

Russia is not in the latter stage, of that there can be no question; consequently it would seem to follow that the attempt to socialize ownership too soon, that is being undertaken at present, must end in a relapse to capitalism which will then perform the necessary industrial concentration. But the price of the attempt to progress too hastily by impossible means will have to be paid; the power of the people will be weakened and capitalism will return in its most tyrannical form, so that it will not only be worse than it would otherwise have been, but also may last longer in consequence.

This point necessitates the delegation of power to the bourgeoisie, either as sole executive with the Socialists in opposition, or in the form of a coalition. Both these alternatives have already been tried—the first mentioned in the form of the Milyukoff ministry, the latter in the form of the Kerensky combination which succeeded it. And both have been rejected at least thus far.

This rejection, however, has not caused the adherents of the Menshevik interpretation to give up their point of view and the diagnosis on which it is based. On the contrary they maintain with the persistence of infallibility that it will be absolutely necessary to return to the rejected principle in order to avoid the present path of anarchy and collapse, and return to the path of progress.

There is this much to be said in favor of the Menshevik position: if their diagnosis is sound, then their conclusions are not mistaken and they will not be disappointed in adhering to their claims. The fact that they did not succeed in remaining in power is not, in itself, a conclusive proof of the fallacy of their position. What we must try to find out is whether failure is incidental to, or inherent in, the policy, whether it is merely an initial loss or a permanent failure.

In view of what has thus far been said the problem to be solved is this:—Is the Soviet government conducting the Class Struggle in such a way as to violate what is historically

inevitable and economically determined and pre-determined? We shall have to arrive at a clear understanding of exactly what is fore-ordained by the Class Struggle, by historic inevitability and economic determinism.

CLASS RELATIONS

It is important to bear in mind that any and all reference to classes in the present analysis has no relation whatever to a classification based on the superiority of one person over another. The classes of the Class Struggle are based on the functions of the individual in relation to production: he can be either a producer or an owner of production. In a society where there were producers only, we should have one class economically or a one class system, i. e., a system of no classes. If a part or proportion of the product goes to the producing body, and the remainder to the owning class, we have what may be termed a two-class system, and it is the latter that covers the greater part of known history, from ancient times up to the present.

Of course, there are actually more than two classes in any class-ruled society, but they are built around the dual principle mentioned. We have skilled and unskilled among the workers, there are also organized and unorganized, etc., etc., and there are big capitalist and small capitalist groups, not to mention many other layers, but they are each and all related to production either as owners or as producers who are not owners.

It must be conceded that previous to the Great French Revolution, the two class basis could never have been abolished. For society regarded the ownership of production as a legitimate function, not yet having learned to diagnose the situation as a class relation. Thus the oppressed classes demanded either a change of personnel in the ruling class, such as, for instance, a good prince in place of a bad one, or at most they favored and accepted a new class relation in preference to an old one, such as feudalism instead of ancient