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RADICALISM

philosophy of democratic revolution

BY

SHIB NARAYAN RAY

FOREWORD BY

M. N. ROY

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PREFACE

The present monograph is the outcome of the Dehra Dun Camp deliberations conducted from May 8th to 18th, 1946, and of the subsequent discussions I had with Comrade Roy during my one week's stay at his place. It endeavours to contribute to the work of making our party workers conscious of the social philosophy underlying their political practice.

It is only a sketch. My ambition is not to proselytize but to stimulate critical and constructive thinking. The response may come as much from our own comrades as from honest and rational people in other progressively oriented political parties....Socialists and Communists, liberals and democrats. It may also come from individuals without any party affiliation. My theme here is practical humanism.

For whatever is valuable and positive in this formulation the main credit goes to the political and philosophical writings of Comrade Roy. The criticisms of Comrade Spratt and Mr. Sikandar Chowdhury helped me to state some of the ideas more clearly and comprehensively than they may otherwise have been done. The responsibility for the present formulation with the many deficiencies (linguistic and theoretical) that remain, is, however, entirely mine.

This book is dedicated to the newly spreading renaissance movement of our age.

Calcutta
1-10-46.

Shib Narayan Ray

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Some of these essays having been written on my request, I could not decline to write this short introductory note, although it is superfluous. The book itself will introduce its youthful author. The subjects treated are of absorbing interest, and the treatment is not only competent, but often brilliant. Therefore, I should not try to summarise what the author has to say. The only thing I wish to observe by way of introducing the book and its author to the prospective reader, is that here is something which deserves very careful reading and serious thinking. It is not one more of those popular tracts which have of late been fascinating the adolescent intelligentsia of this country. It is not a rehash of some fashionable "ism". Here is an attempt at original thinking, and it is a successful attempt. I believe that the bold spirit of the enterprising author will be satisfied if the challenge of his constructive criticism of revolutionary orthodoxy is taken up in a similar spirit. His is an onslaught on intellectual indolence, orthodoxy and conformism. He hits hard, but never below **the belt**. There is not the least trace of malice or querulousness in the scathing criticism of fallacious theories, false ideas and fictitious ideals.

To some extent, the book is autobiographical. Having grown up and attained his intellectual adolescence during the years between the two world wars, the author, together with many others like himself, came under the influence of Marxism and professed the communist faith. But with him, it was not a mere token conversion or sentimental attachment. A terribly serious youth, he embraced the new faith with all serious-

ness. Marx was not a mere name for him, to replace the Ramnam. He studied the works of Marx thoroughly, and did so with all the intellectual and educational prerequisites. The result was that he caught the critical, iconoclastic, spirit of Marxism which enabled him to shun the easy road of blind faith and conformism. Therefore, he was among those few Marxists who, in this country and abroad, reacted to the crisis of Communism precipitated by the anti-fascist war, in such a manner as promised new contributions to the theory and practice of revolution. Those promised contributions are outlined in this book.

Marxism is examined historically, as a system of thought growing out of previous human experience. The claims of Communism are put to the test of a realised ideal. Having done that, the author comes to the conclusion that Marxism should be freed from its fallacies exposed by experience, and the claims of Communism could no longer be maintained. These conclusions are submitted to the judgment of readers. If they will be as objectively critical and fully informed as the author, the force of his arguments and the skill of his presentation will surely carry conviction.

This is neither a political tract nor a polemical pamphlet. Radicalism is offered not as a mere political programme, but as a philosophy. Nor is it posed in opposition to Marxism, but as its elaboration. Revolutionary theories are traced in the process of their evolution. And political practice of revolutionary parties are examined accordingly, if they are adjusting themselves to chan-

ging situations. Maintaining rightly that, if Marxism is to be appreciated as a stage in the evolution of progressive and liberating thought and practice, it cannot claim finality, the author formulates the fundamental principles of Radicalism as the logical outcome of Marxist theories and Communist political practice.

