million to 9.77 million; while those towns that grew for other reasons increased their population from 1.39 to 4.33 million. The rate of growth on the first group was 82 per cent, in the second 212 per cent: "This shows that not only the largest cities are growing faster than the smaller ones, but also that cityward movement was considerably more important for non-economic reasons than for economic ones."[3]

The implications are obvious. The drift towards urbanisation is stronger in Asia. It must make increasing claims on housing, sanitation, etc., and, to that extent, reduce resources available for productive growth. The slower the tempo of development, greater will prove the deadweight of urbanisation to be carried.

Another and greater problem is that of obtaining increasing food supplies for the expanding urban population. The Foodgrains Enquiry Committee (India) recently reported that the requirements of urban areas would increase between 1956-61 by 33 per cent. as against expected increase in food production by about 14.7 per cent. How to coax the fast increasing demand from the peasant? Increasing population and growing urbanisation give to the peasant a primacy that socialism in Europe had no occasion to accord to him.

3. Bert F. Hoselitz: *The City, the Factory and Economic Growth.*

The Growth Inducing Sector

In the socialist movement in Asia, is there any agreement on what constitutes the growth-inducing sector in the economy? Whatever be that sector — and that is undoubtedly an important question — none can gainsay the need of stepping up, in a decisive manner, agricultural production, of foodgrains as well as of commercial crops. In Mexico, real industrial development began in 1939—and since then national output has increased at an average of 7 per cent per year. In this span of less than twenty years, agricultural production has grown more than two and half times: forty per cent of it now consists of raw materials for industry. There can be no industrial revolution without a simultaneous revolution in agriculture. Even if the growth-inducing sector is in industry, or in some segment of it, the momentum of growth cannot be sustained unless agriculture opens up its production potential.

In the conditions of Asia, agricultural production cannot increase without a revival of community spirit. It is not a mere question of input and output but of tending ravaged land, improving irrigation facilities, composting and manuring — in brief, activities that yield results only through community effort. Increased production is important, yet more important is to increase marketed surplus. It is that surplus which meets the needs of industrialisation and urbanisation.

Increase in production does not automatically lead to increased marketed surplus, because the propensity to consume is great among the peasants. The following table illustrating Russian experience need not be viewed as exceptional:

Type of Producer	Pre-War		1926-27	
	Produced	Marketed	Produced	Marketed
	(*in millions of tons*)			
Landlords	9.6	4.5	—	—
Kulaks	30.4	10.4	9.6	2.0
Small and Middle Peasants	40.0	5.9	64.0	7.3
State Farms	—	—	1.3	0.8

Marketable surplus fell from 26 to 13 per cent of production. To avoid such an eventuality not only agricultural production must be helped to increase fast but the peasant also must be induced to have diversified wants for which he would be willing to part with his produce. Community development as distinct from just agricultural improvement helps to generate diversified wants and thereby further production as well as marketable surplus.

It is from the point of view of this surplus that the understanding of the *sarvodayists* is fundamentally faulty. If a village becomes self-sufficient, if it limits its wants, a grave crisis can confront the urban people. Agriculture itself must be diversified and intensified in such a way that it provides productive work almost all the year round. If agriculture continues to remain backward, if ancillary work is provided mainly through substitution of urban goods by rural products, a new crisis would open up.

There is a tendency to think of agriculture and industry, of rural and urban people, in isolation, while the essence of development is their growing inter-relationships.

There is undoubtedly a certain conflict between agricultural life and industrialisation. The conflict cannot be resolved in a stagnant perspective. Only rapid development

can convert the incipient conflict into fruitful collaboration. That has been the teaching of developed countries. Mr. Alexander Gerschenkron has thus summed up the experience: "In viewing the economic history of Europe in the nineteenth century, the impression is very strong that only when industrial development could commence on a large scale did the tension between the pre-industrialisation conditions and the benefit that can be expected from industrialisation become sufficiently strong to overcome the existing obstacles and to liberate the forces that made for industrial progress."

