

CHARKHA MARXISM
INDIAN SOCIALISM

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by

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PREFACE

This little book has not been written for 'Indian Socialists', for there are none in the country—at any rate I have not come across any. It is meant for Marxists, who are not negligible, and the votaries of the charkha, whose number is legion. And it has been written in a way to interest and please both.

The inspiration to write the last chapter was provided by a series of lectures, by different speakers, on 'The shape of things to come', arranged by the local Y. M. C. A.

I am indebted to L. Feroz Chand of the Servants of the People Society, Lahore, for reading a great part of the manuscript and criticising it, and to Prof. R. K. Sud of the Dyal Singh College, Lahore, for many improvements of expression.

January 1941

BRIJ NARAIN

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THE CHARKHA

Of the old set, only Red Tape is missing. Shortly after the outbreak of the war Red Tape left for his home-country, and he is now doing his duty there.

Have we changed? No. Chaudhari Sahib, as is well known, was for several years engaged in Constitution-wrecking as Premier of a Province. He had to leave his task unfinished. Since resigning office he has been constantly engaged in propagating his glorious mission, the mission of the charkha. It is my proud privilege to assist him in this soul-uplifting work.

I love Chaudhri Sahib. The whole country loves him. His sincerity, his simplicity, his untold sacrifices in the cause of the charkha, have endeared him to the hearts of his countrymen and, indeed, the whole world.

That does not mean that every one agrees with Chaudhri Sahib. There is, for example, our friend the Socialist. He sees no good in the charkha—he never did. In his system—he has evolved a wretched system of his own—the charkha has no place. Can you think of it?—a social economy without the charkha! One wants to laugh! I laugh at it, which does not improve my relations with the Socialist. He has started calling me Mahatma B. N.!

And, well, I call him a bloody Fascist. For he is one, though he may pretend to be a socialist and all that.

As I have already said, Chaudhri Sahib has not been idle since resigning office. The whole of *Charkhabad* hums with his unceasing activity. The war has imposed new tasks on Chaudhri Sahib. He has realised, as he had never done before, that not only India but humanity needs him. He has a message for the whole world, a message of universal love, of universal non-violence. 'This is a war to end war', Chaudhari Sahib is accustomed to say. He does not mean the present conflagration but the war initiated by him—of the charkha against the soul-destroying machine, of non-violence against violence that is turning men into beasts.

To inaugurate his campaign Chaudhri Sahib called a big congress of workers at *Charkhabad*. Preparations for the congress were made on a gigantic scale. Not the least important part of the preparations was the *akhund charkha path*, in which thousands of men and women took part. Spinning went on unceasingly night and day for a whole week. It was an inspiring sight. Not a single charkha had a moment's rest during this week. Workers divided themselves into batches, each batch working for a fixed number of hours and, very often, until they were too exhausted to spin any more. Think of their sacrifice in the cause of swaraj, in the cause of

India's freedom! A violent soldier exposes himself to enemy bullets in the field of battle. He sacrifices his life. But that is easy enough. It is far more difficult to get up in the middle of the night, sacrificing sleep and comfort, and to spin, and to go on spinning until you are dead with fatigue. When I saw our non-violent soldiers spinning with grim determination in the dead of night, I could not help saying to myself: 'This is the stuff of which conquering armies are made. Our battle of swaraj is already won.'

It was the biggest workers' congress ever held in *Charkhabad*. Not less than a lakh of people, all dressed in snow-white khaddar, attended the congress and, with wrapt attention, listened to Chaudhri Sahib's discourses (of which a substance is given in the pages that follow). It was a grand spectacle. Try to visualise the scene: an enormous pandal, seating a lakh of people, every one with a charkha before him or her. 'In pin-drop silence Chaudhri Sahib rises and says 'Let us spin.' The pandal is filled with the music of a hundred thousand charkhas. That is how all our meetings began. Chaudhri Sahib would quietly rise and say 'Let us spin,' and the whole audience would spin, devotedly and reverently. Then Chaudhri Sahib would give a sign for spinning to stop, and begin his discourse.

He spoke, always, with ease and supreme self-confidence. When Chaudhri Sahib speaks the whole

world listens. He knows it. He is aware of the tremendous responsibility resting on his shoulders, of his duty to the whole world. But his courage has never failed him. This is because he is conscious that if any one can save this mad world, he can.

THE CHARKHA AS MEANS OF PRODUCTION.

"Brothers and sisters", Chaudhri Sahib began. "Why do we begin our meetings with spinning? Others would begin with a formal prayer. Spinning is our prayer, our prayer for swaraj.

Some boys and girls came to me the other day and asked for my autograph. I gave it. They wanted some message in addition. There is only one message that I have for India, for the young and the old, for men and women : 'Spin for swaraj'.

What is the connection between spinning and swaraj? There is a most intimate connection. To me the charkha is not merely what it is, the spinning wheel. It is much more. The charkha is the basis of our future economy. It is a decisive sign of non-violence; it is the symbol *par excellence* of non-violence. The wheel is bound up with my scheme of swaraj, indeed with life itself.

The charkha will bring freedom, not only to India but to the whole of enslaved humanity. It is the most effective weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. The charkha, you will say, only produces a weak thread. But this weak thread, brothers and sisters, binds the millions in an un-

breakable cord. Even one yard of the thread is not useless, but millions of unending threads, spun by willing and knowing hands, will make a cord strong enough to bear any strain that may be put upon it—the strain of India's freedom, the strain of Europe's liberation, the strain of a new world order.

This evening, however, we are not concerned with the wider interpretation of the charkha. Let us take the charkha as such, as means of production. Allow me to explain how the charkha, as means of production, can become an abiding source of economic well-being and prosperity.

Let us, for a moment, turn our thoughts not to the very remote past, I mean the 16th and 17th centuries. There were no machines then, which have played such havoc with the fabric of Indian village life. The Indian economic organisation was based on the charkha and the charkha alone. Did we starve then? What was our position *vis-a-vis* other countries?

A foreign writer, I am told, divides countries into two classes, exporting countries and importing countries. Now all countries both export and import goods. But you are an importing country if you cannot get along without imports, and you are an exporting country if the world cannot get along without your exports. India in the 16th and 17th centuries was an exporting country. We wanted few goods from foreign countries, while there was a large and ever-increasing foreign

demand for the products of our handicrafts, particularly cotton goods. The world paid for our exports in gold and silver. Gold and silver flowed from Europe to India in mighty streams and remained here, as the rivers flow into the sea.

Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller, thus refers to the ships that he saw at Aden in 1514: "And these ships of Cambay are so many and so large, and with so much merchandise, that it is a terrible thing to think of so great an expenditure of cotton stuffs as they bring."

The products of our hand-loom were in demand in all parts of the world.

What is the present position? There is no export of cotton goods worth mentioning.

Note further that 'these ships of Cambay' of which Barbosa speaks, were Indian ships made in India. Our craftsmen were able to make as good ships as any Englishmen or Hollanders, even better. We have evidence to show that our carpenters had 'growne soe expert and masters of their art' that many Indian vessels in shape exceeded those that came either out of England or Holland—that is what servants of the John Company in India thought and said.

What is the present position?

We have practically no Indian ships engaged in foreign commerce.

Here is an undeniable, incontestable fact: our

predominance as a manufacturing country in the past—which predominance rested wholly on hand-power. We must regain the predominance which we have lost.

But you will say, 'To do so it will be necessary to fight the West with the weapons of the West.' My answer is a most decided, a most definite 'no'. We shall fight Western machines with the charkha, and the charkha will win.

'How' ? you will ask. 'Are not machine-made goods cheaper ? Is not mill-made cloth cheaper and better than khaddar ?'

I emphatically deny that. What is your conception of cost ? Perhaps you reckon cost in terms of annas and pies paid for various factors of production. This is a soul-less conception for which I have no use. Include in the cost of mill-cloth the boundless human suffering caused by the destruction of village crafts, the starvation of millions of hand-spinners and hand-weavers. That is not all. How does a mill-owner make his profits ? He ruthlessly exploits his workers. Capitalist production enriches a single capitalist and impoverishes thousands of workers. How do our mill-workers live ? Why, prisoners in jails get more cereals to eat than supposedly free mill-workers. I said 'supposedly,' for in fact mill-workers are not free. They are little better than slaves driven to work by capitalists with the lash.

Now compare khaddar with mill cloth. Which is cheaper, pure white khaddar, the product of free men, which incorporates honest toil, or mill cloth bespattered with the blood of wage-slaves ?

No, brothers and sisters, in terms of *spiritual* values, mill-cloth is infinitely dearer than khaddar. And that is why the mills cannot compete with the charkha. The charkha will win in the end. Khaddar is cheaper and better than mill cloth.

Let me make my position in regard to machinery perfectly clear. I will have nothing to do with it. I am very often mis-represented. Some time ago I was asked, 'Do you visualise' electricity, ship-building, iron-works, machine-making and the like existing side by side with village crafts ?' I said, 'I do.' And from this answer the inference is drawn that I accept machinery ! Do not forget that my social order of the future will be based predominantly on the charkha. I have said that again and again. It follows that whatever comes into conflict with the charkha, must go. While I visualise machine-making and all that, I also visualise, given the will of the nation, the charkha living when the last mill has closed down. That is the essence of my visualisation. Let me repeat for the thousandth time my opposition to the mills is unbending and uncompromising. The mill-owners know it. But they also know that my opposition is wholly non-violent. I have not started, nor do I propose to start setting fire to the mills. Can any one think of me doing

it ? (a hundred thousand voices cried ' No. Never. ' Chaudhri Sahib *zindabad*')."

Chaudhri Sahib acknowledged the tribute with a characteristic smile and proceeded :

" While I am working for the non-violent destruction of the mills, I do not object to the charkha being financed by mill-owners. (Sensation). Yes, brothers and sisters, mill-owners give me money, even for the charkha. They say they do not fear its competition. Whatever motive they have is on the surface. Nothing is hidden. Everything is perfectly frank and straightforward. They know what I am after. They may say that they do not fear the competition of the charkha. They will find out quickly enough whether they can afford to ignore the charkha. In the meantime, if it pleases them to finance the charkha, I permit them to do so. I take their money. They are financing a movement for their own destruction. When a capitalist offers me money, I tell him frankly and sincerely what I want it for—that is, for encompassing his ruin. If he still gives it, I only say ' the more fool thou.'

Will you allow me, brothers and sisters, to say a few words about this modern Western craze for speed ? Machinery, I am told works faster than human limbs can move. So it does. But what is there in speed ? Some time ago, in a certain district, they started using motor vans for village propaganda. I put my foot down. I will not have it. I prefer

the bullock cart to the motor van. The bullock cart moves slowly, but it can go anywhere. The money spent on the bullock cart remains in the village; it gives employment to village craftsmen. True, one moves faster in a motor car or a railway train. But speed, brothers, and sisters, is not the end of life. Man sees more and lives more truly by walking to his duty.

I wrote these words when I was rushing to Simla in a railway train at the rate of 40 miles an hour. Do you see a contradiction there? There is no contradiction whatsoever. My ideal remains the same—the bullock cart. Personally I hate travelling even in a bullock cart. But between the ideal and practice there always must be an unbridgeable gulf. The ideal would cease to be an ideal, and a source of inspiration, if it became possible to realise it. And my ideal is a civilisation in which the possession of a car will be considered no merit and railways will find no place. I am working for the realisation of this ideal. If you have any doubts about it, refer to my thirteen-fold constructive programme for swaraj. You will find no motor cars, no railways, no mills and no machines there. But khadi is there, charkha is there, and other village industries are there.

What is the picture in my mind of our future economy? It is a village economy from beginning to end. Groups of people are settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of

dignified and peaceful existence. These groups are entirely self-sufficient, Food and raiment are, and will always remain the prime necessities of life. These groups have plenty of food, provided by their own cultivation. And they have plenty of raiment provided by their own takli and charkha. What else can man want ? The craving for the comforts and luxuries of modern civilised life is sinful. It must be suppressed. What is the teaching of our scriptures ? The wise one withdraws the senses from the objects of the senses and sits even as a tortoise which has drawn in its limbs :

यदा सहर्गते चायं कर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीनिद्रयार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

At the end of the meeting Chaudhri Sahib received an ovation. The pandal resounded with the cries of 'Charkhe ki Jai,' 'Chaudhri Sahib ki Jai.'

We, that is the Socialist and I, drove back to our place in *Charkhabad* in my Rolls-Royce. Chaudhri Sahib preferred to walk.

Yes, I keep a Rolls-Royce. And I follow Chaudhri Sahib and think as he thinks. He has never said that in his ideal society no one will be allowed to keep a car. All that he has said is that the possession of a car will be considered no merit. Well, I possess very little merit at present. If I live to see Chaudhri Sahib's ideal society, I shall, as the

owner of a car, be entirely without merit. I have reconciled myself to that position.

As soon as we were comfortably seated in the car, the Socialist said :

Socialist—Mahatma B. N., wot prawce charkha nah ?

B. N.—I suppose you are trying to be funny, but I do not understand Greek.

Socialist—Have you read *Major Barbara* ? It is a play by Bernard Shaw.

B. N.—I detest Shaw and his socialism.

Socialist—Read *Major Barbara*. You will enjoy it. So mill-cloth is be-spattered with blood, is it ?

B. N.—What does your Guru say about capital ? Capital comes into the world oozing dirt and blood from head to foot, from all pores.

Socialist—That may be Marx's view. It is not my own.

B. N.—I forgot. Your socialism means fascism. Well, my dear Fascist, what if we regard mill-cloth as dripping with the blood of exploited humanity ?

Socialist—Capitalists' money is tainted, and yet you take it for financing the charkha ?

B. N.—We do. We conceal nothing. We openly admit that mill-owners give us money even for the charka. Do you not admire our sincerity, our transparent honesty ?

Socialist—I do, as I admire Mrs. Baines, the Salvation Army Commissioner, who got Bodger's whisky to finance her movement. And when Under-

shaft, Barbara's father, who manufactured the implements of war and gloried in it gave her a cheque, she took that too.

B. N.—Very sensible.

Socialist—And in giving her the cheque Under-shaft said: 'Every convert you make is a vote against war. Yet I give you this money to hasten my own commercial ruin.'

B. N.—Just as mill-owners give us money to hasten their own commercial ruin.

Socialist—Precisely. And when every one else sings 'Glory, Hallelujah', Barbara, who was a Major in the Salvation Army, cries out in the agony of her soul: 'My God: Why hast Thou forsaken me?'

B. N.—Why?

Socialist—She thought it wrong to finance people's salvation with tainted money, and she left the Army in disgust.

B. N.—Barbara is a conceited minx.

Socialist—Possibly. That is why Bill says to her tauntingly 'wot prawce selvytion nah?' (What price salvation now).

B. N.—The end justifies the means.

Socialist—So it would seem, in the philosophy of satyagraha. But you know very well that the charkha is doomed?

B. N.—We know nothing of the kind. I share Chadhuri Sahib's faith—the charkha will live when the last mill has closed down.

Socialist—That time will never come, and you know it. You started your campaign in 1921. How many mills has the charkha succeeded in closing down during the past twenty years? Not one. On the other hand, the production of mill cloth, which amounted to less than 2000 million yards in 1921-22, at present exceeds 4000 million yards. If India is self-sufficient today in regard to cloth, it is due to her cloth mills, not to the charkha. The charkha prospered in the past because there were no machines then. How can you ignore facts of economic history?

"Ah" I said conclusively, "We can afford to do so because we are making history".

CHARKHA AND NATIONAL DEFENCE.

In his second discourse Chaudhri Sahib dealt with the problem of national defence, or of non-violent defence against foreign aggression.

"Brothers and sisters", he said, "There is a link of connection between yesterday's and today's discourse. If we accept the charkha as means of production, our defence must be non-violent, or, to use military phraseology, we must rely on non-violent arms for defending the country against foreign aggression.

The charkha can be used violently. If you throw it at your enemy, with a true aim, you may not kill him, but he could not escape injury. And if a million charkhas were dropped from a height of

20,000 feet, they would descend on the invading horde at a speed of several hundred miles per hour, and kill.

But that is not how I propose to use the charkha. Our non-violent arms exclude all thought of violence. The charkha, I need not remind you, is a symbol *par excellence* of non-violence.

If we make the charkha the basis of our system of production, if our society is composed of self-sufficient village units, if village life is to be the keynote of our future economy, we cannot organise violent defence on modern lines.

At the present time, in order to defend yourself violently, you must set up big factories and huge armament works. Village life comes to an end. The worker loses his independence. He is transformed into a wage-slave. In the place of tens of millions of scattered, independent, self-sufficient centres of production, there is concentration of economic power and resources in a few large towns and in the hands of a very small class of capitalists. This is the complete antithesis of the charkha.

I propose to tell you how we may organise non-violent defence. Frankly I could not organise violent defence. I should be at my wits' end, if we had to equip ourselves violently. I cannot even think out an armament plan, much less work it. On the other hand, my non-violent plan is incredibly simpler and easier.

Before unfolding my plan let me emphasize the absolute and utter futility of violent defence. I have always believed in non-violence, but recent events, particularly in Europe, have more than ever convinced me of the superiority of non-violent over violent defence.

They talk of destroying Hitlerism by force ! Hitlerism will never be defeated by counter-Hitlerism. It can only breed super-Hitlerism raised to the n th degree. What is going on before our eyes is a demonstration of the futility of violence as also of Hitlerism.

They call me an impractical idealist ! They say I am not able to face facts or realities ! Well, brothers and sisters, let us, as realists, face facts. What are the facts ? Germany over-ran Poland, and Poland offered violent resistance. The Poles are a brave people. But how has the undoubted military valour of Poland saved her against the superior forces of Germany and Russia ? Would Poland unarmed have fared worse if it had to meet the challenge of these combined forces with the resolution, to face death without retaliation ? Would the invading forces have taken a heavier toll from an infinitely more valorous Poland ? It is highly probable that their essential nature would have made the enemy desist from a wholesale slaughter of innocents.

You will note, brothers and sisters, that I have faith in the essential nature of even Germans and

Russians. The essential nature of the invaders would have saved Poland if Poland had resisted non-violently. Poland would have been a free country still. Seeing that the Poles were ready to face death without fighting, Hitler would have stayed his blitzkrieg and Stalin his hand, even as he raised it to stab Poland in the back.

Let us study the character of modern warfare. It is total war. The actual battle front may extend over hundreds of miles. A particular point is selected for attack, while skirmishes are going on over the whole front. The dive-bombers form the spear-head of the attack. They rain death and destruction from above, while the heavily armoured tanks are leading the mechanized forces into the battle raging below. A gap is made in the defences, and infantry in lorries and trucks pushes through the gap to consolidate the positions won. At the same time other bombers are disorganising communications, destroying industrial works, ammunition factories and stores of food and raw materials behind the enemy lines. Even civilians, women and children are not spared. Modern warfare is hell let loose on earth.

Is India prepared to wage modern warfare? No, we are not. Some time ago His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in a broadcast talk referred to India as a military country. I strongly dissent from the view that India is a military country. And I thank God that it is not. For me, brothers and

sisters, the Defence Forces are of the least importance in the make-up of a nation. You will perhaps say that life would be in constant danger if the defence forces were withdrawn. But can you deny that the defence forces notwithstanding, life is not free from peril? The defence forces avail little in war. France had her Maginot line. Did the Maginot line save France from defeat? Keeping the actual fate of Europe before our mind's eye we are forced to admit that peril lies precisely in defence forces, in military preparedness. I thank God again that I, and with me the millions of India, are untouched by the military spirit. We had our military castes, but these castes had little to do with the millions of India. I attribute all our misfortunes to our military castes. India would have escaped all the horrors of war and enslavement through the ages if she had no military castes to offer violent resistance to foreign invaders.

And now, brothers and sisters, I will tell you how foreign aggression ought to be met, how I, with a comparatively small band of satyagrahis could even now, if they would only let me, stop the fierce conflict raging in Europe.

I cannot draw the whole picture to you because we have no past experience to fall back upon. But imagine two armies locked in deadly combat, with bombing planes, armoured tanks, guns and howitzers. At the head of my non-violent army of, say, 2000

satyagrahis, dressed in pure white khaddar, all carrying light charkhas, I put myself between the two armies. We all squat down on the ground and spin ! Yes, brothers and sisters, while bombers are raining down bombs, while guns and howitzers are belching fire, while tanks are battering down defences, we quietly sit and spin ! It may be that while some of us are spinning, others with folded hands will appeal to the 'essential nature' of the combatants. A bomber roars over-head. With folded hands I say to the bomber 'Maharaj, Namaste. Kill me if that will give you pleasure. I am here to sacrifice myself for the sake of humanity, for *your* sake.' Will he kill me ? No.

I would vary my tactics according to circumstances. The General of a non-violent army has got to have greater presence of mind than that of a violent army, and God would bless him with the necessary resourcefulness to meet situations as they arise. The General of a non-violent army would be strong, stronger than any violent General, for his strength is derived from God.

Take another case. Suppose war has not actually broken out, but is threatened. Suppose I am entrusted with the defence of India's North West Frontier, and information reaches me that strong parties of raiders are about to cross the Indian Frontier. What do I do ? I send them a message : If you want me to rub my nose on the ground

before you, I won't do it. If you want me to pull my ears to please you, I won't do that either. But if you want my earthly possessions, you may take them all.' I will offer no resistance. Earthly possessions are of no account whatsoever. I will surrender them to the enemy. But at the same time I will make it perfectly clear to him that he cannot have my soul or my mind.

That, brothers and sisters, is my advice to my countrymen and countrywomen. Do not rub your nose on the ground or pull your ears at the enemy's command. Do not surrender your mind or your soul to the enemy at whatever cost. The rest is of no consequence.

Some of you may recall my famous appeal to every Briton which profoundly moved the whole world. Addressing myself to every Briton I said: 'You will invite Herr Hitler and Sig. Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your souls nor your minds.

I will go further, brothers and sisters. Suppose raiders from across the North West Frontier want to kidnap you and your family. Allow yourself with your family to be kidnapped. Why? Ahimsa is the supreme law or the highest dharma. And true ahimsa means *asakti*. The true satyagrahi reckons.

not if he should lose his land, his money, his life, even his family. For our ideal is

असक्लिरनमिष्वंगः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥

The votary of ahimsa cares for nothing, he fears nothing. If he has any fear, that is of God alone. He who seeks refuge in God will have a glimpse of the *Atman* that transcends the body, and the moment one has a glimpse of the imperishable *Atman*, one sheds the love of the perishable body.

Will non-violent defence as I have pictured it succeed in its object? That entirely depends on the stage of perfection reached by non-violent soldiers, our satyagrahis. As I have often said, if there is one true satyagrahi it would be enough. Brothers and sisters, I am trying to be that true satyagrahi. Not one of my thoughts would be in vain—I should have but to think a thing and it would happen, as soon as I have attained the *nirvikasa* (passionless) state. Take the present conflagration. Even if there is one individual who is almost completely non-violent, he can put it out. And that is why I think that if this conflagration is to be put out through non-violent effort, it will be done only by India, by our satyagrahis, who have trained and disciplined themselves through *tapasya* (penance). And, brothers and sisters, I, as the author, expert and General of satyagraha, will have the privilege of leading that non-violent effort." (Loud applause).

At the end of the meeting we persuaded Chaudhri Sahib, not without difficulty, to go with us in my car. "If you are always seen walking to your duty, Chaudhri Sahib," I said, "people would begin to think that the gulf between the ideal and the actual had been bridged. Why, then, the ideal would cease to be the ideal and a source of inspiration." Chaudhri Sahib smiled as he got in, and we drove rapidly away.

"A wonderful discourse," I remarked on the way. And even the Socialist agreed. "Chaudhri Sahib surpassed himself," he said.

Chaudhri Sahib.—There is no getting away from facts. Think of the folly of spending £3 millions every night, 4 crores of rupees, on barrage fire to keep bombers off a single city. And even then, whatever you do, a bomber will get through.

Socialist.—But Chaudhri Sahib, even your methods are not entirely inexpensive. Your non-violent army would have to be non-violently armed.

Chaudhri Sahib.—Yes, with charkhas, in the beginning. They must have something to do when they expose themselves to risk in the field of battle. Or panic and fear might seize them. In the battle of Jutland, the Commander of *Nestor* kept his hands fully occupied until the inevitable crash came. In the last moment he ordered the cables to be ranged on deck, just to keep the men busy. I will make my men spin.

Socialist.—Still, Chaudhri Sahib, you may lose thousands of satyagrahis with their charkhas before the enemy acknowledged defeat. That is not very cheap, is it ?

Chaudhri Sahib.—No, it is not, but that would be so only in the beginning. When we have perfected our technique, non-violent methods would put an end to violence without the cost of a single life.

"Incredible" exclaimed the Socialist.

'It is not at all incredible,' I said, "Take our Chaudhri Sahib. At present he is almost completely non-violent, in thought, speech and action. When he has still more perfected his satyagraha, why, he would have only to will the end of a war, and the war would end. Even now he knows that many of his thoughts do not go in vain."

Chaudhri Sahib.—A man or woman who is saturated with ahimsa has only to will a thing and it happens. I can picture this truth in my imagination. It is stated in the Scriptures too. As a matter of fact, I will many things and they happen. It is the Will of God, manifesting itself through me.

Socialist.—So the charkha would accomplish its end through miracles ?

Chaudhri Sahib.—Not through miracles but through *tapasya*. The great Prophets of yore were *tapasvis*, and what they willed happened. Who does not know that Lord Shri Krishna lifted the Govardhan mountain on his little finger to shelter

his cowherds from rain? Jesus Christ willed, and water turned into wine. And you know the story of Joshua? Joshua said in the sight of Israel, 'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon.' The sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. Perhaps you do not believe it?

Socialist.—Are you not mixing up two things, religion and politics, Chaudhri Sahib? Their spheres are distinct.

Chaudhri Sahib.—That is where you err and err grievously. Religion and politics go hand in hand. Their union is the corner-stone of satyagraha. I cannot conceive politics as divorced from religion. Religion should pervade every one of our actions. God is the main support of every styagrahi. Take away God, and what is left of satyagraha?

'Very little indeed,' said the Socialist maliciously.

THE CHARKHA AND LAW AND ORDER.

On the third day, when spinning had ceased, Chaudhri Sahib said :

"Brothers and sisters. Having, in my last discourse, settled the question of national defence, I will, this evening, proceed to explain the role of the charkha in the maintenance of law and order within the country.

