

# YOUNG SOCIALIST

Recd B/1/70

EDITORIALS ON: The Coming General Elections; Politics in the North; Catholic Education for a Catholic Child; Lake House.....; The Siyawasa Celebrations; I.S.F. Requests "Sever ties with Israel" Hope for Years to Come; The Moscow Parley; "Day of Shame" - One Year After; "Mother Church —The Greatest Traitor"

Science and Socialism (Part I)

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by SYDNEY WANASINGHE

What is Communism

by COLVIN R. de SILVA

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Marxism (Part XII)

by R. S. BAGHAVAN

19



## BOOKS ON EDUCATION

1.	Personality Assessment	by <i>Boris Semeonoff</i>	7 25
2.	The Aims of Education	by <i>Whitehead</i>	3 70
3.	Teaching Machines and Programmed Instruction	by <i>Harry Kay</i>	6 00
4.	Soviet Education	by <i>Nigel Grant</i>	5 00
5.	An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth	by <i>Bertrand Russel</i>	5 10
6.	Exercises in English for the Middle School	by <i>E. M. Stephen</i>	3 60
7.	Exercises in English for Senior Classes	by <i>E. M. Stephen</i>	4 20
8.	Education	by <i>W. O. Lester Smith</i>	4 20
9.	Health Education in Schools		4 20
10.	Recent Education from Local Sources	by <i>Malcolm Seaborne</i>	6 75
11.	Ancient Education & Today	by <i>E. B. Castle</i>	5 60
12.	Crisis in the Humanities	by <i>J. H. Plumb</i>	2 40
13.	Changing aims in Religious Education	by <i>Edwin Cox</i>	6 75
14.	Education for Barbarism in South Africa	by <i>I. B. Tabata</i>	7 25
15.	The Young Delinquent	by <i>Sir Cyril Burt</i>	44 40
16.	The Backward Child	by <i>Sir Cyril Burt</i>	42 60
17.	A History of English Education	by <i>H. C. Barnard</i>	30 00
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46.	Conditioned Reflexes and Psychiatry	by <i>Ivan Pavlov</i>	18 20
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48.	The Art of Questioning in the Classroom	by <i>F. M. Austin</i>	11 40

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# YOUNG SOCIALIST

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## *Editorial Notes*

### THE COMING GENERAL ELECTIONS

Assuming that formal democracy continues to prevail, the country will face within the next few months another General Election, the seventh in the history of our present parliamentary constitution. There are two clear alternatives before the people: the SLFP-LSSP-CP United Front or the UNP with its miscellaneous allies. Despite all the propaganda and fanfare, five years of UNP mis-rule have resulted in: (a) the virtual mortgaging of the island and its future to foreign imperialist interests; (b) the further enrichment of a privileged coterie in the country; (c) the whittling away of the limited privileges achieved by the masses after 1956 and (d) the unprecedented flourishing of corruption and nepotism right up to the highest echelons of society. National policies have been determined by imperialist-dominated "international" concerns such as the World Bank. The rice cut and the curtailment of the numerous social services were clearly inspired by this source. Yet, despite the abject surrender of our nation's independence, what we have received in "aid" from the West over the last few years is admitted to be less than half what has been plundered from the country on account of the deliberate pegging of the prices of our primary export commodities. The rich have been never more prosperous than under the present UNP regime. Through the criterion of import substitution a host of fictitious industrial enterprises have been granted tax holidays and set free to amass wealth at the expense of the country and the consumer. The

newest venture in this "get-rich-quick" campaign have been the numerous tourist hotels and "guest-houses", most of which enjoy tax holidays and contribute a facade for spiriting away the country's foreign exchange. The language switch over has come to a virtual halt. Administrators continue to transact their business in English, and insidious attempts are being even made in the spheres of higher education to cry halt to the policy of swabasha instruction. The five years ending next March have been highlighted by stealthy exposures of scandal, of corruption and nepotism, in spheres extending from Ministerial highlights to the bureaucracy and other institutions owing partonage to the ruling party. The latest in this series of scandals concerns Lake House, whose highly moralistic gestures have been now shown up to be a facade for the most obnoxious intrigue and corruption.

The choice before the country is now clear. Another five years of UNP rule could not only shatter our independence and reduce this country to a corrupt outpost of US imperialism such as Thieu's S. Vietnam, it could also mean the end of the limited parliamentary democracy we enjoy. Emergency rule could well become the norm as the past few years have ominously shown. A victory of the United Front, on the other hand, does not ipso facto solve the country's problems, but at least it will provide a spring board for the many avenues that must be taken, boldly and resolutely, to rescue the country from the imperialist grip, to put an end to the polarisation of wealth, to remove the dead-weight of bureaucracy and give responsibility and a sense of participation to the people. Above all, it will permit the first steps to be taken on the road to genuine socialism.

Present indications are that the people have learnt these lessons well. But a big



struggle lies ahead, a struggle not only against the forces of reaction in this country but against foreign imperialist interests as well, who will no doubt use all their influence-financial and otherwise—to bolster the tottering rule of the UNP.

## POLITICS IN THE NORTH

Recent events highlight more than ever the confusion of the political scene in the North and the cul-di-sac into which the alleged leaders have led the Tamil masses. Despite all the tub-thumping regarding the rights of the Tamil peoples, it is clear that

both the F.P. and the T.C. have a different goal in practice: the maintenance of a party in power that will ensure the privilege of the richer and more prosperous layer of the Tamils. While the T.C. continues in open support of the government, the F.P. was only reluctantly compelled to withdraw its overt support due to the pressure of the rank and file and particularly of the more youthful elements in the peninsula. Despite the formal gesture, however, it continues to support the government in every way possible.

The history of the F.P. clearly demonstrates its class interests. In Parliament since 1956 it opposed almost every piece of progressive legislation that appeared on the Order Paper, including the nationalisations of transport and the port of Colombo, the setting up of the People's Bank, the nationalisation of petrol distribution etc. While directing its guns at the Sinhala policy, it made no secret of its preference for retention of English at every stage. In effect, therefore, it has stood for the interests of the **English-Tamils** as against the **Tamil-Tamils**, the many thousands of the underprivileged in the North who love their mother tongue as much as the Sinhalese love theirs.

Disillusionment with both those parties has led to the emergence of other groups such as the DMK and the one formed by the ex-M.P. for Kayts. The extremist policies of the D.M.K. have obviously not found an echo amongst the people of that peninsula. But the danger remains that such policies could well lead to reactions among the communalists of the South.

Effectively there is today a vacuum in the North. The youth, disillusioned with the traditional parties, are looking for an alternative road. It is time that the more left-oriented persons in the peninsular banded together to explain to the masses that their future lies in the socialist direction.

Despite certain historical roots, the problem of communalism came up only in the present era. It has been assiduously fostered by those who prefer to put the Sinhalese and Tamil masses against each other rather than against their common enemy which is capitalism. In doing so, they

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Contents	Page
Editorial Notes ... ..	119
Science and Socialism (Part I) by Dr. Osmund Jayaratne ... ..	126
White man's Burden by Ho Chi Minh ... ..	131
Private Sector in Education (Part II) by Sydney Wanasinghe ... ..	135
What is Communism by Dr. Colvin R. de Silva ... ..	141
An Introduction to the Philosophy of Marxism (Part XII) by R. S. Baghavan ... ..	145
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hope to gain some respite for their outdated system and benefit sectionally from the ensuing chaos. It is significant that in the midst of the worst communal difficulties, the richer classes both among the Sinhalese and the Tamils have found it possible to achieve a *vivius modendi*.

It is true that the confidence of the minorities in the left was to some extent reduced on account of the communal utterances and actions of certain rightwing clubs who have since departed from the United Front. It is equally true that these elements now owe allegiance to the UNP which, despite its ultra-communal history, seeks to parade as the architect of communal harmony.

However emotional the issues, hard reality must be the final arbiter. There can be no just future for the Tamil people except in association with the poor of the South. Manoeuvring between parties in parliament or anti-Sinhala campaigns can only aggravate the situation. The Tamil masses in their own proud right, as a integral part of this nation, must join forces with the Sinhala masses to fight against the rich exploiters of **both** communities.

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR A

### CATHOLIC CHILD

When the State decided to take over the management of the Grant-in-aid Schools in 1960, the Roman Catholic Church opposed it. The Church permitted a number of schools to be occupied and some to be even burnt down. All this, ostensibly for the purpose of ascertaining a right they claimed to enjoy everywhere, the right to educate the Catholic children in a Catholic atmosphere.

Permission to run the Grade one and two schools as Private Non Fee Levying Schools was the compromise reached on this issue. The management of 55 Schools in all was retained by the proprietors on this understanding. Most of them belonged to the Roman Catholic Church.

None of these proprietors would muster sufficient courage to claim that they had any desire to honour this undertaking given in writing to the state to run their schools

as Non Fee Levying. None of them would dare to deny the well known fact that they charge the cost of running the schools to the parents, through methods so devised that would put the well known law breakers—the bookmakers, bootleggers, swindlers and racketeers to shame.

Now, after nine years, it would be useful if the protagonists of Private Schools would re-examine the question. During this period over 10 of these Non Fee Levying Schools have been handed over to the State, as the proprietors could not continue to run them. The rest continue to linger on, most of them shadows of their former selves. The standards in these schools continue to go down; the quality of the staff continues to deteriorate; the examination results continue to decline; and the schools gradually become transformed into glorified tutorials, institutions where the affluent send their progenies to acquire an urban culture. All this while the State Schools of equal stature are miles ahead on the road to progress, despite numerous obstacles placed on their path by a pig-headed Government.

The political change which the proprietors of these schools awaited failed to bring them the expected respite. The proprietors must at least now understand that no minor reverse in the political set up can cause a reversal of a political tide. The longer they attempt to perpetuate this mockery, the longer would the children, the parents and the Teachers suffer. In the interests of the community served by these schools and in the interests of the ideals their respective organisations stand for, it is up to them now to accept with grace, the fait accompli.

### LAKE HOUSE....

On September 1st the House of Representatives and the country were shocked by the disclosures made by Dr. N. M. Perera of fraudulent exchange control deals to the tune of almost 20 million rupees and income tax evasions by the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., otherwise known as the Lake House group. The scandal came to light with the raids organised on the offices of this group by the Commissioner of Income Tax, Mr. S.



Sittampalam, on information received from an ex-employee of Lake House in London. Dr. Perera substantiated his case with copies of correspondence between directors of this newspaper group and persons in London. On September 3rd, the London "Times" highlighted this affair on the first page of its foreign news coverage under the heading "Ceylon Deals Alleged." The fact that this traditionally sober British newspaper thought it fit to give such prominence to this item brought it within the sphere of an international scandal. On September 18th, the weekly "Janasathiya" in an exclusive supplement printed photostat copies of correspondence between a Director of the Lake House group and the Swiss Bank Corporation, providing further evidence of one of the most corrupt foreign exchange rackets witnessed in recent times. Unable to deny the information elicited by the Income Tax Commissioner, the Finance Minister informed the House of Representatives that he was awaiting official reports to decide whether a commission of inquiry should be appointed.