For industrial development to commence on a large scale many conditions have to be fulfilled. The most important condition, however, is that priority should be given to such productive activities as would help to improve, revolutionise, tools and techniques. That means that iron and steel, coal, and power industries should receive precedence. Therein is the core of the growth-inducing sector.

Development means reinvestment of the surplus of total product less labour and other costs. Whatever increases the surplus accelerates the development. Two American economists, Walter Galenson and Harvey Liebenstein, recently calculated the employment potential over a period of years in different types of textile production. The data are from India and 1943 prices and conditions are the bases. The results are tabulated below:

Employment provided by initial investment of Rs. 1200

Years	Modern Mill	Handloom
5	5	35
10	34	35
15	242	35
20	1,718	35
25	12,200	35

To meet the challenge of increasing population and poverty, industrialisation and mechanisation have to be stepped up. To those ends, as also to obtain requisite surpluses for development investments, the heavy industries demand special attention.

During the long gestation period, consumer goods will have to be augmented by the most efficient use of available light industries and productivisation of traditional handicrafts. The essence of socialism lies in the ability to overcome lack of capital in the decentralised sectors of economy by better organisation, co-operation and social awareness.

Introduction of new and better tools and techniques demand new skills, new attitudes and rhythms of work, new social discipline. The base of economic development and the social awareness that can effectively utilise the new sources have to grow together, symbiotically as it were. A distinguished British economist, Sir Dennis Robertson, said recently: "The sacrifices necessary to achieve growth consist not only in passive abstinence from consumption, but in something which is much harder . . . namely, consent to being disturbed in established routine of life and work." Such a consent has to be given not only by peasants and artisans, but by socialists too.

Development and Social Orientation

Socialists have a profound interest, deep involvement, in the welfare of the people. Economic equality and social security have become potent mainly through their efforts. The cycle of production becomes meaningful only when it ends in consumption, and that depends on equitable distribution. It is only by raising levels of living of the working

people that productive efforts gain meaning and momentum. In all development there is an embedded propensity towards inequality, as, among others, Prof. Gunnar Myrdal has shown in his books.[4] Inequality is not only ethically unacceptable but economically restrictive. To sponsor countervailing measures, to foster equality, is to be a true partisan of progress. The accent on equality and welfare characteristic of socialism can never become too strong.

In underdeveloped countries the growth of productive processes cannot be taken for granted. They have to be consciously fostered. As Lenin said in 1923: "We have now the right to say that the simple growth of co-operative societies in our eyes is identical with the growth of socialism. We must, however, admit that we have fundamentally altered our conception of socialism. This fundamental change consists in the fact that formerly we laid, were compelled to lay, the greatest emphasis upon political warfare, upon the revolution, upon the seizure of power. Now the chief emphasis must be on peaceful, organising, 'cultural' work." From a fight for a fairer share, a change in favour of improving the economic-technical development might remain. Take housing, for instance. It is an essential measure of social welfare. In the United States, since 1890 (with a few years of exceptions) industry and housing have each received equal attention, about one-fourth of total investment. During the 1930's the Soviet Government allocated to industry roughly 40 per cent, and to housing only 10 per cent of total investment. In the 1950's housing has been getting about half as large a share as industry. Obviously, one would prefer the U.S. pattern of allocation of resources from the point of view of social well-being and balanced growth. But

4. *cf*: *Rich Lands and Poor.*

that would be at the cost of slowing down the tempo of industrialisation in the case of underdeveloped countries. Were the communists wiser in cutting down housing by 75% (of the total investment) and stepping up industry's share by that much? Such painful dilemmas the socialist cannot escape. What is said of housing can be said about other amenities, everywhere difficult choices have to be made and inadequate allocations distributed in a manner that may not wholly square with socialist conscience.

A similar dilemma faces the quest for equality. Investment is the essence of development, and investment comes from profits, whether the profits be in private or public sector. There are valid reasons for the cutting edge of Maurice Zinkin's comment: "In Asia, even more than in Europe, politicians are afraid that profits have a somewhat obscene sound, offensive to the purity of mind of their electorates. But nothing creates capital as quickly as profits, and the courageous politician might well find that his electorate would tolerate a good deal of such obscenity in return for a better life for their children it brings with it."[5]

How to channel profits into investment is a problem that deserves constant attention, and that is possible only if we cease to frown on profit *per se*.