The nature and functions of the state have formed the subject of fruitless discussions for more than 2000 years. I say 'fruitless' deliberately. For

what have these discussions led to? Everywhere in the world a state exists which is the embodiment of violence. The communists set out to abolish the state. But look at Soviet Russia. The Soviet state is even more powerfully organised for violence than the Imperialist state of Great Britain. Or consider the state in Fascist Italy or National Socialist Germany. The state under Fascism is all-in-all. It has invaded all spheres of national life. Labourers cannot go on strike in Italy or Germany; employers cannot declare a lock-out. Nothing may be imported or exported without the permission of the state. A factory owner may not instal new machinery without leave. There is no freedom of thought or expression. And law and order is maintained with the help of the firing squad.

Does such a state make any appeal to you? Brothers and sisters, I totally reject this view of the state. Why? The Fascist state or the Soviet state governs too much.

Now my considered opinion is that that state will be the best governed which is governed the least. The ideally non-violent state will be an ordered anarchy.

Perhaps you do not follow me. It may seem to you that 'ordered anarchy' is a contradiction in terms. Let me explain.

Anarchy does not mean confusion. It only implies absence of authority, or government, or the

state as the repository of power. The non-violent state means no state at all.

But even when the state has disappeared, there will be no confusion.

It is violence that creates confusion. Our society will be non-violent. It follows that in our non-violent society order will be maintained even without the state.

Brothers and sisters, let us probe deeper into the question. Let me go to the root of the problem. Why is violence committed by man against man? There is a saying in Sanskrit that there is no crime that a starving man will not commit. You are living a life of luxury. You are rolling in wealth. But your neighbour is starving. He breaks into your house, knocks you down senseless and robs you of your possessions. Is this not very nearly the whole story? Violence springs from inequality, grave, unjustifiable inequality in the distribution of wealth. It is obvious that the problem of distribution must be satisfactorily solved before a non-violent society, or our state of 'ordered anarchy,' can come into being.

This also is a thorny problem. It has been discussed *ad infinitum* by social reformers, philosophers, jurists and economists. Have they been able to solve it? No. They cannot. The problem is insoluble in terms of violence. But start thinking in terms of non-violence and lo! it is found to be no problem at all. It is solved most simply and most easily.

I believe in equal distribution of wealth. According to my doctrine no one may own a rupee more than his neighbour.

But actually we find society composed of members some of whom own millions while others own nothing except a loin cloth. Do I propose to take away their wealth from the wealthy and distribute it among the poor and the needy ?

No. We cannot dispossess the wealthy of the wealth they own except by violence. And violence we have definitely ruled out. How will equality in the distribution of wealth be brought about then ?

Most simply and most easily, I repeat. We make a distinction between owning wealth and possessing it, and that is all. The Gordian knot is cut !

Some time ago a sister put a question to me : ' May a non-violent man possess wealth, and if he may, how can he keep it non-violently ? '

The question would have stumped any one else. I only said quietly, very quietly, ' He may not own any wealth though he may possess millions. '

Take as an example my friend B. N. He possesses a Rolls Royce, a big mansion with many rooms in which he lives and other house property in Lahore and elsewhere. He possesses a radio set specially made for him by European experts, carpets, specially woven for him by skilled hands in India and Iran, and many other things. He possesses all this. Will he cease to possess this wealth in our non-violent society ? No. He may possess all this.

and more. He may possess millions of rupees and millions of pounds. We raise no objection to that. But he will own nothing. Owning nothing his status will be the same as that of his neighbour who possesses only a loin cloth. Since no one will own anything, all will be on an equal footing so far as the distribution of wealth is concerned. Perfect equality in distribution, the ideal of social reformers of all ages, is thus realised.

Inequality, brothers and sisters, arises from ownership. Do away with ownership and equality is restored !

But, the critic may say, 'You are leaving the rich man in possession of his wealth.' We are. We are also leaving the poor man in possession of his *langoti*. Remember, his *langoti* is of as much value to a poor man as a carpet or a car to a rich man—perhaps more. For a *langoti* is indispensable, the carpet or car is not. Again, so far as the possession of wealth is concerned, we make no distinction between the rich and the poor. We treat them alike. We leave their possessions with them.

But the critic may still object that the rich man has superfluous wealth. Will he be allowed to use his superfluous wealth as he pleases ?

No. Having lost the ownership of all wealth, the rich man will become a trustee for all wealth possessed by him in excess of what he reasonably requires for his personal needs. His superfluous wealth will be used for society.

For example, we shall tell B. N. 'You own nothing. Of the wealth you possess, keep what you reasonably require for your personal needs. You are a trustee for the remainder, which will be used for the society.' At the same time we shall expect B. N. and every one else to limit their wants to a minimum.

We thus make the rich trustees for their superfluous wealth. It will be objected that a trustee may be dishonest. He may require, or think he requires, a palace to live in, a car to go about in, Havanas to smoke, the best of radio sets to 'listen in', the choicest ~~wines~~ to drink, the costliest carpets to sit on. Who is to decide what are the reasonable requirements, or reasonable personal needs of a man who possesses, but does not own much wealth?

A non-violent society, brothers and sisters, must leave this decision to the trustee himself. For if somebody else sat in judgment on the trustee, and the trustee disagreed, a deadlock would be reached. As I have already said, we do not propose to violently dispossess any one of the wealth he possesses. Therefore we are compelled to assume that trustees will be honest. To the question, 'What guarantee is there that the rich would part with their superfluous wealth for the good of the society', my answer is that we assume that they will. And that ends the matter. The problem of equal distribution in our non-violent society is finally solved by this single assumption !

HONOUR OF WOMEN.

A sister once asked me, 'How is one to protect the honour of women' ?

The question may be discussed under two heads : (a) How is a woman to protect her own honour non-violently, and (b) how are her male relatives to do so in the same manner ?

As regards the first question, where there is a non-violent atmosphere, where there is the constant teaching of ahimsa, woman will not regard herself as dependent, weak or helpless. She is not really helpless when she is pure. Her purity makes her conscious of her strength. I have always held that it is physically impossible to violate a woman against her will. The outrage takes place when she gives way to fear or does not realise her moral strength. If she cannot meet the assailant's physical might, her purity will give her the strength to die before he succeeds in violating her. Take the case of Sita. Physically she was a weakling before Ravana, but her purity was more than a match even for his giant might. On the other hand, if a woman depends on her own physical strength or upon a weapon she possesses, she is sure to be discomfited whenever her strength is exhausted.

The second question is easily answered. The brother or father or friend will stand, preferably with folded hands, between his protégée and her assailant. He will then either dissuade the assailant

from his wicked purpose or allow himself to be killed by him in preventing him. In so laying down his life he will not only have done his duty, but given a new accession of strength to his protégée who will now know how to protect her honour. She probably did not know it before. But as soon as her guardian, husband, father, brother or friend is killed before her eyes, that knowledge will suddenly dawn upon her, and she will be safe.

It is natural for our sisters to be concerned, even to be gravely concerned about their position in a non-violent society without a penal code. There can be no penal code in our society because 'ordered anarchy' lacks the authority to enforce a penal code. Our sisters, then, must rely on their own strength—the irresistible, invincible strength that purity gives, to protect their honour. And their guardians, husband, brother, father or friend, or all four, must always hold themselves in readiness to be killed by goondas without offering resistance.

THE COMMUNAL PROBLEM

How will communal disturbances be dealt with in our non-violent society?

We may discuss this question also under two heads: (a) how to prevent communal disturbances, and (b) how to quell them when they occur.

For preventing communal disturbances we obviously need a formula, and fortunately I have discovered it. It is a constituent assembly!

Long and intense reflection on the communal problem has convinced me that communal troubles are inseparably bound up with our present rigid and cramped constitution. At present the right to vote is enjoyed by a microscopic minority of the population. Give the right to vote to every man and woman of 21 years and over, and communal bitterness will vanish, like an ugly dream !

Let me confess, brothers and sisters, that at one time I thought nothing of a constituent assembly. Now I swear by it. The more criticism I see of the scheme, the more enamoured I become of it. It will be the surest index to the popular feeling. Perhaps you will say that most of us are illiterate. It is so. But it does not worry me. I would plump for unadulterated adult franchise, irrespective of whether the voter can even sign his or her name or not.

Perhaps you will ask : 'Will not our illiterate and ignorant masses be misled by corrupt and jealous leaders ? Alas ! brothers and sisters, the danger exists. Even the huge political organisation, which is founded on the highest moral principles and which is led by me in person, is not free from corruption. But I console myself with the reflection that the greater the organisation, the less felt is the effect of corruption. Why ? Because corruption is so widely, thinly distributed. There is corruption and jealousy in our organisation, but it is confined to those few who run the machinery. The leaders are corrupt and jealous, but how many are

they as compared with the masses they lead ? The masses are untouched by the defects of their leaders. Corrupt leaders do not corrupt the masses !

The constituent assembly as conceived by me is not intended to coerce anybody. Its sole sanction will be an agreed solution of communal questions. What will be that agreed solution ? That I cannot tell you. That no one can tell you. I possess a representative character. I speak in the name of India. But even my representative character can be and has been questioned. The representative character of any one can be questioned. And that is why we have not been able to find an agreed solution of communal questions. But who can question the representative character of a constituent assembly ? Let me enunciate a principle of fundamental importance in dealing with the communal problem : the solution of the problem depends entirely on the representative character of the body of men who attempt to solve it. It is sometimes argued that the communal problem has its roots in religious differences. No. Religion does not preach war. Who knows the meaning of true religion better than I ? Religion stands for universal concord, universal love, universal brotherhood. They are misguided who seek the origin of communal troubles in religious differences. These differences exist and will remain. They are a sign of life and growth. Mischievous people talk of uprooting religion. What

do they know of religion? Religion is life itself. The communal problem is not a religious but a constitutional problem. Therefore a constitutional formula is needed to solve it. Get this formula and let it work. The communal problem will be automatically solved.

I now pass on to the second part of the question. When a communal riot has broken out, how shall we suppress it?

We shall call in the aid of our police.

You are amazed, and I have given you cause for amazement. I have not the courage to declare that we can carry on without a police force, as I have in respect of an army. No army is needed for national defence, but a police force is needed for the maintenance of law and order within the country.

But do not run away with the idea that when I talk of a police force, I have the present police force in my mind. Nothing is farther from my thoughts. Our police force will be totally different in character from the police force of any country in the world.

Its ranks will be composed of believers in non-violence. It may have some kind of arms, but they will be rarely used, if at all. In fact, brothers and sisters, our policemen will be reformers.

Policemen-reformers! a novel and a grand conception. We are accustomed to think of the police as violent men, who violently drag citizens to the thana, where other violent men knock them about to extract confessions. I do not care for such a police.

The police force must undergo a radical transformation. In our society of the future the function of the police will be not to catch and punish goondas but to make goondas better men.

Is it possible to reform goondas? I believe in the innate goodness of human nature, and therefore my answer is 'yes'.

Even the dirty water from the gutter, when it mixes with the water of the Ganges, becomes as pure as the Ganges water. Contact with our policemen-reformers, under the guidance of our political organisation, will purify goondas.

Now you will say that we governed nine Provinces, and that in some of our Provinces goondaism prevailed. Evidently some of our ministers had not attained the purifying potency of the fabled Ganges. They were weak, and resorted to force to quell communal disturbances. That was a mistake. You will perhaps say that if 500 goondas run amok together, they will, if allowed to go unchecked, work untold havoc. But I ask: 'Why should there be 500 goondas or even 5 goondas, to run amok'? The presence of a single goonda in our midst shows that our ahimsa is only half-baked, that we, who lead and guide the people, are lacking in the faith that moves mountains. And if there are goondas, and if they run amok, what is our duty? Is it to kill them? Goondas too are our countrymen. We should allow ourselves to be killed by goondas. In a communal

riot it is the duty of ministers to allow themselves to be done to death first.

I am told that several years ago when there was a riot, an appeal was made to the leaders to go and throw themselves into the conflagration, but no one was ready. This rather supports than weakens my argument. It shows that our loyalty to ahimsa was lip-loyalty and not heart-loyalty.

Let me now draw a picture of non-violent action to quell a communal riot. I learn that violent communal clashes are occurring in the streets, that innocent people are being stabbed, houses set on fire, shops burnt and looted. What do I do? I, the General of satyagraha, suddenly appear in the streets at the head of a strong force of my policemen-reformers. We carry no arms, except the most powerful weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, the charkha. I rush into the thickest of the fight. Note that. In violent warfare, while common soldiers, led by their officers, hurl themselves at the foe, risking death, the General is calmly smoking a cigarette far away from the scene of battle. In non-violent warfare the General leads in person, followed by his officers and men—the men come last of all. Well, then, having got into the thickest of the fight, I start spinning! The music of the charkha acts like magic. It soothes ruffled nerves. Our coolness, our courage in the face of extreme danger makes the deepest impression on every one. We go on spinning. We

spin faster and faster. The goondas are stupified. They stand bewildered. There is no more any stabbing, any setting fire to houses, any looting of property. In the final scene goondas and all are discovered sitting side by side and spinning as if very life depended on it. The communal riot is over. It is transformed into a spinning competition ! "

Whether Chaudhri Sahib had intended it or not, the mention of the spinning competition actually started one in the meeting ! Chaudhri Sahib's discourse ended with frantic cheering and still more frantic spinning.

The Socialist had invited us to dinner. The simplest fare had been provided for Chaudhri Sahib. He eats very little, if he can be said to eat at all. He is a vegetarian, and so am I. The Socialist is not. Once we discussed this question. Do meat-eating and egg-eating consist with non-violence ? Chaudhri Sahib said, 'They do,' and also explained why. 'Otherwise we should have to exclude Mussalmans and Christians and a vast number of Hindus as possible co-workers in ahimsa.' It will be seen that our conception of non-violence is not rigid, but elastic. The mere fact that you kill a bird or other animal in order to eat it does not necessarily make you violent, or your deed a violent deed. Of course Chaudhri Sahib is incapable of hurting a fly.

Both during and at the end of the dinner we conversed freely. I paid my tribute of admiration

to Chaudhri Sahib's eloquent discourses. Even the Socialist admitted that they were inspired by the highest ideals. But he is a dissenter, a violent dissenter.

Socialist.—I do not see why I should always be ready to be killed by goondas :

"I am," I said. "Let goondas come in now and kill me. I will allow myself to be killed."

Socialist.—Suppose my daughter or sister is molested by a goonda. It is my duty to protect her. How do I protect her by allowing myself to be killed ?

Chaudhri Sahib.—Your martyrdom will open the eyes of the goonda.

Socialist.—There are also other ways of opening the goonda's eyes. Suppose I give him a knock on the head ? Or two knocks or three knocks, until his eyes are effectively opened ? You talk of my duty to be killed. Why is it not the duty of the goonda to be killed ? He has committed or attempted to commit a wicked act, not I.

Chaudhri Sahib.—This is the principle on which existing society is founded. But do we really reform criminals by punishing them, or through terrorism ? I would appeal to their essential nature through self-imposed suffering, even amounting to my death.

Socialist.—And their essential nature is love ?

"We believe in the innate goodness of human nature," I said.

Socialist.—Say 'innate wickedness' and you would be more correct.

Chaudhri Sahib.—There is a divine spark in every one of us. We know our origin : God.

Socialist.—Actually we are descended from infra-human ancestors.

"We admit no such descent," I said.

The Socialist ignored my remark and proceeded : "Text books of evolution know nothing about God as our origin. But they tell us about family trees. Each individual climbs its own family tree. Every vertebrate embryo passes through a stage in which a noto-chord is the only skeleton, and, moreover, every ~~vertebrate~~ embryo has a tail and gill-slits like a fish, which clearly indicate its descent from an aquatic ancestor. Early embryos of man, pig, chicken and fish are almost identical."

Noto-chord and a tail and gill-slits like a fish ! I began to laugh, which exasperated the Socialist.

Socialist.—What is the meaning of this idiotic laughter ?

"My dear fellow," I said, "in nation-building we have little use for noto-chords and tails and gill-slits like a fish."

Socialist.—That, however, does not alter the fact that we are essentially beasts, being descended from beasts. Or let me put it otherwise. Human nature is both good and bad. You must admit that there may be men, that there are men, in whom evil predominates.

Chaudhri Sahib.—Admitted, for the sake of argument.

Socialist.—As soon as you make that admission, your non-violent society, Chaudhri Sahib, evaporates into thin air.

"It does not," I said. "It is a solid reality."

Socialist.—It is possible that a number of wicked people live across your frontiers. Their wickedness, increased by poverty and hunger, may lead them to attack your country. You will not resist violently.

"No, never," I said.

Chaudhri Sahib.—Let them attack us. Let them over-run my country. If they ask me to perform humiliating acts, I will flatly refuse. If they ask me to surrender my mind or soul, I will not do that either, even at the cost of my life.

Socialist.—They do not care for your mind or soul. What they want is your lands and other goods.

Chaudhri Sahib.—My earthly possessions are of no consequence. I will not fight for them.

Socialist.—Well, then, you lose your independence. For ever and ever you will be slaves. Similarly, within a country there may be men, capitalists and landlords, whose essential nature is selfish. Your trustee may be dishonest. This one possibility makes an end of all your utopian schemes of equal distribution of wealth. Let me put it frankly, Chaudhri Sahib. You are not interested in

social reconstruction but in individual salvation. These two things are totally different. Your point of view is fundamentally wrong.

Chaudhri Sahib.—Save the individual and you will save the society.

Socialist.—No. No particular individual is of any importance. We have to think in terms of the whole. The good of the whole ensures the good of the individuals composing it. And that is why religion and politics do not go hand in hand. Religion is concerned with individual souls. In politics we are concerned, not with any soul but the safety and ~~material~~ prosperity of a group of human beings.

"But these human beings have souls to be saved," I insisted.

Socialist.—I know nothing about that.

"Have you a soul?" I asked.

Socialist.—Have I? But let us assume I have one. Why should Chaudhri Sahib insist on saving it? If he wishes to save his own soul, let him retire into a forest and save it there. His whole philosophy is based on mediaeval asceticism. It makes no appeal to India. And that is why he has failed.

"He has failed, has he?" I exclaimed. "The whole of India swears by him."

Socialist.—That is what you think. It is a delusion. Chaudhri Sahib is perfectly sincere himself. But, unwittingly, he has turned millions of his countrymen into hypocrites. Do they believe in the

charkha as the basis of our system of production? Do they believe in the charkha as the basis of national defence? Do they believe that charkha will maintain law and order and protect the honour of their wives, daughters and sisters? Not one.

Chaudhri Sahib.—But if they do not, why don't they say so?

Socialist.—You will not let them. So far as non-violence is concerned, you are the most dictatorial of dictators, the most tyrannical of tyrants. You will give Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin points and beat them. You are all three rolled into one. That, however, does not mean that I do not love you.

"We all love him. A dictator and tyrant," I said, "who is securely enthroned for ever and ever in the heart of India, in the heart of the whole world. Long live Chaudhri Sahib! Long live the charkha!"

CHAPTER II

MARXISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

A whole chapter was devoted to the struggle for existence in my *Marxism is Dead*. The main points that I endeavoured to make in that chapter are summarised below.

There is incessant struggle for existence in nature and, in the case of the animal kingdom, the struggle is very often of an extremely violent and deadly character. Its chief result is the elimination of the weak and survival of the fittest.

The struggle for existence is due to the natural law of over-production. Man, as part of organic nature, is subject to this law. If we could maintain our present rate of growth, the population of India would double at the end of 70 years.

Population (in the absence of positive and preventive checks) tends to increase more rapidly than the means of existence. The law of over-production has thus the same meaning for man as for the lower animals. The fact that animals are at most 'gatherers whilst men are producers' does not make any vital difference. There are limits to the expansion of food supply.

Imperialism is a phase of the struggle for existence among nations. There is no essential difference between ancient and modern Imperialism. The forms of exploitation are different but the real cause of Imperialist expansion is the same in the two cases.

The international struggle for existence is due to the fact that the world's natural resources are unequally divided among the nations.

If the international struggle for existence is, a fact, it follows that socialism can never develop into communism in any one country. The 'withering away' of the State in any country might mean loss of independence for that country or its dismemberment.

The international struggle for existence accounts for national differences and antagonisms. Since the time of Marx and Engels these differences and antagonisms have increased, instead of vanishing as Marx and Engels expected.

In the concluding portion of the chapter I referred to the Soviet Union :

"The Soviet Union realises the dangers of isolation and seeks to safeguard its position by means of alliances with France and Britain. The struggle for existence has driven Marxist (!) Russia into the arms of Western finance capital. This alliance has no meaning whatsoever in terms of Imperialism regarded as the last stage of capitalism. But its

meaning in terms of the struggle for existence is plain to every body."

As a matter of fact, to the amazement of the whole world, the Soviet Union concluded pacts, not with the Western democracies but Fascist Germany!

FRIEDRICH ALBERT LANGE

One of Marx's contemporaries, Friedrich Albert Lange, was considerably influenced by Darwin, as is shown by his book *The Labour Question. Its Significance for the Present and the Future*.¹ The first chapter of the book is entitled 'The Struggle for Existence'. Lange accepts the fundamental principles enunciated by Malthus and Darwin in regard to the growth of numbers and the struggle for existence, which leads him definitely to reject Marx's dialectical conclusion that capitalist production would produce, of itself, and with the inexorability of a law of nature, its own negation.

While Lange differed from Marx, he was impressed by his work. Again and again he bestows high praise on Marx. Marx was 'the most learned and clever' economist of his time, but Lange thought that a great part of the theoretical framework of Marxism was not of permanent value, though Marx attached the greatest importance to it. He specifically mentions the theory of value. Time has shown that Lange did not err in his judgment.

1. *Die Arbeiterfrage. Ihre Bedeutung fuer Gegenwart und Zukunft*. Winterthur, 4th ed. 1879.

Marx's contribution to the theory of value is of so little importance that it may be ignored altogether.

The first edition of *Das Kapital* appeared in 1863 and of Lange's *Die Arbeiter-frage* in 1855. In a letter to Engels dated March 11, 1855 Marx thus refers to Lange's book: "Siebel has sent me Lange's pamphlet. Confused; Malthusianism mixed with Darwinism, flirts with all sides—but there are some nice things against Lasalle and the bourgeois consumers' co-operative fellows" *.

Lange's emphasis on the struggle for existence elicited the following comment from Marx in a letter to Kugelmann (June 27, 1870): "One must admit that this is a very impressive method—for swaggering, sham-scientific, bombastic ignorance and intellectual laziness"². Lange is surprised that Marx should have revived the forgotten Hegelian dialectic. In regard to this Marx, in the same letter to Kugelmann says: "In one respect he reminds me of Moses Mendelssohn. That prototype of a wind-bag wrote to Lessing, how he could take 'the dead dog Spinoza' seriously. Similarly Herr Lange wonders that Engels, I etc., take the dead dog Hegel seriously when Buechner, Lange, Dr. Duehring, Fechner etc., are agreed that they—poor deer [this phrase was written in English] have buried him long ago."²

2. *Marx-Engels, Selected Correspondence*. Published by Lawrence and Wishart, p. 201.

Here then we have a characteristically Marxian judgment of a critic of Marxism. Herr Lange was something of a windbag, a pseudo-scientist, bombastic, ignorant, intellectually lazy and incapable of clear thinking.

Is it still worth our while to get to know Herr Lange and his point of view more fully? I should say 'yes.' I have very little faith in the judgment of Marx and Engels so far as their intellectual opponents are concerned.³

The short biographical note on Lange in *Selected Correspondence of Marx and Engels* describes him as 'A German bourgeois scientist and political writer.'⁴ Lange was born in a place near Solingen (Germany) on the 28th of July 1823 and died in Marburg on the 21st of November 1875. He studied philosophy, theology and philology at the universities of Zurich and Bonn. He taught philosophy at Zurich as Professor of Inductive Philosophy in 1870, and in 1872 became Professor of Philosophy in Marburg.

3. Marx and Engels thought very highly of their own work and very little of the work of others. For example, they refer to Malthus as a 'plagiarist' and 'servant of the bourgeoisie'. Engels in a letter to Lavrov referred to Darwin as 'a so-called natural scientist'. Engels attached more importance to abstract reasoning (dialectics) as a method of investigation than to induction, which led him to speak of 'the inductive ass' (*Induktionesel*) Newton as 'a plagiariser and corrupter' in contrast to Leibnitz. *Esel* in German means precisely what 'ass' or 'donkey' means in English. It is not a complimentary term. *Dialectics of Nature* by Engels, Lawrence and Wishart, p. 155 and n.

4. *Marx-Engels, Selected Correspondence*, p. 200

He published many books, of which the two best known are *The Labour Question*, and *History of Materialism* in two volumes, which latter was translated into French and English after his death. He was also associated with several journals, and himself founded and edited two or three.

Was Lange a bourgeois? By birth and education he was one, but in the same sense Marx and Engels were bourgeois too. Only one who had not read *The Labour Question* would describe Lange as bourgeois in sympathies or outlook.

The 'labour question' is a part of the general social question. What does Lange understand by the 'social question?' Under capitalism there is a growing differentiation between the classes. On the one hand there is accumulation of wealth in the hands of a small number of individuals, the capitalists, and on the other growing poverty of the masses. In effect it means that men and machines are used to provide more and more comforts and luxuries for the rich, while the workers lead a life of misery. They enjoy little leisure. They suffer from want. They have no intellectual pleasures. If capital were not concentrated in a few hands but widely distributed among the people, more necessities would be produced, hours of work would be shorter and, gradually, the standard of living of the masses would rise, so that they could consume even some luxuries. The claims of justice and equality demand a solution

of the labour question. Lange however, is no sentimental advocate of equality. The farther back in history we go, the fiercer we find the struggle for existence. No state of equality and blessedness of all existed in the past, of which the poets have sung. Nor can perfect equality be established. But this is no argument in favour of the existing system. It is sometimes thought that if things were allowed to take their own course, in time the economic condition of the oppressed classes would automatically improve. Lange would not passively wait; he would actively assist a solution. He would work for the realisation of his aim—which is a society in which no single member earns so little wages and enjoys so little leisure that it becomes impossible for him to take a share in the intellectual life of the society.

Lange is not a revolutionary but a social reformer. He does not preach class-war, or the violent destruction of the bourgeoisie by a militant proletariat.

We are not concerned with Lange's own solution of the labour question—he elaborates a six-fold programme in the last chapter of his book. We are more concerned with his Darwinism which Marx found so offensive.

