

The Development of Socialism from Science into Action

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The Development of Socialism from Utopianism into a Science

What is Communism? This question is answered by the young Friedrich Engels in a sketch of the Communist Manifesto in the year 1847: "Communism is the theory of the conditions of the victory of the working class." According to this definition which in itself contains the whole spirit of scientific Socialism, the whole work of Marx and Engels consisted in seeking in the development of capitalistic society, the development of the conditions of the final victory of the working class, in order to make of it a starting point for Communist activity. In this manner the development from Utopia into Science was accomplished.

The predecessors of Marx and Engels, the Utopian Socialists, have accomplished much in the characterizing of bourgeois society. The grim Fourier, who scourged himself and divested himself of all masks, the Faust-like gifted Saint-Simon, who illuminated whole epochs of human history in a few words; Owen, who penetrated deeply into the nature of man and exhibited his dependence on economic conditions in his writings and his speeches—all of them contributed building blocks for the mighty edifice of scientific Socialism. Without them Marx would have been impossible. But in spite of the deeply penetrating criticism of capitalist society, the predecessors of Marx did not understand how this very society could furnish those mass forces which would overthrow it. For this reason, they had to play the rôle of historic prophecy, and to work out a plan for the rescue of humanity from the claws of capitalism, a plan the only weakness of which was, that the architect was missing who could by means of it erect that temple of humanity to Heaven. Marx and Engels showed how the development of the powers of production under the rule of capitalism would result in ever increasing anarchy and enslavement of the masses, but also how by means of the concentration of industry, the formation of a strong working class and the realization by them intellectually and emotionally of the coming of a new order, and the iron will to attain it, the foundations of Socialism would also be created. Marx and

Engels showed the international proletariat the historic necessity of his victory—the victory of Socialism. At the same time they showed it also that this victory of the disinherited and the enslaved was not going to fall mechanically into their lap when a certain stage of historic development had been reached, but that they must prepare themselves for this victory in the sweat of their brows, by the uninterrupted struggles of their brains, fighting day by day against the bourgeoisie in all the spheres of social life, in order then in the direct revolutionary struggle, class against class, to win it. This final revolutionary struggle which will result in the iron dictatorship of the proletariat, this alone will guide the workers into the promised land of Socialism.

The theory of Marx and Engels as to the conditions of the victory of the proletariat remains true, it has been untouched by the tooth of time, it stands like a granite boulder. The seventy years which separate us from the day on which the magnificent young men saw the future of mankind sharply illumined and pointed it out to us in the unforgettable Communist Manifesto, have caused many changes in the capitalist structure, to comprehend which has been the not always well performed task of the successors of Marx. But the outlines of the development have not changed and only at the present time, during the first Socialist Revolution which the world has ever experienced, do we really comprehend the theory of Communism. Through the first Socialist revolution, through its stern necessities, we can see the splendid proof of the prophetic power of the intellect of our masters. Communism is a theory of revolution and therefore it can only be understood in its entire significance during a period of revolution. On this account we can see that in the long period of quiet development which preceded the era of revolution only a few keen intellects were in a position to comprehend the theory of Communism so completely and clearly as when, during the revolutionary epoch of rising capitalism, it was born in the brains of those children of the period of storm and stress, in the brains of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

In the epoch of quiet development the *most diverse non-communistic elements were mixed with it*, and so under the name *Social Democratic conception*, different *substitutes for Communism* were created which the international working class must discard if it wishes to be equal to its duty. It is the diluted and false Communism from which the living spirit has been purged, which makes it difficult for the work-