

States, and of the world, up to 1917 was of a hesitating, compromising, reformist character, having as its goal merely the transfer of the larger industries of the nation from the hands of individual groups of capitalists to the control of the government. The war has hastened the development of government ownership in the various countries until the fondest dreams of the reformist socialists are realized. In fact, some of them have become alarmed at the rapid spread of government ownership under the stimulus of the war, and Allan L. Benson, presidential candidate on the socialist ticket in 1916, was compelled to exclaim that although he considers himself a socialist, he believed President Wilson was making a grave mistake by introducing "socialism" at too great a pace. The former presidential candidate for the socialists believes we should proceed at a slower pace. While we should take a "step at a time" they should be slow, deliberate steps, enabling us to feel our ground well, and not such a helter skelter gallop toward socialism as Mr. Wilson has so recklessly indulged in. Other socialists in the United States, who are more "progressive" than Mr. Benson, look with favor upon such socialization of industries, and in harmony with the European reform parties, work for a constant extension of the "achievements" gained, considering such action sufficient to drive the capitalist out of one position after another and gradually expropriating it within the bounds of capitalist legality, without any change in governmental power. Alongside of and within the capitalist state occurs the peaceful penetration of socialism into the capitalist system. Thus does the reform socialist "build the new society within the shell of the old."

If syndicalism can be said to have a theoretical foundation it is based upon M. Sorel's book, "The Socialist Future of the Syndicats," published in 1898. The book attracted little attention until the entry of Millerand into the French cabinet brought parliamentary socialism into disrepute in the labor movement of Europe. In this book Sorel correctly declares the state is an organ of authority, used by the capitalist class to impose its will upon the workers. Through direct action of the syndicats (industrial unions) the workers will gradually take over one function of the state after another, until there is very little for the state to do. Union action of the working class is substituted for state action. The syndicalist does not ask for laws from the legislator for protection of the working class as does the reform socialist, but he expects to force from the legislator facilities for proceeding with the transfer of power from the state to the union. This transformation comes about through the unions taking control of those departments that directly concern labor, such as government employment agencies, old age pension departments, workmen's compensation, shop and factory inspection offices, etc. Sorel explains his conception of the gradual decline of state power and the ascendancy of the power of the industrial unions in the following:

"It is necessary that the unions strip the state of its powers, little by little, by demanding them incessantly, by interesting the public in their efforts, by denouncing the abuses without respite, by showing the incompetence or the dishonesty of the public administrations. They will thus eventually take away from the old forms, pre-

served by the democrats, everything vital in them, and leave them nothing but the repulsive form of police repression. Then a new society will have been created, with elements completely new, with principles purely proletarian. The societies of resistance will have ended by enlarging their field of action to such a degree they will have absorbed nearly everything political."

Emil Pouget, the best known anarcho-syndicalist writer in Europe, is the one individual recognized as the modern theoretical exponent of syndicalism. Following the lead of Sorel, Pouget declares:

"Syndicalism does not look to a simple modification of the governmental personnel, but rather to a reduction of the state to zero, by transplanting into the syndicalist organs the few useful functions which keep up the illusion of the value of government, and by suppressing the others, purely and simply."

So we see that both the syndicalist and the reform socialist aim to stroll into the co-operative commonwealth or industrial republic while the capitalist class maintains control of the state. Both aim to "build the structure of the new society within the shell of the old." While the revolutionary socialist has no objection to building a new society within the shell of the old he recognizes the fact that it is impossible to even begin building the structure of the new society while the capitalist class maintains control of the state. The fundamental fallacy that brands both the position of the reform socialist and the syndicalist as hopelessly utopian is their misconception of the state.

Although the spokesmen of both organizations declare the state is the instrument of class domination, they picture this state as a machine from which some parts can be taken without wrecking the whole apparatus. The fact that the reformer uses parliamentarism and the syndicalist what he terms direct action does not change their fundamental misunderstanding of the structure of the capitalist state. When this idea of securing benefits for the workers within the confines of the capitalist state is carried into a revolutionary crisis the shallowness of parliamentarism and syndicalist direct action is completely exposed, not only as insufficient weapons in the struggle for working class emancipation, but as positive impediments in that struggle. The recent failure of the syndicalists of France to lead the masses of the workers into a political strike, which was called for July 21 as a protest against Allied intervention in Russia is the latest expose of the reformistic tactics of the syndicalists. For weeks the workers of three countries had been preparing for a general political strike, when just before the hour to call the strike the bourgeois Chamber of Deputies expressed its distrust of one of the minor members of the Clemenceau cabinet. The leaders of the syndicalists professed to believe the repudiation of this member was the signal for the fall of the cabinet, hence they tabled the orders for the strike to await the outcome of the parliamentary squabble. So we see the most rabid opponents of the working class political action childishly placing their salvation in the hands of a capitalist parliament. Whether this action on the part of the syndicalists was stupidly or perfidiously cowardice, it was a betrayal of the revolutionary workers in Russia and also the workers in the Allied countries. The most logical explanation is that it was ignorance and inability to recognize a revolutionary opportunity which made cowards of them. Rather than face the

stern reality of a proletarian test of strength they capitulated before the capitalist state without the representatives of that state so much as requesting them to do so.

Complete extermination of the capitalist class is the goal of the class conscious worker, but it is only the socialist, well grounded in the principles of Marxism, who can point the way to working class conquests of power. The Russian revolution is an illustration of the ability of Marxian socialists to correctly gauge a revolutionary crisis and to understand the action necessary for working class conquest of power. Instead of demanding anything from the capitalist state or trying by any action, direct or otherwise, to force concessions from it, the socialist endeavors to arouse the workers for the conquest of the political state of capitalism; to seize and destroy it and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in its place. This is in complete harmony with revolutionary theory and practice. Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto of 1848 declared the first act in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class, and the lessons learned from the experience of the Paris Commune proved to the revolutionary workers that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready made machinery of the capitalist state and wield it in its own interest, but must establish its own particular form of class domination.

The fact that the socialist points to the insufficiency of the syndicalist organization as a means to emancipate the working class does not mean that he minimizes the importance of all industrial organizations as centers of resistance against the encroachments of the capitalist class. The beneficial effects of the struggle for better conditions under which a group of workers sell their labor power should never be overlooked. Through the efforts of unions to improve the conditions of the worker, thousands of persons who before looked upon life from an individualist bias are aroused and brought into the organization. This activity develops discipline and mutual fidelity, and the suppression of individualism and the identity of interest existing within the group is learned in the struggles on this field. In this struggle the conflict of interest between the worker and the master manifests itself. It is at this point that the political struggle asserts itself. The union organization, whose activity is limited to the commodity struggle, only represents a particular group of the working class against a given group of the capitalist class. In the political struggle all this division disappears and the representatives of the working class political organization, instead of facing the capitalist class as the representatives of the workers in a single industry or group of industries, speak as the representatives of the working class as a whole. Hence the political struggle extends the conflict beyond the confines of the unions. The revolutionary socialist takes advantage of the political struggle and even nominates candidates for office, not as a means of attempting to ameliorate the condition of the worker under capitalism, but in order to be in a position to teach the working class the modus operandi of the capital-