Lange has a clear grasp of the struggle for existence and its application to mankind. Here is an almost literal translation of a passage from the first chapter of the book :

" Now the whole of the animal kingdom and the

plant world fights not only for land as such but also for the best land. A warm and moist spot in the middle of an inhospitable region is over-grown with shrubs, weeds and flowers, each trying to maintain itself and displace the competitors; where there is too much of life, the richest crop may be destroyed. Powerful interlopers take possession of the land and destroy the old vegetation. Similarly human beings, in their devastating migrations, fight for the richest lands, and the fertile Asia Minor and Italy with its mild climate, have been the graves of many nations. Then begins the terrible struggle between the races. The favoured European goes to regions which had so far remained in the possession of less • developed members of the human family. He brings them Christianity and death. A fearful destruction, which imagination cannot conceive, begins. The Antilies, the South Sea islands and large areas of North America are depopulated; the original inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land are rooted out; of the natives of Australia only a miserable remnant is left; as against this, millions of unhappy negroes are carried off from Africa to be exploited and used as cattle in America. Here the Europeans bring with them small-pox or other foul diseases, and there brandy; here they pursue the natives with blood-hounds and there they commit mass slaughters with fire-arms; here the natives are deprived of food on account of the occupation of their hunting grounds or the killing of their useful animals, and there they

are cruelly driven to work, which kills them.”⁵

Lange notes that the struggle for existence among men is on a higher plane than among the lower animals. He says :

“In the present work on the labour question Darwin plays an important role in so far as we have endeavoured to explain the circumstances which have given rise to the labour question in the light of the principles developed by Darwin, without, however, regarding them as absolute determining factors of human destiny. For whereas plants, without any consciousness, and animals controlled as a rule by natural impulses, are governed by those natural laws without any will of their own, there appears in man, representing the last stage of the natural process of improvement, the ability to raise himself above its cruel and heartless mechanism, to free himself from the inter-play of blind forces through consciously directed effort and, while saving himself endless pain and agony, to achieve progress which is quicker, more certain and uninterrupted than that which is brought about by natural laws working blindly through the struggle for existence. But at the same time it cannot be denied that all his intelligence and all his good-will notwithstanding, man will never free himself completely from the operation of those natural laws.”⁶

5. Lange, loc cit. Pp. 5-6.

6. *Ibid.* Pp. 30-1.

The last sentence puts the whole matter in a nutshell. Marx and Engels thought that the law of over-production had no application to mankind since man was able to produce food, while animals were at most gatherers. According to Lange, man as part of organic nature is still governed by natural laws and would always be so governed. That means that the struggle for existence among men is an inevitable biological phenomenon and not an ephemeral product of the capitalist system of production.

There is a curious unwillingness among men with a Marxian outlook to recognise facts as facts. For example, in his foreword to *Biology and Marxism* Joseph Needham says: "Totalitarian war is justified on the ground of an assumed struggle for existence between the national states of today, regarded as ultimate biological organisms, as if a centrally controlled world population were not yet a possibility." 7

Is the struggle for existence between the existing national states a real or an 'assumed' struggle? We may admit that the national states of today would bear no resemblance to 'ultimate biological organisms' if it were possible to centrally control world population. But when the world's population is not thus centrally controlled, is there or is there not a real and not an 'assumed' struggle for existence among

7. *Marxism and Biology* by Marcel Prenant; p. ix.

different national states, due to extreme inequality in their natural resources? And when has any attempt been made to centrally control world population? Who is going to do it? The defunct League of Nations? A world state which would come into existence only to 'wither away' ultimately? What are the means of centrally controlling world population? Has Mr. Joseph Needham any perception of the practical difficulties in the way of controlling the population in such countries as India, China or Japan? He seems to know nothing about it. Japan is a civilised country, but this is what a well-known Japanese writer, Lt. Commander Tota Ishimaru says about the population problem in Japan :

"Japan's population is increasing at the rate of about 700,000 a year. Unless she were made to adopt a compulsory system of birth-control, or were given the colonies and the raw materials and capital that she lacks, there would be another and possibly a world war in a few years' time. Compulsory birth-control is easier said than done, and if Japan were driven out of Manchuria, Korea and Saghalien, it is as clear as day that, with her population and her insufficient resources, it would not be long before she had to draw her sword and stand up to fight for life." *

The first English version of Lt. Commander Tota Ishimaru's book *Japan must fight Britain* appeared in 1935. The second world war has come.

Compulsory birth-control is easier said than done —this is true not only of Japan but India. The population of India increased by 10·6 per cent between 1921 and 1931; 34 millions were added to the population of India in this period and the addition may amount to about 40 millions in 1931-41. Every one knows that the rapid growth of numbers in India is a cause for alarm rather than satisfaction, but only famines and epidemics can slow down our rate of growth, as they have done in the past, not compulsory birth-control.

Like Japan, we may also claim to be a civilised people. If compulsory birth-control is impracticable in Japan, India and China, it is inconceivable in less civilised parts of the world which cover vast regions of the earth's surface.

There is no social problem, however difficult, which cannot be solved most easily on paper. On paper it is certainly possible to control world population. Actually it would be possible to do so only by shooting down millions annually in almost every part of the world, or by putting unwanted babies into bags and throwing them into the sea.

While the growth of numbers in India at the rate of one per cent per annum is a cause for alarm rather than satisfaction, the growth of the Russian population at a much more rapid rate has caused no alarm in the world or embarrassment to the Government of Russia. Why? Russia has a population of about

180 millions and an area of about 8 million sq. miles. India with an area of less than 2 million sq. miles, or about one-fourth that of Russia, has to support a population more than double that of Russia.

Or consider Australia. Approximately the area of Australia is 3 million sq. miles. The population of Australia was 4,455,000 in 1911, 5,436,000 in 1921 and 6,630,000 in 1931. Between 1911 and 1931 the population of Australia increased by 48·8 per cent. During the same period the population of India increased from 315·2 millions to 352·8 millions, an increase of 11·9 per cent. The phenomenally rapid increase in the population of Australia was mainly due to natural causes, i.e., the excess of births over deaths—immigration into Australia since 1911 has been on a small scale. No one regards the rapid growth of numbers in Australia as a cause for alarm : there is plenty of room for the growth of numbers there. There is growing pressure of population on the soil in India in almost all parts of the country. This pressure would be relieved by emigration of the surplus population to Australia. India is a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. But are Indians permitted to settle in Australia? No.

Needham recognises the need for centrally controlling world population. But for the orthodox Marxist the population problem does not exist. Over-population is the result of the capitalist system !

Under capitalism there is a class of oppressors and a class that is ruthlessly oppressed and exploited in virtue of the ownership of means of production by capitalists. Let us suppose that means of production are not the monopoly of any class but are most widely distributed among the people. The use of machinery, we assume, is unknown and the chief sources of national income are handicrafts and cultivation.

Will the Malthusian law apply under such conditions ?

It did, to India of the pre-machine age. The population of India at the death of Akbar ~~has been~~ estimated at about 100 millions, which is less than one-third of the present population, but India then also produced wealth on a much smaller scale, and, relatively to her income, India was over-populated. This may be inferred from famines and epidemics which visited India and cut short the growth of numbers. The sufferings of the people in famines were terrible. They have been described by contemporary writers.

It cannot be questioned that the Malthusian law was at work in India before the rise of capitalism and yet India had no important class of exploiters. We had no large class of tenant farmers ; the tiller of the soil owned the land he cultivated and the industrial worker owned the tools and implements he worked with.

Assume that all the land of the country is equally divided among peasant proprietors, who are entirely self-dependent. As population increases the amount of land per owner will decrease until in a few hundred years what were economic holdings before will become uneconomic. When that stage is reached, one would be able to speak of over-population, which has nothing whatever to do with capitalism or the oppression of workers by a class of parasites.

Over-population may thus appear even when class differentiation is totally absent. Inequality of wealth may be removed by periodic redistribution of land. But there is no remedy against progressive diminution in the size of individual holdings on account of the growth of numbers.

Nothing is more painful to read than the account of labour conditions in Bombay about 70 years ago. Even to-day our capitalism is only in its infancy. Seventy years ago only the faintest traces of capitalist enterprise were noticeable. In ginning factories the engine started between 4 and 5 a. m. and went on working without any stoppage till 8, 9 or 10 p. m. In the busy season the same set of workers continued to work both night and day, with half an hour's rest in the evening, for as many as eight days. Large numbers of women and children were employed, and both men and women came to the factories at 3 a. m. The hands that

worked from 4 a. m. till 10 p. m. were paid from 3 to 4 annas per day.⁹ These were starvation wages, but still they attracted workers. Why? Had capitalism already created the Marxian industrial reserve army? But then capitalism could hardly be said to exist at all in our country. There was no capitalism worth speaking of, but the industrial reserve army was already there! Capitalists exploited the labour of men, women and children who never failed to offer themselves for exploitation—they were glad to earn anything at all. Factory workers came from the villages where there was no work for them.

The experience of other countries which have made the transition from hand-work to capitalist production has not been dissimilar. Lange refers to the organisation of handicrafts in Europe which offered the strongest opposition to factory production. The hand-workers were organised in guilds which endeavoured to maintain wages at a satisfactory level by restricting the number of new entrants. "In these circumstances" says Lange, "whoever was not able to find employment for his children, and particularly the more poverty-stricken peasant, who, apart from that, was accustomed to see his children working partly in the most varied and the lowest employments, could be persuaded with comparative ease—specially at a time when the

9. See *Indian Socialism* by Brij Narain, pp. 40-1.

refined greed of the undertaker had not yet learnt to extract the last drop of life-blood from the victims of industry—to deliver up his children to the factory, and thus provide capitalists with the means of breaking the resistance of adults.”¹⁰

It will be admitted that the growth of capitalism is facilitated by the pre-existence of an industrial reserve army which it did not create. A better name for this surplus population is Nature's Reserve Army, since it is the product of the natural law of over-production. This Nature's Reserve Army is composed of men, women and children who have been driven to the margin of subsistence by the law of ~~over~~-production. This marginal population, being under-nourished and having little disease-resisting power, suffers most in famines and epidemics.

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL WAR

Given the tendency to over-population, irrespective of the system of production, and given, further, the extreme inequality in the opportunities for expansion enjoyed by different peoples, it is not surprising that history is largely a record of sanguinary international wars.

The idea of an international civil war, leading to the establishment of the dictatorship of the world proletariat, is attractive. The working class throughout the world unites and, at a favourable moment, rises in revolt against the world bourgeoisie and annihilates it.

10. Lange, loc. cit. p. 235.

The moment that international socialists of the entire world had long awaited with impatience arrived when the Great War of 1914 broke out. Practically the whole world was drawn into the vortex of war. The Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party had no difficulty in understanding the true nature of the gigantic conflict, and it lost no time in revealing it to the world proletariat. The 'only real content, the significance and the meaning' of the Great War was not merely conquest and pillage, but to divert the attention of the toiling masses from the internal political crises developing in the leading countries, 'to disunite the workers and fool them with nationalism, to exterminate their vanguard in order to weaken the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.'¹¹ In other words, the revolutionary proletariat in Russia, Germany, England and other countries had successfully carried class war to a point where the fall and extinction of the bourgeoisie was imminent. To save itself, the cunning bourgeoisie of the leading countries started the Great War! The German bourgeoisie fooled the working class and the toiling masses by asserting that it was waging war for the defence of the Fatherland and for liberating the oppressed Russians from Tsarism. The Russian, the British and the French bourgeoisie repeated the same

11 Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V. Pp. 123—130.

'lying phrases about patriotism'. The bourgeoisie of each country extolled the significance of 'its own' national war and declared that it wanted victory "not for the sake of plundering and seizing territory, but for the sake of 'liberating' all other peoples, except its own."

What was the only real war of liberation? Naturally civil war in each country against the bourgeoisie both of its own and foreign countries.

The opportunists were preaching class-collaboration and bourgeois chauvinism under the guise of patriotism and defence of the Fatherland. The Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party reminded them of 'the fundamental truth of socialism', expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*, that the workers have no country. It gave the world proletariat 'the only correct proletarian slogan': 'Transform the present imperialist war into civil war'.

The international fraternity of the workers ignored the slogan! The Great War was not turned into a civil war.

We are now in the midst of a second world conflagration. Does it bear the character of an international civil war? Not more than the Great War of 1914. Somehow the international proletariat always fails when victory is almost within its grasp! It allows itself to be fooled by the bourgeoisie with chauvinism!

But some British labour leaders still retain their faith in the old slogan. That is alone how we can understand their insistence on a clear definition of war aims.

Suppose you tell them: 'Our war aim is to win the war'. British socialists are not content with that. What do you want to win the war for? they ask. Do you want to defend the *status quo*? In that case the British Government might as well seek to ensure for the industrialists at home and the profiteers of Empire abroad that they should retain at least 10 per cent of their profits under Hitler's hegemony. The *status quo* cannot be defended. The social structure of the United Kingdom and the British Empire must change, and this should be made clear in the statement of war aims.¹²

Even when engaged in a life and death struggle, British socialists cannot put aside all thought of class differentiation!

War aims are to be so defined as to further the cause of international civil war. Those who maintain that the consideration of war aims may be postponed till victory has been won 'are really ostriches of a particularly stupid kind'. 'Either we turn the war into a war of European revolution or we shall be defeated. There is no half-way house'.¹² The statement of war aims on this basis would, it is thought,

12. *New Statesman and Nation*, July 6, 1940, p. 3, editorial.

immediately start the world proletarian revolution !

One may find excuses for workers in other countries who have again allowed themselves to be fooled by the bourgeoisie with lying phrases about patriotism, but what about the only socialist country in the world, Marxist Russia ? Is she working for the world revolution ? There is no bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union to fool its own proletariat or the proletariat of other countries. One thought that if there was a single country which, in virtue of its creed, had abandoned all thought of aggression, that country was Russia.

~~The~~ Soviet Union has not played a passive role in the present conflict. But the interpretation of her role is not easy.

There are two interpretations, one in terms of the struggle for existence and the other in terms of the class struggle. Which of the two is more worthy of acceptance,

“ The latter ”, a Marxist would say.

Let us thrash the matter out with our old friend the Marxist, who, I may again warn the reader, is no actual person, but a faithful epitome of the Marxist point of view.

Marxist—What are the facts to be interpreted ?

B. N.—To begin with, Soviet's friendship for the Axis Powers.

Marxist—We know nothing about that. The

Soviet may be their most deadly enemy. Stalin may be working secretly for their destruction.

B. N.—Well, then, the Soviet's pacts with Germany, the Soviet's attack on Poland and the fourth partition of Poland.

Marxist—We have already discussed that.¹³ You seemed to recognise that the fourth partition of Poland was necessary in the interests of the world revolution.

B. N.—Yes. But I do not understand why it did not occur to Lenin that the interests of the world revolution required a fresh partition of Poland. Lenin was a world revolutionary, was he not?

Marxist—He was. What are you referring to?

B. N.—In an article on *Lenin and Foreign Policy* contributed by Tschitscherin (Soviet Commissar for foreign affairs under Lenin) to *Lenin, His Life and Work*, Tschitscherin said: 'When negotiations began with Poland, Wladimir Iljitsch [Lenin] conceived the brilliant idea of offering more territory to Poland than was offered to her by Clemenceau and Curzon. And when negotiations were proceeding in Riga, Wladimir Iljitsch telephonically examined all proposals that were made to us and insisted on the signing of the agreement in its

13. See *Supplement to Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain.

present [1924] form.'¹⁴

Marxist—I know that. And do you know what Lenin wrote about Finland? I will tell you. Writing in *Pravda* on May 15, 1917, Lenin said:

Tsar and others are against an agreement with the Finnish Diet. They want to subjugate Finland to Russia. Class-conscious proletarians and Russian social-democrats, true to their programme, are for the freedom of Finland as well as of other non-sovereign nationalities'. Note the reference to class-conscious proletarians. Lenin never [forgot civil war. He consistently thought in terms of the class struggle.

B. N.—But he stood for the freedom of Finland?

Marxist—And of all subject nations. Lenin went on: 'Finland was annexed by Russian Tsars through a deal with Napoleon. If we are really against annexations, we must come out openly for Finland's freedom. After we have said it and practised it, then and only then will an agreement with Finland become a really voluntary, free and true agreement and no deception. Comrades,

14. Bei Beginn unserer Verhandlungen mit Polen war es Wladimir Iljitschs glaenzender Gedanke, Polen ein groesseres Territorium anzubieten, als ihm von Clemenceau und Curzon angeboten wurde. Und waehrend der Verhandlungen in Riga eroerterte Wladimir Iljitsch telefonisch alle Vorschlaege, die uns gemacht wurden und bestand schliesslich auf der Unterzeichnung des Vertrages in seiner gegenwaertigen Form'' (Lenin, *Leben und Werk*, a joint-work containing contributions by several noted co-workers of Lenin, since 'liquidated.' Published in 1924. Verlag fuer Literatur und Politik. Vienna. P. 99.

workers and peasants, do not be carried away by the annexationist policy of the Russian capitalists concerning Finland, Courland and Ukraine. Do not fail to recognize these people's right to independence ¹⁵ Could anything be clearer ?

B. N.—No. But Stalin attacked Finland and he has annexed Finnish territory. In Lenin's time class-conscious proletarians stood for the independence of both Poland and Finland. But in Stalin's regime class-conscious proletarians make war on their weaker neighbours. Stalin is class conscious, is he not ?

Marxist—Extremely class conscious.

B. N.—And yet it would seem as if he had abandoned the class struggle and was, like other chauvinist dictators, endeavouring to safeguard the position of his own country. He seems to have transferred his allegiance from the class struggle, in terms of which Marx and Engels interpreted the whole of history, to the struggle for existence which they derided.

Marxist—No such question arises. The struggle for existence is only a phase or aspect of the class struggle.

(I was astounded. Lange, with his Socialist outlook, views the class struggle as a phase of the universal struggle for existence. Something may

15. British Official Wireless, dated London, December 6, 1939.

be said for this view. The largest class, that of workers, organises itself to safeguard its existence. The struggle for higher wages, shorter hours of work and a higher standard of living is the workers' struggle for existence. The workers may even want to get rid of the bourgeois altogether and set up their own dictatorship. Their success would mean the survival of a particular class in the struggle for existence among different social classes in a country. But how can the struggle for existence be interpreted as a phase of the class struggle? Darwin may explain Marx, but Marx does not explain Darwin).

"Is there a class struggle in nature?" I asked.

Marxist—Class differentiation and parasitism are not unknown even among the lower animals. But we are concerned with man. The distinguishing feature of human society is not the restriction of natural resources but the appropriation of the means of production by a dominant social class. The Malthusian law ceases to apply, and the struggle for existence as such disappears. It is replaced by the class struggle. Class-conscious proletarians therefore know and act only in terms of the class struggle.

B. N.—You could explain Soviet aggression and annexations in terms of the class struggle?

Marxist—Most easily. In fact there is no other explanation. Let us begin with Finland. What is the charge-sheet against Stalin?

AGGRESSION IS ALWAYS WRONG

B. N.—There are several charges. Before enumerating them I will state a general principle which, I am sure, you will immediately accept.

Marxist—State it.

B. N.—I ask you to agree that aggression by one state against another is always wrong.

Marxist—No, I do not agree.

B. N.—You justify aggression?

Marxist—I do no such thing. It depends on circumstances. Take two individuals. Let us take you and me. Suppose a state of war exists between us. If you were standing before me, do you know what I would do? With a single blow on your proboscis I will alter your whole physiognomy.

(Ha! Alter my physiognomy, will he? If there is anything I am proud of, it is my physiognomy. It attracts attention everywhere. It was more than I could bear and very nearly I landed one on the Marxist's jaw.

He easily avoided the blow. I really did not mean it).

"There you are"! The Marxist was laughing. "If we were really fighting, you will not await my blow but strike first".

B. N.—This is not aggression but self-defence.

Marxist.—Precisely. There are circumstances in which attack is the best and perhaps the only defence.

B. N.—But we are talking of states, not individuals.

Marxist—Does that make any vital difference? A state has to safeguard the liberty and possessions of its people. Like any individual the state enjoys the right of self-preservation. Suppose there is war between India and Russia. Afghanistan is a neutral state. It has made its neutrality known to the combatants. But you have reasons to believe that Russia will violate Afghan neutrality. You also know that you can best meet the danger that threatens your liberty, your very existence as a nation, not on your own borders but on the Soviet-Afghan frontier. You will demand free passage for your troops through Afghanistan. If the permission was refused, you will forcibly occupy Afghanistan. Will you or will you not?

B. N.—I will do no such thing. I believe in non-violence.

Marxist—Yes, you do! You may regard aggression as always wrong, but international law does not. In certain circumstances international law may excuse or even approve of unprovoked aggression by one state against another. The right of self-preservation is even more sacred than the duty of respecting the independence of others.

B. N.—Whose right of self-preservation?

Marxist—Of a national state, of course.

B. N.—Of a national state regarded as a biological organism ?

Marxist—Call it what you like. If the right of self-preservation clashes with the duty of respecting the independence of others, a state naturally acts upon the former. I could give you any number of instances from history.

B. N.—So can I. But I interpret history in terms of the struggle for existence.

Marxist—And I interpret the struggle for existence in terms of the class struggle. Need I say more ?

B. N.—Take the concrete case of Finland. Russian aggression is inexcusable because Finland could not entertain any idea of attacking the U. S. S. R. She is a peace-loving and democratic country, and she is, above all, a small country. Finland was not a buffer state between two combatants. Russia was not at war with Sweden or Norway. But Russia struck the first blow and started the war.

Marxist—You are entirely wrong. Finland struck the first blow and started the war. Finland invaded Russia, not Russia Finland.

B. N.—You are falsifying history. Is the press of the entire world wrong ?

Marxist—By the press of the entire world you mean the Imperialist press. The Imperialist press

did not record the provocative incidents on the Karelian frontier on November 26, 1939. It enveloped them in a conspiracy of silence. Why? Because it suited the game of Imperialists." "They ask innocently: Is it conceivable that 'poor little Finland' should have provoked her mighty Soviet neighbour? The fact is that it did".¹⁶ Let me give you an eye-witness account of what actually happened on the Karelian frontier on November 26, 1939. The account is by a Soviet citizen in Karelia, that is, by a man on the spot.¹⁷

Manila is a Soviet frontier post. The Manila district has always been a favourite place for all sorts of provocation by Finnish Whiteguard bandits. This frontier post was always on the watch. Sometimes Finnish spies would enter the district in all sorts of disguises. Sometimes Soviet guards were fired on. We were always prepared for this kind of thing. But no one expected an artillery attack in broad day-light.

B. N.—The Finns attacked Manila with artillery? Incredible!

Marxist.—That is precisely what the Red Army men of the Manila frontier post thought as they marched over the snow-covered ground, their lusty voices resounding through the crisp frosty air, when all of a sudden a sharp report of

16. See *National Front*, Bombay, of January 21, 1940. p. 16.

17. *Ibid* P. 17.

artillery fire from the Finnish side rang through the entire hill-side. One group was engaged in their daily drill on a hillock; another was training on a nearby slope for a ski-ing contest. Their movements were being watched by their comrades, evoking dialectical praise or critical comment, when Finnish shells began to land among them! What were the Red Army Commanders to do? An artillery commander immediately ordered his men to strip guns for action. But the thought immediately flashed through his mind that this was the usual Finnish provocation. He gave the order not to fire. Note our restraint. The Finnish massed batteries open fire on us, deliberately provoking us. But we are not provoked! We do not play their game! Some of our men are killed; many are wounded. We bury the dead; we rush the wounded to first-aid stations. We do not retaliate, but pick up the fragments of enemy shells and lay them in the evening, in the meeting of the frontier guards, on the table of the political instructor Begolubov. Red Army man Toklychev told the meeting (I am giving you his exact words): 'When we received orders not to reply to the enemy fire, we found it difficult to restrain ourselves. I wish* to ask our Government to issue the necessary orders'. Pavlov and Rechitaky and machine-gunner Dibrov expressed similar feelings. The Red Army men had not long to wait. On November 29 the mighty Red Army moved forward. Please note again that the order to

move forward was not given until the most careful expert examination of fragments of the shells picked up had convinced every one that the shells were Finnish, nor until the Red Army man Toklychev definitely asked Stalin to issue the necessary orders. Is that how a state that harbours designs against a small neighbour acts? I say 'no'. Did we conspire against Finland? No. Had we matured plans to invade Finland? No. Stalin was totally unprepared. He was not ready for war against Finland, or the Finnish war would have been over in less time than Hitler took to overrun Poland. But when the frontier guards hold a meeting and Red Army*men and machine-gunners ask Stalin to move forward, has he any other alternative except to move forward? I say 'no'. Who started the war? Who struck the first blow? It was Finland.

(I had listened patiently to this long recital. Did I believe it? Not for a moment). I said:

"Very interesting as a fairy tale".

Marxist—A fairy tale? You call it a fairy tale?

B. N.—Perhaps Finland wanted to annex the Soviet Union?"

Marxist—The old, old story of 'poor little Finland.'

B. N.—Where is your commonsense? Russia has an area of 21,176,000 sq. km. as compared with

Finland's 388,000 sq. km; Russia has a population of 170,467,000 as compared with Finland's 3,600,000, or a ratio of about 50 to 1. There is no comparison between the natural and human resources of Russia and Finland. What hope could Finland have of defeating Russia? Do you think the Finnish Government was composed of lunatics?

Marxist—Worse than lunatics—they were agents of the world bourgeoisie. They talk of 'poor little Finland'! Finland had behind her the financial resources and man-power of England, France and the United States, not to speak of other countries. It was not Finland that attacked the Soviet Union but the entire capitalist world. Finland was the spearhead of the armed intervention by Imperialists against the land of socialism. The basic antagonisms of our epoch, the antagonism between capitalism and socialism, between the old world and the new, broke out into an armed conflict. Finland was but a fig-leaf.

"A fig-leaf"? I said puzzled.

Marxist—A mere excuse. Savages sometimes cover their nakedness with fig-leaves. That Finland was but a fig-leaf to cover counter-revolutionary intervention against the Soviet becomes crystal clear from the fact that huge contracts for war material had been placed by Finland with Britain and America long before the war broke out. Class against class, the capitalist world against the

socialist : that was the issue in Finland fought out with guns and aeroplanes and tanks, as once with strikes and lock-outs. 'Poor little Finland' is 'an exploded myth.'¹⁸

B. N.—But Finland knew very well that the war would be over long before effective military aid on a scale sufficient to defeat the Soviet Union could reach her. Knowing this it would have been madness for Finland to provoke her formidable neighbour.

Marxist—She did it, all the same. And so far as democracy is concerned, surely you do not maintain that a country ruled by the butcher Mannerheim and his capitalist gang was any sort of democracy? Ah! for real democracy give me the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is the greatest democracy in the world, the greatest democracy of all time, of all ages, past, present and future.

B. N.—Finland only desired to keep her own independence and her own territories. She had a perfect right to do so.

Marxist—Had she? Perhaps you have not seen the map of Finland. Have a look at it. (The Marxist produced a map). Measure the distance between Leningrad and the Soviet-Finnish frontier. It is only twenty miles.