Despite the shocking nature of this scandal it is understandable that the Lake House group completely blacked out these disclosures from the newspapers under its control. However, not a word of this affair appeared even in the newspapers published by the "Times" and "Dawasa" groups. Newspaper groups must apparently back each other in distress!

It is also understandable that, despite the statement of the Finance Minister, the government of Dudley Senanayake has not thought it fit to appoint a commission of inquiry, as demanded by the opposition. In fact all attempts are being made to treat it as a purely income tax affair under strictest secrecy.

It would be well worth to take a look at the composition of the controlling interests of the Lake House group. The private capital of this group exists in the form of 36,000 shares, each valued at Rs. 70/- 33,593 of these shares are owned by the Wijewardena family and their close relatives. The chairman of this group is Ranjith Wijewardena, who happens to be wedded to the daughter of Robert Senanayake, the brother of prime minister Dudley

Senanayake—in other words, the prime minister's own nephew! The rest of the directorship of the company are distributed among the brothers-in-law of Ranjith Wijewardena.

The country need not be surprised if the government makes no further moves in this matter. However shocking the scandal, whatever prominence it may have received in the international press, it must be always remembered that in U.N.P. circles blood is thicker than water!

These then are the people who were supposed to be the "defenders of democracy" and the "Saviours of the nation" against the alleged totalitarianism of the Coalition government five years ago. One is not unduly surprised at the embarrassed silence of the Philip Gunewardenas and Rajaratnes who joined the band wagon then in extolling the virtues of the "national" press and condemning the Coalition's efforts to break its monopoly. The self-styled dispensers of morality to the nation have been exposed for what they are—an utterly corrupt coterie of men, flouting the country's laws to enrich themselves and sheltering under the protection of close links with the ruling government. This is the essence of all the unconscionable lies and deception they have all along practised to defend the interests of the U.N.P. and its allies in the country.

"Young Socialist" joins with the people and the opposition in demanding the institution of an immediate Commission of inquiry and swift punishment to the guilty. We have no doubt, however, that the aftermath of the coming elections will see proper justice meted out.

#### THE SIYAWASA CELEBRATIONS

The Government spent an estimated sum of Rupees Six Million on the celebrations to mark the completion of 100 years of the Department of Education. When the expenses hidden in other votes are added this figure would be much higher. Was this event of such singular importance to warrant this expenditure? Or was it an excuse for the Government to have a exhibition of its "achievements" on the eve of the General Elections?



It is very clear that the latter was the case. If the Ministry of Education were to commemorate the numerous landmarks in our educational history it would hardly have any time to do anything else. But that it miserably failed to boost up the fast fading popularity of the Government through this eleventh hour effort is entirely due to the Hon. Minister of Education himself. Having antagonised the vast majority of the teachers by his sadistic punitive measures, abusive harangues etc., he went a step further by compelling the teachers to foot the bill of this political tamasha.

Education in this centenary year of the Department of Education is in a parlous state. Free Education which we boast of is a myth as far as the majority of school going population is concerned. Equality of opportunity is a goal from which we are getting further and further away. But the worst is the state of the teaching profession. Demoralised and treated with contempt by Society the profession has ceased to attract talent. The unattractive salary structure drives away those in the profession who are yet in a position to obtain other jobs. The cumulative effect of all this will only be seen in the years to come when education continues to fail to keep pace with the increasing demands of the economy.

### I. S. F. REQUESTS SEVER TIES WITH ISRAEL

The burning of the Al Aqsa Mosque situated in Eastern Jerusalem recently occupied by Israel from Jordan helped to rally the Arab Countries together again. Being an emotional issue it was instrumental in rousing the Muslim people in almost all parts of the World. It also had repercussions in distant Ceylon, where the Muslims have traditionally supported the forces of reaction. The Islamic Socialist Front which for some time has been attempting to politicalize the Muslim people in a Socialist direction was quick to grasp this issue for the purpose.

The Middle East or the West Asian question holds a multitude of lessons for the Muslim people. The Muslim people the world over were until recently subject to the

Colonial rule of the English, French and the Dutch. It was only after the 2nd world war that this imperialist stranglehold began to break up gradually. A number of countries which were directly under the West European powers managed to win their political independence, some like Algeria at the sacrifice of Millions of lives. Others which were under indirect control of these nations through feudal monarchs amenable to them asserted their independence by changing their rulers. This assertion of independence of these Arab countries rich in natural gas was a direct threat to the interests of the Arab interests of the Anglo American and French in this region. Hence their support of the Zionist attempt to set up a Jewish State in Palestine. The birth of Israel with the blessings of the Anglo-Americans and French was the result. Since it came into existence in 1947 Israel has consistently adopted a policy of aggression and has extended her frontiers on successive occasions by resorting to War. On each of these successive attempts the victims were the Arabs living in the annexed territories, the majority of whom joined the ranks of the refugees who now add up to several millions.

The existence of Israel is completely dependent on the Aid she receives from the west, particularly the USA. This aid continues to flow freely in the shape of money, implements, food and arms because it is in the interest of the western imperialists to continue to have a foothold in this oil rich area through Israel. If the I.S.F. manages to drive this lesson home to the Muslim people in this country they would have gone a long way in their own road to liberation.

### HOPE FOR YEARS TO COME !

In Mid September five Palestine Youngsters ranging in age from 13 to 16 threw hand grenades at Israeli buildings in three West European Capitals—the El Al Airline Office in Brussels, and the Israeli Embassies in Hague and in Bonn. Even though the damage done to property and life was slight these attacks by the Young Tigers of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine form a high water mark in the struggle of these freedom fighters. The



fact that the teen agers have entered the battle scene with explosives in hand shows the extent of the support the Arab cause has been able to muster. The Arab youth assisted by the Youngsters have introduced a high degree of militancy to the struggle and this has become the main anchor of hope for the Arab world threatened on all sides by the Imperialists.

### THE MOSCOW PARLEY

The many-times-postponed conference of Communist Parties was finally held in June. Representatives of 75 parties attended the Conference. Among those absent were Albania, China, North Korea, North Vietnam and Yugoslavia. Cuba sent an observer.

The main task of the conference, as first projected by Khrushchev, was to rally the forces of the world Communist Movement against the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. A secondary task was to obtain approval of the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the doctrine issued by Moscow to justify it.

The reluctance of some of the pro-Moscow Communist Parties to support a resolution that would place the Chinese Communist Party out of the world brotherhood was one of the main reasons for the repeated deferment of this conference. The policy of this bloc led by the Italians and the Roumanians was to block Moscow from staging a show down with Peking. To get the parties together Moscow appeared to have promised them that no definite action would be taken against the Chinese.

The first speaker on the very first day, C. Mariel of Paraguay attacked the Chinese. The Roumanians took the first opportunity to appeal to the conference to desist from continuing this attack. But this appeal was not heeded and Gomulka of Poland next took the floor against China. Others followed him and the main attack came from Brezhnev himself. He stated that the decisions of the 9th Conference of the Chinese C.P. made it very necessary to discuss these issues frankly. This deliberate magnification of the Sino-Soviet conflict, particularly the attempt to create

conflict, particularly the attempt to create scare over the alleged threat of a war, was calculated to divert the attention of the delegates and the press from the Czechoslovakian issue.

The Australian C.P. expressed its disapproval of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. They stated that the consequences of this will not be easily overcome.

The Italian C.P. disagreed with Moscow on both China and Czechoslovakia. They opposed the policy of "Guided Democracy" and advocated the concept of "live and let live". They emphasised their readiness to act as the go-between in order "to transcend the present situation and to diminish this tension."

### "DAY OF SHAME"—

### ONE YEAR AFTER

The massive demonstrations in Prague, Brno and other Czechoslovakian cities on August 21st were a clear indication that a year after the Soviet invasion the Kremlin has failed to turn the tide of the struggle of the Czechoslovak workers and students for Socialist democracy. At the same time the brutal police and military suppression of the popular protests showed the determination of the Husak Regime to impose the ruthless dictates of Brezhnev and Kosygin and to preserve at any cost, its own bureaucratic rule.

Despite Government threats that force would be used, 1,000 students and workers gathered in Wenceslas Square in Prague on August 19th and were cleared off the square by club-wielding police backed by tear gas and armoured cars. Demonstrations continued the following day and youths built barricades on Prague's Narodni Boulevard. The biggest demonstrations took place on August 21st. A five minute general strike called by the Left Communist underground was widely honoured. Public transport was boycotted throughout the day. Stores were almost deserted. A crowd estimated at 50,000 gathered at Wenceslas square and over 100 tanks were brought to disperse them. On August 22nd over 5,000 demonstrators in Brno faced police gun fire in their attempts to hold a rally. Two



were killed by police fire. In all 1,337 were arrested in Prague. Arrests throughout the country totaled 1,893.

This shows that the might of the Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak State and Military Bureaucracy have been unable to intimidate and demoralize the Czech masses. This constitutes a continuing political disaster for the Kremlin and shows the potential for the development of a mass antibureaucratic movement, not only in Czechoslovakia, but in the rest of Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself.

### “MOTHER CHURCH— THE GREATEST TRAITOR”

“Among the greatest traitors ever in Ireland, the mother Church stands in the first place—as a strong obstacle on the road to equality and freedom. It has always been a purely conservative force.” That is how the most prominent leader of the Catholic population in Ireland, the youngest Member of the British Parliament, the 22 year old Bernadette Devlin, described the role of the Church in Ireland in her memoirs printed in the West German magazine *Der Spiegel*, August 22nd.

The current civil strife in Ireland is the outcome of religious communalism introduced by the English conquest of Ireland. The Irish discriminated against as Catholics by the Protestant Englishmen developed a deep seated loyalty to the Catholic Church, becoming the captives of a reactionary ideology and hierarchy which impeded their liberation struggle.

The English conquest was completed in the 17th century. The Irish Protestant community served as the main prop of English rule in Ireland. Due to the privileged status they enjoyed and the growing threat to it from the revolutionary

movement of the cruelly oppressed Catholic majority, the Protestant community developed a quasi-racist mentality. This is clearly noted in the events that occurred in the recent weeks in Ireland.

Fanatical Protestant mobs led by a body of Royal Ulster Constabulary stormed into the Catholic Ghetto in Derry City on August 12th. According to press reports it is very clear that they intended to carry out a pogrom on a higher scale than the attacks in January and April this year. The battle spread to other Ghettos. There was considerable loss to life and property. On August 15th the British troops entered Derry. The same day they entered Belfast also. They were ostensibly sent to protect the Roman Catholics who had barricaded themselves in the Ghettos for self protection. But gradually a confrontation developed between the British troops and the Catholic population. On September 6th the defenders of the Belfast Catholic Ghetto were threatened by a British Commander, “it is tear gas first and then we fire.”