This leads us to the question of orientation of economy. What powers the drive towards development, production or consumption? In the nineteenth century, dynamics resided in production. In the interplay by which production and consumption reciprocally stimulate each other, the initiating impulses came predominantly from the side of production. In the interaction between investment and income growth,

5. Maurice Zinkin: *Development for Free Asia*, p. 43.

the causal claim tended to run predominantly from investment to income. Consumption and demand played a dependent role; the motive forces were mainly on the side of production and supply. Under socialist pressure the roles are sought to be reversed. The production-oriented economy is a harsh system. In the West its crudities have been tempered by the growth of social reform; fiscal measures favouring the underprivileged, social security measures and nationalisation of certain monopolies like coal and railway transport. Distributive justice seeks to restrain and train the productive thrusts in economy. In Asia, can distributive justice *generate* the productive thrusts? Otherwise, the outcome would be petering out of the developmental impulse. Can Plan provide a common focus for the claims of distribution and production and provide the requisite social discipline behind it? The communists have a clear answer. If the socialists endorse the answer *in toto,* their distinctive vision must fade. If they have a different answer, it needs to be adumbrated with clarity and courage.

Dynamics of Nationalisation

What, in essence, is a Plan for the communists? How is it constructed? How is it implemented?

"A Plan represents a comprehensive set of accounts linking a series of output, investment, and consumption targets with the projected factor commodity and money flows required to assure their attainment. Contrary to Western practice, in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe these accounts, called *balanced estimates,* do not constitute just a series of forecasts or provisional models based on varying hypotheses and assumptions, but a definite set of tasks

which must be accomplished and which are binding as a law for the society as a whole."[6]

Plan "binding as a law for society as a whole" is possible only under totalitarian control. While the communists object to all efforts at capital accumulation and production orientation of economy, when they are out of power; on seizure of power their drive in that direction becomes single-pointed. As a Polish planner, Hilary Minc, remarked: "We must do away with the erroneous conception that increase in productivity must always be accompanied by an equal or even superior increase in wages .... That would be an effective contradiction to the fundamental laws of socialist accumulation. These laws imply that increase in wages should progress more slowly than the increase in productivity because this is the only means of achieving a decrease in cost and increased accumulation for investment."

The "erroneous conception" fatal to the augmentation of profit for the purpose of increased investment is deliberately fostered by the communists while in opposition, and the stern laws of economic growth are brazenly denied. Once in power, with that heave of history a decisive somersault is taken. That of course is dialectics!

Socialists, who are wedded to democracy and humanism, cannot function with double standards. They have to pioneer a single discipline of understanding and action.

The communists might argue, as many a socialist is apt to argue, that accumulation of capital takes on ease and a qualitatively different form once the productive forces are nationalised. All mischief resides in the intervention of pri-

6. Nicolas Spulber: *The Economics of Communist Eastern Europe*, p. 282.

vate ownership between productive forces and their utilisation; to tear down the intervention is to open up the sluices of abundance. *To be cured of that illusion is the alpha and omega of democratic socialism.*

We have throughout argued in favour of discriminating socialisation. Wholesale nationalisation sought by the communists has no economic validity, only political advantage in forging total control of the state on society. The communist process of nationalisation affects not just the key segments of economy but farms, petty trade, artisans' shops, and services. In China, recently all residential houses have been nationalised. The result of such indiscriminate and sweeping nationalisation is not economic improvement but harassment of the people. As Matyas Rakosi stated during the 1953 "new course" reversal, "whole villages and city districts have remained without a cobbler, tailor, locksmith, plumber, electrician, and other craftsmen.... If anyone wanted to have a broken window replaced, or a farm implement repaired, he would have to travel 20 or 30 miles to the country seat." What perfect chaos under total planning!