B. N.—Yes.

Marxist—Now Leningrad is a very important city. It has a population of 3,600,000, which is

18. *National Front*, Jan. 21, 1940, P. 17.

almost equal to the entire population of Finland. The industrial output of the enterprises of Leningrad and the Leningrad region equals one-quarter of the output of the entire industry of the U. S. S. R. This is many times larger than the industrial output of the whole of Finland.

B. N.—And yet Finland had the courage of provoking the Soviet ?

Marxist—She had. We have settled that point. I am now endeavouring to show the military importance of Leningrad for the Soviet Union. Leningrad is one of the main centres of the ship-building, machine-making and the chemical industries, and is the only Soviet port in the Baltic. The traffic turnover of the port of Leningrad holds the first place in the Soviet Union's maritime trade. Leningrad is the heart of the Soviet Union. Whoever conquers Leningrad will conquer Moscow and the Soviet Union.

B. N.—Possibly.

Marxist—Now the distance of Leningrad from the border of Finland is less than that required for modern long-range guns to shell it. The Soviet wanted the Soviet-Finnish frontier to be moved back some miles to get Leningrad out of range of artillery fire. Was that unreasonable ? Remember, Leningrad has also a sentimental value for the workers of the U. S. S. R. Leningrad is Lenin's city—the cradle of the October Revolution. It is held in the deepest

affection by the working people not only of the Soviet Union but the entire world, for its glorious military history, for its glorious revolutionary traditions. It is a holy city. It is the Mecca of all communists. Imagine our Mecca being bombarded with long-range artillery by a foreign power. Imagine the destruction of the base of the world revolution! Perhaps you can imagine it. We cannot. Therefore we say to Finland: 'Move back your frontier'.

B. N.—If this argument is valid, Soviet frontiers would be constantly moving forward and of other countries backward. I have no doubt the range of Soviet guns is being constantly increased?

Marxist—May be. I may not reveal military secrets to you.

B. N.—The Germans, during the Great War, shelled Paris from a distance of 75 miles. They may have improved their Big Bertha. The Soviet will next ask the Germans to move back their eastern frontiers.

Marxist—That contingency may arise.

B. N.—The Soviet may present similar demands to Turkey and Persia in the South and China and Japan in the East?

Marxist—Yes. It may not be long before Soviet frontiers begin to move forward in all directions.

B. N.—That means that the Soviet has the right to occupy the whole of Europe and Asia.

Marxist—Soviet frontiers cannot be permanently fixed.

B. N.—That seems obvious. As the range of field guns increases, the safety of some town or other on the Soviet borders must be endangered. Having occupied the whole of Europe, the Soviet will next annex Africa. For parts of Europe are commanded by guns on the African coast. Gibraltar can be bombarded from Morocco. Only America is safe. There is a distance of 3000 miles between Liverpool and New York. Field guns with a range of 3000 miles are unthinkable.

Marxist—At present, yes.

B. N.—That is one comfort. I will go and live in the United States.

Marxist (with a knowing smile)—It is not merely field guns that bombard towns.

B. N.—What do you mean ?

Marxist—How did the Germans destroy aerodromes in Poland, Belgium and France far behind the front ? Not with their field guns. Think.

B. N.—The bomber ! You are right. But, still, bombers have a limited range ?

Marxist—Take the best bombing planes in the world, next to Russian—the British. Handley-Page

'Harrow' has a range of 1200 miles, Armstrong 'Whitworth' 1950 miles, the famous Bristol Blenheim 2000 miles, Short 'Sunderland' 2500 miles and Vickers Wellington, a medium bomber, has actually a range of 3200 miles. Liverpool can be easily bombarded by a plane starting from New York.

B. N.—But you have to halve the range if the machine has to return to its starting point without landing to re-fuel ?

Marxist—Re-fuelling in mid-air is not impossible. And I do not see why the bomber must return to its base. America wants to burn down Liverpool. She may be willing to sacrifice 2000 bombers for the purpose. An increase in the range of bombing planes is not only not inconceivable but a reality in the Soviet Union. You would be astounded if I revealed to you the range of some Soviet bombers of latest design.

B. N.—It must be terrific, 50,000 miles, if I may make a guess. But you will move forward the Soviet frontiers only if enemy bombers have a range sufficient to endanger your security, is it not ?

Marxist—Yes. But America could not save herself by asserting that the range of her bombers did not enable them to return to New York after bombing Liverpool. We shall accept no such flimsy excuses.

B. N.—But that means that Soviet frontiers will continue to expand until they coincide with the frontiers of the known world ?

Marxist—Yes. Soviet frontiers are the frontiers of socialism. The frontiers of socialism will continually advance and those of capitalism continually recede until the victory of socialism throughout the world is complete. This is the world revolution. The world revolution has started. It began with the presentation of the Soviet demand to Finland to move back her frontier.

B. N.—Finland has lost Viipuri and the Karelian Isthmus, the western shore of Lake Ladoga and a tract near Salla and the Ribachi Peninsula. The Soviet has also practically annexed the Hango Peninsula.

Marxist—We have not annexed Hango but taken it on lease for 30 years. We shall make it a naval base and station a fixed number of troops there.

B. N.—Why did you want Hango ? On account of the range of modern field guns ?

Marxist—No. But the keys to the Gulf of Finland, the keys to the naval districts in the West to be defended by the U. S. S. R. lie in the Hango Moonsund region. These keys must be kept in safe hands.¹⁹

19. *National Front*, Jan 21, 1940. P. 10.

B. N.—Which are your own ?

Marxist.—Naturally.

B. N.—Will you quarrel with Britain if she insists on keeping the keys to the Mediterranean and the keys to India in her own hands ?

Marxist.—But that is Imperialism.

B. N.—And when you invade Finland, indiscriminately rain down bombs on Finnish towns and population, and seize Finnish territory, that is not Imperialism ?

Marxist.—No.

B. N.—Sir Walter Citrine in his *Finnish Diary* describes your work of destruction in Turku, the ancient capital of Finland. When he was crawling over piles of bricks, twisted iron work and charred remains of wooden walls, he thought bitterly to himself : ' What a curious mentality it is which seeks to justify the wanton destruction of the homes of these poor people under the hypocritical guise of liberating them and opening up the vista of Soviet socialism.' ' Socialism ! ' he exclaims in disgust, ' It is a vile insult to associate the excesses of the Imperialist Stalin and his coterie of despots with a word which has provided the inspiration and hope of millions of mankind.' ²⁰

Marxist.—There is only one word—both a word and a name—which is the inspiration and hope of millions of mankind—Stalin.

B. N.—The Imperialist Stalin ?

20. P. 43 (Penguin).

Marxist.—The class-conscious Stalin. The world revolutionary Stalin.

B. N.—By his deeds he has shown himself to be an Imperialist. You cannot deny facts ?

Marxist.—I do not deny facts. It is a question of interpretation, let me repeat.

B. N.—You yourself talk of keeping certain keys safe in your own hands. So may Britain. What is the difference ?

Marxist.—A whole world of difference. Our keys are the keys of the class struggle, of the world revolution, of the liberation of mankind. The charge of Imperialism is baseless. Imperialist states seek territorial expansion. Why ? Everybody knows the answer. Under capitalism production exceeds consumption. There is a never-ceasing struggle for markets. Imperialist states, not being able to sell what they produce at home, annex foreign territory for the sake of markets in which they would have a privileged position. The Soviet Union is entirely different. Ours is a class-less society. There is no exploitation of man by man in the Soviet Union. Production is determined by the needs of the people. Increase in production causes no alarm but only a rise in the standard of living of the masses. There is no distinction of races in the Soviet Union ; woman is the equal of man. Under such conditions there can be no desire, since there is no motive for territorial expansion in the quest for markets. Our system is based on a consti-

tution which gives to every one the right to education, to work and to leisure, and if any of these are refused, the right to appeal to a court of law.²¹

B. N.—And yet, having no motive for territorial expansion, you have enlarged your territory ?

Marxist.—In the interests of the class struggle, of the world revolution, of the liberation of mankind. Let us review the facts. Recall the words with which Molotov inaugurated the Polish campaign : ' The Soviet Government considers it to be its sacred duty to stretch out a helping hand to its brother Ukrainians and brother Byelo-Russians who inhabit Poland, to help the Polish people out of ill-fated war and make it possible for them to live a life of peace'.

B. N.—You liberated not all Poles but only some. Why ? Was it not because of your pact with Hitler ?

Marxist.—Hitler's turn will also come. Then we liberated Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. The work of liberation in the case of these Baltic states has been completed by their free entry into the Soviet Union. The servitude of Bessarabians and North-Bukovinians has also been ended. We were thwarted in Finland. Our intention was to set up a real People's Government in Finland. The composition of the People's Government, its powers and actions, were to be sanctioned by a Diet elected on

21. See *Must the War Spread ?* by D. N. Pritt (Penguin) P. 184.

a basis of universal, equal, direct suffrage, with a secret ballot. This People's Government, I may make a safe guess, would have freely, without any suggestion on our part, elected to join the Soviet Union.

B. N.—You failed in your mission in Finland ?

Marxist.—We might have achieved more. Still we have no cause to be dissatisfied. Ah ! I can picture the Georgian leaving his maps and happily going to sit in his hard chair by the window.

B. N.—The Georgian ?

Marxist.—Stalin, of course. He rubs his nose.

B. N.—Why ?

Marxist.—A habit. Eileen Bigland, you know, actually saw the Georgian rubbing his nose when he decided to liberate Poland.²² The Georgian rubs his nose as he sits down in his hard chair by the window which overlooks the Red Square. In the Red Square, by shifting slightly, he can see the glittering hump which marks the god's marble tomb.

B. N.—Gods lie buried in the Red Square ?

Marxist.—Only one, Lenin. What a long way, the Georgian reflects, he has come, and how faithfully has he carried out the god's instructions. He leans forward. He is speaking to the god. 'Europe is in the maelstrom of war, caught by her own crass foolishness, and the little capitalists of the world are running madly from pillar to post. Only your

²² *The Riddle of the Kremlin* by Eileen Bigland, White Circle Book, Chapter 9.

Soviets remain serene. A year of war has given us back the territory we had lost and cast the stupid Nazi Germans into our lap. Not such a bad record for such a short space of time, is it, Vladimir Ilyich ? And that is only the prelude ... only the prelude ...

B. N.—To what ?

Marxist.—The Georgian does not complete the sentence. His head slumps forward on to his chest.

“ Ah ! ” I exclaimed in uncontrollable excitement, “ he has a heart-stroke ! The god has called the Georgian to his abode in Heaven ”.

Marxist.—No. He sinks into deep thought, while his right hand fiddles mechanically with a buttonless thread on his tunic.

B. N.—Why buttonless ?

Marxist.—Class-conscious proletarians working for the liberation of mankind have no time to think of buttons on their tunic. What does the Georgian think of as he sits there, yellow eyes blinking ?

B. N.—Has he yellow eyes ?

Markist.—Yellow like those of a cat. Does he, yellow eyes blinking, think of his German ally and wonder how best he can aid her ?

B. N.—Perhaps he is thinking of a third pact with Hitler, which would place Russia's man-power at Hitler's disposal ?

Marxist.—Far from that. You do not understand. The pacts really conferred no benefit on Germany. The Soviet supplied one million bushels of wheat to Germany, but the wheat was weevily

and of no use to any one. It was the Georgian who said to Hitler 'I stay in this half of Poland ; you stay in that', and the Georgian's half of Poland was the very part wanted by Germany for its fertile lands, its minerals, its factories ! Consternation reigned in Berlin. Von Ribbentrop, the ex-commercial traveller in vile gooseberry wine known as sekt, became paralytic with rage. By his clever move the Georgian caused the first German victory to crumble to ashes and a nasty smell.

B. N.—Smell also ?

Marxist.—A particularly foul, putrid smell, that of muck. This is only what the pacts brought Germany. You think the Georgian is helping Hitler. /On the contrary he has got Germany beautifully taped ; she has to crawl to him on hands and knees for food, for ore, for oil, for the many necessities she must have, and as the British blockade tightens, she will have to crawl more often.

B. N.—What does crawling matter to Hitler provided he gets what he wants.

Marxist.—He won't get anything unless the Georgian feels it is to his own advantage to supply him.

B. N.—It seems that Hitler and Stalin are both trying to double-cross each other ?

Marxist.—You may well say so. But the Georgian, with yellow, blinking eyes, is not to be beaten in this game. When it suits him to smash

Germany, h'll do so ruthlessly, swiftly, but at the moment she looks if she'll do the smashing herself.

B. N.—Who ?

Marxist. Germany is trying to smash herself without the Georgian's aid. And when Germany is defeated, you know what the victors will say to the Georgian ? 'Take your red armies out of Poland'. Will he ? Tell me now, will he ?

B. N.—It is very likely he will. Prudence may dictate withdrawal.

Marxist.—But he won't do so, oh dear me, no ! He will 'stay put',

B. N.—Stay put ?

Marxist.—Haven't you seen desk lamps which 'stay put' at any angle and in any position desired ? The Georgian is like that. He has taken up a position in Poland and he will 'stay put'. When you ask him to withdraw from Poland, he will say 'Come along, capitalists. and chuck me out.'

B. N.—But suppose they do ?

Marxist.—Will they ? Will the democracies, exhausted by the war, have the courage to attack the best armed, the best trained and the best led army in the world ? But Yosif Stalin is planning his real attack on capitalism not in the West but in the East.

B. N.—He will fight Japan ? So far he seems to have given Japan a free hand in China ?

Marxist.—Yosif Stalin no longer wants Japan in China. But he had assigned a function to Japan in China.

B. N.—That of conquering China ?

Marxist.—That of knitting the Chinese people into the beginnings of unity, which Japan has fulfilled.

B. N.—Not quite, for Japan has not yet unified the whole of China.

Marxist.—True. True. The greater the sufferings, the greater the humiliation of China the stronger will be the desire for national unity in China. When Japan has created a united China through conquest, the time will be ripe for the liberation of the Chinese by Yosif Stalin. China knows that her uncle Joe will help her mightily.

B. N.—Uncle Joe ?

Marxist.—That is how Yosif Stalin is popularly known in China. Then for the final show-down. All Asia backed by Russia will fight against the rest of the world. And Asia backed by Russia will win. Yosif Stalin has no doubts on that score. Somewhere behind his yellow eyes every detail of that vast campaign for World Revolution is mapped out and every thing he has done—mark that well, every thing from his scrapping of his splendid isolation policy of 1936 to his engineering of the Soviet-German Pact in 1939—note that also—the Pact was engineered by Uncle Joe—has been for the achievement of World Revolution.²³

Is that so ? Who knows what is in the mind of Stalin ? Stalin is subtle. He may be working for

23. Eileen Bigland, loc. cit. Pp. 186-87.

the world revolution now ; he may have been consistently, in his own subtle, unfathomable way, working for the world revolution, even while seeming to act as the most ruthless of Imperialists. I began to doubt. I began to weaken. Perhaps, deep down in the hearts of most of us communism lies hidden.

If the world revolution explains Russia's role in the war, what becomes of the struggle for existence ? It vanishes ! Only the class-struggle remains—the class-struggle initiated by the Soviet Union in the West and the class-struggle going to be initiated by the Soviet Union in the East. And this class-struggle can end only in one way—the establishment of the world communist society under the leadership of the of the Georgian with yellow, blinking eyes ! Long live Yosif Stalin, the salvation of mankind ! Long live Uncle Joe, the darling of the world proletariat !

The Marxist had risen. I rose with him shouting in communist frenzy "Victory ! victory ! Workers of the world, unite ! Hallelujah." !

CHAPTER III.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME.

We ask an orthodox Marxist¹ to speculate about the shape of things to come. By an 'orthodox Marxist' I mean an upholder of genuine, unalloyed Marxism, not Leninist-Marxism, nor Stalinist-Marxism.² Lenin, on the whole, was a faithful interpreter of Marx, but there are differences between Leninism and Marxism. As for Stalin, if he is a Marxist, then Fascism and Marxism are convertible terms.

What would the orthodox Marxist have to say about 'the shape of things to come'? The orthodox Marxist is speaking.

"We live in the era of capitalism. Does capitalism represent the final shape of things? Is it the

1. The term is not my invention. Participating in a discussion on Soviet planning, in London in 1937, Mr. Hansa, an Indian, spoke as an "oppressed 'orthodox Marxist' whose views are not in favour in the U. S. S. R. today" (*For Peace and Friendship*, a joint-work published by Gollancz, 1937, p. 186). Evidently an 'orthodox Marxist' is not a 'Stalinist Marxist'.

2. The term 'Stalinist Marxist' occurred in a Reuter's cable dated October 31, 1938, (see C. & M. G. dated November 1 1938). In Spain there were two groups of Marxists, Stalinist and non-Stalinist. Fenner Brockway tells us that the P. O. U. M. (Workers' Party of Marxist Unity) was 'disconcertingly open in its criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy in Russia' (*Workers' Front* published by Secker and Warburg, 1938, p. 103) and that 'it was vigorously sceptical about the Moscow trials'. The result was the denunciation of the P. O. U. M. by the Stalinist group as 'agents of Fascism' etc. The P. O. U. M. have had their revenge. The leader of Stalinist Marxists, the great Stalin himself, has established friendly relations with Fascism—at any rate, so it would seem.

final form of human society ? The answer must be in the negative. Capitalism has grown out of an earlier, simpler form of society by a natural, inevitable process of change, which we may call the social law of development. The law of development has not ceased to work. The shape of things is ceaselessly changing.

There are two methods of speculating about the shape of things to come. We may adopt the moral point of view. Capitalism leads to the exploitation of the working masses by an idle class. We may desire to end this exploitation. Why ? Because it is in contradiction to our moral sentiments. We may devise ways and means of improving the condition of the workers. We may heavily tax the rich to increase the expenditure on social services. We may set up wage-fixing machinery. We may encourage self-help or co-operative effort among workers. We may even interfere with the system of ownership. We may thus endeavour to create a new social order more in harmony with our sense of social justice.

This is the moral approach to our problem. This is not the method of science. It is the method of social reformers and utopians.

My method is borrowed from biology, and can best be explained by an example. We confront a biologist with a new biological species. We tell him its origin and we describe to him the environment in which the new species has developed and is developing. Knowing the origin of the species, the condi-

tions of its development in the past and the direction in which it was changing, the biologist would be able to predict its future form.

The biologist is not concerned with any moral question. His sole concern is with the natural law of development.

Take the noble animal known to us all, the horse. Fifty-five million years ago the dawn horse, called Eohippus, was a five-toed little creature standing only about a foot high at the shoulder. The dawn horse lived in America. In the course of millions of years the horse underwent important changes. The five toes were reduced to three and finally to one. The teeth became harder and longer to adapt them better to grazing. These changes were determined by environment. The horse developed on grassy plains, where the grass was harsher than that in or near forests, and it contained more silica. The teeth, therefore, had to become harder. A hard, small hoof, peculiar to plains horses, as well as long legs, were required to enable the horse to escape from enemies, such as wolves and other carnivorous animals.

The form of the horse changed not because the Creator wished to make the horse more useful to man, but owing to its law of development. In biology we meet with continual changes of form, a succession of new forms. And these changes are not determined by moral reasons but by the inevitable necessity of adaptation to environment.

If 55 million years ago an all-knowing biologist had existed to study the form of the horse and its environment, if he had known the origin of the horse and the direction in which it was changing, he would have been able to predict the present form of the animal.

You now know the difference between the moral and the biological or scientific method of reasoning. In the one case we hold a certain thing to be desirable and a certain other thing undesirable. We wish to get rid of the latter and make efforts to replace it by something better. In the other case, the question of desirability or undesirability does not arise. We view the existing state of affairs as the product of past conditions. We discover the law of change or movement and, with its help, predict the inevitable change to a higher and better form.

Human society is governed by a law of motion. This law is not peculiar to human society. It is found working throughout nature. It is a dialectical law — the law of the struggle of opposites, of the negation of the negation. It is a law of progress.

Why is there progress? I do not know. But the fact of continual change leading to progress is undeniable. We sow a seed. The seed germinates. It is negated. A plant comes into existence. The plant grows and bears ears of corn and then the stalk dies. The decay and death of the stalk is the negation of the negation. The negation.

of the negation is a mark of progress. Instead of a single grain we have many. Millions are fed by this form of the negation of the negation.

We are at present not concerned with plants or the lower animals. Let us consider the operation of the dialectical law in human society.

Since the earliest dawn of civilisation human society shows a struggle of opposites, a struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed.

In ancient India society was divided into Sudras and the twice-born. How the twice-born treated the Sudras in the past, and treat them now, is well known.

In ancient Rome there were patricians and plebians. The plebian existed to serve the patrician, to make life comfortable for him.

Slavery lasted till almost recent times. The slave was a chattel to be used according to the will of his owner.

Gradually the slave became a serf and the serf a freeman, a burgess. The burgesses, in course of time, formed the nucleus of a new class, the bourgeoisie.

The growth of the bourgeoisie was an event of revolutionary importance. The bourgeoisie broke up the feudal organisation of society and laid the foundations of modern capitalism.

The power of the feudal nobility rested on land; that of the bourgeoisie is derived from the ownership of capital.

The growth of the bourgeoisie is linked with the development of the system of production. The use of machinery revolutionised production. The old system of hand-work, guilds and local markets came to an end. Large-scale production became the rule. Machine-made goods were cheaper and better than the products of handicrafts. Cottage industries began to lose ground and cottage workers lost their employment. Now the cottage worker owns the tools and implements he works with. He is an independent producer on a very small scale, not an employee. The factory-worker, on the other hand, is a wage-slave. He cannot employ himself; he must seek a master, if he is not to die of starvation. Machine competition, by destroying handicrafts, converted masses of hand-workers into wage-slaves.

Capitalism revived old antagonisms in new forms. The modern factory worker is the lineal descendant of the old slave or the serf. The class struggle, which explains the whole of history, is now a struggle between the property owner, the bourgeois, and the property-less, the proletariat.

The opposition between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may be carefully noted.

An opposition, in dialectical reasoning, has two sides, positive and negative. Private property is the positive side of the opposition. Private property is a source of wealth. Wealth, therefore, is the positive side of the opposition.

Proletariat and wealth are opposites. Why? The proletariat owns no income-yielding property. The proletariat is completely divorced from property. Proletariat, being the opposite of property, forms the negative side of the opposition.

Why is it that under capitalism the bourgeoisie grows richer and the proletariat poorer not only in a relative but an absolute sense? The answer is known to every student of economics. Under capitalism wages are governed by an iron law, which limits them to the barest necessities of existence. As markets expand and production grows, the profits of the bourgeoisie grow apace. More and more money is turned into capital, into the means of exploiting labour. Circulating capital, or capital spent on labour in the form of wages, also increases, but much more slowly than fixed capital, with the result that the proportion of fixed to circulating capital goes on mounting. Over-population appears.

An industrial reserve army, representing over-population, is an integral part of the capitalist system. Capitalism inevitably produces large masses of the idle, starving unemployed. Why? Because the producing capacity of the people grows more rapidly than their consumption. The demand of vast masses of workers remains restricted on account of their starvation wages. Goods may be produced but they find no customers. Surplus goods may may be dumped abroad, *i. e.*, in backward countries. But for how long? The growth of

capitalism in backward countries precipitates the crisis. The crisis becomes more and more acute, more and more universal.

Such is actually the position.

Let me remind you of the world crisis of 1929. It was not a crisis within the framework of the capitalist system. It was a crisis of the capitalist system itself.

All are agreed that the world's productive capacity has enormously increased. All are agreed that world consumption has not increased proportionately. If it had, no crisis on a world scale would have occurred. By consumption we do not mean consuming capacity. It may be doubted if the world produces more wheat than it is possible for human beings to consume. But there is a surplus of wheat for which there is no effective demand. The world stocks of wheat mount up. It is necessary to get rid of the surplus even by using wheat as fuel in railway engines. It is necessary to get rid of surplus coffee by throwing millions of bags into the sea and setting fire to hundreds of thousands of other bags. It is necessary to restrict the area under jute, cotton and tea. In India alone there are millions of men who go about practically naked. They want cloth. We possess raw material, *i. e.*, cotton, for making cloth. But if all the cotton we grow were turned into cloth, Indian mill production would have approximately to double. Is there no need for the additional cloth that we can produce?

It is only 400 crore yards, or ten yards more per head of the population. We need it, and more. But the masses lack the requisite purchasing power.

We need more rice, wheat, tea, coffee and a thousand other things. We have the means of producing them. But who will buy them? Therefore we restrict production. That is how the balance between production and consumption is maintained under capitalism.

It is obvious that capitalism, owing to its own law of development, has become an obstacle to progress. Obeying its own law, capitalism must now end. Capitalism contains within its own bosom the seeds of its own destruction.

Capitalism gives rise to a proletariat. Masses of workers are brought together, they live together, they suffer together. Soon the workers become conscious of their miserable condition, and of the means of their salvation. They feel together and learn to act together. Workers of the whole world unite and rise against the world bourgeoisie. The struggle of opposites reaches its culmination. The proletariat as proletariat, is forced to abolish itself and, with this, the opposite which determines it, which makes it the proletariat, that is, private property. The knell of capitalist property sounds. The capitalist integument is burst asunder. Capitalism ends. It yields place to something far higher and nobler, Communism.

Communism resolves the contradictions of capitalist society. It is a synthesis.

The class-struggle, the struggle of opposites, was due to private property. Communism negates private property. It is the negation of the negation. The original form of property was communal ownership. Private property was the negation of joint, communal ownership. Communism, by negating the negation, ends the struggle of opposites and gives to society a higher form of property and a better economic system.

You must not, however, run away with the idea that as soon as the proletariat has annihilated the bourgeoisie, full-fledged communism will, Pandora like, spring out of a box. No. The transition from capitalism to communism is gradual, not sudden. It is marked by well-known stages. First there is dictatorship of the proletariat. In this stage the proletariat consolidates its power, mopping up the remnants of the bourgeoisie, nationalising land and other instruments of production, socialising trade and commerce. In this stage the state still exists, maintaining law and order and regulating production and distribution of wealth. What is the principle of distribution in the first stage of communism? Is it productivity, as under capitalism? Is it the piece-wage, 'a form of wage-payment best suited to the capitalist system'? No. Labour is the standard of payment. Equal quantities of labour in one form (*i. e.* part of the social working

day contributed by the labourer) are exchanged for equal quantities of labour in another form (*i. e.* food, clothing and other goods representing the same amount of labour). Money, as we know it, disappears. Labour vouchers or certificates perform the functions of money.