In this crisis the two sides are sharply divided on religious lines. The fight is between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants—a belated continuation of the infamous 30 years war. We are amused at the ominous silence of the Christian World on this issue. The organizations which claim to propagate the humanist doctrine of the Babe of Bethlehem have not prevailed upon their colleagues in crisis torn Northern Ireland to practice what they preach. Instead they still keep on singing with gusto, that epic hymn,

“Onward Christian Soldiers,  
Marching as to War  
With the Cross of Jesus  
Going on Before”.

the same cross that sheltered the Christian hordes that marched to conquer the infidals during the “Crusades”.



# Science and Socialism (Part 1)

by OSMUND JAYARATNE

## INTRODUCTION

### ORIGINS OF SUBJECTIVE THINKING

Man has been always subjective in his efforts to understand himself and the world around him. Projecting his own desires, his hopes and his fears to external reality, he has often tried to interpret the world in terms of his own experience and in ways convenient to him. Here we detect the psychological counterpart of the process of biological recapitulation where the human foetus passes through a telescoped version of the long process of evolution of the race. To the new-born child there is only a nebulous dividing line between the living and the non-living. The objects around him, the toys that delight him are invested in his mind with the properties of life. He regards them as he would a living thing. We have here the racial parallel in what is known as *animatism*<sup>1</sup>, according to which primitive folk entertained the notion that all objects in the natural world—trees, stones, rivers etc.—are sentient beings in the same sense that man himself is. Throughout the world we find mythological allusions to talking animals and birds, trees which spoke, rivers which whispered warnings and so on. *Animism* is an extension of this idea, and refers to the belief that every natural object possesses an indwelling “soul” or “spirit” of its own. This led to the widespread belief in gods and spirits that lived in trees, in mountains, in rivers and even piloted the sun and the moon across the dome of the sky. The forces of nature, awe-inspiring to primitive man, were each invested with their own specific deity. Thus in Graeco-Roman times we have a legion of gods and goddesses who preside over thunder and lightning, the destructive winds and the oceans. The idea of separable spirits seem even partly to have contributed to the Christian idea of personal “souls”.

To return to the human infant, as the months pass by he begins to discriminate between animate and inanimate things. At the same time the parents begin to loom

large on his horizon, particularly the father, the awe-inspiring dispenser of justice, to be both loved and feared. It is not strange that in later pantheons the father figure assumes a dominant role, such as Zeus on the heights of Olympus. In the course of time through a multitude of involved condensations we reach the belief in monotheism, the worship of the one almighty god, the creator and the supreme power on heaven and earth, combining in himself all the attributes of the perfect father figure and evoking in his devotees both love and fear.

It would be interesting to speculate how far the various idealist schools of philosophy owe their origins to these primitive beliefs of humanity. The belief in the separation of mind from matter, of spirit from body, undoubtedly shows close links with the animistic phase of pre-history, which lurks unrecognised in the deep unconscious of every human mind. From here it is only a short step to the assumption of the “supremacy” of mind over matter of human thought over external reality, which is in essence the common foundation, explicitly or otherwise, of the many schools of idealist thinking. The view that human thought is the main determinant of history arises from such an idealist foundation. There are many variants of this notion: that society is what it is because men have not yet understood the correct path to happiness, that the good life on earth can be assured by teaching men the difference between good and evil.

Psycho-analysis has demonstrated that the new-born babe experiences a feeling of omnipotence, which is nurtured for a period by the constant attention of its parents<sup>2</sup>. It has only to cry when it is pressed against the warm body of its mother and put to sleep with rhythmical lullabies. Hunger and discomfort are dispelled by simply imagining the satisfaction of them. Since the child has no knowledge of the real concatenation of cause and effect, he feels himself in possession of a magical capacity



that can realise all his wishes by simply imagining them. In other words he feels himself omnipotent, the centre of existence. In the course of time, however, every wish is not necessarily complied with, disappointments lie in store for the growing child, he has to exert himself to satisfy his wants. Above all he begins to understand his own insignificance in the big world around him. Only so does the young human being gradually begin to accept reality and grow into adulthood.

The human race too has been obsessed with its own feeling of omnipotence. There was a time when men believed that our home, the earth, was the centre of the universe, that the sun and the stars revolved around it. But in the 16th century *Nicolaus Copernicus* propounded the heliocentric view that the earth is a planet like many others, which revolves around the central sun. It was a blow to man's sense of omnipotence, but over the years he had to accept this reality. There were other areas however in which he could exercise his sense of greatness. Whatever the rest of the animal world might be, he, Man, was unique in the world, especially created by an almighty god according to his own image. Then came *Charles Darwin* in the 19th century to prove by his researches that man himself is only a stage in the long process of biological evolution, that his earliest ancestors were the organisms that abounded in the slime of the primeval sea, that other and more developed forms of life may yet evolve in the aeons to come.

Man said to himself: "At least I am master of my own society. I control it and I plan its destiny." But again reality intruded in the shape of the young *Karl Marx* who proved that social change is dictated by the resultant of millions of human wills, a resultant which is not governed by any individual human mind. Capitalist society, said Marx, is dependent on the blind forces of the market. Social change is subject to certain laws of its own, and men can only work within their context, thereby accelerating or retarding the process. Still clinging to his sense of importance, man made another attempt: Was he not at least the master of his own mind, of his thoughts and his desires? *Sigmund Freud* in this

century put paid to this notion: Your conscious thought, he said, is the outcome of the conflict of many forces in the deep well of the unconscious, over which you have little control.

The final blow to man's sense of omnipotence was struck within the last two decades. Sir James Jeans' theory of the origin of the solar system made it seem highly improbable that a planetary system such as ours could have arisen anywhere else in the universe. Humanity could still claim to be the only intelligent life-form in the universe. However, more recent theories have shown that far from being rarities planetary systems must be commonly associated with stars like the sun. We belong to a vast spiral galaxy—an island universe called the Milky Way—which consists of a 100 thousand million stars. And in this galaxy alone it has been estimated that at least 100 million stars must have planetary systems that include a planet with conditions similar to those on earth. It is widely accepted today that in our own galaxy intelligent life is highly probable, perhaps far more developed than our own. And in the vast universe there are millions and billions of island universes like the Milky Way! Man has been finally reduced to proportion: an insignificant animal form living in an insignificant solar system on the periphery of a vast galaxy, which is one among many billions of such others.

This is the process of growing up, of beginning to accept reality. For it is only by the conscious acceptance and understanding of reality that mankind will be able to make its influence felt on the external world, to control the blind forces of nature and make the world a better place to live in.

Unfortunately superstitions die hard, despite the demonstrations of modern science. And wherever in society class privileges exist, scientific analysis is restricted to convenient spheres and the worst forms of pre-scientific thinking predominate. "Man who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere,\* who converses on invisible waves with the Antipodes.... this proud and daring ruler of nature

\* We add: "Who voyages even to the moon!"



remains a slave to the blind force of his own economy"<sup>3</sup>.

In an age when science and scientific method are being enshrined more and more in human thinking, the study of man's own society remains officially at a primitive level. Official economics and sociology have deteriorated into a superficial collation of facts without any serious attempt to discover the underlying laws of development. Where scientific analysis is attempted it is only at the periphery which hardly touches the core of social reality. For the rest we witness the most unscientific attempts to rationalise the status quo. Indeed, the well-known psychological process of rationalisation is most obvious in those spheres which come closest to human tradition and class privilege. People, for instance, will find the most humanitarian reasons for justifying the continuance of the present system of capitalist exploitation. And scientists in other fields of human endeavour will use the most puerile and pre-scientific rationalisations to extol the virtues of a system that assures them their privileges.

### THE NATURE OF SCIENCE

Since its origins science has been alone in its efforts to gain an objective understanding of the external world, free of pre-conceptions and prejudices. By its very nature it was forced to base itself on the reality of the external world and to this extent became a counter to idealism which believed in the primacy of mind. Unlike the ancient Greeks who sought to understand the world by pure thought, science *experimented* with natural phenomena and subjected its conclusions to *practical verification*. However, even in the spheres of natural science conservatism and the age old habit of interpreting the world subjectively in terms of inborn prejudices dogged scientific advance. Many important ideas in science were born in the teeth of opposition from the scientific establishment. Nevertheless, despite certain limitations in the logical framework, scientific method has come to be established in the physical and natural sciences.

What is the scientific approach? What methods does science use in studying the mysteries of the natural world? It would

be useful to start with an illustration of unscientific thinking. The following example was quoted by the well-known physicist, Eric Rogers<sup>4</sup>. It is an imagined dialogue between yourself and Dr. Faustus. Faustus the legendary figure who sold his soul to the devil in return for the gift of mastering the demonic arts, was obviously chosen because of his avowed belief in demons!

- You:* Why does a ball rolling on a table eventually come to rest?  
*Faustus:* Friction slows it down.  
*You:* What causes friction?  
*Faustus:* Demons  
*You:* I don't believe in demons.  
*Faustus:* I do.  
*You:* Anyway, I don't see how demons can make friction.  
*Faustus:* They just stand in front of things and push to stop them from moving.  
*You:* I can't see any demons even on the roughest table.  
*Faustus:* They are too small, also transparent.  
*You:* But there is more friction on rough surfaces.  
*Faustus:* More demons.  
*You:* Oil helps.  
*Faustus:* Oil drowns demons.  
*You:* If I polish the table, there is less friction and the ball rolls farther.  
*Faustus:* You are wiping the demons off; there are fewer to push.  
*You:* A heavier ball experiences more friction.  
*Faustus:* More demons push it; and it crushes their bones more.  
*You:* If I slide a brick along the table again and again, the friction is the same each time. Demons would be crushed in the first trip.  
*Faustus:* Yes, but they multiply incredibly fast.....

And so on and on.....the wily Faustus builds up a regular sociology of demons. To every question you may ask Faustus supplies an *ad hoc* answer. But the crux of the matter is that *not one of his assertions can be verified in practice*. Besides, there is no conceivable *inter-relation* between demons and the other known properties of solid surfaces—their hardness, their elasticity and so on. On the other hand, the modern scientific theory of friction attributes this phenomenon to the inter-molecular forces of attraction that operate between the ball and the table. This is a conception that can be readily *tested* in the laboratory. From the known



arrangement of molecules on such surfaces and the forces between them it is possible to *predict* the frictional force and then to *verify* this prediction experimentally. Above all, the molecular hypothesis is also able to explain the hardness of solids and their elasticity, besides tying them up with the shape of raindrops, the viscous nature of oils and a host of other properties thermal and electrical.

We begin to appreciate now the merit of the scientific method as against the *ad hoc* approach of Faustus: (a) Hypotheses must be capable of practical verification; (b) they must relate the given phenomenon to other properties of the system. Science bases itself on an implicit faith in the essential unity of nature. A hypothesis sufficient only unto itself is what we might call an *expensive* hypothesis. For instance, in Faustus' approach we need a special demon with peculiar behaviour to explain each natural event, and therefore we need many kinds and vast numbers of them. Science prefers something more economical. It looks for the simplest explanations that can unify the maximum range of phenomena.

