

seventies. Yet, beyond a pretentious *petit bourgeois* circumscription of the meaning of democracy, there is absolutely no political content in this battle-cry. Whenever it was legally used to point out the possibility of a democratic republic, Engels was ready, on occasion, to "defend" this battle-cry, from the agitatorial standpoint. Yet this slogan was opportunistic, for it reflected not only an advocacy of bourgeois democracy, but also a failure to understand the state at all, in the light of socialistic criticism. We are in favor of a democratic republic, as it is the form of state most favorable to the proletariat under capitalism, yet we have no right to forget that even in the most advanced democratic bourgeois republics, wage slavery is the people's lot. Every state is a "special organ" for the oppression of the lowest class. Consequently, *every* government is *unpopular* and *unfree*. Marx and Engels pointed this out more than once to their party comrades in the seventies.

Fifth. In the same work of Engels out of which everyone remembers what is said about the "dying out" of the state, there is a passage on the significance of revolution by force. Instead of an historical estimate of its role, we have in Engels a veritable panegyric on revolution by force. "Not a soul" remembers this; to talk or even think of the implications of this idea is considered improper in our present-day socialistic parties, and in the every-day propaganda and agitation among the masses, this thought has no place at all. And yet, it forms, together with the thought of the "dying out" of the state, a single, indissoluble whole.

Here is the passage from Engels:

"That force has a different role to play in history than that of a performer of evil) should be evident precisely from the revolutionary role which, in Marx's words, plays the mid-wife to every old system of society, when it is pregnant with the new; force is the instrument by which every social movement clears a path for itself and breaks the petrified and atrophied political forms; concerning all this Mr. Dühring says not a word. Only with sobs and

sighs does he admit the possibility that, in order to overthrow the system of the exploiters, it may be necessary,—unfortunately, mind you!—to use force; but every application of force demoralizes, as it were, him who uses it. And this is said in spite of the high moral and intellectual enthusiasm which every great revolution has always led in its train! And this is said in successful Germany, where a violent collision, even though it should be forced upon the people, would at least have the advantage of sloughing off the servile spirit that has been the heritage of their national character from the humiliation of the Thirty Years' War. And this spiritless, miserable, impotent old woman's theory is suggested as a program for the most revolutionary party that History has ever known?" (Page 193, 3rd German edition; end of 4th chapter in 2nd edition).

How is it possible to unite into a consistent whole this panegyric on revolution by force, so stubbornly maintained by Engels in his relations with the German Social-Democrats from 1878 to 1895, in other words, to his death, and the theory of the "dying out" of the state?

Usually the two are rendered compatible with the aid of eclecticism, a superficial, idealless, or sophistical arbitrary choice and emphasis now of the one, now of the other passage (as may best please the powers that be), at the same time, in 99 cases out of 100, if not in all, assigning the prominent place to the "dying out" passage. Dialectics yield ground to eclectics: this is the most common, the most widespread phenomenon in the official social-democratic literature of our day, in its relations to Marxism. And this substitution is by no means new: you will find it already in the history of classic Greek philosophy. Among the other substitutions of opportunism for Marxism, that of eclecticism for dialectics is best of all adapted to deceive the masses; it creates some false sense of satisfaction by appearing to consider all phases of the process, all the tendencies of evolution, all the opposing influences, while in reali-