In the beginning there is inequality in distribution, caused by the different quantities of labour performed (the degree of intensity being given). But these inequalities are reduced to a minimum. Soon the socialisation of production removes all obstacles to the growth of production, and there is an enormous increase in the output of both producers' and consumers' goods. In a socialist society the growth of circulating capital keeps pace with that of fixed capital. That means that there can be no unemployment, no over-population, no crises in a socialist economy. Production is determined by the needs of consumers. The purchasing power of consumers grows side by side with production; therefore there are no limits to the expansion of production under socialism except those imposed by Nature. Finally a stage is reached where equality in distribution can be introduced. Money, even in the form of labour vouchers, is abolished and there is free utilisation of the resources of society.

What is the form of the state appropriate to this stage? The state is no longer needed. It has 'withered away.' The state is an engine of repression. The state begins to wither away as soon as

a class-less society has come into being. The state is the organ of class-rule. A governing class presupposes a class that is governed, suppressed or oppressed. But the abolition of private property has removed all class distinctions. Only one class remains under communism—that of workers. Do the workers need a state to oppress themselves? The state goes, it 'falls asleep' or 'dies out.'

Is this picture of future society national or international?

It is essentially international. Communism is practicable only on the world scale. My communism is world communism.

Workers have no country. 'Workers of the world, unite' is the rallying cry of the world proletariat.

The mode of production determines the form of social organisation. In the earliest stages each family is more or less self-sufficient. Man lives by hunting and fishing. The produce of the chase suffices for the needs of the family. Family is the social unit.

In the pastoral stage man leads a nomadic life, wandering with flocks of goats and sheep and herds of cattle from place to place. Family, expanded into a tribe is still the social unit. There is some exchange but in the form of barter.

It is when man learns to cultivate the soil that there is real growth in the size of the social unit. The village is more or less self-sufficient, but not

each family in the village. The hand-workers supply the peasant with tools and implements and the peasant supplies them with food and other materials. Money comes into use, but a barter economy flourishes along with the simplest form of money economy.

The growth of handicrafts leads to the development of town life and exchanges between the town and the country. But the early towns are merely overgrown villages. The market widens. The use of money becomes more general. Exchange and distribution become more complicated. With the improvement of communications local and provincial markets develop into a national market.

Finally comes the machine age. Handicrafts are destroyed. The markets of the world are linked together and the whole world begins to function as one economic organism. The factory enlarges the social unit because factory production exceeds the bounds of the national market. Capitalism ushers in the era of international economy.

Is it possible for any country today to lead an entirely self-sufficient existence? The days of national economies are gone. The new mode of production has inevitably produced a new order which cannot be confined within the narrow framework of nationalism.

The interests of the world proletariat are identical. Everywhere there is the same exploitation of

the worker by the bourgeoisie; everywhere the workers have the same interest in annihilating the bourgeoisie. Having won political power, will the working class erect barriers between country and country, dividing one section of the working class from another? No.

Political frontiers and tariff barriers have no meaning in a society which brings together the whole of mankind in one family. A nation as a nation jealously safeguards its interests as against other nations. An Imperialist country enslaves other peoples for the sake of selfish gain—in which gain the worker has no share³. But when nations have disappeared, when Imperialism has been liquidated, nationalist ideologies would automatically fade away.

The advantages of a world system of communism are obvious. We may look forward to a very great increase in production as the result of (a) territorial division of labour carried to its extreme limit, (b) the closest co-operation between science and technics and (c) the planned organisation of scientific work throughout the world. In a world system of communism there will be the fullest utilisation of natural conditions of production in the different parts of the globe. Agricultural countries will specialise in the production of food-stuffs and raw materials. At

3. If a Marxist admitted that workers shared in the profits of the Empire, he would also have to concede that workers in an Imperialist country might be unwilling to improve their lot through socialism *minus* the Empire.

present agricultural production in industrial countries limits the demand for their products. When agricultural protection is abolished, and artificial substitutes for such natural substances as are available in abundant quantities disappear, a great demand for the products of agricultural countries will spring up. The cost of manufactured goods will fall steadily with the progress of invention and discovery. Science achieved wonders during the past 100 years. It will achieve miracles in the coming years. Planned world production and distribution will eliminate crises. There will be no rich and no poor in any country—all would enjoy the greatest measure of prosperity, and the level of prosperity will rise continuously from year to year and decade to decade as the volume of production grows. Indeed, I look forward to a time when production will have expanded so much that consumption according to needs will become the rule in every part of the globe. The world state would then vanish without leaving a trace; the administration of things will replace the government of persons.

How will world communism come ?

It cannot come except through a world revolution. Communism has no use for the state, and the state in one country cannot go unless it goes simultaneously in other countries too. Suppose we build a communist society in India, while we are surrounded on all sides by capitalis foes. We cannot let the state 'wither away' without endangering our

liberty, our very existence. It follows that if communism is to be successful in one country, the communist revolution must occur simultaneously in all or at least in the leading countries.

Engels was asked whether a communist revolution could take place in one country alone. His answer was a definite and categorical 'No'.⁴ He drew attention to the growing dependence of the civilised peoples on one another, to the creation of a world market, to the similarity in the social development of all civilised countries, to the dominating struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie every where. "The communist revolution," he said, 'will therefore not be a national revolution alone; it will take place in all civilised countries, or at least in Great Britain, the United States, France and Germany at one and the same time.'⁴ Why at one and the same time? Because of the similarity of social development and the identity of interests of the working classes in these countries. The pace of the revolution, Engels admitted, would be faster in some and slower in other countries, according to the degree of industrial development of each country: "The revolution will assume its slowest pace and be most difficult of achievement in Germany; in Great Britain it will go ahead easily and quickly. It will exercise considerable influence upon all other lands,

4. Quoted in the *Communist Manifesto* edited by Ryazanoff pages 332-33 (Martin Lawrence publishers.)

changing and hastening the process of their development. This is to be a universal revolution and will, therefore, have the whole world as field for its operation."⁴

I have faith in this universal world revolution. A Marxist believes in the world revolution, or he is not an Marxist. Socialism in one country does not satisfy me. It inevitably degenerates into dictatorship for the proletariat.^{4a} World communism through a world revolution is the final 'shape of things to come'. And the world revolu-

(4a.) Socialism in one country is not Marxism, if Marxism can be interpreted to mean what Marx and his collaborator Engels wrote and preached. Why? If socialism has triumphed in one country alone, that country, as Stalin has explained (see *Supplement to Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain, pp. 1-3), cannot abstract itself from the international situation and 'must have at its disposal a well-trained army, well-organised punitive organs and a strong intelligence service'—and the rest of the paraphernalia of a strong and powerful state. Necessarily cadres have to be created, and 'cadres decide every thing' (this is a new Soviet slogan raised by Stalin—see Molotov's speech in *Soviet Union* 1936, p. 66, Lawrence and Wishart publishers). The old bureaucracy is smashed up but a new bureaucracy arises. The Soviet bureaucracy is a privileged class of officials who occupy the key positions and rule the country. Is such a country Marxist? Marx's ideal was the Paris Commune. All officials and public servants under the Commune, including the police, magistrates and judges, were elective, responsible and revocable. Further, the public service had to done at 'workmen's wages' (Marx's italics). (See *Civil War in France*, p. 40 et seq.) Now if no official is paid more than 'workmen's wages', if all offices at the same time are 'elective, responsible and revocable', office is deprived of any flavour of political power or repressive authority. Soviet socialism or communism is the very antithesis of Marxism; it is not dictatorship of the proletariat but dictatorship for the proletariat. Economically the lower classes in Russia lead a life of extreme poverty and misery; politically they do not enjoy much more freedom than slaves (see *Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain, pp. 247-57.)

tion is not only maturing, but happening before our eyes. We are witnessing a gigantic conflict of forces which must result in the establishment of a world communist society. The old world is passing away. A new world is being born, and it is our proud privilege to assist at the new birth."

INDIAN SOCIALISM.

Thus far the Marxist.

We shall now let an Indian Socialist, whom we suspect of being a Fascist in disguise, speak :

"I shall begin where the previous speaker left off, that is, with a world communist society. My main thesis is that international socialism is a utopia, for which reason socialism must be national or there is no socialism. My outlook is limited to India, as I do not feel competent to solve world problems. Socialism for India may be called Indian Socialism.

The 'shape of things to come' reminds one of Mr. H. G. Wells' book bearing that title, published in 1933. Assuming the role of a clairvoyant, Mr. Wells, in this book foretells the course of history during the next 120 years.

Mr. Wells predicted a world war in 1940. The present war broke out towards the end of 1939 and in 1940 it assumed the proportions of a world war. The incident which plunged the world into the vortex of war in Mr. Wells' book happened in Danzig. The present war began in Danzig too. The war of Mr. Wells' creation spread from country to country until the whole world was.

engulfed in its flames. We are not concerned with details. Suffice it to say that the war brought about the dissolution of great Empires. The British Empire 'relaxed to nothing'. The fate of India in this process of relaxation may be guessed, though Mr. Wells tells us little except that before the British Empire relaxed in India, it had a brief, convulsive phase of 'firmness.'

The idea of a world state grew up in the period of collapse and disaster, graphically described by Mr. H. G. Wells, which followed the outbreak by the second world war. By 1965 the world state had come to be recognised as 'manifestly the only possible solution of the world problem.' In that year a world conference was held at Basra. The world state 'formally invaded human politics' at the Basra Conference.

A second Conference was held at Basra thirteen years later. At this conference a world council was constituted to reorganise the resources of the entire world as a single unit. But an immense amount of work had to be done before the planning of world production and distribution could be taken in hand. National differences and antagonisms had to be swept away, a *lingua franca* had to be made universal, and religion fought and vanquished. The abolition of nationality was not an easy job, but it was accomplished. One after the other Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other religions lost their grip on mankind. 'Basic English' was pre-destined to

become the *lingua franca* of the world, and by 2020 A.D. every one was able to speak it.⁵

I feel disposed to quarrel with Mr. Wells about the *lingua franca*. Why not 'basic' Hindustani? But, then, it is Mr. Wells' utopia. Mr. Wells, however, might have given us a little more time to acquire a knowledge of 'basic English'. At present not more than one per cent. of the population of India understand English, and we have been at the job for much more than 80 years. At the present rate of progress several centuries would be required to teach English to every man, woman and child in India. But 'basic English' might prove simpler

5. When the proletariat is victorious throughout the world, separate national cultures will be fused into one, with a single, common language. Dialectical thinking on the question of national culture led Lenin to this inevitable but Utopian conclusion. In his report on 'Deviations on the National Question' delivered at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on June 27, 1930, Stalin said :

"It seems strange that we, who are in favour of the *fusion* of national cultures in the future into one common culture (both in form and in content), are at the same time in favour of the *blossoming* of national cultures at the present time, in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But there is nothing strange in this. The national cultures must be permitted to develop and expand and to reveal all their potential qualities, in order to create the conditions necessary for their fusion into a single, common culture with a single, common language. The blossoming of cultures national in form and socialist in content under a proletarian dictatorship in one country, *with the object of* their fusion into a single, common, socialist (both in form and content) culture, with a single, common, language, when the proletariat is victorious throughout the world and socialism becomes an every day matter—such is the dialectical nature of the Leninist presentation of the question of national culture" (*Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* by Joseph Stalin, p. 261, published by Martin Lawrence). Stalin may now suggest 'basic' German as the future *lingua franca* of humanity. 'Basic' Russian is out of the question,

than the excessively difficult language of our present rulers.

The sweeping away of national and religious differences prepared the way for the rise of a new culture common to all humanity. The new system of education completed the solidarity of mankind by the year 2059. In the place of warring nations, religions and cultures, a compact human family, embracing all peoples, came into existence.

The keying up of the planet was proceeding side by side. The progress of science opened up a grand vista of undreamt of possibilities. By 2050 A. D. new creatures could be artificially evolved. Already before 2050 A. D. the areas needed for food-supply could have been halved. Hunger and want vanished from the earth like an ugly dream. Fruits and blossoms unknown before were summoned out of non-existence. The soil, lay-out, vegetation and fauna of vast regions could now be re-arranged at man's will. A huge and hitherto unsuspected mineral wealth was brought out of rocks and bowels of the earth. It became possible to control earthquakes and dry up volcanoes.

Such is Mr. Wells' 'shape of things to come'. It is a most pleasant utopia. Who would not like to live in it? Why, Mr. Wells has thought of every thing, even of new homes for housing the population. Our future homes would be made of portable material. If you were not pleased with

your surroundings, you would just take up your home, carry it on your head to the locality you preferred, and dump it down there. There would be plenty of sites to choose from. Mr. Wells fixes 4000 millions as the upper limit of the world's population ; beyond this optimum the population would not be allowed to grow. And then a vast extension of building area would become possible on account of heavy reduction, if not total disappearance of the area at present devoted to cultivation. If necessary, we might dry up an ocean or two. Why not ? The drying up of oceans would conceivably present fewer difficulties than that of volcanoes.

Mr. Wells returns to world revolutionary socialism in *The Commonsense of War and Peace*. Do you want world peace or not ? he asks. If you do, you must be prepared to scrap the sovereignty of your own government and amalgamate the general control of political and economic life into a world wide system. If you are not, and still want world peace, Mr. Wells would put it to you with the utmost deference that you are either muddle-headed, or insincere or both. These are unpleasant alternatives. I would rather vote for unending war than face them.

Mr. Wells tells us with the utmost frankness that world revolutionary socialism means the end of the British Empire quite as much as that of

German Imperialism⁶.

A chain of reasoning has led Mr. Wells to his inevitable conclusions. Mr. Wells would claim to be a 'scientific' socialist.

Mr. Wells met Lenin. He found that 'fine, valiant and subtle intelligence entangled in the beard of Karl Marx, and doing its best to struggle out of that huge fuzz to real constructiveness.' The same may be said of Mr. Wells himself—the only difference is that he has made no effort to get out of that huge fuzz. There is not the slightest trace of constructiveness in Mr. Wells' wishful thinking.

The Commonsense of War and Peace does not strike the same confident note as *The Shape of Things to Come*. It is evident that Mr. Wells finds independent sovereign states hateful and would sweep them out of existence. But national prejudices die hard. He is, therefore, willing to make concessions. It is not necessary, he says, to destroy existing governments as such. The idea of a federal world does not involve the creation of a common world government which is to replace existing governments. It does not threaten in the least, he goes on, the racial and cultural distinctions of mankind. There is to be no President of World Republic, no World Senate, no Lower House of Mankind. All that his 'War-Welded Federalism'

6. *The Commonsense of War and Peace* (Penguin Special, 1940), pp. 30-31.

7. *Ibid.* P. 17.

means is a world transport control, 'a world production control, a world system of barter, a world control of hygiene, education, information, "without anything you would call a central government".⁸

The world state has vanished ! And so also 'basic English'. There is no reference to artificial evolution of creatures or drying up of volcanoes in *The Commonsense of War and Peace*. In his later book Mr. Wells is decidedly less interesting than in *The Shape of Things to Come*. Find means of welding the whole of mankind into one family, and one day you may have a world state. Discover the secret of life, find untold new mineral wealth, dry up volcanoes and oceans and one day the whole of mankind may live in (portable) happy, contented homes, without a thought of war. But if the states and peoples of the world are left as they are, with limited and unequal resources, and divided by racial and cultural differences, no world union of any kind, whether in the form of a world state or federation, or federalism, or war-welded federalism, can come into existence,

Let us now emerge from the shadow of utopia into the broad day-light of reality. What do we see ?

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

We see nations with conflicting interests.

Curiously enough, Marx and Engels, with their penetrating intellects, were not able to see that. What they saw was something entirely different :

8. *The commonsense of War and Peace* P. 94.

"National differences and antagonisms between peoples", says *The Communist Manifesto*, 'are daily more and more vanishing owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.'⁹

Marx and Engels were the greatest of the utopians. *The Communist Manifesto* might as well be called *The Communist Utopia*.

It is important to note that some of the factors which, according to Marx and Engels, were operating to bring about a universal harmony of interests, are the very factors which have sharpened national antagonisms.

Take freedom of commerce. Marx and Engels lived in the era of free trade. The British people were convinced of the advantages of free trade, of the soundness of the principles on which free trade rests. These principles were forced upon us by a Resolution adopted by the House of Commons in 1877. By 1881 all duties on imports, with the exception of that on salt, were repealed and when, in 1894, the 5 per cent *ad valorem* tariff was re-imposed for financial reasons, an equivalent excise duty was imposed on the products of Indian mills. Till the outbreak of the Great War (1914-18) imports into India were taxed at this rate for revenue purposes.

British trade prospered under free trade. Was

9. P. 26. Edition issued by Martin Lawrence.

free trade good for India?

Imports of British cloth into India steadily expanded until they reached the record figure of over 3000 million yards in 1913-14. But our hand-weavers were ruined. The British worker got higher wages but our hand-workers starved. In consequence of the destruction of cottage industries the pressure of population on the soil steadily increased from decade to decade. Till the close of the 19th century extreme dependence on the land meant death by starvation to millions of people in times of famine. Attention was drawn to this aspect of the question by the Strachey Famine Commission of 1880. The Commission emphasized the need for industrial development, which would gradually relieve the pressure on land. Indian manufacturing industries could not grow up under free trade. Free trade thus sacrificed the interests of Indian workers for the sake of British industry. And the interests of British industry were not only the interests of the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, but the interests of British workers as well. So long as Britain prospered under free trade the real wages of the British worker continued to rise. It is estimated that between 1850 and 1900 the rise in the real wages of British workers amounted to over 75 per cent.¹⁰

It can be easily shown that under certain conditions free trade may ruin a country, or reduce the workers of a country to utter destitution. Take two

10. *The Condition of Britain* by G. D. H. and M. I. Cole (Gollancz). P. 237.

countries A and B. A is agricultural and B is industrially advanced. Trade begins between A and B. In the beginning there may be a strong demand for the agricultural products of A in B, and specialisation may prove advantageous to both. But suppose industrial advance affects agriculture in B so that A's markets in B shrink. What happens in country A? Free trade finished her hand-industries and agricultural progress in B may finish her agriculture. This approximately is the position in India. For a long time we paid for necessary imports by the export of food stuffs and raw materials. But the world demand for our exports is declining. The terms of foreign trade have moved against us.

It is wrong to think that national interests are the interest of the bourgeoisie alone. National interests are the interests of all classes in a country, and most particularly the interests of workers.

Free trade is gone. Trade relations between India and the British Empire are now governed by the principle of preference.

Does Imperial Preference recognise identity of interests of the workers of the world?

No. We tax Japanese goods more heavily than imports from Empire countries. We seek to benefit the worker in the British Empire by injuring the Japanese and other foreign workers.

Assume that Japanese goods are admitted free of duty. What would happen? Japanese goods would flood our markets. Most of our cotton mills would

close down. Capitalists would lose their profits and the mill employees their wages. Japan can sell goods cheaper than Britain. Wages and employment in Britain would also be affected. We do not let this happen. We protect ourselves fully against British competition and, by means of a preferential rate of taxation, grant some measure of protection to British industry as well.

At the Ottawa Conference in 1932 our Delegation pressed for a duty on the imports of cotton into the United Kingdom. Our proposal was not acceptable to the British Delegation. The interests of the British industry, it was explained to us, placed our proposal out of court. British interests conflicted with our own. If cotton were accorded preferential treatment in Britain, the Indian grower—a worker, not an exploiter—would be benefited. But the rise in the price of cotton would raise the cost of manufacture and make it more difficult for Britain to compete with her rivals. Loss of trade would inevitably reduce wages and employment in Britain.

I have referred to the movement of the terms of foreign trade against us. One consequence of this is the export of gold from India. Since 21st September 1931 we have lost over 350 crores worth of gold. Much of this gold, it is admitted, was 'distress' gold, that is gold sold by peasants in order to pay Government dues and meet the daily necessities of life. The export of gold has made Indian peasants poorer—their reserves are gone. But it was explain—

ed to us by one of our greatest financial authorities, a Finance Member of the Government of India,¹¹ that the export of gold performed a very useful function. It encouraged the flow of international trade. How? you will ask. The world was not prepared to buy more of our goods, raw materials and food stuffs. World production of important food grains like wheat, and important raw materials like cotton, had increased and revolution in methods of production had brought down cost. Since the world demand for our exports had declined, our power of purchasing foreign goods also contracted—exports of goods pay for imports of goods and services. We, then, dug gold out of hoards and melted down ornaments, and offered this commodity, for which there is an unlimited demand in all countries, in exchange for the imports of goods and services. But for gold exports, imports into India would have shrunk far more than they did. That is how gold exports from India conferred a benefit on the whole world. It is conceivable that gold exports, which have made the masses of India poorer, kept some workers employed somewhere in the world. The loss of our workers was the gain of world workers.

Talking of gold one is reminded of the United State of America which, of the world's monetary gold, possesses 80 per cent today. The United States was a debtor country before the Great War. She emerged from that war as a leading creditor

11. Sir George Schuster in his budget speech for 1933-34.

country with a tremendous pull on the world's gold. Another country which began to attract gold on a large scale after the Great War was France. The accumulation of gold by these two countries in post-war years had serious consequences for other countries. Take, for example Germany. She had to pay reparations. No gold is produced in Germany. To meet her obligations Germany was obliged to acquire large amounts of foreign currency. By what means ? Foreign countries were not going to give millions and milliards of their currency to her for nothing. Germany could acquire the means of meeting her obligations by selling her goods. But her creditors raised high tariff walls against her. Why ? To protect their own industries, to safeguard not only the profits of the bourgeoisie but wages and employment of their workers. What is true of Germany is also true of any debtor country which does not produce gold. In post-war years creditor countries, the United States leading, followed a policy which was bound to break up the rule of the international gold standard. They would not agree to the cancellation of debts, and they would not agree to receive payment in goods. The debtor, they argued, was bound by his bond. So he was. And why should they permit their industries to be ruined by imports ? The inevitable crash came, though this is not the whole story of the crisis of 1929. The point is that the conflict of national interests disturbed international harmony in money matters, and

the gold standard, the symbol of this harmony, disappeared.

Interesting light is thrown on the supposed harmony of workers' interests throughout the world by the immigration laws of certain countries. The communist slogan 'Workers of the world, unite' makes no exception in the case of coloured workers. It treats white and coloured workers as members of a single family of workers. We are all comrades, irrespective of distinctions of colour, race or creed. For a hundred years communists of the world have been shouting this slogan; radio broadcasts from Moscow begin with this slogan. The unity of world workers has been sedulously preached in communist literature for nearly a century. With what result?

Chinese and Japanese immigrants into the United States were regarded with intense jealousy by their white comrades. In California an Alien Land Law was passed in 1920 severely restricting the number of Japanese settlers. The marked success of the Japanese as truck-gardeners threatened the prosperity of the whites.

The Chinese were regarded with hostility because they were found willing to work for wages far below those required to support a European in comfort. Increase of Chinese immigrants threatened the standard of living of their white comrades and legislation was undertaken, first in 1882, which suspended Chinese immigration. Immigration laws are enforced with extreme rigour in the United

States, as in other countries.

During the last years of the 19th century and first years of the 20th century the United States and the British Dominions 'closed their doors to Chinese and Japanese immigrants and, indeed, practically to all Asiatic immigrants.'¹² In Australia immigration is subject to the condition that the immigrant must be able to write down fifty words in a European language at the dictation of the Immigration Officer. This does not seem a particularly hard or impossible condition to satisfy. At any rate so thought some coloured immigrants who knew several European languages. But they forgot that the choice of the European language rested with the Immigration Officer. When they presented themselves for examination, the Immigration Officer started off with a dictation in Gaelic ! Count Puckler is responsible for this story.¹³

Australia is white and intends to remain white. Of course we are all comrades, and our interests are identical, and we all want to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie, and we are all world revolutionary socialists. But coloured comrades had better stay where they are. Our attempt to cement the bonds of union with white comrades by working side by side with them in their countries as corn-growers, market gardeners or sheep farmers,

12. *World Economic Survey* of the League of Nations, 1938-39, P. 165.

13. *How Strong is Britain* (Right Book Club). P. 248.

is not encouraged. Why? In the interests of proletarian solidarity? They love us, but from a distance.

Not long ago, in 1933, the Dean of Canterbury suggested that Japan might be permitted to colonise that part of Australia which the British could not colonise themselves. Australia struck the Dean as empty—it is empty. Australia has only two persons per sq. mile. The Dean's statement is quoted with approval by Lt. Commander Tota Ishimaru.¹⁴ Australia's reaction to the Dean's statement is not known. But Britain has built a powerful naval base in the East to meet any danger that may threaten her in this part of the globe.

White immigration in the United States, as also in the British Dominions, is strictly controlled, but there is discrimination in favour of migrants from the United Kingdom and from Northern and Western Europe. It is precisely in the United Kingdom and Northern and Western Europe that a population decline is imminent. It is in Southern and Eastern Europe and in Asiatic countries like India, China and Japan that there is most evidence of over-population.

The Japanese would prefer to settle in Australia and New Zealand which, in climate, are much like Japan. Manchuria and Mongolia, says Lt. Commander Tota Ishimaru, are unsuitable for Japanese immigration on account of the cold and of

14. *Japan Must Fight Britain*, P. 91.

Chinese labour.¹⁵ So far as the Punjab peasant is concerned, he is inured to extreme variations of climate, he can work as hard as any white, and he is adventurous enough to go anywhere for a living. There is very great pressure of the population in several parts of the Punjab. We are waiting for a friendly gesture from our comrades in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. Let them demonstrate working class solidarity by relaxing their immigration laws in favour of coloured immigrants. Will they?

They will, you maintain. For my part, I would wait for 'Latter Day Warnings'¹⁶ before ordering my emigration kit.

There is no difficulty in understanding the attitude of white workers if we remember that their standard of living is much higher than that of Asiatics. It is unreasonable to expect that they

15. *Japan Must Fight Britain*, P. 90.

16. A poem bearing that title by Oliver Wendel Holmes (*Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*) :

When lawyers take what they would give,
And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live,
Save when they fast for conscience' sake. -
When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
The power of suction to resist,
And claret bottles harbour not
Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

.....

Till then let Cumming blaze away
And Miller's saints blow up the globe
But when you see that blessed day
Then order your ascension robe.

would sacrifice their well-being and comfort for our sake. International slogans are useless. Workers of the world will never unite.

'To-day', says Benham, 'the family of a British workman, drawing unemployment relief, is fed and clothed and housed on a scale enjoyed only by a small minority in Eastern countries to-day or in the Great Britain of a hundred years ago'.¹⁷

'Twenty years after the Revolution', says Parkes, 'the living standards of the average employed worker in Russia are lower than those of the unemployed worker in the United States'.¹⁸

The purchasing power of the average Soviet industrial worker is not much greater than that of the average mill worker in Bombay.¹⁹ Unemployed workers in the United States are better off than the fully employed average industrial worker in India.