In everyday life we have ample examples of the Faustus approach—*ad hoc* hypotheses that may satisfy their authors but have no relation whatsoever to the scientific method. Ever so often we hear pontifical pronouncements from public platforms that crime is the result of our failure to inculcate religious values in youth. Or we may be informed that student indiscipline is the consequence of decadent Western influences. These remain *ad hoc* hypotheses incapable of independent verification and totally unrelated to other realities of the social scene. Some of the international criminals Ceylon has produced were men who in their youth absorbed and understood all the values religion had to teach. And the second hypothesis fails to explain why student indiscipline was not more rampant in the past when our student population was more Western-oriented than it is now. It would be more scientific to seek in our own society the needs of discontent—to look for a hypothesis that could tie up student discontent with the other manifestations of protest in our society.

One of the most beautiful examples of the scientific method is the discovery of the planet Neptune on the basis of Newton's theory of gravitation: At the turn of the 16th century, Johannes Kepler, studying the observational data of the astronomer Tycho Brahe, found certain regularities in the motions of the planets round the sun. He embodied these in the form of certain laws. Almost a century later Isaac Newton was trying to understand, as the story goes, why an apple should fall downwards instead of upwards. He believed that the earth somehow attracts the apple. From this point, basing himself on certain related phenomena, he postulated that *every* particle of matter in the universe must attract every other particle with a force proportional to the masses of the particles and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. When he applied this law to the solar system, he discovered that Kepler's suggested planetary motions could be exactly predicted if the sun is assumed to attract the planets with the same kind of force that acted on the apple. With one single theory Newton was now able to explain a multitude of phenomena—the motions of the planets, the ocean tides, the shape of mountains, and the falling of an apple.

In the 18th century the planet Uranus was discovered by the astronomer, William Herschel. Its orbit was accurately calculated from Newton's theory. However, some years later it was found that Uranus deviated slightly from the path prescribed for it. Scientists assumed that perhaps there was yet another unknown planet beyond Uranus whose attraction interfered with the motion of the latter. From the observed behaviour of Uranus, Adams and Leverrier in 1846 predicted the exact orbit and velocity of this hitherto unknown planet, as well as its mass. The same year Galle in Germany directed his telescope towards that region of sky where calculations predicted the new planet should be found. The result was the discovery of Neptune, which proved to have a mass, velocity and orbit exactly as predicted!

To sum up then, the actual process of scientific investigation may take many forms but the essence of the scientific approach may be stated thus:

(Continued on Page 148)



# The White Man's Burden

by HO CHI MINH

*(as a tribute to Ho Chi Minh, for whom the revolutionaries the world over had the greatest admiration and affection, we are publishing the following article by him. This article, written in 1924 for the Communist International publication, **INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE**, reflects Ho Chi Minh's deep involvement with all colonial peoples, and not merely with the people of Indo-China. This article is reproduced from the **MONTHLY REVIEW**, October 1969)*

**How the whites have been civilizing the blacks.  
Some deeds not mentioned in history textbooks.**

If lynching—inflicted upon Negroes by the American rabble—is an inhuman practice, I do not know what to call the collective murders committed in the name of civilization by Europeans on African peoples.

Since the day the whites landed on its shores, the black continent has constantly been drenched in blood. There, mass murders are blessed by the Church, lawfully sanctioned by kings and parliaments and conscientiously perpetrated by slavers of all calibres, from yesterday's slave traders to today's colonial administrators.

## Religion

It was to spread the blessings of Christianity that, towards 1442, the knights of the most Catholic king of Spain landed on the shores of Africa. Their apostolate began with massacres. "And in the end", said their logbook of the journey, "our Lord, who rewards acts of kindness and ventures undertaken to His glory, has obtained for His faithful servants victories over His enemies. He has given us laurels for our work and recompense for our expenditures and we have, thanks to Him, captured 165 men, women and children, *not to mention the great number of killed and wounded.*"

These pious conquerors instituted a tradition. The list of property confiscated from the Jesuits in Brazil in 1768, contains,

among salvation crosses and other objects of worship, irons for branding slaves.

For a long time, English societies "for propagation of Christianity" drew their missionary resources from the slave traffic.

On February 12, 1835, the Independent Church of the Parish of Christ's Church (South Carolina) advertised in the local newspapers the sale of "a batch of ten slaves accustomed to cotton-growing." How many of these deeds can be quoted!

The churches in North America were the most resolute enemies of the abolition of slavery.

## The Kings

From Charles V down to Leopold II, King of the Belgians, from the virtuous Queen Elizabeth of England down to Napoleon, all the crowned heads of Europe were engaged in the Negro trade. All colonizing kings signed treaties and granted monopolies for the exploitation of black flesh.

"On August 27, 1701, His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain and His Most Christian Majesty of France granted the Royal Company of Guinea a ten-year monopoly for the traffic in Negroes in the colonies of America in order to obtain, by this means,



laudable and mutual benefits for Their Majesties and their subjects...."

"His Britannic Majesty undertook to introduce into Spanish America 144,000 Indians of both sexes and of all ages in consideration of a payment of 33 piastre-crowns and 1/3 piastre per head...."

### The Slave Traders

In 1824 a slave ship that had just taken on board Negroes from the shore of Africa bound for the West Indies, was given chase by a cruiser. During the chase, several barrels floated past the cruiser. It was believed that the slave ship had got rid of its casks of water to speed its flight.

But when the ship was boarded, mourns were heard from a barrel left on the Deck. Two black women were found in it almost asphyxiated. The slave traders had hit upon this means of lightening the ship.

An English ship saved a foundering slaver ship. Negroes as well as the crew were taken on. But when it was noticed that provisions were short, it was decided to sacrifice the blacks. They were lined up on deck and shot down in cold blood with two cannons.

### The Conditions of the Slaves

Arrested blacks were chained in pairs, by the neck, the arms, and legs. A long chain linked them in groups of twenty or thirty. Bound in this way, they were forced to walk to the port of embarkation where they were bundled into the holds with no room, light, or air.

"For the sake of health" they were made to dance under a rain of whiplashes once or twice daily. It often happened that, in the hope of making room for themselves, men strangled each other and women drove nails into their neighbours' skulls. The sick, considered as damaged and unsaleable goods, were thrown into the sea. As a rule, at the end of the journey, a quarter of the living cargo had succumbed to infectious diseases of asphyxiation. The surviving slaves were branded and numbered with white-hot irons like cattle and counted in tons and bales. Thus the Portuguese Company of Guinea signed a contract in 1700 by which it undertook to supply 11,000 "tons" of Negroes.

More than fifteen million Negroes were transported to America in these conditions. About three million died or were drowned on the way. Those who were killed while resisting or during revolts have not been recorded. That infamous trade ended in 1850, giving way to a new form of slavery on a larger scale: colonization.

### Colonization

The examples of atrocities that we are going to quote if they were not proved by irrefutable documents or related by Europeans themselves, would be hard to believe.

A French trader in Madagascar, noticing that a theft had been made from his cash-box, tortured with electricity many of his native employees suspected of the theft. It was discovered soon after that it was his son who had taken the money.

A colonial administrator forced a black woman to remain in the burning sun for a whole day with a heavy heated stone on her head. Then he had her tied and bound, and molten rubber poured into her genitals.

As he could not make his two native servants work for nothing, a colonist flew into a rage and tied them to poles, poured kerosene on them and burnt them alive.

Other colonists inserted dynamite cartridges into Negroes' mouths or anuses and blew them up.

A functionary boasted that, single-handed he had killed 150 natives, cut off 60 hands, crucified many women and children and hung a great number of mutilated corpses on the walls in the villages under his administration. On only one of its plantations, a concessionary company caused the death of 1,500 native labourers.

Exceptional, isolated cases? No. Typical cases. But let us quote a few collective crimes which cannot be attributed to the barbarous instincts of a few individuals, but for which the whole system is accountable to history.

"In our Algeria," related a French writer "on the confines of the desert I saw this. One day, some troops captured Arabs who had committed no other crime than fleeing



from their conquerers' brutalities. The colonel gave orders to put them to death on the spot without investigation or trial. And here is what happened.... There were thirty of them. Thirty holes were dug in the sand and they were buried naked therein up to their necks, their shaved heads exposed to the sun at its zenith. So that they should not die too quickly, water was poured on them from time to time as on cabbages.... Half an hour later, their eyelids were swollen, their eyes starting from their sockets. Their swollen tongues filled their horribly gaping mouths.... their skin cracked and roasted on their heads...."

A Bangi tribe was unable to provide the quantity of rubber demanded by the concession. To force the tribesmen to make good the deficit, they had fifty-eight women and ten children arrested as hostages. They were deprived of air, light, food, and even water. From time to time, they were tortured. Their cries, according to the plantation owners, helped to speed up work. After three weeks of atrocious sufferings a great number of the hostages were dead.

That year there was a drought. The crops had failed completely. That whole African region was desolated. The inhabitants ate grass and roots. Old people died of starvation. The civilizing government, however, demanded its taxes. The sufferers left their lands, gardens and lands thatched huts to the latter and took refuge in the mountains. The administrator sent out hunting dogs and troops in pursuit. The fugitives were caught in a cave and were killed by fumigation.

In 1895, the English massacred 3,000 Matabele rebels who had surrendered.

From 1901 to 1906, the Germans massacred no less than 25,000 Hereros in West Africa.

In 1911, the Italians turned the suburbs of Machiya into a slaughter-house for three

days. Four thousand natives were massacred.

These mass murders were set forward as political principles. It was a policy of extermination. One government at the Cape has declared, "If the natives allow themselves to slip into disobedience or rebellion, they will be mercilessly swept out of the country; other peoples will take their place."

Today, ten years after the war for "the right of peoples to govern themselves," Spaniards and French continue their blood-thirsty advance into Morocco under the indulgent eye of the pontiffs of the League of Nations.

The history of the European advance into Africa—and the whole history of colonization—is written from beginning to end in the blood of the natives.

In addition to massacres pure and simple there are corvees, portage, forced labour, alcohol and syphilis to complete the destructive work of civilization. The inevitable consequence of this monstrous system is the extinction of the black races.

It is of painful interest to juxtapose to these facts some figures. It will be seen that the rapid enrichment of some colonizers corresponds exactly with the no less rapid depopulation of the exploited regions. From 1783 to 1793 the Liverpool Company made about £1,117,700 profit from the slave trade. During the same period, the population of the regions visited by that company, lost 304,000 inhabitants. In nine years, King Leopold II received £3,179,120 from the exploitation of the Congo. In 1908, the population of the Belgian Congo was 20 million. It was 8,500,000 in 1911. In the French Congo, tribes of 40,000 inhabitants dropped to 20,000 in two years; other tribes disappeared completely.

In 1894, the Hottentot population amounted to 20,000. Seven years of colonization brought it down to 9,700.

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We will fight from this generation to the next.

Today the locust fights the elephant, but tomorrow the elephant will be disemboweled.

Our rivers, our mountains, our men will always remain. The Yanks defeated, we will build our country ten times more beautiful.

—Ho Chi Minh.