Nationalisation shares with controls common characteristics: a few selected controls can be effective; when the limit gets crossed, more and more controls need to be piled up, and every fresh control makes the whole system less effective and more vexatious. Dynamics of nationalisation, unchecked, carries it not only to excess but to oppression. That is why periodically the pressure is relaxed in communist countries: then in agriculture, retail trade, crafts, the corset of control is loosened and free initiative given a breather.

Once total nationalisation is rejected, the market and pricing system come into their own. They obviously cannot

be allowed to work unchecked; the state would take appropriate countervailing measures. They are however meant to enhance the social utility of the market, not to undermine it. In Asia, the socialists have taken the market mechanism for granted; it is time effective research is initiated.

In economic development the motive force comes from those who have the urge to innovate. To produce something new or differently, and to produce somewhat abundantly are the two aspects of innovation. Under capitalism the role was played by the entrepreneur — Joseph Schumpeter's "innovating entrepreneur" who is largely weak or non-existent in Asia — and under communism by the *cadre* and the commissar. Under socialism the creative impulse has to come from *experimentation:* new institutions and novel efforts: in some cases workers' control of factory, elsewhere trade union ownership of enterprise as in Israel, industrial estates as nurseries of new entrepreneurs, public corporations, co-operative management, private ownership — these are among the varied foliations of socialist spirit. It is through such experimentation that, as individuals or in corporate forms, competent captains, engineers of development will emerge.

Wholesale nationalisation presumes that the state, its apparatus, has powers of initiative and enterprise inherent in it. This is as gratuitous an assumption as to believe that Asian economy can blossom through capitalist innovations alone. Such powers have to be carefully tended and husbanded.

Innovation and experimentation are not confined to the managerial plane. Their importance to technique is no less: the *form* as well as the *degree* of industrial innovation is variable, a fact which the communists have ignored and the

socialists have not fully recognised. The truth, that in Asia not just the relations of production but the forces of production also may have to be modified, needs to be branded on our consciousness.[8]

Economic development cannot prosper in isolation. With the onrush of energy, of vital creativity, its demands will never be confined to economic life. Such a surge, once started, affects all activities. As Prof. John Nef has recently shown in his book, *Cultural Foundations of Industrial Civilization,* no industrial revolution proceeds without an intellectual renaissance. Commitment of human minds to new creative upsurge is a necessary hallmark of development. Socialists' chosen arena therefore cannot remain politics or economics, the whole domain of culture must receive their vitalising impulses and, in their turn, be enriched by such protean commitments. In a depressed and oppressed world, socialism has to be the voice of conscience, it has to touch human thought with the vision of tomorrow and the faith needed to realise it.

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8. *cf*: Rammanohar Lohia: *Aspects of Socialist Policy.*

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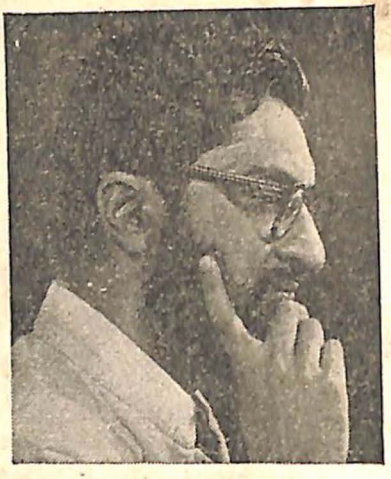

THE AUTHOR

Journalist, economist and P.-S.P. leader, Asoka Mehta, M.P., is an able dialectician with considerable reputation as a socialist theoretician. Along with Jayprakash Narayan and Achyut Patwardhan he had pioneered the Congress-Socialist Movement. As Deputy Leader of the Praja-Socialist Party in the Lok Sabha he commands the respect of the Treasury Benches. His report as Chairman of the Food-grains Enquiry Commission of the Government of India is considered as a classic of its kind.

A Wilsonian, Asoka took active part in the Youth Movement of the country and was imprisoned in the first Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932 ; edited *the Congress-Socialist Weekly* ; had a further term of imprisonment for participating in the Individual Satyagraha Movement of 1941 and the 'Quit India' struggle of 1942. He to
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