World communism would not be worth having if it did not bring with it a certain equalisation of standards of living in different countries. And the equalisation of standards of living would meet with the strongest opposition on the part of the industrially advanced countries, *e. g.*, the United States and the United Kingdom. Mr. Parkes says: "Consider, for example, the problems which would be presented by the unification under a single govern-

17. *Economics*, P. 103.

18. *Marxism, a Post Mortem* by H. B. Parkes, George Allen publisher, 1940, P. 21.

19. *See Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain, Chapter V.

ment of a rich nation like the United States with a poor nation like China or Japan. An equalisation of the standard of living would be impossible, since the people of the United States would never agree to such a sacrifice.²⁰ It would be a real sacrifice both for the American bourgeoisie and the American proletariat, if any proletariat may be said to exist at all in the United States.

National conflicts are not resolved by supposing that invention and discovery increase man's mastery over Nature in a manner which is at present inconceivable. No single country or territorial unit to-day is completely self-sufficient. But Russia, the United States and the British Empire enjoy a higher degree of self-sufficiency than other countries. The economic position of the United States is one of exceptional strength. She is seriously deficient in rubber, silk, flax, jute, sisal and some minerals, and has inadequate supplies of certain other minerals and wool. But she has sufficient quantities of the 'really basic materials,' coal, iron, petroleum and cotton—of the last two she is the world's largest producer and exporter.²¹

As the world's supply of minerals tends to be exhausted, the struggle between the nations for what is left will become fiercer, but let us assume that

20. *Parkes*, loc. cit. P. 143.

21. See *Colonies and Raw Materials*, Information Department No. 18, issued by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, P. 30.

invention and discovery come to man's aid. Now it is extremely unlikely that all countries would simultaneously learn to manufacture artificial food or wool or cotton, or that unsuspected mineral wealth would be discovered in every part of the world. If the United States found better and cheaper substitutes for the raw materials she at present lacks, if she discovered within her territories inexhaustible sources of manganese, chromium, tin, antimony and other minerals in which she is at present deficient, she would become completely autark. She would then have no need of the rest of the world. Her unwillingness to enter a world system of communism would be greater than before.

The same is true of Russia. As her resources develop, the standard of living of the Russian people may be expected to rise. If these resources are immensely increased by invention and discovery, the Russian worker would be so much the richer. Why should he share the wealth created by Russian scientists and Russian organisation with Indians, Chinese and Japanese?

World communism would confer the greatest benefits on the 'have-nots'; it would impose the greatest sacrifices on the 'haves'.

Mr. H. G. Wells thinks nothing of the British Empire. He calmly talks of its dissolution, or 'relaxation to nothing.'²² With equal readiness

22. "London to-day is lousy with parasites who would theoretically have the British renounce their possessions, and who are

Sir Noman Angell is prepared to present the British Empire to any one who will have it. 'The situation,' he says, 'truly calls for sacrifices, but they are not the imaginary ones of giving up imperial territory which, so far as we are directly concerned, would prove no sacrifice at all.'²³ Can one take these intellectuals seriously? Do they mean what they say?

The workers of the world might have given a proof of their international solidarity when the Great War broke out. But they paid little attention to the clarion call of Lenin. They failed to turn the Great War into a war of world revolution. Another test came in 1939. Where is the international civil war? The British worker is fighting shoulder to shoulder with the British bourgeoisie in the defence of his Empire. And Marxist Russia is working in the closest harmony with Fascist Germany. Or did Hitler and Molotov meet in

to be found in practice to be the chief beneficiaries from those possessions. These decadents gnaw sadistically at the breast that feeds them because it is the most extravagant and extraordinary thing they can do" (Donald Cowie in *An Empire Prepared*, P. 255, issued by the Right Book Club).

23. *This Have and Have-Not Business*, 1936 (Hamish Hamilton). P. 20. H. S. Ashton takes a more sensible view of Britain's colonial Empire. In *Clamour for Colonies* (Thornton Butterworth, 1936) he says: "Meddle with our colonial possessions and you meddle with our colonial trade. Toy with our colonial trade so that the foreigner may get a share, and you reduce Britain's share. Interfere with the sources of many of our essential supplies and you immediately close down some of our manufacturing activities. Allow any portion of the trade of the colonies to be diverted to Hamburg, Genoa or where not and you throw men out of employment in London and Liverpool (P. 124). See also Pp. 113-14,

Berlin to evolve a plan of world proletarian revolution?²⁴

What has become of the world market? It has vanished. National markets have largely replaced the world market. Uniformity in the mode of production is not a factor working for working class world unity but directly its opposite. The rise of coloured capitalism after the Great War intensified commercial competition. Compare Indian mill production of cloth with British imports to-day with those of the pre-war year 1913-14. And if India learnt to make ships for carrying goods and passengers to Europe, if all insurance business in India were taken over by Indian companies, if European Exchange Banks were excluded from India, British workers will have little reason to feel happy, or to thank us.

THE VANISHING PROLETARIAT

Having drawn attention to the destructive effect of the freedom of commerce and other factors on national differences and antagonisms, the *Communist Manifesto* proceeds: 'The supremacy of the

24. Speaking on the 10th of January 1936 Molotov said: "We also know that the masses of the people in capitalist countries have no sympathy for the predatory plans of the Imperialists of all shades, especially of the imperialists in the fascist camp" (*Soviet Union* 1936, P. 105, published by Lawrence and Wishart). Molotov was careful to say nothing about the attitude of the masses in the Soviet Union towards predatory Imperialism. It is evident that the Russian masses approve of Soviet expansion at the expense of the neighbouring States, and of the predatory plans of Imperialists, 'especially in the Fascist camp.' Or have the leaders of the Soviet Union ceased to represent the masses?

proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.²⁵

The proletariat means the property-less section of the population. This class stood facing the bourgeoisie when the *Communist Manifesto* was drafted. There was no other class besides these two, for the epoch of the bourgeoisie had 'simplified' class antagonisms.

The main communist thesis is based on the intensification of class antagonisms with the progress of capitalism. The lower middle classes sink gradually into the proletariat and entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, also precipitated into the proletariat.²⁶ The struggle of opposites, proletariat and wealth, inevitably ends in the victory of the proletariat.

Since the class conflict is sharpest in the leading industrial countries, the proletariat in these countries leads the vanguard of the world revolution.

Recent changes in capitalism demonstrate the futility of this analysis. They have knocked the bottom out of dialectical materialism.

Take a leading civilised country, Britain. Marx and Engels expected that English working men, these 'first-born sons of modern industry,'²⁷ would be

25 P. 26 (Martin Lawrence).

26. *Ibid.* P. 16.

27. *Marx-Engels Correspondence* (Lawrence and Wishart) P. 91. See also P. 88.

the first to make a revolution. But the British proletariat declines to fulfil its historic role. Why? The British proletariat is vanishing!

Out of a total of a little over 21 million persons in all occupied groups in Britain in 1931, the black-coated or non-proletarian groups comprised a little over 6 millions. Adding two pre-capitalist groups, agricultural workers and domestic servants, who are not the sons of modern industry, we get a total of about 8½ million persons, or over 40 per cent of the whole employed population.

It is not possible to-day to regard society in Britain as divided into two classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie. There are also powerful intermediate groups, with a non-proletarian outlook.

It is estimated that the middle class formed 19 per cent of the occupied population in 1881, 26.9 per cent in 1901 and 29.1 per cent in 1931. The progress of capitalism does not cause the middle class to sink into the proletariat but to expand.

The proportion of the total national income paid in salaries in Britain, according to Prof. Carr Saunders, rose from 12.0 per cent in 1911 to 26.0 per cent in 1935. The salaried worker belongs to non-proletarian groups.

Most interesting of all, the proletariat turns bourgeois, a process called *embourgeoisement* of the proletariat by Mr. Durbin. The proletariat acquires property in the shape of a monetary reserve. 12 million separate accounts in the British Savings

Banks contained an average holding of £50 in 1935. In addition the proletariat held funds to its credit in several other forms. The total investments of the small investor are estimated at about £3,000,000,000 for over 15 million investors.

Mr. Durbin concludes : " The proletariat is the great class of industrial workers who own *nothing* but their labour and who, therefore, have ' nothing to lose but their chains ', to quote the peroration of the *Communist Manifesto*. It is the literal and sober truth to affirm that a class so defined is rapidly disappearing. In Great Britain it is disappearing. In America it has disappeared."²⁸

Is it any use discussing the world proletarian revolution any further ? The proletarian revolution presupposes a proletariat which is to make the revolution. The proletarian revolution is vanishing because the class which was to lead the vanguard of the revolution is vanishing !

NARSI BHAGAT.

Marxism is dead. But it is impossible to convince Marxists of this literal truth. One may as well try to convince a man of faith that God is dead ! Scientific socialism is a misnomer. It is a religion founded on faith. It is a Church.

Suppose you try to explain to Narsi Bhagat that he worships an illusion. You will fail. Why ? He has seen the Lord and established personal relations with Him. The Lord works miracles for his personal

28. *Politics of Democratic Socialism* by E. F. M. Durbin (George Routledge), P. 113.

benefit. The agent of a powerful Diwan comes to Narsi Bhagat's village in search of a match for the Diwan's daughter. Narsi Bhagat is poor, but the Lord intervenes with a miracle and Narsi Bhagat's boy is chosen. The marriage procession which Narsi Bhagat leads, with the bridegroom seated in a village cart, excites ridicule. The Lord works another miracle. The cart is transformed into a gorgeous chariot which the Lord Himself drives. Poor village folk suddenly find themselves dressed in robes of gold and following the procession on richly caparisoned elephants! Can Narsi Bhagat, after all this and more, be persuaded to believe that the universe is governed, not by the caprices of a personal God, but by laws which make no distinction between the saint and the sinner? It is impossible.

And like Narsi Bhagat men of faith, with their intelligence hopelessly entangled in Karl Marx's beard, have for a hundred years been waiting for miracles to happen. First the proletarian revolution was to happen in the leading civilised countries. Had not Marx and Engels said so? Was not the divorce of the worker from property most complete in England? But it did not happen there. It could not happen there. Marx and Engels knew very well that capitalism did not impoverish the worker in the absolute sense, that it gave rise to intermediate groups which, so far from sinking into the proletariat, climbed into the ranks of the bourgeoisie. The recognition of this one single fact makes an end of

dialectical materialism. The Marxist house of cards collapses. Therefore do not recognise the fact, ignore it, deny it. Lenin, when he knew better, still talked of the worker actually growing poorer than before, being compelled to live worse, eating more sparingly, remaining underfed, seeking shelter in cellars and attics.²⁹ Is that a description of the economic condition of the British or the American worker in the first two decades of the 20th century when Lenin was living ?

The Russian Revolution revived the dying Marxist faith. The miracle had finally happened, if not in England then in Russia. Russia forthwith became a Marxist country, though the Russian Revolution in itself was a flat contradiction of Marxian dialectic. The dialectic therefore underwent a change. Proletarian revolutions may now be expected where capitalism is not most, but least developed. This is the famous theory of the weakest link which is offered to the gullible public as the rehabilitation of Marxism !

Russia tried communism, or to follow Marx, and failed. The attempt to equalise wages was abandoned, a money economy was fully restored, a capitalist principle of distribution was re-established, cadres were organised, a new, powerful and privileged class of bureaucrats under a virtual dictator took over the government of the country. But Russia remained Marxist. The new socialist principle of

29. See *Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain. P. 67.

distribution (wages according to piece-work) is supposed to be the principle recommended by Marx for socialism ! Marx said something exactly the opposite. Russia is the greatest democracy in the world, but when an election is held, there is only one candidate to contest a seat ! The Russian worker is the freest and happiest worker in the world — actually he enjoys less freedom than the worker in a country like India, subject to both class and Imperialist exploitation ! The prosperity of the Russian worker is increasing by leaps and bounds. How ? The wages fund is doubling and quadrupling every four or five years ! And this Marxist country, the Fatherland of all socialists and the ' base of the world revolution,' has not the courage to publish statistics showing the salaries paid to the bureaucracy, to different classes of workers, and variations in the purchasing power of money !

And in spite of considerable differences in earnings, between the highest and the lowest scales of pay, Russia is a class-less society. Why ? Land and capital in Russia have been nationalised. A Soviet Commissar spending £7-15 a day for board and lodging and gorging caviare at each meal is a proletarian like an unskilled worker who would have to labour for six months in a Soviet factory to earn an equivalent amount !³⁰ No, there are no classes in the Soviet

30. Eileen Bigland writes (*The Riddle of the Kremlin*, published in White Circle books, 1940) : "By the time I reached Yalta, that exquisite Crimean bay, I had come to the conclusion that the Russian hatred of Nazi Germany was a basic or

Union ! The Commissar and the coolie belong to the same social class and enjoy the same status ! Can self-deception go further ?

Another miracle was expected to happen in August 1939, the Soviet fighting for freedom and democracy. The 'base of the world revolution'

almost universal emotion, therefore I received a severe jolt when I listened to General Tcherkakevsky's views on the subject. But then, just meeting him was sufficient to take the breath away—in Soviet Russia, for he descended like a whirlwind on the modest Hotel Leningrad and within ten minutes of his arrival the place was in an uproar. I was intrigued ; the Commissars who stopped at the new Moscow Hotel might pay the equivalent of seven pounds, fifteen shillings a day for board and lodging and gorge caviare at each meal, their wives might wear fine fur coats, but they were proletarians who looked and behaved like proletarians and this dashing General was their antithesis. Debonair, smiling, courtly, he travelled with an imposing entourage, ran several motor cars, knew a sound Tokay when he tasted one and enjoyed the society of pretty women " (pp. 69-70). £7-15 is equal to a little over Rs. 100. We do not know the salary and allowances enjoyed by Soviet Commissars, but even if a Commissar was not able to spend more than the equivalent of £7-15 a day on all his requirements, including board and lodging, his purchasing power would be equal to a monthly salary of Rs. 3000. And these Commissars were proletarians ! The present writer is a bourgeois, but for a daily allowance of Rs. 100 for board and lodging *plus* something more for clothing, furniture, books and travelling, he might be willing to become a proletarian !

The lowest salary paid to unskilled workers in Russia in 1937 or 1938 was 80 to 100 roubles a month, say Rs. 10-12½.

The General to whom Eileen Bigland refers, travelled 'with the pomp and flourish associated with the movements of minor royalty' (pp. 73-4). He was no proletarian, even in the judgment of Eileen Bigland.

Soviet society consist of classes whose purchasing power shows extreme variations. At one end of the scale there are members of the highest bureaucracy, e. g. the Commissars and the General mentioned by Eileen Bigland, who live like princes or *reises*, and at the other end there are unskilled workers whose purchasing power is not much greater than that of unemployed workers in the leading capitalist countries. And yet the Soviet is a country without classes ! It is wonderful !

elected to follow another course.³¹ But who knows ? The miracle may still happen. Marxists in India have still faith in the living embodiment of Marxism on earth, Stalin the worker of miracles !

CONTENT OF INDIAN SOCIALISM.

To such men of faith I have nothing to say. But there may be others who have ceased to dream of international socialism and the world revolution. I ask them : If world revolutionary socialism is a fraud, does it follow that all socialism is a fraud ?

The answer is 'No.' International socialism is dead, but not socialism in one country.

What is the main content of Indian socialism ?

It is necessary to distinguish between the content and the method of socialism.

The content or aim of socialism is the ending of the exploitation of man by man, and a planned production and distribution of wealth. Traditional socialism seeks to realise this aim through the nationalisation of land and capital.

31. Peter F. Drucker writes in *The End of Economic Man* (William Heinemann publisher.) "Actually the expectation of a Russo-German War was never much more than wishful thinking. Unless an unforeseeable accident intervenes, there will be no war between Germany and Russia. If there is no war, there must eventually be an alliance between these two Powers against the West.....The two regimes will come together because they are similar ideologically and socially" (p. 229). Mr. Drucker's book was first published in May 1939. That the two regimes were ideologically and socially similar was known long before 1939 to every one except Stalinist-Marxists, but Mr. Drucker is the only writer who predicted an understanding between the two countries before the signing of the first Soviet-German Pact.

But the method is not an integral part or the main content of socialism.

It may be possible to realise the aim of socialism without nationalising land and capital. The content, not the method, is important. A discriminating smoker is interested in the contents of a box of cigars. He is not attracted by the box or the fascinating labels it may bear.

Suppose we nationalise land and capital in India. The state or the bureaucracy will become directly responsible for working the entire economic machine. Socialism in this case cannot do without a vast bureaucracy. And the bureaucrats will have tremendous power.* Conceivably they may be inefficient and corrupt. Conceivably they may eat up a large proportion of the total income of the country. Conceivably they may constitute a privileged class, to whose wishes and comfort every thing else is subordinated. Such a society would not be classless. It would not be a socialist society either. It would be a tyranny, where a ruthless, powerfully organised minority holds down the masses of workers in subjection. No private individual may own instruments of production, or all may jointly own all the apparatus of production. But it is income on which one lives, not on the principle of state ownership, or the feeling that one owns, with the rest of the society, 1/180 or 1/400 millionth share in all tools and implements.

Nationalisation of land and capital in itself does

not end exploitation.

To say the least the Russian experiment is not encouraging. That the Russian bureaucracy is inefficient is shown by the Finnish campaign. That it eats up a very high proportion of the national income is shown by the life of poverty and destitution of the lower classes of Russian workers. That the bureaucracy is tyrannical is abundantly proved by mass persecutions and extraordinary trials.

Russia must be seething with discontent. This perhaps explains why 'the base of the world revolution' hesitates to strike a blow for freedom and democracy. Armed clash between Germany and Russia would lead to an uprising of the Russian proletariat against the Stalin regime. The proletariat has disappeared in the United States, but it exists in the Soviet Union.

Even if it is argued that nationalisation of land and capital has ended completely and for ever the exploitation of man by man in Russia and raised the standard of living of the Russian worker immeasurably above that of workers in the most advanced capitalist country, it does not follow that it must produce the same results in India. The Russian bureaucracy may be the most efficient, self-less and honest bureaucracy in the world, but it is our bureaucracy that would have to work our system, not the ideal Russian bureaucracy.

I distrust an Indian bureaucracy. It is incapable of managing industries. The reasons may be briefly stated. They are based on facts which are so

well known that detailed explanation is superfluous :

1. Danger of corruption.
2. Nepotism.
3. Communalism.

No sudden transformation of our character will take place on winning swaraj. Honest and efficient men may be found to direct agriculture and industry, to control production and distribution. But the taking over by the state of all agricultural and industrial production is a far more difficult undertaking. For one bureaucrat required for controlling economic activity, 50 would be required for managing industry.* The danger of corruption and inefficiency is increased in the same proportion.

Achieving socialism is a practical problem, which is not solved by uttering slogans. Nationalisation of land and capital is inadvisable in India. We are compelled to try another method. This is state control.

The first essential is an all-powerful state which will control value in all its forms, rent, wages, interest, and profits. Each of these shares in distribution is a price. The state of the future will consciously, deliberately, determine all prices—not merely the prices of goods but the price for the use of land and capital, price of labour-power and of the services of entrepreneurs. It will endeavour to realise the ideal of a 'just' price.

Is it possible for the state to do so ? Are not

prices determined by market conditions ? Will not state interference in the realm of free competition produce confusion ?

This view is a relic of old times. It is a product of *laissez faire* economics.

In a time of war the state becomes the sole determinant of value. It assumes the direction of the whole economic life of the people. It may be labour's birth-right to strike for higher wages, but, in national interests the right is not asserted. Both labour and capital submit to state regulation or dictation.

What is possible in a time of war is possible in a time of peace.

Even in a regime of free competition the role of the state in creating value and altering the scale of values is important.

In the year 1933-34 the average price of agricultural land per acre in the Punjab was Rs. 477, but before the annexation of the Punjab by the British in 1849, and for some years after annexation, agricultural land had practically no saleable value. In the early days of British rule an acre of land was sold in Sirsa for six annas.³² There is no record of sale prices of land in Moghul times. There is not a single reference, so far as I am aware, to the buying and selling of agricultural land in the 16th or the 17th century by contemporary writers. There were no

³² *Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab* by H. Calvert, 2nd Ed., p. 219.

transactions in land then, or land was not an article of merchandise.

It is also well known that the class of landlords, who to-day claim the largest share in the net income from the land, are the creation of British rule. In old times, and even under the Sikhs, the produce of the land was shared between two parties only, the tiller of the soil and the state. Economic rent of land existed, but practically the whole of it was appropriated by the state. The state has created economic rent of land as a share accruing to a particular class of the community.

Or take rural interest or rural money-lenders. There were always money-lenders in India—there are references to money-lending and to measures for the control of usury in Kautilya's *Arthshastra*. But never before in Indian history did money-lenders attain such importance as they have done under British rule. There is no mention of the exploitation of the peasant by the money-lender in Moghul times in contemporary literature.

In Moghul times the land revenue was a share of the gross produce of the land, which the cultivator might pay in kind. Similarly in Sikh times in the Punjab the land revenue was the state's share of the gross produce of the land. The British converted the land revenue into a money payment. In the early days of British rule assessments were heavy relatively to the prices of agricultural produce. The peasant was driven to borrow to pay the land

revenue, and thus the foundation of rural indebtedness was laid. As prices of agricultural produce rose, as a money economy gradually replaced barter in the villages, land itself acquired a price, thus inscreasing the credit of the borrower. His indebtedness grew with his credit. The conditions which the state itself had created gave rise to a new problem, that of the rural rate of interest.

Has the problem been solved today? No. The heavy demands of the state force the peasant to borrow. Even if all existing rural debts were wiped out, but the level of rural taxation and of *agricultural prices remained unchanged*, within 20 years the peasant would find himself as heavily involved in debt as he is at present.

Our rural problems are not insoluble. But *laissez faire* would not solve them. And to excite the rural against the urban classes is criminal madness.

Shall we raise the slogan of land nationalisation? Where is the sense in nationalising the land of the worker? So far as the non-worker is concerned, taxation can reduce his income to zero. The state created the economic rent he receives, the state can take away the whole of it without touching ownership.

The aim of the new state would be to gradually return to the old system in which no intermediaries stood between the tiller of the soil and the state. There would be no place in the new system for

parasitical landlords, but landlords as creators of value may remain. A landlord creates value when he actively assists in production. He may bring his financial resources to the aid of the cultivator ; he may help in modernising agriculture. The landlord will not be the trustee for the welfare of the rural worker. The state must assume the role of the universal trustee. And the state will see to it that the landlord works or goes. The present system in which a non-worker grabs most of the net income from the land for no services rendered to production cannot be too strongly condemned.

Is it possible for the state to control the rural rate of interest ? The answer is 'yes' but there is a right and a wrong method of doing it. We may enact legislation fixing the rate of interest, leaving the demand for and the supply of capital unchanged. The Government rate could not be enforced even if the severest penalties were imposed for infringing the law. But if the need of the borrowers were reduced and the supply of capital augmented, the rural rate of interest could be brought down to a reasonable level and maintained at that level. The state of the future would adjust rural taxation to the capacity of the rural tax-payer ; it would stabilise his income by stabilising the prices of agricultural products, and it would directly and indirectly add to the supply of capital. Gradually the state would, directly or through its credit institutions, completely take over rural money-lending.

Can the state fix profits ? Even at present state action is an important factor in determining profits. Protection has brought into existence a number of industries. Who can doubt that if protection were withdrawn some protected industries would completely disappear and others would be seriously crippled. Government action has created profits in the protected industries. When an excise is imposed, as on sugar and matches, the rate of profit is reduced. In the case of monopolies the Government has directly exercised its power of fixing price, thus controlling profits.

The taxation of imports affects the prices of imported goods, and indirectly, the prices of all other goods which compete with imported goods, and thus the rate of profit.

The control of profits is not only conceivable in theory, it can and has become a reality in practice. Prof. E. H. Carr in *The Twenty Years' Crisis* says :

" Moreover, we are moving rapidly everywhere towards the abolition or restriction of industrial profits. In the totalitarian countries this has now been virtually accomplished. In Great Britain the assumption has long been made that to earn more than a limited rate of profit on the provision of essential services is immoral. This assumption has now been extended to the armaments industry. Its extension to other industries is only a matter of time and would be hastened by any crisis."³³

33. Published by Macmillan, 1940. P. 305.

The state can control the consumption of the rich by the heavy taxation of expenditure on luxuries. It is not merely a progressive income-tax, with the rate of taxation rising steeply as income rises, that we have in view, but the taxation of expenditure as such. If for every rupee spent on illuminations or fire-works on the occasion of a marriage you were required to pay two rupees to the state, you would very quickly learn to avoid waste. If sofa sets, carpets, perfumes, artificial aids to beauty, *saris* of gold and jewellery, were taxed at the rate of 200 per cent *ad valorem*, people would be more economical in their use. Restriction of expenditure on luxuries would set free capital and labour devoted to their production for the production of necessities, increasing the supply of the latter and making them cheaper. The upper classes in India, both men and women, are rapidly becoming Europeanised. Receptions and parties in the European fashion were not common thirty years ago. If for every guest you entertained at a modern party you had to pay five or ten or twenty rupees to the state as a tax, you might be induced to think that old customs were, after all, not so bad. The state might use taxation as a means of re-Indianising Europeanised Indians.

Without nationalising industry it is possible to control production and prices. This, again, is not a matter of theory but an accomplished fact in several countries.

Production is easier to control when producers

are grouped together into unions. It is immaterial what we call these unions—syndicates, federations, or trusts—the main thing is the organisation of producers in associations which the state can control. It is difficult for the state to regulate the output of tens of millions of producers, each working independently on a small scale. This reason alone compels us to abandon all thought of a charkha economy. A charkha economy is a decentralised economy. It may be possible to control production and prices even in a decentralised economy, but the task is much simplified when there is concentration of production in cartels and trusts. We need not wait until the normal development of large scale enterprise in India brings trusts and cartels into existence. This may take a century. But it is within the power of the state to accelerate the process.

In the course of his address to the students of the Commercial College, Delhi, on 'the new economic world order' in November, 1940, Mr. S. Satyamurti is reported to have opposed the nationalisation of industries and suggested that 'private enterprises should be encouraged with 49 per cent private capital and 51 per cent state capital, the state guarding against the grinding drudgery of labour, while the public must keep a keen eye on profit and efficiency'.³⁴

By furnishing the major portion of the capital of enterprises the state will become a partner in

34. *Tribune* of Lahore, Nov. 23, 1940. P. 3.

them and will be able to control both profits and wages. In such a system the state can fully safeguard the interests of labour and regulate profits. The stimulus of private enterprise is preserved.