# Private Sector in Education (Part II)

by SYDNEY WANASINGHE

## 7. MANNING REFORMS

On 19th November 1919, in his Memorandum tabled before the Legislative Council, Governor Manning stated that, "Government can hardly acquiesce to the suggestion that compulsory attendance could in any way connote the suggestion of compulsory Christianity, and such an idea it has never entertained. The Christian Manager of Schools in Non-Christian villages is within measurable distance of being superseded by the Non-Christian proprietor of the Private School, and it would be inadvisable to seek for any remedy except a system of State education in areas other than those where the large majority of inhabitants are Christians; for with the elimination of the school under the Christian Management, the Private School established, it is presumed, with the idea of avoiding the influence of Christian Doctrines loses its *raison d'être*, and it must be granted that, however high the motives which may have animated the promoters, there is connected with these schools, and the voluntary system generally, an incontrovertible record of ill-paid teachers, for there has been no legislation to define the limits within which public funds given as grants-in-aid to these Private ventures might properly be expended." (23)

This memorandum brought out the defects of the Private School system and showed the need to have greater control on Grant-in-Aid Schools. Despite the control enforced subsequently, under-payment of teachers continued in the Grant-in-Aid Schools until the State initiated the system of direct payment of salaries. This was after the implementation of the Free Education scheme. The Ordinance No: 1 of 1920 provided for the opening of Government Schools in Non-Christian areas. It also led to the closing down of Missionary Schools in these districts. The Memorandum quoted above paved the way for the enactment of this Ordinance. These

changes resulted in a proportionately higher increase of Government Schools than Grant-in-Aid Schools in the decade that followed.

	1920	1930	Increase
Government Schools	895	1395	500
Grant-in-Aid Schools	1868	2246	378

Government expenditure on Education also increased from Rs. 3,465,703/- in 1920 to Rs. 12,053,379/- in 1930, an increase of 247%.

Ordinance No: 1 of 1920 was the first comprehensive education Ordinance. It set up a Department of Education with a Director at its head. It also set up an Advisory Board known as the Board of Education. It laid down that no applicant to any Assisted School shall be refused admission on account of religion; that religious instruction shall not form part of the instruction to be given in State Schools; that it shall not be required as a condition for any child to be admitted or continuing in an Assisted School that he shall attend or abstain from attending any Sunday School or any place of religious worship; or that he shall attend any place of religious observance or instruction in the school elsewhere from which observance or instruction he may be withdrawn by his parent or guardian; or that he shall attend the school any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs; the time during which any religious observance is practised or religious instruction is given at any meeting of any Assisted School shall be either at the beginning or at the end of such meeting and shall be inserted in a timetable to be approved by the Director of Education and to be kept permanently and conspicuously fixed in every classroom; and any scholar may be with-drawn by his parent or guardian from such observance or instruction without forfeiting any of the other benefits of the school. (24)

23. Hansard of the Legislative Council, 19th November 1919.

24. Legislative Enactment of Ceylon, Ordinance No: 1 of 1920



This Ordinance also empowered the Director of Education to appoint and remove local school managers. It laid down that all public money to be used on education should come from General Revenue and should be voted annually by the Legislative Council. It provided for greater centralisation of education. This process was quickened by the setting up of the Department of Education and the Board of Education. It enabled the setting up of schools where required and the closing down of inefficiently run schools.

Subsequently, as a result of pressure from teachers, increased grants were sanctioned for Sinhalese and Tamil Schools in order that higher salaries may be paid to teachers. This was in February 1920. Later in the same year an increase of 15% was sanctioned for English Schools. In the following year this was increased to 30%. There was however no guarantee that the increase accrued to the teachers, and it appeared that they gained only by about 10%. Accordingly the Department decided to lay down minimum Salary Scales and this was done by Circular C4 of October 14th 1922 for Vernacular Schools and by Circular C7 of February 26th 1923 for English Schools. The scales were incremental and were dependent on qualifications. (25)

A more representative Legislative Council was set up as a result of the Reform of 1924. This resulted in a greater interest in educational matters. Two committees were appointed to look into various aspects of education. The Macrae Committee which issued its report in 1929 recommended that, "it was essential for the Government to maintain an attitude of neutrality and that preservation of such neutrality could best be maintained by the refusal to subsidize either directly or indirectly, religious instruction in any school and that the conscience clause should be recast in a positive form so as to indicate that in the matter of religious teaching the written consent of the parent or guardian is required." (26) But these recommendations had to await another decade to be considered for implementation. This was due to extraneous factors beyond the control of the Committee. Its report coincided with the visit of

the Donoughmore Commission in 1929. All attention was now centred on constitutional reforms and education was forgotten for the moment.

The Donoughmore Commission recommended far reaching and radical changes. On its recommendations we were given Universal Suffrage in 1931, two years after it was introduced in Britain. This widened the sphere of politics to embrace the common man. This step was to have far-reaching consequences on our society. The Donoughmore Commission also recommended an Executive Committee system as a stop gap before fully Representative Government was to be granted. There was to be an Executive Committee in charge of Education in the new set up. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, who had first entered the Legislative Council in 1924 was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of Education in 1931. Throughout the period of the State Council, until 1947, he held this office. His striking personality dominated the field of education during this period, which has quite appropriately come to be named after him.

#### 8. THE KANNANGARA ERA 1931—1947

Certain trends can be clearly seen in the development of education in this period. There is a definite move to have greater control over education. This was particularly in regard to ownership and management of schools. There was an attempt to increase the powers of the Minister to assert this greater control over education. The Government also tried to eradicate inequality of educational opportunity we had inherited from the early days of Colonial rule and ensure some sort of equality. Education came to be recognised as a welfare service. Thus Education became a question of national interest.

This era can be divided into two parts, the year 1939 when the Ordinance No: 31 was passed forming the dividing line. The period from 1931 to 1939 was marked by constant friction between the Executive Committee which wanted to go ahead on the lines indicated above, and the Board of Education which opposed this trend. The

25. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 24.

26. Report of the Macrae Committee.



Ordinance No: 1 of 1920 had given excessive powers to the Board of Education. The Board of Education was a functioning body well representative of the Managers of Schools. Hence they opposed any moves of the Executive Committee to assert State control over the management of their schools. This conflict of interests is seen from the notice of Motion given by Mr. G. R. de Zoysa, a Member of the Executive Committee of Education that the Ordinance No: 1 of 1920 be amended to make the Board of Education a purely advisory body. There was another factor which retarded progress in education during the period of the first State Council. During that period the country was going through a financial crisis which prevented the undertaking of any new burdens.

There was a disparity between the terms and conditions of service of Teachers in the Government Schools and the Assisted Schools. An attempt was made earlier to lay down minimum salary scales for Teachers by Circulars C4 and C7 of 1922 and 1923 respectively. The fact that anomalies existed even subsequently is clear from the Motion moved in the States Council on 29th March 1933, to the effect, "That in view of the fact that the services rendered by both Government and Assisted Schools are the same, their Salary Scales, emoluments, pensions and Privileges be put on the same footing without any difference or distinction." (27)

This resolution was moved in the State Council 36 years ago. The problem it sought to remedy was resolved subsequently with the assertion of greater control over the Assisted Schools with the introduction of the Free Education Scheme, with the introduction of the system of direct payment of salaries to teachers in Assisted Schools and finally with the take over of the management of the Assisted Schools in 1960. But a disparity much greater in extent exists today between the terms and conditions of service of Teachers in the State Schools and the Private Schools, most of whom or at least almost every one of those that occupy a pride of place in the Private School system, were nurtured and

foisted to their present stature under the infamous Grant-in-Aid scheme. As they are an insignificant lot numerically in a sea of State Schools, the grievances of their teachers have so far failed to draw the attention of the public. Lost in wider issues, less important but emotional, the teachers in Private Schools have become the forgotten factor but nevertheless the object of systematic and ruthless exploitation by leading illuminaries in the world of education.

The new Education Bill was delayed for a long time at the drafting stage and it is evident from the speech he made, that Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara suspected the treacherous hand of vested interests being responsible for the delay. At last in 1938, in moving the bill in the State Council, he laid down the line of thinking that guided the Executive Committee of Education of the State Council until 1947, that, "In all justice to this country and to the State Council, if the State Council pays the money for educating the youth of this country, it should be able to control education. He who pays the piper, should be able to call the tune." (28)

The Ordinance No: 31 of 1939 removed the Administrative Powers of the Board of Education and reconstituted it as an advisory body. It placed the Director of Education as the central authority subject to the general supervision and direction of the Executive Committee. For the first time a conscience clause in positive form was introduced. It stated that religious instruction could not be given to a child of an unlike denomination, unless the parents of the child had expressly stated in writing their consent that the child shall receive instruction in religious subjects in the school or attend such place of religious worship. The appointment of Managers had to be approved by the Director of Education who also had the power to remove them. No new schools were to be set up without the prior approval of the Minister.

At the same time it was felt that piecemeal reform was not sufficient and that a complete overhaul was necessary. This is seen from the motions moved by Messrs.

27. The Hansard of the State Council, 1933, p. 633

28. Hansard of the State Council, 1938, p. 1974



E. A. Nugawela, and D. Wanigasekera in the State Council on 11th June 1936 and 19th May 1938. They urged that a Commission be appointed to look into this question and recommend whatever changes that were considered necessary. (29) There was pressure from the electorates for more schools and equal opportunities in education: At the same time there was also a growing concern regarding the increasing expenditure on education.

In moving the Appropriation Bill for the year 1937-38, Sir D. B. Jayatilake stated in the State Council, that, "The problem of education is always with us and is likely to trouble us for many years to come. If you look at the estimates you will find that this year it has increased by Rs. 22,11,887/- and we do not know what the bill will be next year or the year after. This question has engaged the attention of the Board of Ministers for some time and they have come to the conclusion that the whole question must be examined and reviewed by an independent authority. Some device must be found for controlling this expenditure so that it may be within the capacity of the country to bear." (30)

A meeting of the Income Tax Payers and other prominent citizens of Colombo was held on 23rd August 1937 at the Colombo Town Hall to demand the restriction of expenditure on education and insist on a Royal Commission to look into the question of education. The debate now ensued between the Urban Bourgeoisie and those in the Legislature who were more susceptible to mass pressure, as to the composition of the Commission. The bourgeoisie and the vested interests in education, the Missionary Organisations, campaigned for a Royal Commission while the Executive Committee on Education headed by Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara desired that a Committee of local people should go into the question.

On 4th April, 1940 the Executive Committee on Education passed a resolution appointing a Special Committee Consisting of the Members of the Executive Committee of Education and eight others to investigate the present educational system and recommend measures of Reform. Thus the

question of the composition of the Committee was finally settled. Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, A. Ratnayake, G. A. H. Willie, H. W. Amarasuriya, D. Wanigasekera, S. Natesan (Principal, Parameswara College) and T. B. Jayah (Principal, Zahira College, Colombo) were Ex-officio members of this Special Committee. P. de S. Kularatne, H. S. Perera, The Rev. Father M. J. LeGoc, S. Shivapadasunderam, E. A. Nugawela, E. L. Bradby, were appointed to the Special Committee by the Executive Committee on Education and Messrs. J. C. Amarasingham, G. P. Malalasekera, G. K. W. Perera, N. Nadarajah, R. S. de Saram and A. R. A. Razik were co-opted to the Committee subsequently.