During the inter-war period, the idea of democracy fell in disrepute. Proletarian dictatorship was offered as the alternative to discredited parliamentary democracy. Fascism was the reaction to that ill-conceived panacea. The emergency of the fight against triumphant Fascism, however, revived the ideal of democracy. Even the Communists to-day talk in terms no longer of dictatorship, but of democracy. But at the same time, realities of the actual situation raise the question: Is democracy possible? Unless the challenging question can be answered positively, in a convincing manner, the future of the world appears to be dark. Radicalism offers the answer. It is outlined in this book, which, therefore, is a document of historical importance.

The youthful author undertook a great task, not on his own initiative, but at my instance. He has performed it meritoriously. Here is the first statement of the fundamental principles of Radicalism, in all its different aspects, particularly philosophical, cultural and political. All thoughtful minds concerned with the future of the world, will find in this book a stimulating contribution to their collective efforts to see a way out of the present crisis of civilisation.

Dehradun, November 20th, 1946.

M. N. ROY

LESSON OF RECENT HISTORY

The interwar decades were marked by experiments in and conflicts between the three different political philosophies of parliamentary democracy, fascism and communism. Of these, parliamentary democracy had been showing signs of senility and decay even before the first world war, and ever since that conflagration it has been recognised widely as a probably well-intentioned but definitely inadequate and decrepit system of socio-political organisation. As a result, the two remaining ideologies have come gradually to dominate the international political scene as the only two possible means to free society of the contradictions and suicidal tendencies of capitalist democracy and to put social institutions on a more stable footing.

The story of the inter-war decades thus resolves itself almost into one of a scramble between fascism and communism to polarise human loyalties between themselves by giving to parliamentarism the necessary *coup de grace*. As however the utopian professions of both the ideologies (and let us submit, every philosophy of political action has some utopia or other for its social *teleos* despite all its sneers at earlier utopias) began taking tangible shapes, and their methodological and organisational implications became more concrete, the basic inadequacies of communism and the fundamentally anti-social and destructive purpose of fascism came out in clear and concrete form.

Communism, which considers proletarian dictatorship the only means whereby social revolution in our time is possible,

and has little recognition for the individual conscience or the cultural institutional values of liberalism or bourgeois democracy, was forced by the logic of its own class-monopolism to dissipate the developing democratic front of the people against fascism. In the only state where communism was applied to the purpose of the social reconstruction, after some experimentation the method of democratic reconstruction was gradually given up as impracticable and utopian, and, in the name of planning, efficiency and higher production, political administration was more and more centralised in the hands of a party bureaucracy, and economic organisation gathered gradually into the hands of technicians, managers and directors. In its international working, communist leadership first of all by its principle of ideological purity and class-monopoly of revolutionary responsibility weakened the already ill-organised front of democracy and contributed very largely to the rise of fascism as a consolidated political force in Europe and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Later, when it formally repudiated its monopolistic stand and adopted the policy of the united front, it did so without understanding the historic implications of the new stand. Communism, as a political philosophy, was incapable of appreciating the true nature of fascism and therefore of evolving of its own strength a correct political method for fighting fascism and thereby bringing into existence a free democratic society. In any case, the communist united front remained as formal as the passive anti-fascism of parliamentary democracy. On the one hand, communists went to the other extreme of pinning their politics to the preposterous ideal of national unity (Earl Browder's theoretical leadership during the years of the last war is the classic piece of evidence bearing on this political imbecility) and thus in reality of denying the very existence of

fascist forces in every capitalist state. On the other, the united front policy became a strategy through which communists might penetrate social democratic parties, hasten their break-up, and thereby consolidate the class dictatorship which remained their ultimate method of revolution.

As a result of these policies, while parliamentary democracies in various countries were rapidly liquidated, fascism became stronger and more consolidated as an international force. If parliamentary democracy by its senility and concealed class interest brought about its own destruction and the eventual rise of fascism, the communist parties along with their supreme state institution, the Soviet Union, contributed no less to the triumph of social reaction, by forcing the hesitant but potentially anti fascist forces of parliamentary democracy either to political inertia or to submission to militant fascism.

