

Capitalism Appeals to God

(From a Swiss Bourgeois Newspaper of Zurich)

Translated by F. Blumer

We publish the article below not because we agree with any of the ideas put forward, but because it illustrates something of the real conditions in Switzerland. The news that filters through the capitalist press from Europe is vague, indefinite and in the main misleading. The situation in Switzerland has received practically no publicity, yet it is obvious from the tone of this article that revolution is imminent.

It is also interesting to note the reactions of the "good" bourgeois to the conditions they have so strenuously supported in the past, now that those conditions are about to bear their logical fruit. They appeal to the workers not to allow their wrath to break before the continued provocations of the capitalist class. They seek refuge in truth, kindness, and nobility now that the workers are rising to power, but they never evoked these virtues on behalf of the millions of the proletariat who have been beaten, starved, degraded and murdered throughout the ages.

In the face of the rising might of the proletariat they cry loudly to the virtues that today echo only as a mockery in the ears of the workers of the world.

THE inner developments of Switzerland have of late reached a stage which are disconcerting to all who are conscious of their responsibility for what is happening and will happen in the future. Those of us who are awake and not blind must be aware of the fact that we are facing civil war. To this fact we must give the widest publicity, so that the catastrophe will not take us by surprise as did the world-war, also expected by many and yet most surprising to all of us. The fear, otherwise justified, of "painting the devil on the wall," shall no longer deter us from shouting, with all the strength of our lungs: "Wake up, all of you, from your long sleep, and ask yourselves whether or not you want civil war!"

If we allow things to go on as they have been going, civil war will come. At present it is the bourgeoisie which unconsciously—and sometimes we regretfully confess consciously—is precipitating the crisis. The incessant repetition of calling the military forces to arms, for no better reason than bourgeois ghost fright; the insistent circulation of fantastic rumors; a reaction whose fierce idiocy reminds us of the most abhorrent past; the incapacity of our still existing system to understand the needs of the hour; the reign of a predatory system in our economic life, which at present, after the termination of the war, still holds prices up at an unattainable height, in spite of large stocks of supplies, just in order to make still more war profits—all these and many other conditions have created a feeling among the workers, of which a great number of us, in our old insolence of power, have no proper conception.

If these people do sense something of the feelings of the masses, they draw wrong conclusions and only intensify these feelings. Correspondingly the feeling of bitterness grows among the workers, and with it the inclination to conquer force with force, which in turn seems to give reaction a moral justification.

A tremendous tension has been created, and a spark will suffice to bring about the terrific explosion of civil war. And it seems that the spark may at any minute fall into this accumulated heap of explosive matter. The workers at this hour do not want a readjustment by violence, and a large section of the bourgeoisie leans towards peaceful settlement; but in the end the accumulated forces do not ask our will, they act according to their own law. You that sleep and you that have been duped, can you not see what is going to happen if present conditions are allowed to continue?

What then must be done? Shall we preach peace and good-will to men in the habitual mediating way? Shall we ask that both sides give up some of their demands in order to make everything well again (as if it had ever been well)?

No, this was never our way. For us it is clear that the gigantic struggle between the old and the new worlds must be fought out. Bad as it may be if this happens in a violent and bloody way, it will be worse if the decision is fearfully avoided. *We also expect peace only with the victory of the new world.*

The question now is whether blood and fire are necessary to bring about this victory. We think not. The struggle can be fought in another way, if we expect it to bring the greatest amount of welfare and the least amount of misfortune.

But then what must be done?

We think that from the side of the bourgeoisie the following is necessary:

(1) It must give up immediately the dictating policy which it at present uses, and endeavor to come to a loyal, trustful understanding with the Socialist proletariat.

(2) For this purpose it must make immediate political changes, bring new men to the responsible posts. Any delay is a crime.

(3) It must take hurriedly in hand those social reforms which are recognized as necessary, so that the workers may have proof of its serious and honest intentions. No further time must be lost!

(4) Bourgeois who recognize the seriousness of the situation must energetically raise their voices whenever possible to enforce these reforms. All the forces of our people must be concentrated on this one goal. If we can solve this problem in an exemplary way, we will have given great service not only to ourselves but to the world; but if we refuse to solve it we forfeit our moral right to existence, and merely add one more sad spectacle to the many others that the world is witnessing today. Where are the churches, the schools, the political associations? All religious talk, all aspirations of knowledge, all patriotism become a sneer and a lie if before this problem we are unable to raise ourselves to the position where we can act impartially.

As regards the proletariat we think that it can help to solve the problem in the following way:

(1) It ought to try every non-violent possibility and not play with the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and similar violent thoughts—as far as this is not injurious to the necessity of a new form of democracy and freedom.

(2) It ought not to allow itself to be drawn, through provocations from the side of the bourgeoisie, no matter how grave, into anything that does not grow out of the necessity of its own course. Its strength lies in repose.

(3) It ought to formulate a new, simple and popular program of the minimum demands that it has to make and insist upon their immediate

realization, and this without renouncing the struggle to reach the final goal.

(4) It ought not to give up its faith in the ultimate truths it stands for, nor, in spite of all disappointments, the belief in good-will as a basis for meeting those who outwardly belong to the other camp. This good will is actually there, but does not find the means of expression. Help it along.