The Committee found a number of major defects in the existing educational system. The existence of two types of education based on medium of instruction was one of them. The English Schools were the preferred ones. Employment in the Administrative, Clerical and Supervisory grades both in the Government Sector and the Private Sector were open only to those who had a knowledge of English. As English Education had to be paid for these comparatively better paid jobs were confined to the well to do people. Thus education only helped to widen the gulf between the rich and the poor. It was pointed out that the child would be at a advantage if the medium of instruction was the mother tongue. The Committee therefore decided that it was important for the mother tongue to be the medium of instruction and recommended that it be enforced in the Primary School.

There was also no equality in educational opportunity. A child's education was governed by the purse of his parents. Those who could afford it received an English Education which had to be paid for, the less fortunate a Vernacular Education and a large section very little of it or none at all. Those who receive an English Education was only 10% of the total number in schools. There was hardly any form of compulsory education. Not only was there no legislation to enforce compulsory education but there was at the same time no schools in sufficient numbers to provide for it.

29. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon. Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 5.  
30. Hansard of the State Council, 1938, p. 1800



It was the opinion of the Committee that the educational system could not be considered satisfactory unless there was uniform compulsory education.

State Education had all along remained secular. The Kannangara Committee went back on this and introduced religious instruction in State Schools. Mr. Kannangara was in complete accord with this proposal. In his rider to the report, he stated that, "I do certainly subscribe to the proposition that no education can be complete unless imparted against a religious background." (31) This reversal of policy was motivated by the desire to make State Education respectable in the eyes of the public.

Mr. Shivapadasunderam stated in his rider to the Report, "the only weapon in the hands of opponents of a State system of Education has been that no importance is attached to the teaching of religion in State Schools. They are now disarmed by our recommendation that religious instruction shall form part of the curriculum in State Schools." (32) This change was effected with the idea of creating a balance between the various religious groups, as the Christians had hitherto enjoyed a decisive advantage in the matter of their denominational schools. It also reflects the electoral pressure resulting from the granting of Universal Suffrage. This retrograde step, was to a very large measure, a sop to Buddhist clericalism.

Ordinance No: 26 of 1947 which amended the earlier Ordinance, No: 31 of 1939 was enacted to give effect to these recommendations of the Special Committee on Education. It amended the conscience clause further to the effect that no religious instruction may be given to a child of a unlike denomination with or without the consent of his parent. This marked the end of a controversy which lasted almost throughout the British period.

Mt. Kannangara has gone down to History not for these embellishments referred to above, but to use his own words, "for the Pearl of great price contained within—the Free Education Scheme." It is

indeed an achievement to be proud of, the most popular and far reaching piece of legislation our legislators have so far been capable of.

In his letter dated 15th October 1945, addressed to the Secretary of State for Colonies, Governor Sir Henry Moore "The Minister of Education observed, that a perusal of the report of the Special Committee on Education and of these new regulations which give effect to certain decisions of the State Council, on the recommendations arrived at by the Special Committee on Education, will reveal that, a new landmark in the history of Education in the Colonial Empire has been established, by the bold decision to abolish school fees in the various types of schools in this Island. He adds that this revolutionary measure which he regards as one of first class social importance will for the first time give to all pupils in this country, equality of opportunity, to profit from education suited to their diverse attitudes, and that no child hereafter will be denied, all that a well planned system of education can offer him owing to the poverty of his parents." (33)

In his reply to the Governor, Mr. G. H. Hall, the Secretary of State for Colonies in the Post War Labour Government stated, that, "I am happy to be able to endorse the observations of the Minister of Education reported in paragraph 8 of your despatch. I consider that he deserves to be congratulated on his achievement in introducing an educational system which for the first time in Ceylon gives all pupils equality of opportunity in the educational spheres irrespective of the status or the financial position of his parents." (34)

The following figures show the progress of Education during the Kannangara Era:

	1931	1947
Number of Schools	5,304	5,915
Number of Students	553,701	1,025,836
Number of Teachers	18,242	28,210
State Expenditure on Education	16,104,215	69,813,605

31. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 165.

32. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 161.

33. Sessional Paper VII of 1946, p. 4.

34. Sessional Paper VII of 1946, p. 10.



Contrary to expectations of Sir D. B. Jayatilake the Committee of inquiry which he envisaged to "find some device of controlling this expenditure" resulted in paving the way to increase it in geometric proportions.

The Free Education scheme was to be implemented through a dual system of schools, one managed by the State and the other by Private individuals and organizations. Almost the total cost was to be met by the Government. The Committee recommended that the "system of direct control and the system of denominational control should be permitted to exist side by side" was a concession to the vested interests. Mr. Kannangara who headed the Committee did not agree with this recommendation. The Committee recommended that, "the following conditions be laid down for the recognition of new denominational schools.

- (a) to be recognised it shall have at least 30 pupils of school going age of the same denomination who reside within a radius of two miles for boys and one mile for girls and children under 8,
  - (b) having being recognised and registered for grant such a school shall have at least 30 pupils of school going age of the same denomination to continue to receive state assistance.
  - (c) if it is within two miles of an already existing State School, children of an unlike denomination shall not be taken into account for assessing the grant,
  - (d) If it is within two miles of a State school established later, children of unlike denominations shall be reckoned for the purpose of the grant."
- (35)

These recommendations reduced considerably the prospects of putting up new schools by the Christian denominations, with the hope of obtaining grants to run them at a later stage. On the other hand, it facilitated the indigenous religious organisations to put up more schools. The Committee also recommended that, "No

school established in the future and controlled by an individual proprietor shall be assisted from state funds. A condition of State Aid to all new schools shall be that proprietorship as defined in the Education Ordinance, shall be vested in a religious or educational society incorporated by law or an educational society duly registered under any written law, provided that in the latter case the society possesses a minimum capital of Rs. 10,000/-" (36)

This recommendation prevented the setting up of schools by Private individuals with the hope of obtaining grant from the Government to run them.

The School Grants (Revised condition) regulations were introduced in the State Council by the Minister of Education and they received the assent of the Governor on 8th April 1945. These regulations became effective from 1st October 1945. From that date instruction in all English medium Government Schools was also provided, free of charge. The Grant-in-Aid schools were also invited to join the free scheme and accept a greater measure of control and supervision that accompanied it. The Government was prepared to permit the management of these schools to remain in the same hands. Attractive as it was, the Managements were nevertheless reluctant to accept this offer as it entailed a reduction of power they had been accustomed to enjoy. Their unwilling hands had to be forced by student action and we witness during this period a spate of strikes in a number of leading schools which compelled the management to opt for Free Education.

It was on this strident note that the Kannangara era came to an end. It was the most eventful period in our educational history. The newly constituted Parliamentary Government which more or less coincided with the granting of independence, marked the commencement of a new era which provided a congenial atmosphere, where the reforms affected earlier in the field of education, could have been nurtured and developed. It was indeed a misfortune that Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara should have been defeated at the polls in 1947 and thereby prevented from continuing his

(Continued on Page 141)

35. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 34.  
36. Report of the Special Committee on Education, Ceylon Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 36.



# What is Communism

by Colvin R. de Silva

We reproduce below an article written by Colvin R. de Silva 34 years ago. It was published in the *Ceylon Daily News* on 11th November 1935, twenty three days after the formation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

AT a time when the terms "Communism" and "Bolshevism" are being freely bandied about to divert attention from the misdeeds of a bankrupt leadership by drawing a literally "red" herring across the trail of genuine criticism, I must thank the Editor of the *Ceylon Daily News* for affording me the opportunity of placing the Communist or Socialist point of view before the public. At the same time—Communism being a complete and unified philosophy of social life,—I trust that it will be fully realised that an adequate exposition, with all its attendant qualifications, of so vast a subject is impossible in the short space of a single article."

## Means of Production

Historical analysis proves that society is not a stable entity but a developing or evolving organism subject to the process of growth and decay. A particular set of relationships characterizes any particular society and distinguishes it from those that precede or succeed it. Thus the characteristic relationships of primitive society are different from those of feudalism and they in turn from those of capitalism.

Sir Henry Maine defines the change from feudal society to capitalist society as the progress from status to contract as the basis of social relations. That is the legal aspect. But as Law is only the definition of already established social relations it is more important to grasp the economic change that underlies this process.

The basic factor is the ownership of the means of production. The maintenance of life is based on production. Consequently the question of the ownership of the means of production is of vital importance to society. The characteristic feature of feudal

production is the ownership of the means of production by the producer and the appropriation by him of the product.

With the growth of scientific knowledge and the development of machine technique, individual possession of the tools of production by the producer became increasingly impossible. The producer has been divorced from the ownership of the means of production. Socialised modes of production came into being, but, as before the owner of the means of production continued to appropriate the resultant product.

Thus we arrive at that characteristic feature of capitalist economy—individual ownership and appropriation of the product of a socialised productive process. This contradiction itself affords the clue to the direction of social change in modern society.

## Basic Objective

From a social point of view the resolution of this contradiction is the basic objective of Communism.

The defence of capitalism has always been based not on its moral desirability but on its achievement in expanding production. The moment that justification is absent its entire position is undermined.

That production has expanded under capitalism is true. But it is today equally true that the capitalist structure has itself come to be the most serious drawback to the expansion of production. What is more, it is amply demonstrable that the inherent contradictions of capitalism have themselves developed *pari passu* to such a point as to make it impossible even to maintain the level of production already attained. The League of Nations' Economic Survey has shown that world production has slipped back in 1933 from the 1929 level to the 1913 level while population has increased during the same period.



### Motive of Capitalistic Production

The reason for this is to be found in the fundamental motive on which capitalism is based. The motive of capitalist production is private profit and not public use. From this derives the notorious paradox of poverty amidst plenty. Thus we have, on one hand, such modern phenomena as the destruction of Canadian wheat while Chinese across the Pacific are dying of starvation; of cotton being ploughed in by order of government in U.S.A. of fish being thrown back into the sea and millions of oranges being dumped in the deep in England while the unemployed cried for food, of live-stock and coffee being incinerated in U.S.A. and Brazil, etc., etc.... These are examples amongst innumerable which could be quoted of things which have been actually produced being destroyed in a hunger-stricken and unemployment-ridden world.

On the other hand we have the deliberate restriction of production in the interests of private profit. Thus we have the well-known world-restriction schemes like the rubber, tin, and tea restriction schemes. There are many such others, official and unofficial, on a smaller scale. Simultaneously 30 million are known to be unemployed in the industrialized capitalist countries alone, for the rest of the world no statistics are available. For instance American production today is only at 40 per cent capacity while there are over 10 million unemployed in the country.

Thus capitalist society has outlived its usefulness. The capitalist shell which was useful at one stage of expansion of production has now become a fetter.

### Unemployment

A second evil deriving from private ownership of the means of production is unemployment. This is but another way of saying that large numbers of the true productive agents, i.e., the workers, are denied access to the means of production, or, if you wish it, of taking part in the productive process. The reason can be shortly stated. In capitalism, labour power has become a commodity bought and sold in the open market. Therefore, the owners of the means of production would only employ workers if profit would result to themselves

A maximum of output with a minimum of labour becomes the objective. Thus, labour-saving devices are made the agents of private profit and public misery, i.e., unemployment.