Mr. Satyamurti is thinking on right lines. But how does he reconcile the charkha with state subsidised large-scale industries? Or did he mean that the state would provide 51 per cent of the capital of every hand-worker—spinner, weaver, dyer, carpenter, shoe-maker and a thousand other classes of artisans? Why don't charkha leaders tell us sincerely what they think? If charkha and non-violence are to be the basis of our future economy, it is ridiculous to suggest that the state should finance private enterprise to the extent of 51 per cent of the total capital. There is no sense in paying half the cost of the charkha to every charkha owner in order to guard against the grinding drudgery labour'. Mr. Satyamurti has large-scale enterprise in view. And large-scale enterprise will be the keystone of our future system of production, for reasons of national defence, if for no other reason. Unless non-violence can defend India against foreign aggression, India will be forced to modernise her industries. All talk of decentralised production under the charkha is the purest bunkum.

We may not rule out all state enterprise. The state may take over an industry if it can manage it successfully. There may be such industries, *e.g.* social monopolies. But the question of nationalisation of an

industry cannot be decided on *a priori* or theoretical grounds. Before an industry is taken over by the state, it must be shown that private enterprise has failed to produce satisfactory results, and that state enterprise will be more efficient and economical.

Without owning a share in industries it is possible for the state to safeguard the interests of labour or to end the exploitation of labour by capital. A 'just' wage is not the highest wage demanded by labour, nor is it the lowest wage that a capitalist would like to give. A 'just' wage is the maximum wage that can be paid, having regard to the condition of a business or an industry at a particular time. How is the 'just' wage to be found? Shall we leave labour and capital to fight it out between themselves? But strikes and lock-outs interrupt production and, apart from injuring labour and capital, inflict loss on the whole community. The state, as the guardian of national interests, must intervene. The non-party state stands between the two parties growling at each other and gives its verdict, which is final and must be accepted by both.

That is how the problem of a 'just' wage is solved even in democratic England at the present time.³⁵

35. In the course of a debate in the House of Commons on Nov. 27, 1940, Mr. Bevin, Minister for Labour said: "The Government had succeeded in settling a problem in industry that had baffled every one for generations, namely to put the wages in the tool room right and to get skilled men in the right place."

It cannot be argued that wages are 'just' in Russia because Russia is the workers' state and necessarily 'unjust' in England because of capitalism. The factory worker does not exercise political dominion under any system—he works under conditions fixed for him and for wages determined for him by others.

No wages are 'just' or 'unjust' in themselves. Wages that are 'just' to-day may become unjust to-morrow if industrial conditions changed. Secondly the most fair wage for the Indian mill-worker may be several times lower than the wage earned by a similar worker in the United States or the United Kingdom. Assuming that all wages are 'just' in the Soviet Union it has to be recognised that they are much lower than the rate of 'unjust' wages under capitalism in the leading countries.

Here again we make, not the private capitalist, but the state the trustee for labour. It is the duty of the state to find out, in each case, the 'just' wage for an industry, taking into consideration the cost of production, demand and profits, and to enforce it. The fixing of the rate of profits and wages by the state is the means of ending the exploitation of labour by capital. It is also the means of ensuring permanent industrial peace.

Such in the broadest outline is the shape of things to come. I have purposely avoided details of planning ; only the general principles of planning, its objects

and methods have been stated. The time to work out details has not yet come. Planning pre-supposes power to enforce the plan, which we lack. In this sense economics is dependent on politics.

It is clear, that 'Indian Socialism' is a no plan for a new 'world order'. Is 'Indian Socialism' Italian Fascism or German National Socialism ?

No. I interpret Indian Socialism as the well known German economist Werner Sombart interprets *Deutscher Sozialismus*, or German Socialism.

Sombart makes a distinction between National Socialism and German Socialism. The idea of national socialism is nothing new—it is not the creation of Mussolini or Hitler. The germs of national socialism, Sombart points out, are found in the systems of a horde of thinkers of the past. The series begins with Plato. He next mentions Thomas Moore, Campanella, Fichte, Schleiermacher, and Goethe. In the 19th century national socialism was represented by Lorenz von Stein, Karl Rodbertus, Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle, Albert Schaeffle, Adolf Stöcker, Adolph Wagner, Adolph Held, Friedrich Nietzsche, Hermann Losch and many others. Even a national socialist need not borrow all his ideas from Mussolini or Hitler.

But what is Sombart's conception of German socialism as distinguished from national socialism ? He says :

" For me German Socialism means socialism for Germany, that is to say a socialism which is valid

exclusively for Germany alone, and indeed for Germany of our time, because it is adapted to German conditions, which is thus like clothes made to exactly fit Germany, or made according to her measure (no ready-made article), which is not satisfied, like many of the writers mentioned above, with occasionally taking German conditions into account, but which endeavours systematically to deal with the totality of problems from the German point of view."³⁶

In the passage above read 'India' and 'Indian' for 'Germany' and 'German' and this is what Indian Socialism means to me.

It was in this sense that I wrote in *Indian Socialism* :³⁷

"It will be said that socialism is international in its outlook because it stands for the brotherhood of peasants and workers of the world. We have no use for this socialism."

And in *Marxism is Dead* :³⁸

Class unity, nationalism, a strong and powerful state which will never 'wither away' are the very antithesis of Marxism. 'Indian Socialism' totally rejects Marxism.

"India will have to evolve her own plan and methods for solving her problems. No ready-made system exists which India might copy."

Again :

"Q. 106. If the interests of workers of different nations are not identical, if no world proletarian revolution is matur-

36. *Deutscher Sozialismus* by Werner Sombart, published by Buchholtz and Weisswange, 1934, p. 121.

37. Pp. 150-51.

38. P. 224.

ing or can ever happen, if no world socialist society can ever come into being—in brief, if international socialism is dead, does it not follow that socialism must be 'national'?"

"Q. 107. Is there a socialist pattern which every country must accept irrespective of its peculiar national characteristics, political position and degree of economic development?"

"Q. 108. 'Indian Socialism' is emphatically not a demand for setting up a 'Corporate State' in India as in Italy, or for copying Fascist methods of Imperialist aggression. Is there any reason why 'Indian Socialism' must mean state capitalism as in the U. S. S. R.?"

"Q. 109. What are the objections to interpreting 'Indian Socialism' as an economy or system aiming at a just distribution and a planned production of wealth under given Indian conditions?"

The answer to the last question is 'None at all.' Indian Socialism has just this and can have no other meaning.

Sombart would not recommend German Socialism for India. German Socialism is a close-fitting suit made to Germany's measure. Our measure is different. There are three good, sound and solid reasons why economic reconstruction in a country must bear peculiar characteristics, why it cannot be an exact copy of socialism or fascism anywhere else.

The area and population of the country must be considered. Sombart says :

"How can the economy of a tiny country like Switzerland or Belgium bear the same plan as a gigantic Empire of the extent of Russia or China ?

How foolish would it be to demand the same economic system for a thinly and a densely inhabited country: for England with 264, for Germany with 134 persons per sq. km. and Russia with 15, Finland with 9, Argentine or Brazil with 4 persons per sq. km. !"⁴⁰

Secondly, economic planning must take the social structure of a country into account. Sombart proceeds :

"How can one treat in the same manner Bulgaria, Russia and Turkey with 80-85 per cent agricultural population, and England with 8 per cent and Germany with 30 per cent agricultural population ?"⁴⁰

India with more than 70 per cent of her population dependent on agriculture must have an essentially different plan from Germany or Italy.

Thirdly, the shape of economy and planning are influenced by the character of a people, their cultural level and their outlook. To quote Sombart again .

"A fresh and tired people, a passive or an active people, a highly civilised and a half cultured people—each requires a different kind of planned economy. I need not state what differences exist between Russia and Europe, between China and Japan, between India and England, between Brazil and Switzerland, between Germany and France."⁴⁰

Let us get rid of the idea that Indian Socialism

40. Sombart, loc. cit. Pp. 281-82.

is a borrowed garment. It exists nowhere. We have to create it. And the best brains and the stoutest hearts in the country would be needed to create it.

DEMOCRACY

It finally remains to consider the form of political organisation most suited to the realisation of our economic aims.

We want planned production and distribution. We want to eliminate class war. Economic data being given, a political curve is to be fitted to the data. What is the shape of this curve?

That is not how J. S. Mill would have viewed the problem. On the very first page of his *Representative Government* he refers to those who look upon a constitution as they would upon a steam plough or a threshing machine. He did not approve of such people. But that is precisely how I would look upon a constitution. A given national economic task has to be performed. What type of constitution or government will best do the job?

The form of government has some relation to the form of economy. J. S. Mill was the greatest advocate of liberty and democracy, but he was also the greatest advocate of *laissez faire*.

He did not condemn state interference in trade on account of individual liberty. Trade is a social affair—it does not concern the individual alone. But then Mill believed that the best results—cheapest and best goods—were produced when state interfer-

ence in trade was reduced to a minimum.

Laissez faire in economics goes with democracy.

Or consider communism, which is *laissez faire* carried to its uttermost limit. There is no coercion of the individual—every one works according to his capacity and consumes according to his need. There is no money; free utilisation of the resources of the society replaces exchange. Under such conditions the state becomes superfluous. It 'withers away.'

Similarly a charkha economy is self-regulating. Law and order is maintained by policemen-reformers, and the danger of foreign invasion does not arise. If it does, a number of satyagrahis stand with folded hands before the invaders, who precipitately retire! A charkha economy is composed of independent, self-sufficient village units. The political form of a charkha economy is therefore simple. It is an 'ordered anarchy'. The state has disappeared.

Would J. S. Mill have admitted that democracy was not the form of government best suited to a planned economy? But Mill would not have accepted a planned economy. We cannot put such a question to him.

No form of government or constitution possesses absolute value, or value in itself. Its value is relative to two things: (1) the objects which it has to subserve and (2) the character and other circumstances of the people who have to work it.

Possibly J. S. Mill attached value to democracy

for its own sake, but then he believed that each was the best guardian of his own interests. Economic planning starts with the assumption that the state represents all interests, and that to realise the ideal of social justice the state must determine all values. We cannot judge the new state by *laissez faire* standards.

Secondly, even if democracy is the best form of government in the absolute sense, a people may not be fit for it. Even Mill recognised that representative government was inapplicable in certain cases.

We all love democracy, and some of our leaders go much further. They would force democracy on the whole world. They dream of a world federation based on socialism and democracy. They would work for this ideal. They would fight for it.

It does not occur to them that the political development and national character of different peoples are different. Are all peoples able to fulfil the duties and discharge the obligations which democracy will impose on them?

We are attracted by the success of democracy in the United Kingdom. The British people won democracy through a long struggle which began in the reign of King John. Behind British democracy there are traditions, political training and discipline of long centuries. Democracy has given Britain freedom and also a strong and stable government. But what reasons have we to believe that it will be equally successful in another country whose political

evolution has followed a different course ?

Let us take Italy as an example. For a very long time Italy was only a 'diplomatic' or 'geographical' expression. The first Italian Parliament met in Turin in 1861, but it was not before 1870 that Rome became the capital of a united Italy. Was Parliamentary government a success in Italy ? Between 1870 and 1922 there was, on an average, a change of government more than twice a year.⁴¹ In 1922 party government degenerated into 'a wretched skirmish and intrigue of ephemeral groups in a Vanity Fair of endless ambitions', as Giovanni Gentile puts it. At the end of January 1922 there was no government in Italy at all. A government was formed after six weeks of party squabbles, but it lasted only a short time and more weeks followed without a government.

Fascist writers who discuss 'democracy' may be divided into two groups. There are those who see no good in democracy—democracy, they argue, is at bottom the rule of a small capitalist oligarchy. But there are others who take a less prejudiced view and ascribe the failure of democracy in Italy, not to inherent defects of democracy, but to political conditions in Italy. Minister Alfredo Rocco, for example, recognises that the Democratic Liberal State flourished and achieved great things in Anglo-Saxon countries, because of the social and political conditions of these countries. In England the individual, in theory, asserts his liberty as against the state but,

41. *Italy* by R. Sencourt, p. 68 (Arrowsmith, 1938).

thanks to his rigorous education and training, in practice he knows how to limit it spontaneously. "All these conditions", says Rocco, "were lacking in Italy." Mediaeval anarchy and the conquest of Italy by foreigners made Italians forget the old Roman traditions of discipline which were, later, revived by the Catholic Church. Under foreign rule Italians came to look upon the state as an engine of oppression, and when a national government was established, the masses continued to regard the state with suspicion and hostility. The confusion of post-war years found the Italian State weaker than ever before. A period of anarchy followed in which the state 'having been reduced to a shadow of itself, helplessly watched the outbreak of civil strife which it was unable to control'.

"At this point", Rocco goes on, "the Liberal-Democratic State was finished in Italy. The March on Rome marked the historical completion of the collapse. Even if the forces of Fascism had been less imposing than they were, they would have still triumphed. No regime falls on account of the power of its opponents, all fall on account of their own weakness."⁴²

Next consider Germany. Are Germans fit for democracy? No. Germans, says Sombart, want a strong state in spite of or on account of their individualism. He believes "that the joyful accept-

⁴². *La Trasformazione dello Stato* (La 'Voce', Rome). Pp. 14-15.

ance of a clear and sharp order has been rightly described as a German characteristic—it is not merely Prussian, as others would say.”⁴³ The German allows himself to be led (or shall we say misled ?) willingly, which nature of the German, according to Sombart, is intimately connected with the metaphysical character of his soul or mind.

The leader does not listen to the people ; he does not serve the interests of the people but only the national idea.⁴⁴ As a matter of fact, says Sombart, those who have rendered the greatest services to their nation have been the most unpopular rulers, e. g., Bismarck in the Conflict Period (1862-66) and Friedrich Wilhelm I. When Wilhelm I died, people embraced one another in the streets and wept tears of joy.

Goethe meant the same thing when he regretted that the German language had no word to express the relation of *Volk-heit*, people-hood, to *Volk*, people, as *Kindheit* expresses the relation of childhood to *Kind*, child. The educator, said Goethe, should listen to childhood, not to the child, for the child does not know what it wants. Similarly the true ruler is guided by the generally unexpressed will of *Volk-heit*. The people, like a child, do not know what is good for them.

43. Sombart loc. cit. Pp. 212-213.

A leader serves the ‘national idea’ when he makes a nation united, great and strong. Bismarck, the creator of German unity, served the ‘national idea’.

Perhaps in Urdu we have a word to express the idea of *Volk-heit* as distinguished from *Volk*. *Volk* is خلق, the crowd, the people. *Volk-heit* is خلاق. When the poet exclaims

آواز خلق کو نثارۂ خدا سمجھو

One day, before the outbreak of the Franco-German War of 1870, Moltke and Roon, leaders of the German army, were dining with Bismarck. Bismarck writes : " During the dinner, in which Moltke and Roon participated, a message was received from the Paris Embassy that the Prince of Hohenzollern had withdrawn his candidature [to the Spanish throne] in order to avoid war with which France threatened us. My first thought was to submit my resignation, because I saw Germany's humiliation, for which I did not want to assume official responsibility, in this yielding to pressure after the many insulting provocations which had preceded it. The impression that the feeling of national honour had been violated by giving in under compulsion was so strong in me that I was determined to write to Ems submitting my resignation " (*Gedenken und Erinnerungen*, Vol. II, pp. 96-7).

Now if any one had been insulted it was the Prince who, on account of the threat of war, had withdrawn his candidature. Neither his father, William I of Prussia, nor the Queen wanted war with France. It may be doubted if any one in Germany wanted war except Bismarck, who was convinced that only war was the means of vindicating Germany's honour and who saw in victory the means of cementing German unity. Prussia had gained prestige as the result of the war of 1866. Prussia, he argued, would lose it for ever if the idea gained ground among the people that in questions of national honour, the French insult, *la Prusse cané* (Prussia shows the white feather) had a basis in fact (*Ibid.* P. 100).

Bismarck decided on war, and war it was. And he took action which left the King, Queen and the country no choice in the matter.

He served the ' national idea ', or the real interests of the nation. What the ' people ' thought was of no consequence.

If a leader arose in India who taught the masses a rational view of life, or led them away from religion, he would be serving the ' national idea ' for he would thereby be laying the foundations of real and permanent Indian unity. Actually, at the present time, leadership is founded on religion. Mahatma Gandhi's source of inspiration is God, and communalism has its roots in religious fanaticism.

possibly he does not mean the uncultured, raucous voice of an ignorant, illiterate mass of humanity.

The ruler leads and is not led by the people. It is not necessary that the will of the state should be embodied in a single person—a wise and benevolent despot. Sombart would establish a *Fuehrerrat* or Council of Leaders, composed of a small number of the best men. How to find these élite, or chosen ones, is the central problem of government. Sombart rejects the parliamentary principle of selection. It does not come into the question at all. "The Catholic Church with the College of Cardinals at its head is a model of democractic-authoritarian constitution. The Prussian army can also serve as a model."⁴⁴

If the Germans prefer to be led or misled by their Fuehrer, we shall have to let them. It is their own affair. They do not satisfy the very first condition laid down for representative government by J. S. Mill : "That the people should be willing to receive it".

What about democracy in India? We have faith in the voice of the people, خالق، for we want universal adult suffrage. We shall accept a constitution drafted by the people, and the people's solution of the communal and every other problem!

And yet the masses in no European country are half so illiterate and ignorant as the masses in India.

That leaders should serve the will of the masses

44. Sombart, loc. cit. p. 213.

in our country' is entirely senseless. And yet such is the meaning and purpose of democracy.

Democracy has failed in India. The reason is not merely the illiteracy and ignorance of the voters, but our traditions, character and other circumstances.

Democracy is a hot-house plant in India. It was introduced by the British. We are democrats because our rulers are democrats. Our students are brought up on J. S. Mill like British students, but there is a whole world of difference between our political history, traditions, psychology and outlook and those of the British people. Still it is assumed that what is good for England is good for India !

But, it will be said, democracy is working in the Punjab. And charkha democracy ruled 8 or 9 Provinces. The success claimed for Unionist democracy in the Punjab and charkha democracy elsewhere is, in my judgment, the strongest argument against democracy.

The Punjab is ruled by big landlords. The Assembly is composed of legislators many of whom are practically illiterate. How many of our legislators could take an intelligent share in a discussion of a 'planned economy'? What is the good of legislators who know nothing? Why should they be a burden on the tax-payer?

Will universal adult franchise improve matters? Not much. Only more illiterate, ignorant people would be invested with sovereignty.

Will the class-composition of the Punjab Assembly change by an extension of the franchise? It is hardly likely. The tenant may vote for the landlord for personal considerations. Votes may be purchased. Who does not know that they are purchased?

Take a University election, where the constituency consists of highly educated persons. The candidate who tops the poll at a Fellows' election by registered graduates in the Pnnjab is generally the man who works the hardest, or is the best canvasser, and, not unoften who spends the largest amount of money.

Fighting an Assembly election is no joke. You may have to spend several thousand rupees, and, in some cases, tens of thousands of rupees. Democracy in India puts a premium on wealth.

The success of charkha democracy is a proof of the gullibility of the Indian masses and their unfitness to exercise political sovereignty. What does charkha democracy stand for?—gur, charkha and khaddar as means of economic regeneration of India, and non-violence as the foundation of social order. We may grant that charkha leaders represent, truly and fully, the will of the people. But a constitution which gives rise to such leadership is worse than no constitution at all.

Nor can we ignore the communal factor. It is significant that the advent of democracy has synchronised with increase in communal clashes.

When was India a democracy? Certainly at no time during the past 1000 years. Was Akbar a constitutional monarch? Was Ranjeet Singh one? Let us go back to the ancient past. Did a party system of government exist under Asoka or Chandragupta Maurya? The caste system in itself is a negation of democracy.

Asoka was a great king, the greatest that ever ruled India. He endeavoured, in the words of Vincent Smith, 'to make India the kingdom of righteousness, i. e., a theocracy without a God; in which Government should act the part of Providence, and guide the people in the right way'.⁴⁵ That is my idea of a ruler or government. Such a ruler truly embodies the will, not of the people, *Volk*, خلف, but of *Volk-heit* خاق. The political problem in India is not that of a wide extension of the franchise, or of summoning a constituent assembly, or of drafting a constitution, but that of finding the best men in the country who can plan, and of investing them with full powers to execute their plan, irrespective of the 'will of the people'.

45 *Ancient India*, Pp. 169-70.

APPENDIX A.

VON KOMMENDEN DINGEN.

Walter Rathenau (1867-1922), the author of *Von Kommenden Dingen*, cannot be ignored in a discussion of 'the shape of things to come'.

Von Kommenden Dingen has been translated into English with the title *In Days to Come*, and in French with the title *Où Va La Monde* (*Where goes the World?*). Literally *Von Kommenden Dingen* is 'Of Things to Come'—or more fully, as we may say, 'The Shape of Things to Come'.

Rathenau was 'the first to preach totalitarian economics'¹. For this reason alone the man and his system deserve to be studied.

Rathenau was of Jewish descent. He was the son of Emil Rathenau, the founder of the A. E. G. (*Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft*), which became a world-famous concern. Walther Rathenau studied physics, chemistry, engineering and philosophy. He became a technician, and some of his processes were commercially exploited. In 1915 he succeeded his father as President of the A. E. G. During the Great War he was appointed Economic Director with the

1. *The End of Economic Man* by Peter F. Drucker (William Heineman, 1939). P. 244.

duty of countering the Allied blockade. In this capacity he re-organised the raw material resources of Germany and helped to prolong Germany's resistance. After the war he was appointed Minister of Re-construction. In 1920 he became Foreign Minister and in April 1922 negotiated the Rapallo Treaty with Russia. Around this Treaty, says Graf Kessler, Rathenau's biographer, legends have grown up.² It has been supposed that the Treaty of Rapallo signified a military alliance between Russia and Germany. Great Kessler insists that it was only *ein Friedensvertrag*, or treaty of peace. Rathenau was a man of peace and did not care for armaments or military alliances.

Rathenau was assassinated on June 24, 1922. There is no doubt that he was assassinated by the Nazis, for in 1933 the Nazis honoured the memory of the assassins (who had been caught and executed) — Naval Lt. Erwin Kern and Lt. Hermann Fischer of the Erhart Brigade. On this occasion Herr Himmler is reported to have said, 'Without the deed of these two, Germany to-day would be living under a Bolshevist regime'.³

The man who was the first to preach totalitarian economics was brutally done to death by agents

2. *Walther Rathenau, sein Leben und sein Werk* by Harry Graf Kessler (Hermann Klemm publisher, 1928). P. 333.

3. *Hitler and the Nazi Dictatorship* by Fred. L. Schuman (Robert Hales Co.), P. 297.

of the Party which was later to set up a totalitarian regime in Germany!

Graf Kessler relates the story of the assassination. The evening before the murder, i.e., of June 23, was spent by the conspirators together. They drank beer, brandy and wine and re-capitulated the reasons why Rathenau was to be got rid of. Kern said that Rathenau was a believer in sneaking Bolshevism, that is to say, a Bolshevism which sought to attain its goal without terrorism; his sister was married to the famous Russian revolutionary Karl Radek. He had obtained his office by giving a twenty-four hours' ultimatum to the Reichs-president. Kern stated further that Rathenau wanted to bring Germany under Jewish influence and, to further that end, he had concluded *a secret agreement with the Allied Powers, and also* that his policy of paying Reparations was treachery to Germany. On the same day, in a meeting of the German Parliament, one of Rathenau's political opponents, Helfferich, had violently criticised Rathenau's policy in regard to Reparations and said, like Kern, that this policy was responsible for the entire misery of the German people.⁴

Rathenau had indeed said that 'under all conditions the attempt must be made to show to the former enemies that Germany was ready to go to the limit of her capacity to pay'.⁵ But he did not

4. Graf Kessler loc. cit. pp. 361-62.

mean that Germany should pay more than what she could be reasonably expected to pay.

In the course of a speech in the Reichstag on March 29, 1922, Rathenau said :

" The policy which we wish to carry out is the policy of peace. We have adopted it in the free conviction and faith that our cause is good and just.

" We are willing to pay Reparations so far as it is possible to do so, not as an end in itself, but as the way to peace. We desire the reconstruction of ruined territory as the way to peace, and we desire to help to the best of our power in reconstructing the world and lightening its burden " .⁵

The way of Nazi Party, however, was not the way of peace. The Nazis would not pay a pie of Reparations.

The murder was carefully planned, and the conspirators would take no chances. It had been decided to follow Rathenau in a car when he was going to his office. Was it possible to kill by an ordinary revolver when both cars were being rapidly driven ? An experiment was tried in Grunewald, and Kern found that an ordinary revolver might fail. He therefore secured a machine-pistol. The machine-pistol did not fail ; in addition a hand-

5. *Cannes und Genua* (four speeches by Rathenau on the Reparations question published by S. Fischer, Berlin, 1922). P. 20 This is taken from a speech delivered by Rathenau before a committee of the Reichstag on 7th of March 1922.

6. *Ibid.* P. 42.

grenade was thrown into Rathenau's car as it was rounding an S-curve. •

Five shots were discovered in Rathenau's body. On Sunday, the 25th of June, Rathenau's body lay in state and hundreds of thousands of workers silently marched past. He had a funeral worthy of a king.

In regard to Rathenau's system no detailed account is necessary as *Von Kommenden Dingen* is available in English. The book was written in the second year of the Great War. It was published in 1917 and, by the middle of 1918, 65,000 copies had been sold. He followed it up in January 1918 with *Neue Wirtschaft* (*New Economy*) of which 30,000 copies were sold in the first month.

Rathenau had no faith in socialist slogans, but he was a genuine socialist. He says: "The lure of socialism does not depend upon the colourless thesis of the nationalisation of capital, but on the manifest aim of the socialists, which is, no matter by what way, to abolish the heaping up of riches, and thus to improve the lot of the average man." 7

He ridiculed the notion that wages could be increased by suppressing interest through the nationalisation of world capital and the administration of world affairs by a world republic with a President sitting enthroned at Chicago or anywhere else. 8

7. *In Days to Come* London, George Allen, 1921. P. 92.

8. *Ibid.* P. 69.

How would Rathenau reconstruct the economic system ?

He lays it down that neither consumption nor production is a matter concerning the individual alone. The state has thus the right to direct all economic activity.

He enunciates four principles on which the new economy is to be based :

1. The control of luxury through heavy taxation of expenditure.

2. "The equalisation of property and income is prescribed both by ethics and economics." But certain differences in income and property would be permissible.

3. "There will be no place in the coming economic order for the monopolist, the speculator or the inheritor of great wealth."

4. "The restriction of the right of inheritance, in conjunction with the equalisation of popular education at a higher level, will throw down the barriers which now separate the economic classes of society, and will put an end to the hereditary enslavement of the lower classes."⁹

The new system would not work of itself ; its success depends on the state. Rathenau's state is a rich and powerful state which interferes in every thing.¹⁰

9. *In Days to Come*. P. 111.