To both camps we wish to say:

(1) Remember that after a bloody conflict the victor as well as the conquered will be utterly ruined. The struggle once started, will grow tremendously, and the blood-seed once sown will bring harvest after harvest of its hateful curse.

(2) Try to wage the necessary class war differently from the way now being done, not with the weapons of hate, meanness and lies, but in a truthful and chivalrous fashion, considering that a bad struggle will ruin your own cause.

(3) Take a stand at once against the criminal actions of a certain press, and remember that you of the bourgeoisie have also an inflammatory press, and a most evil one. Take a stand against this Hydra or its flaming breath will set our land on fire.

Once more we say that the decisive struggle between the old and new order of things we cannot and will not prevent. But we can and should free it from the forces of Hell. We call upon all of you who are thus capable. We call upon truthfulness, nobility, kindness, understanding, cheerful sacrifice. We shout this with all the strength we have at our disposal, in staggering consciousness of the gravity of the hour. We call in the name of God, who wishes civil war as little as any other war, we call in the name of Christ to whom the bulk of our people are confessed, and who wishes to bring about reconciliation through forces of a higher order.

Anyone reading this is forthwith made responsible. There is no fate that reigns over us. We still can rise towards the summit instead of tumbling down the abyss. Wake up!

Bourgeois Dictatorship in Local N. Y.

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phraseology as "ethically unjustifiable and tactically suicidal." Our Party press, rostrums, and constitution form a new holy trinity for making the mass of membership take "one step forward, two steps backward."

BUTTRESSING THE DICTATORSHIP

Now for the third deadly parallel. The capitalist class has many means enabling it to baffle the will of the masses and to thwart their purpose. So has the Party Bureaucracy.

Witness the powerful press, ever watchful of the interests of the Bourgeoisie. This monster makes and unmakes public opinion, wins political campaigns, lynches labor champions, imprisons its class foes, and sends millions to untimely graves. The capitalist educational institutions are no less the expression of capitalist class interests. Science is perverted, philosophy is turned into cracked truth, thousands of highly trained defenders of capitalism are turned out annually from the universities, ignorance among the masses is sanctified, and revolutionary men and movements are banished. So are all other means of shaping and determining the opinions of the masses under complete bourgeois mastery.

The bourgeois dictatorship has full economic power. It owns the land, the homes, and all the means of production and exchange. From on high the bourgeois dictators dole out to the meek laborers their weekly crumbs. The bourgeoisie is steadily growing richer and the proletariat poorer.

To even question the absolute control of military power by the bourgeois dictators is treason. The police, the army, the navy, the state Cossacks, the thugs, the courts and sundry species of justice dispensers most adequately buttress the Bourgeois Dictatorship.

The Party Bureaucracy finds itself no less fortunate. It owns a press which is constantly growing more powerful and influential. This reactionary Socialist press debauches the ideals for which revolutionary comrades have gone to jail, by appealing to the bourgeoisie for money, and by arranging meetings ostensibly to assist their liberation, but in reality to fill its own coffers. This press, controlled by those highest in the councils of the Party Bureaucracy, and at the direct behest of this Socialist bureaucracy, blocks the revolutionary masses in the Party by refusing them public-

ity. Witness *The Call's* attitude toward Left Wing advertisements and towards "re-organized"—rather massacred—branches. This press, obedient to the dictates of the Party Bureaucracy, makes and unmakes the standing of Party members. Ever on guard to prolong the life of the Party Bureaucracy, the privately owned, Jeffersonian-Socialist-Democratic press blinds the comrades as to the nature of the struggles of the revolutionary Socialists in Europe. Recall its attitude toward the Bolsheviks when their success appeared improbable! Remember *The Call's* notorious editorial on the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg by Herr Von Scheidemann, whom the Party Bureaucracy once brought to America to assist their work of stifling revolutionary Socialism here.

The Party's educational institutions are no less the expression of the interest of the Dictatorship of the Bureaucrats. The Rand School, in the main owned and controlled by the Party Bureaucracy, and organized into "an organization within an organization"—the American Socialist Society in the American Socialist Party—teaches, under the name of Socialism, a travesty and a misrepresentation of the principles of scientific Socialism, as expounded by Marx, Engels, Labriola, Dietzgen, Lenin, Liebknecht, etc. This same Rand School annually turns out many defenders of the Party Bureaucracy. It spreads petty-bourgeois, pacifist, and hence counter-revolutionary, notions of the class struggle. This "Socialist" school of Social Science does not dare to give non-perverted courses in Marxism, for fear that this would entail inviting comrades not in the good graces of the Party Bureaucracy to be teachers. Thus is ignorance sanctified among the Party rank and file, and so are revolutionary currents shut off from the Party.

The Dictatorship of the Party Bureaucracy has full economic power. The Branch treasurers and lessees are either part and parcel of the Bureaucracy, or at least subject to its dictates. The Party buildings, printing presses, books, due stamps, furniture, and other property are subject to titles and mortgages held by the Socialist Bureaucracy. The Bureaucrats' ownership and control of Party property have been growing greater, and the rank and file's ownership and control of Party property have been growing smaller.

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