Further, the search for profit creates a drive towards Imperialism and War. Large scale capitalist production requires assured markets. Capitalist groups working behind the veil of Nationalism compete for the monopoly of markets the world over. Thus arises the search for colonies which under modern capitalist conditions afford the only assured markets. Within these Imperial boundaries the controlling capitalist organizations establish monopolies by way of tariff preferences, quotas and such like restrictions.

### Imperialism A War-Process

This is the process known as Imperialism which itself is, clearly a war-process howsoever it may be disguised. This in turn contains the seeds of a wider tragedy. Expanding Imperialisms, ever in search of a wider tragedy. Expanding Imperialisms, ever in search of wider monopolistic markets, inevitably clash. Thus the local tragedies of colonial wars merge into the world tragedy of modern Imperialist war.

So much for capitalism. It is clear on the above analysis that the main contradiction of capitalist society is itself the cause of the manifold evils that afflict the world today. If this contradiction can be resolved, the resultant evils, so clearly traceable to it, would disappear. This is what communism sets out to achieve.

The problem is solved if the product of socialized industry is socially appropriated. The essential means to this is *social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange*. Thus the problem of unemployment is solved because the producer has free access to the means of production; the problem of overproduction ceases to exist because production will be conditioned only by actual human need and not by the desire for profit; the expansion of production will directly redound to the benefit of all instead of to the profit of a few and the misery of the many. The achievements of science will from now on contribute to the



real happiness of mankind by affording that comfort, leisure and freedom to develop its culture which to date has been the preserve of a few. Imperialism and imperialist war will disappear with the causes that give them birth. Mankind will advance to a higher stage of development instead of receding again into that confused and primitive tribalism from which it once emerged. Mankind will move from pre-history to history.

### The Class-War

Above all, that class-war which is the curse of modern capitalist society will then inevitably disappear. The economic basis of capitalist society, which has already been illustrated, has very definite social repercussions. Capitalist society has been of necessity divided into two classes which *ultimately* cut across all divisions of caste, colour and creed. Those are the classes termed, on a strict analysis, the bourgeoisie or capitalists and the proletariat or working class, i.e., the owners of the means of production and the possessors of labour power. These classes have essentially antagonistic interest, for the wages of the one come from the profits of the other or, rather vice versa. And this will last till the abolition of capitalism. It is this conflict which so demonstrably exists and which the capitalist system has created, that communists are accused of forging anew on the anvils of Moscow. It is not the least monstrous paradox of today that those who seek the abolition of the evil are supposed themselves to create the evil.

### New Set of Principles

It is clear that the achievement of Communism thus in itself constitutes a revolution inasmuch as it implies the substitution of a Society based on one set of principles by a Society based on a different set of principles. It is setting an inverted pyramid on its base or setting human idealism, which has hitherto stood on its head, on its feet.

How this revolution is to be accomplished is a pure question of method. At a time when Constitutions are being changed overnight Communists or Socialists cannot confine themselves to any particular method. They can only say two things. On the one hand methods must be determined by circumstances. On the other, history teaches us that no class has abdi-

cated from power voluntarily. Force has been the midwife of every old society pregnant with the new. All that can be said is that historically the ruling class in every decaying society has clung to its waning power till forcibly flung off by the remorseless pressure of historically engendered forces.

Communism is thus both a method of thought which dictates a mode of action and a practical ideal towards which that action is directed. By its study of the lessons derived therefrom it seeks to help society in its own movement towards that goal of social and economic equality which is the essential basis for the progress of mankind.

## Private Sector in Education (Part II)

(Continued from Page 138)

devoted service to education in this country. They say that one must not expect gratitude in politics. But nevertheless it would be interesting to find out what part vested interests played in ensuring his defeat. Though rejected at the hustings, destined to spend his last years in abject poverty, his service to education will ensure the perpetuation of his memory and will cause the generations to come to remember him with love and gratitude.

(To be continued)

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# An Introduction to the Philosophy of Marxism

## (Part XII)

by R. S. BAGHAVAN

### TROTSKY ON COMBINED DEVELOPMENT

We would look in vain to find a reference to the law of combined development in books on dialectical materialism by Stalinist writers.

The reason for this is not hard to find: it was Leon Trotsky who gave explicit recognition to this law.

Our brief survey of this aspect of Marxist dialectics indicates that the very phraseology of Marx, Engels and Lenin—relics, vestiges, crippled states, inherited evils, passive survivals, appendages, archaic forms, anachronisms, antiquated methods, superimposition, engrafting, trailing along—is not accidental. Moreover, the recurrence of the word *combination* points to the implicit recognition of the law of combined development by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Uneven development, characterized by an accelerated (or a retarded) tempo and a skipping of stages, (or stagnation at a particular stage), gives rise to combined development characterized by:

(a) a combination of features or a co-existence of forms, ancient and modern and

(b) the overlapping, merging, or to use another, more expressive term, the telescoping of stages.

Hybrid forms are the hall-mark of combined development.

“The law of uneven development,” Trotsky points out, “is supplemented throughout the whole course of its history by the law of combined development,” (566)

Trotsky gave the law its name in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, written 1929-1931:

“The development of historically backward nations leads necessarily to a peculiar combination of different stages in the historical process. Their development as a whole acquires a planless, complex, combined character....

“Unevenness, the most general law of the historic process, reveals itself most sharply and complexly in the destiny of the backward countries. Under the whip of external necessity their backward culture is compelled to make leaps. From the universal law of unevenness thus derives another law...the law of *combined development*—by which we mean a drawing together of the different stages of the journey, a combining of separate steps, an amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forms....

“Without this law,” he adds, “it is impossible to understand the history of any country of the second, third or tenth cultural class. (567)

### Capitalism and — Capitalism

Trotsky distinguished the “organic” development of capitalism in England and Western Europe from the “imposed” or “fostered” capitalism in the backward countries. (568)

Combined development, naturally, reveals itself in more striking forms in the development, of “fostered” capitalism in backward countries. However, even American capitalism, starting on virgin soil, did not escape the results of combined development: though feudal forms did not take root, the historically older forms of slavery flourished for a while and created new, distorted, social patterns. (569)

In his analysis of the Russian Revolution of 1905, Trotsky polemicised against the mechanical interpretation of history:



"They believe that the history of one capitalist nation must repeat itself in the history of any other capitalist nation, with larger or smaller deviations. What these pedants fail to see is that the world is now undergoing a unified process of capitalist development which absorbs all the countries it meets on its way and creates in them a social amalgam combining local conditions with the general conditions of capitalism. The actual nature of this amalgam cannot be determined by mouthing historical clichés, but only by applying a materialistic analysis.

"There is no historical analogy, though there is a deep internal connection, between, for example, England and the modern colonies. England was pioneer of the capitalistic development which produced, in the course of centuries, new social forms and a powerful bourgeoisie acting as their carrier, whereas in the colonies European capital had ready-made armour-clad ships to import ready-made rails, sleepers, nails and drawing-room cars for colonial administrators, as well as rifles and bayonets to expel the natives from their ancestral land and force it into capitalist civilization. There is no historical development here analogous to that of Europe, though there is a deep inner resemblance...." (570)

In his Introduction to Isaacs' *Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* Trotsky says:

"Colonial and semi-colonial — and therefore backward countries, which embrace by far the greater part of mankind, differ extra-ordinarily from one another in their degree of backwardness, representing an historical ladder reaching from nomadry, and even cannibalism, up to the most modern culture. The combination of extremes in one degree or another characterizes all of the backward countries. However, the hierarchy of backwardness, if one may employ such an expression, is determined by the specific weight of the elements of barbarism and culture in the life of each colonial country.....

"Historical backwardness does not imply a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, England or France, with a delay of one, two

or three centuries. It engenders an entirely new 'combined' social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal or pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating peculiar relations of classes (571)

#### Combined Development of Russia.

It was quite natural that Trotsky paid special attention to the combined development of Russia.

At the beginning of the 20th Century there existed in Russia extremes of social development which Trotsky describes:

"In this enormous area, all stages of human development from the primitive savagery of the Northern forests, where men eat raw fish and worship trees, to the most modern social relations of the capitalist city" (572)

Added to the organic development there came the impact of the West, which, "taking Siberia in tow, creating a combination of nomad economic primitiveness with alarm clocks from Warsaw" (573)

As a result Russia had "the most modern capitalist industry in an environment of economic primitiveness" (574)

Analysing Russia's development, Trotsky observed:

"Russia's development is first of all notable for its backwardness. But historical backwardness does not mean a mere retracing of the course of the advanced countries a hundred or two hundred years late. Rather, it gives rise to an utterly different 'combined' social formation, in which the most highly developed achievements of capitalist technique and structure are integrated into the social relations of feudal or pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and dominating them, fashioning a unique relationship of classes...." (575)

He adds:

"The backward nation, moreover, not infrequently debases the achievements borrowed from outside in the process of adapting them to its own primitive culture. In



this the very process of assimilation acquires a self-contradictory character..." (576)

Understandably, the impact from outside causes a break in the history of the country.

Russia, Trotsky says, "acquired its completely peculiar character by circumstance of having received its capitalist baptism in the second half of the nineteenth Century at the hands of a European capital which had already reached its most concentrated and abstract form, that is, finance capital. Its own previous history is no way linked with the previous history of Russia..." (577)

### Combined Development and Revolutionary Tasks

The impact of a "superior", that is, a capitalistically more advanced society on a backward one, not only imposes upon the latter uneven capitalist development and combined social formations, but also the contradictions immanent in the situation. This hastens, inevitably, the revolutionary transformation of society.

The tasks of the revolution became complex, and on the shoulders of the new revolutionary class falls the accumulated tasks that were left over, unfinished, by the previous revolution.

Trotsky writes:

"...Belatedness is a complex conception inevitably contradictory. The backward country does not follow in the tracks of the advanced, keeping the same distance. In an epoch of world-wide economy the backward nations, becoming involved under pressure from the advanced in the general chain of development, skip over whole series of intermediate stages. Moreover, the absence of firmly established social forms and traditions makes the backward country — at least within certain limits — extremely hospitable to the last word in international thought. Backwardness does not, however, for this reason cease to be backwardness. The whole development gets a contradictory and combined character. A predominance of historic extremes is proper to the social structure of belated

nation — predominance of the backward peasants and the advanced proletarians over the intermediate formations of the bourgeoisie. The tasks of one class are shouldered off upon another. In the national sphere also, the uprooting of mediaeval remnants falls to the lot of the proletariat ...." (578).