10. Rathenau says : (*In Days to Come*, pp. 91-2 : "The goal, however, is that the state should be unhampered by

The state does not run enterprises but assists private enterprise with loans and regulates wages. ¹¹

The enterprises in Rathenau's system become autonomous in the end. Rathenau saw before Mussolini ¹² that the structure of capitalism in the material restrictions. Its means must enable it to anticipate need, not to limp painfully after need. It must not be compelled to ask the question, How can I raise the money? It must merely have to ask, How can I best do the work? It must be able to take effective action to relieve distress wherever it may arise, to safeguard the country wherever it is endangered, to undertake any great civilising task which may be necessary, to perform every desirable work of beautification or benevolence. The citizen may with just pride contemplate the power, the wealth, the lavishness of the state; but he has no right to be proud of the vastness of his own private hoard.

11. Rathenau says; "The state becomes the guardian and administrator of enormous means of investment. On the most modest terms, it places these means at the disposal of all productive occupations, while making it a condition that those to whom such means are ceded shall pay the normal rate of wages. A new middle class comes into existence through the national financing of such medium scale enterprises as it is expedient to maintain side by side with the large-scale industries. The influx of nationalised capital lowers the rate of interest in industrial undertakings throughout the country and facilitates the establishment of enterprises of moderate proportions" *In Days to Come*, p. 126).

As the result of state action class contrasts are softened and then disappear. To quote Rathenau again: "As the state becomes more prosperous, so concomitantly does the well-being of the people increase, not indeed through an increase in great private fortunes, but through the general diffusion of civic comfort. Class contrasts have disappeared; the path towards independence and responsibility has been thrown open to all; the means of culture are accessible to every person of talent. No longer has the man of ability to struggle against the closed phalanx of the privileged; we see a continuous intermingling, an enduring ascent and descent, in the ranks of the active and in the ranks of the leaders" (pp. 126-127).

12 It is noteworthy that Rathenau was writing *Von Kommoden Dingen* when Hitler was a Corporal in the German army and Mussolini a Bersagliere in the Italian army. Addressing the General Fascist confederation of Italian Industry in June

twentieth century was not the same as in the time of Marx. The capitalist-employer of Marx who engaged labourers in order to pocket their 'surplus value' has disappeared. The principle of limited liability had led to a great dispersion of property, and, secondly, it has effected a divorce of control from ownership. The shareholder is a pure income--receiver, he is not an administrator. In short, there is a 'complete detachment of ownership from the owner.'¹³

"The de-individualisation of ownership, the objectification of the enterprise, the detachment of the property from the possessor, lead to a point

1928 Mussolini said (*Discorsi del 1928*, Aples, Milan, p. 213 et seq.): "You are today the advanceguard of a great transformation which is taking place in the type of capitalist economy and which is a prelude, perhaps not only in Italy, to a new type of corporate economy. I am proud to have foreseen this inevitable tendency in the years immediately following the Great War. The capitalist, as he is described in pre-socialist literature, no longer exists. A separation has taken place of capital from management, of the industrialist from the capitalist. Under the system of joint-stock companies, capital has enormously extended. The owners of the capital of a company, through the purchase of shares, are often innumerable. While capital was becoming anonymous, and the capitalist likewise, there sprang to the first place in the economy the manager of the undertaking, the captain of industry, the creator of wealth. To employ military terminology, the industrialists may be viewed, in the field of production, as the General Staff of the army of workers.

"Consequences flow from this which we shall presently see. Henceforth the production of wealth no longer serves individual but national aims. There spring, out of sheer necessity, new duties from this new politico-moral position; collaboration is imposed, not so much by laws or by institutions or by will as by the nature of things, that is, the present phase of economy"

13. *In Days to Come*, p. 121.

where the enterprise becomes transformed as it were into a trusteeship, or pethaps it would be better to say into an institution resembling the state." ¹⁴

Rathenau thought that in the days to come 'this objective and de-individualised ownership will become the leading mode of existence for all permanent property.' ¹⁵

Rathenau's system is a planned system with the state as the planning authority.

The idea of a state planning and controlling economic activity was suggested to Ratheneu by his experience as Economic Director during the Great War. Rathenau was no dreamer but a practical businessman, an administrator and a statesman. His theorising is not the product of vain imaginings and vague aspirations; it has a basis in practical experience of economic life and organisation.

What form of government is best adapted to the realisation of Rathenau's economic aims?

It is obvious that freedom of enterprise is largely sacrificed in a thorough-going system of state regulation and control. But the main question is: Is real planning consisent with a democratic form of government?

Mr. Durbin answers this question in the affirmative.¹⁶ When socialism triumphs in Britain,

14. *In Days to Come*. P. 121.

15. *Ibid.* P. 123.

16. *Politics of Democratic Sociolism* by E. F. M. Durbin, P. 245.

the Labour Party would be in power with Mr. Churchill or his successor as leader of the Opposition. Mr. Durbin retains the Opposition.

But he insists that democracy must be able to continuously form stable governments. Party strife must not be allowed to weaken the government. Party strife must be 'strictly limited in method' and scope.' ¹⁷

It follows that the Opposition must accept socialism !

Democracy is based on the principle of duality in politics. Assuming that the two main parties, Proletarian led by Mr. Durbin, and Bourgeois led by Mr. Churchill, are to govern the country alternately, the utmost confusion would prevail if their alternation meant the alternation of socialism and capitalism. Socialism would plan and capitalism would restore freedom of enterprise !

If we retain democracy, planning has to be sacrificed. A vote for planning is a vote against democracy.

In India, at any rate, planning and democracy cannot go together.

Democracy in India will bring into existence parties and groups which will seek to capture state machinery for the sake of power and personal profit. Even now membership of the Legislative Assembly is an attractive prize. In the new state it would become a thousand times more attractive.

17. Durbin, loc. cit. P. 251.

Members of the government would use their power to find lucrative jobs for their relations and friends and men of their own caste and community. Our democracy would rapidly degenerate into a scramble for official loaves and fishes.

• If there is no party called the Opposition in the new state it does not follow that there will be no Opposition to criticise the government. The Opposition may be organised within the government. It will consist of highly paid experts and technicians who will continuously watch government action both in the political and the economic sphere. As occasion arises selected members of the Opposition may be entrusted with government portfolios. Opposition in this form will have a place in a planned economy, but not an Opposition, which does not accept the fundamental principles of planning and which seeks to overthrow the government in order to establish a totally different regime.

I do not regard it as an accident that there is one-party system of government in countries with a planned economy—Russia, Italy and Germany. Democracy in Russia is not British democracy. It is as real or unreal as 'democracy' in Italy or Germany.

APPENDIX B

INDIA AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Socialists in India think in terms of the world revolution and the 'new world order'. They have never considered India's position in a 'world order'. It will not be a position of honour or advantage.

H. G. Wells is one of the most ardent advocates of the new world order. It seems to him that Indians are 'destined to play only a secondary and supporting role in any unification of human affairs that is achieved.'¹ He is not impressed by our 'fictitious nationalism of an imitative parliamentary kind' or Mahatma Gandhi's fasts. None of our cultural movements 'amounts to even a slight contribution to world re-organisation.'

Lionel Curtis hopes that the British Commonwealth would eventually be transformed into an international commonwealth. Would India be a member of this 'Commonwealth of God' on equal terms with other countries? We have first to learn to govern ourselves, which we shall do only 'by a long and painful experience'.² Curtis finds it easy to conceive that our statesmen might seek to enter the Commonwealth of God 'long before they have reached the stage of self-government'. If they do,

1. *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*, p. 247.

2. *The Commonwealth of God*, p. 935, Macmillan, 1938.

India's status will be inferior to that of self-governing countries—that is fairly obvious.

The chief object of Sir William Beveridge's federation is to secure peace in Europe. Germany would be included in the federation when she returns to democracy. The states to be included have to a large extent 'comparable standards of life.'³ A federal armed force will replace the armed forces of the federating states. In regard to colonies, (i) the interests of the natives will come first, (ii) all citizens of member states will enjoy equal rights of trading and settlement, and (iii) interests of states outside the federation will receive fair consideration. Sir William Beveridge would not insist upon absolute freedom of trade and migration within the area of the federation, nor would he introduce a single currency. He would leave the final decision on these questions to the federating states: 'It is better that they should federate for defence and foreign policy and equal access to their dependencies, than not at all.'⁴

India, being of Asia, has no place in this European federation. It is also clear that 'India could not be brought into the federation as an additional state on the same terms as the rest without

3. *The Deeper Causes of the War*, p. 171. London, George Allen, 1940 (collection of addresses). The States to be included are: Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Ireland and the four self-governing Dominions.

4. *Ibid.* P. 182

changing its character.' * It follows that 'the federation would stand to India in whatever relation Britain stood at the time when Britain joined the federation'. Or Britain within the federation might maintain special relations with India. There are thus two possibilities—we may continue as we are, or we may pass under the authority of the federation.

The world order of Francis Williams,^a until recently editor of the *Daily Herald*, is enchanting; his 'proclamation to the world' is thrilling. Sir William Beveridge, an honest bourgeois, leaves India very much as it is; he is not interested in India's freedom but in securing peace in Europe.^b Francis Williams would give us our freedom. He would establish a free and independent government in India, answerable only to the people of India.^b For this reason alone his world order deserves a longer notice.

Francis Williams represents the labour point of view, which has much influence in India. The internationalism of some of our leaders with a socialist outlook is directly derived from the internationalism of British labour, and most of our younger Marxists would feel inspired by the programme of revolutionary democracy outlined by Francis Williams.

He is a revolutionary democrat and his world order is meant for revolutionary democracies only.

5. *The deeper Causes of the War*. P. 173.

(a) *War by Revolution*, published by the Labour Book Service, 1940.

(b) *Ibid.* P. 160.

Why? Why should Britain tell the people of Europe what form of government they should have? His answer to this objection is clear and decisive: 'It is our concern on the most precise grounds of self-interest' ^a—the existence of dictatorship in Europe is a threat to British democracy.

How will he deal with Russia? We do not know. Possibly British labour may accept Russian democracy as the genuine article. Or Russia may be kept out of the new world order.

Francis Williams would end imperialism completely and for ever. Having set India free, he will ask the British people 'to set aside all imperialist privileges' and 'to renounce all imperial claims in their colonial possessions.' ^a Colonies which are not yet capable of independent democratic government will be placed under the control of an international commission. A United States of Africa will be created for the development of Africa in the interest of the natives. No nation or group of nations will be permitted to exploit the natives or monopolise the natural resources of that vast continent.

World trade will be freed and world resources of essential metals, minerals and raw materials will be utilised for the common benefit of humanity under the direction of a World Resources Board.

(c) *War by Revolution*. P. 163

(d) *Ibid.* P. 160.

The federation of European countries will have a common currency. Peace will be maintained by the armies of the federation. The federating countries will have to agree to such diminution of their sovereign power as may be necessary for the realisation of these aims.

Here is a most pleasing prospect held out, not only to enslaved Europe but India. Our serfdom is to be ended. India is to be free ! Who would not be an internationalist on these terms ?

Does Francis Williams mean all that he says ?

The title of the book is significant—*War by Revolution*. The new world order is war propaganda, war strategy, or a method of winning the war for Britain and democracy.

If this war is to be won, 'exclusively military standards of judgment' have to be abandoned. This war cannot be won by the tactics of 1914-18. Britain would have to equip a continental army of many millions and transport it, with heavy tanks and other equipment, to the continent of Europe—a difficult and dangerous enterprise.^(e) To ensure success, the strength of Germany must be first broken from within, so that when the Allied forces land on the Continent, they find the populations ready and willing to support them. The new world order is to serve as a powerful political attack on

(e) *War by Revolution*. Pp. 6-7.

(f) *Ibid.* P. 6.

Germany, an attack on the German mind which would cause it to revolt against Hitler and dictatorship.

T. R. Lawrence, organiser of the Arab revolt, is our author's hero. It was clear to Lawrence that fighting the Turkish Army according to their own methods and those of orthodox warfare would mean certain defeat.⁹ He chose another method, which was brilliantly successful. He approached the civilians through trained, active rebels. He won provinces by teaching civilians in them 'to die for our ideal of freedom.'¹⁰ They did.

Francis Williams would establish a kind of staff college for officers of the democratic revolution, where subjects of the Allied Powers in Britain would be instructed in the international strategy of propaganda and then sent out on their mission. He quarrels with 'the respectable, gentlemanly British Government' which does not make allies of traitors, while using them. 'But the enemies of Hitlerism of every nationality are our allies in this war and must be publicly proclaimed as such.'

We agree that his scheme is a most effective weapon to break up German unity and to defeat Germany. Whether a world order which is little more than war tactics to gain victory can regenerate

(g) *War by Revolution*. P. 135.

(h) *Ibid* P. 137.

(i) *Ibid*. P. 125.

mankind is a question best left to the reader's judgment.

In Clarence Streit's Great Republic or Federal Union the right to vote in Union elections and to hold elective Union office will be restricted to those born or naturalised citizens of self-governing federating countries (15 in the beginning). Self-governing Dominions will have representatives in the Union Senate and House of Deputies but not India.

India's slavery is no bar to the Federal Union. Streit cites the example of American Union. The founders of the American Union did not sacrifice the idea of Union because of slavery. They chose union despite slavery.⁶ The slaves were freed later.

W. B. Curry agrees with Streit. "As regards India", he says. "all that is necessary is British good faith."⁷ When British good faith has made India free, we may enter the Federal Union.

6. *Union Now*. P. 249. Jonathan Cape, 1939.

7. *The Case for Federal Union*, p. 195 (Penguin). Mr. D. N. Pritt may well doubt if the Federal Union 'would find wide acceptance in India' (*Federal Illusion?* London, 1940, p. 115). I agree with him that the Federal Union would be a kind of "Holy Alliance" of a few great powers and their satellite states". (P. 110). Such world orders, Mr. Pritt says, 'solve no economic conflicts, no problems of *Lebensraum*'; "they provide no means of reconciling the conflicts between higher and lower standards of living, between so called 'superior' races and colonial or coloured peoples" (Pp. 151-52). So one may agree with Mr. Pritt. But his own world order, under the leadership of the U. S. S. R., is not very attractive either. Mr. Pritt is a great admirer of the Soviet democratic federal constitution. The right of free secession from the U. S. S. R. enjoyed by every Union Republic is a hoax. Soviet democracy is, if possible, a greater hoax. A democratic world federation

There is general agreement between Streit and Curry in regard to the duties which will be entrusted to a world authority in the Federal Union. There will be a pooling of all armed forces. Political and economic relations between states and international communications will be taken over by an organ of the world community. There will be international control of currency. 'National currencies serve no useful purpose. They are merely a nuisance.'^{7a} The operations now controlled by international finance and by national finance operating abroad will be brought under world control. As for colonies, Streit would require them to be ceded to the Union, but that need not mean upsetting existing administration. Curry would create international commissions to

of the Soviet type could not be established except through the military conquest of the world by the U. S. S. R. — not a very likely event, at any rate in the near future.

Federation and World Order by Duncan and Elizabeth Wilson (Thomas Nelson, London, 1940) supports Streit and Curry but has nothing very much new to say. Mr. H. G. Wells' latest book *All Aboard for Ararat* is amusing but otherwise useless.

7a. What is the purpose served by national languages? They are a greater nuisance than national currencies. They are indeed more than a nuisance. They are harmful since they breed nationalism. The case for a single common language ('basic' American) is even stronger than that for a single currency.

The Federal Union of Streit and Curry is a utopia. A Federation with limited objects, such as that suggested by Sir William Beveridge, may materialise after the war, but no Federal Union with a single currency, free trade and free migration.

control all the non-self-governing parts of the world. Free and equal access to colonial raw materials would be guaranteed to all countries.

Movements of population would be free : ' The normal rule should be the recognised right of any one to go anywhere, save for reasons of quarantine, and to be accepted anywhere as a citizen of the world.'⁸

Trade in the Federal Union would be free. The abolition of customs frontiers would take effect on a definite day.⁹

Even if India were free to enter the Federal Union with equal status, she would hesitate to do so—on account of free trade.

The arguments advanced by Streit and Curry in favour of free trade are the classical arguments of Adam Smith and Bastiat. Has the experience of the past one hundred years taught us nothing ?

Remove all protective duties, and Indian industries that have grown up under protection will disappear. Streit and Curry would argue that only the interests of a small minority would be injured. True. And the consumer would gain. But the pressure on the soil, heavy as it is now, would increase. Further, where is the guarantee that our wheat and cotton would compete with wheat and cotton of other agricultural states of the Union on more favourable terms than at present ?

8. Curry, loc. cit. P. 115.

9. Streit, loc. cit. P. 353.

In a world system of government, with universal free trade, India would be progressively ruralised. Now it is unquestionable that as a source of income agriculture is several times inferior to industries.¹⁰

Economic barriers are not desirable in themselves, and economic frontiers separating adjacent portions of a country would be definitely harmful. But what is true of a country is not true of the world as a whole. Capital and labour move more freely within a country than between different countries, which serves to equalise the standards of living in different parts of the same country. Standards of living in two countries as India and Australia, or India and the United States, are widely different. In a world system of government capital may move freely, but would it be possible for millions of Indian workers to emigrate to Australia or America?

Universal free trade is impracticable without free international movements of population. For this reason alone India, China and Japan would not be allowed to enter the Federal Union as equal members.

It is inconceivable that Australia, Canada and the United States should freely admit coloured immigrants, even if they agreed to remove their tariff barriers.

There will never be a Great Republic or World Government comprising the whole of mankind.

10. See *Marxism is Dead* by Brij Narain, pp. 48-53.

Streit says : ' Abolition of trade barriers within the American Union did not result in lowering the higher standards of living in it : instead it has raised gradually both the higher and the lower standards. The surest way to protect the workers with the higher standard would seem to be to raise it in this manner or to bring up to it as many workers elsewhere as possible.¹¹

This argument may have force so far as the fifteen founder democracies¹² are concerned. But the admission into the world union of the other half of mankind (Japan's 70 millions, India's 400 millions and China's 450 or 500 millions) must inevitably lower the white standard of living.

That is what makes one think that if states consented to the abrogation of their sovereignty and united in a world system of government, there would be at least two separate world governments—a Western or White World Government, and an Eastern or Coloured World Government. Russia would and can stand by herself. She has no need of the rest of the world.^{12a}

11. Streit, loc. cit. P. 346.

12. Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom and the United States.

12a. Stalin may not be content with standing by himself—he may found a world order of his own based on socialism, freedom and democracy of the Russian type. Sir William Beveridge describes Soviet Communism to-day as ' a tyranny become as shameless in aggression as Hitlerism itself ' (loc. cit. P. 163). But

While discussing the economics of the refugee problem Curry describes an immigrant as a 'valuable capital asset' which is offered free.¹³ Well, India is in a position to offer free 'valuable capital assets' in the shape of millions of fully grown, capable and hardy workers to Australia and America if she is admitted to the world order on equal terms. There is not the slightest chance of our offer being accepted, or even considered.

Streit and Curry are not socialists. But Sir Richard Acland, M. P. is one. He believes in common ownership and a new world order. In his international order also trade will be free. An international organisation would be set up to study comparative costs of production in terms of man-hours in different countries, and it would inform individual governments which of their different products it was worth their while to concentrate upon. As comparative costs changed, a country would be advised by the world government to switch over from the production of shale oil to motor cars, from wheat to cotton, from cotton to tobacco. Sir Richard Acland is an uncompromising supporter of free movements of goods, but not of labour. In his world order Indians, Chinese and he does not fail to note 'the one redeeming virtue' of Soviet Communism—its inefficiency in organising war. When Stalin has smashed up Germany in the West and Japan in the East, time will come to talk of Stalin's world order.

13. Curry, loc. cit. P. 75.

Japanese would have to rely on their own natural resources ; the natural resources of thinly peopled countries would not be directly exploited by them. There would be no equalisation of coloured and white standards of living ; ' a certain tendency for the world as a whole to suggest ' ¹⁴ sacrifices of that nature to prosperous white workers is of no use to anybody

Lasky recognizes that when different countries are unequally developed, free trade is not a blessing to less advanced countries. That is India's experience, notwithstanding all the theoretical advantages of territorial division of labour. ' Free migration under these conditions, whether of capital or labour ', he goes on, ' means as before, under the present system, the use of lower-paid and unorganised labour to attack the standards it has won so painfully in the better developed countries.' ¹⁵ He would therefore insist on a

14. Sir Richard Acland says (*Unser Kampf*, Penguin, P. 132) : " The universal rule for all countries would be that the people within them should enjoy that standard of living which their skill and enterprise, their natural resources, and their accumulated man-made capital resources made possible for them. There would be a certain tendency for the world as a whole to suggest to the most skilful nations and the nations most richly blessed by nature that they might sacrifice some part of the high standard of living which would otherwise be theirs for the benefit of the more backward and more barren parts of the world. These places would also be favoured by special technical advice from the more skilful peoples, and international research might concentrate on the problems of overcoming their natural difficulties ".

15. *Where Do We Go from Here*, Penguin, P. 123.

change of system, from capitalism to socialism. The change must begin immediately, even before victory comes. Vested interests must be socialised in the United Kingdom and elsewhere; their socialisation would make it easier to abolish the sovereignty of individual states. In India we nationalise all industrial capital and end landlordism. What then? The population problem will still remain unsolved. Perhaps the international organisation which will take the place of existing states would lend us capital to develop agriculture. But capital is no substitute for land. Even if we used this capital to develop industries, there is a limit to surplus agricultural labour which industries can employ. Lasky does not tell us whether in his world order the world government would permit us to attack the standards labour 'has won so painfully' in the better developed countries.

C. E. M. Joad has the courage to suggest the only possible and honest solution of the problem of mal-distribution of population.¹⁶ But he is a

16. Joad says in *Why War* (Penguin.) P. 185: "To concede to Japan a large slice of the Australian territory that the British are unable to populate would satisfy at once the demands of justice and the dictates of expediency. Nevertheless, the proposal is one which would be rejected by the average Englishman with scorn. The following story related by Dean Inge is significant: "Soon after the war a Japanese gentleman called upon me and asked me whether I was in favour of the League of Nations and universal disarmament. I said that I was. 'Well then', he said, 'if we were to disarm and join the League, should we be allowed to settle in California and Australia?' 'I am afraid you certainly would not'. 'We should be kept out by force, as we are now?' 'Yes'. 'Then why should we disarm and join the League?' I had no answer".

pacifist of the same brand as Mahatma Gandhi. He would have announced at an international conference before the outbreak of the war that if the British Empire were to be attacked, Great Britain would not be prepared to defend it by force. He would have started disarming and continued his disarmament programme 'until England was as defenceless and, I should hope, as safe as Denmark [!], whether other nations followed my example or not.' ¹⁷ Excepting votaries of the charkha, no one in India would take Joad seriously.

All talk of ending war and of the new world order is perfectly futile so long as there is no agreement about peaceful re-distribution of the population of the earth. The greatest obstacle to world peace and world union is not so much bourgeois nationalism as proletarian chauvinism.

In the 'new order' of Sir George Paish living space would be provided for Germany and Italy, particularly in Brazil. Japan is not mentioned in this connection. Japan would be required to hand back to their lawful owners the territories she has acquired by conquest. A further contribution to the 'new order' by Japan would be the restoration of the gold value of the yen. See *The Way Out* by Sir George Paish, pp 183-89, London, 1937.

Alfred Plummer says in *Raw Materials or War Materials*, (Gollancz), 1937, pp. 135-36: "All the land of the world is now included within the home or colonial frontiers of existing sovereign states, from whom it can be got only by voluntary agreement or by spoilation after victory in war. Neither sovereign states, such as the South American Republics, nor self-governing dominions, like Australia or Canada, can reasonably be expected to hand over large portions of their territories to one or more foreign powers in order that the latter may unload thereon their surplus inhabitants." Quite so. That is why there are wars and there will be wars.

17. C. E. M. Joad, loc. cit. P, 195.

A Congress convened by the International Labour movement considered the question of emigration in June 1926 in London. The trade unions and labour parties of the world were represented at the Congress. 'Out of deference to the views of the Australian and Canadian labour movement'¹⁸ no resolution was adopted by the Congress favouring the principle of no restriction of immigration on the ground of race and colour, though the great majority of the Congress supported this principle. And if such a resolution were adopted by a future International Labour Congress, it could never be enforced.

Workers who have no Fatherland, suddenly discover that they have one when their standard of living is threatened by coloured immigrants !

Democracy and internationalism are two pillars of Marxism in India. Our love for democracy is insincere but understandable. It expresses a demand for political power, though it is not clear why, in wresting power from our foreign rulers, we must saddle ourselves with a costly and inefficient system of government. What is totally incomprehensible is internationalism in a dependent country which is not even a nation.

The League of Nations was a device for the maintenance of the *status quo*. The new world order,

18. See the article on Emigration in the *Labour Encyclopedia* (by Fenner Brockway), Vol. I, P. 247.

Japan has well-developed iron and steel and machine-making industries. The machine-making industry has progressed so much that Japan not only makes all spinning and weaving machines she requires for her own use but also exports them. Excepting special machines, Japan makes all machine tools for herself. With the development of the artificial silk industry Japan also learnt to make the requisite machines for this and the chemical industries. "There followed the manufacture of very powerful electrical machines and motors", says Saburo Shiomi, Professor at the Kyoto University, "and the quality of these machines made in Japan is by no means inferior to that of products of other countries."²² The manufacture of precision instruments is also progressing rapidly.

Japan would be in a position to supply many of our requirements in regard to manufactured goods.

Trade between these three countries could be developed to the mutual advantage of all. They would command an enormous market, comprising about half of mankind. There is also very great scope for the growth of national income and wealth in China and India through industrialisation.

We may learn from Japan the conception of a nation as an organism—Japan is one family.²³ Japan

22. W. A. for July 1937, p. 151.

23. This is well known. Prof. Yasuma Takata of the Kyoto University says: "A knowledge of the peculiar social structure of Japan is indispensable for a deeper insight into Japanese cultural life. A nation of about 70 millions lives here united as a

could also teach us national defence. So far as our sham democracy is concerned, we shall part with it without shedding too many tears.

family, which is unique in world history ; strong unity and compactness gives the nation its impetus and determines the rhythm of its life and work '. During the past 2600 years since the foundation of the Japanese Empire, 'the community of life and blood of the Japanese people, from high north in Hokkaido to the southernmost point of Kyushu, has attained a degree of homogeneity that has forged together the Japanese, from the noble to the simple peasant and worker, into an organic whole, in language and physiology, in race and intellect, in their view of life, in manners and customs, and in other external manifestations of culture ' (W. A. for July 1937, pp. 1-2). The attempt of communists to weaken and destroy Japanese unity by sowing the seeds of class-war has so far failed,

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