Writing during the First World War, Trotsky had pointed out that:

"For the economically backward countries the war brings to the fore problems of a far earlier historic origin — problems of democracy and national unity... But these historically belated questions, which were bequeathed to the present epoch as a heritage from the past, do not alter the fundamental character of the events." (579)

In his 1905 he said:

"The Russian Revolution, if defined in terms of its direct and immediate tasks, is a 'bourgeois' revolution. It attempts to free bourgeois society from the shackles and fetters of absolutism and feudal property. But the chief motive force of that revolution is the proletariat, and the Russian Revolution is therefore a 'proletarian' one, if defined in terms of its methods." (580)

Rosa Luxemburg, independently, drew the same conclusion from the experience of 1905. In her war-time *Junius Pamphlet*, she wrote that the Russian Revolution of 1905 was "a proletarian revolution with bourgeois tasks and problems, or if you wish, a bourgeois revolution waged by socialist-proletarian methods, a crash of two generations amid lightning and thunder, the fruit of the delayed industrial development of class conditions in Russia and their over-ripeness...." (581)

Trotsky reminds us that:

"The solution of the problems of one class by another is one those combined methods natural to backward countries...." (582)

### The Russian Revolution

Trotsky explains why Russia was the first to enter the road of socialist development:



"Russia took the road to proletarian revolution, not because her economy was the first to become ripe for a socialist change but because she could not develop further on a capitalist basis. Socialisation of means of production had become a necessary condition for bringing the country out of barbarism. That is the *law of combined development for backward countries...*" (583).

In his *History*, he explains further:

"The law of combined development here emerges in its extreme expression: starting with the overthrow of a decayed mediaeval structure, the revolution in the course of a few months placed the proletariat and the Communist Party in power." (584)

Earlier, he observes that "the soviets are not a mere child of the historic backwardness of Russia, but a product of her combined development," and reminds us that the Revolution of 1918-1919 could find no better forms of revolutionary organization.

And again:

"The law of combined development of backward countries — in the sense of a peculiar mixture of backward elements with the most modern factors — here arises before us in its most finished form, and offers a key to the fundamental riddle of the Russian Revolution. If the agrarian problem, as a heritage from the barbarism of the old Russian history had been solved by the bourgeoisie, if it could have been solved by them, the Russian proletariat could not possibly have come to power in 1917. In order to realize the Soviet State, there was required a drawing together and mutual penetration of two factors belonging to a completely different historic species: a peasant war — that is, a movement characteristic of the dawn of bourgeois development — and a proletarian insurrection, the movement signaling its decline. That is the essence of 1917." (585)

And once again, Trotsky emphasizes the concrete nature of Marxist analysis:

"We have attributed the October Revolution in the last analysis, not to the fact of Russia's backwardness but to the law

of combined development. The historic dialectic knows neither naked backwardness nor chemically pure progressiveness. It is all a question of concrete correlations." (586)

### Combined Development After October

The Russian Revolution could not and did not liquidate at one stroke the heritage of backwardness left it by Czarism.

We have already seen Lenin's comments on this aspect of the development of post-revolutionary Russia.

Trotsky had occasion to repeat this point many times. In 1926 he said.

"What is special about our position is that we — at the point where the capitalist West and the colonial-peasant East meet — have been the first to make a socialist revolution. The regime of proletarian dictatorship has been established first in a country with a monstrous inheritance of backwardness and barbarism, so that among our people whole centuries of history separate a Siberian nomad from a Moscow or Leningrad worker. Our social forms are transitional to socialism and consequently are beyond comparison higher than capitalist forms. In this sense we rightly consider ourselves the most advanced country in the world. But technique, which lies at the basis of material and every other kind of culture, is extremely backward in our country in comparison with the advanced capitalist countries. This constitutes the fundamental contradiction of our present reality.." (587)

In his *Permanent Revolution*, he wrote:

"The October Revolution inherited from old Russia the contradictions, no less profound, between capitalism as a whole and the pre-capitalist forms of production.." (588)

Thus, after the revolution, the combined development of Russia became a brake on the development of the country on the socialist road.

### Combined Development of China

The combined development of backward countries dragged on to the road of capi-



talist development takes obvious forms. Junks still anchor beside modern liners in Chinese Ports.

Referring to Turkey, Rosa Luxemburg in 1916 made an observation which applies to other backward countries as well:

"The most modern methods of transportation were grafted upon a primitive, in many cases, agricultural population." (589)

The belated arrival of rival imperialist powers in China in the 19th Century prevented this ancient civilization from becoming a colony of any individual predator. But, as we have seen, the pressure of world imperialism forced China to take the road of uneven capitalist development, enmeshing China in world politics and making the world crisis part of its own.

However, imperialism played a dual role as in other backward countries. It destroyed the old order only to the extent that was required by capitalist development. At the same time, it attempted to preserve part of the old order for its own political purposes.

"Once entrenched," Harold Isaacs observes, "Western imperialism defended itself by supporting all that was archaic, conservative and backward in that society," and "helped perpetuate pre-capitalist forms of Chinese social organization." (590)

In consequence, Chinese society was full of contradictory, combined patterns.

Isaacs writes:

"Modern forms...are superimposed upon and only partially woven into the worn and threadbare patterns of the past. That ancient fabric was already giving way just over a century ago when the West invaded China..." (591)

If, in ancient Chinese society, there could be, in Trotsky's words, "no revolutions, but only hopeless rotations," (592), in the new social conditions, as Isaacs observes, "the weight of imperialism made forever impossible a repetition of the old cycle of peasant war, dissolution and dynastic change." (593)

The mid-19th Century Taiping rebellion was, as Isaacs notes, a peasant war with "bourgeois tendencies". (594) In the 20th Century, "a different historical context" called for "different solutions." (595)

### National Peculiarities

The cheapest criticism of Marxism is that it does not take into consideration the national "peculiarities" of individual countries. Marxism, the critics claim, does not apply to this or that particular nation, and certainly not to their own, because of its "unique" characteristics. These national traits are never specified, they are conveniently referred to as 'culture' and 'tradition', and these vaguely defined assets are said to provide exemption from the laws of social development and, therefore, of revolution. National peculiarities become treasured national assets. "Patriots" are called upon to reject Marxism and all that it stands for.

The substance of this contention is false to the core. It is easy to expose it by analogy.

The intense differences between human beings, no two of whom are exactly alike, even in the case of "identical" twins, do not invalidate the laws of anatomy, physiology or psychology. Biology and medicine are based precisely on the common characteristics of these millions of different beings, dead, alive and still to be born.

Marxism not only takes every concrete historical factor into consideration, it is the only school of thought that adequately analyses the peculiarities of national traits.

It traces them to the uneven and combined development of nations. The uneven development of commercial capitalism within the womb of the feudal structure of the various nations of Europe, and the Asiatic or primitive structure in the colonies, gave rise to the national peculiarities of the various countries as we know them by creating complex patterns of a combined character.

Trotsky sums up the question:

"The economic peculiarities of different countries are in no way of a subordinate



character. It is enough to compare England and India, the United States and Brazil. But the specific features of national economy, no matter how great, enter as component parts and in increasing measure into the higher reality which is called world economy....

*"National peculiarity is nothing else but the most general product of the unevenness of historical development, its summary result, so to say. It is only necessary to understand this unevenness correctly, to consider it in its full extent, and also to extend it to the pre-capitalist past. A faster or slower development of the productive forces; the expanded, or, contrariwise, the contracted character of entire historical epochs — for example, the Middle Ages, the guild system, enlightened absolutism, parliamentarism; the uneven development of different branches of economy, different classes, different social institutions, different fields of culture — all these lie at the base of these national 'peculiarities'. The peculiarity of a national social type is the crystallization of the unevenness of its formation."* (596)

Marxists, far from ignoring national peculiarities, pay special attention to them. In his *History*, Trotsky explains why the proletariat captured power in backward Russia "without belatedly repeating the history of Western European Countries":

*"In the indubitable and irrefutable belatedness of Russia's development under influence and pressure of the higher culture from the West, results not in a simple repetition of the West European historic process, but in the creation of profound peculiarities demanding independent study."*

*"The deep uniqueness in our political situation, which led to the victorious October revolution before the beginning of the revolution in Europe, had its roots in the peculiar correlation of forces among the different classes and the state power..."* (597)

#### COMBINED DEVELOPMENT IN NATURE

Though the operation of the law of combined development was first enunciated in the field of socio-historical analysis, nature is the richest source of examples of combined development.

Biologists tell us that while many prehistoric creatures are now extinct, quite a number remain in modified existence side by side with later evolutionary forms of life.

In fact, man himself is a walking example of combined development. The infant "Homo Sapiens" has prehensile toes, as anyone, who cares to, can discover for himself. It is a vestigial heritage which dies out from non-usage. Rare individuals preserve this ability; Professor Sydney Smith has recorded the case of a cat-burglar who had retained his anthropoid birthright. (598)

The last three spinal vertebra, anatomists tell us, are the vestigial remains of our ancestral tail. Since this is no visible embarrassment, however, one can still reject Darwin. But the vestigial appendix, sometimes proves to be a painful reminder of the combined evolution of man.

The mental life of man has not escaped combined development. Freud tells us that:

*"The evolution of the mind shows a peculiarity which is present in no other process of development.... Here one can describe the state of affairs, which is quite peculiar one, only by saying that in this case every earlier stage of development persists alongside the later stage which has developed from it; successive stages condition a co-existence..."* (599)

As we have seen, combined development is not a peculiarity of the mind. Here, as elsewhere, Freud is astonished by the dialectical nature of his findings. In explanation, we must remember that Freud himself has stated that he deliberately avoided philosophical ideas in his empirical search for fundamental psychological principles.

He has also written:

*"Psychoanalysis has concluded from a study of the dreams and mental slips of normal people, as well as from the symptoms of neurotics, that the primitive savage and evil impulses of mankind have not vanished in any individual."* (600)



In one of his last works, Freud wrote:

"There probably exists in the mental life of the individual not only what he has experienced himself, but also what he brought with him at birth, fragments of phylogenetic origin, an archaic heritage... The archaic heritage of mankind includes not only dispositions, but also ideational con-

tents, memory traces of the experiences of former generations..." (601)

These are not isolated references. As a matter of fact, the basic principle of psychoanalysis is that of combined mental development: repressed memories of an earlier — generally childhood — period disturb mental processes and cause "abberations" in later psychic life. (602)

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(Continued from Page 129)

- (a) *Observation* and the collection of relevant data.
- (b) The search for *regularities* or common trends in this data.
- (c) The formulation of a *hypothesis* that links the observed phenomenon with others.
- (d) The *prediction* of new results on the basis of this hypothesis.
- (e) The *verification* of these predictions by practical observation or experiment.

Reality is infinitely richer and more complex than the best of our theories. And that is why scientists will return over and over again to the sure ground of observation and experiment to re-test their theories. If any facts should emerge that contradict a prevailing theory, then the theory must be discarded or modified to explain the new information. We can never attain to "absolute" truth. The scientific process is

merely a continuing approach to the truth, justified ultimately by its practical achievements. As *Goethe* wrote:

"Theory, my friend, is grey,

But green is the eternal tree of life."

Those who elevate theory to a dogma and try to manipulate facts to fit in with theory are necessarily pre-scientific in their thinking. This applies to politics as much as to the natural sciences.

(In the next issue:—The Scientific Approach to Society)

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