Meantime fascism consolidated itself taking advantage of the division in the democratic front. To win over that wide section of the so called lower middle class who were repelled by the class-monopolistic claims of the communists, it at first tried to camouflage its gross reactionary character behind socialist pretensions. Fascist parties described themselves as socialist. Their socialism however was another name for absolute totalitarianism. Their basic principle is that of national totality which is pledged to crush all individual distinctions and any personal or organised recognition of the existent fact of basic social conflict. In the name of national or racial interest and unity and with the bogey of national crisis and national danger, fascism on the one hand forcibly irons out all individual differences and on the other seeks to destroy all possible psychological and institutional means for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship. To this end, it

systematically destroys all the progressive achievements of bourgeois democracy and puts all its technological constructions to destructive purpose. Through a socio cultural goose-step, it reduces individuals into masses; it takes away from the individual all the formal freedom that parliamentarism had offered him; it reflex-conditions his behaviour and consolidates in him his fear of freedom; it ultimately destroys in him his capacity for choice and thus liquidates the very moral foundation of human existence. It drives man to a hard life and puts the clock of human history back to barbarism.

These considerations would have no meaning if they stopped with a mere statement of the negative nature or the dangerous inadequacies of all the existing philosophies of political action and social organisation. Do these considerations lead us to the formulation of some positive alternative? Is there any prospect of building up an international democratic peace on stable foundations? If so, what may be the way? Are there any signs that this way (if there be any) is being recognised by the various leaderships of the postwar societies of the world?

A consideration of the negations and inadequacies of past political philosophies can be significant only if the above questions are properly answered. We submit that only on an appreciation of these inadequacies can there be a recognition of the ideals and methods of the new political philosophy which still may save the world from another world war. A survey of the experiences of both parliamentary democracy and communism during the interwar period as also during the years of war will reveal the nature of these inadequacies and also indicate the way in which they may be removed. In a later section we consider the inadequacies in their theoretical aspects and seek to deduce from that primarily theoretical

consideration the principles and practice of the new philosophy. Here we follow the empirical method of analysing certain concrete and significant events of contemporary history to expose these inadequacies in their concrete nature and also to point out how the new philosophy (without being theoretically formulated) is being practised in various countries by communists and parliamentary democrats who thereby are outgrowing (under pressure of circumstances, not from theoretical considerations) their antiquated philosophies and thus tending towards a really democratic world order.

The war against fascism brought communism and parliamentary democracy willy nilly together, and it is only in the context of the fascist menace that these two antagonistic philosophies which have been thrown into the melting pot may outgrow their formalism and purism and may emerge into a new philosophy, that of radical or organised or militant democracy.

This will mean a society which is democratic not only in end but in its very method and means of struggle, democratic even in the transition from the old to the new order. By being democratic even in the means and method of struggle it will outgrow the weakness of atomised society on the one hand and the danger of a dictatorial transition on the other. The basic ideological conflict, when visualised from this angle of a new social polarisation, appears to be that between all forms of pseudo-democratic or pure totalitarianism and organised or radical democracy. The apparent patterns of conflict between parliamentary democracy and communism and between communism and fascism that still prevail are really a dangerous continuation of inadequate and obsolete modes which do not represent the basic development of our age. The pointer of history since the rise of fascism as a world phenomenon has

been towards a consolidation of all democratic forces, parliamentary, communistic or uncrystalised, on the principle and programme of organised democracy. It is on the conscious and honest recognition of this pointer by all democratic forces irrespective of class, community, race or geographical limitation, that the emergence of a stable international pattern of peace depends.

How has parliamentary democracy been found out? Parliamentary democracy under went rout after rout after World War I until during the last war it was forced into a life-and-death battle with fascism and in the process underwent a complete transformation.

It began with Italy. There as everywhere parliamentary democracy suffered from its two basic institutional defects, atomisation of its individual members and a totally inequitable economy based on private monopoly of resources and means of production and pauperisation of a large section of the people. When after the war the economy faced a crisis and the political apparatus of the state became unstable, a monolithic centralised party with the fullest backing of all sections of the social vested interests (whose cause they wanted to champion by giving to the inequitable social system a forced stability of dictatorial managerial control) destroyed all the democratic-liberal elements in the then Italian society and established a fascist state. The liberals, the democrats and the socialists found themselves helpless before this development. The fascists were organised and ruthless, they took advantage of the tradition of *laissez faire*, they consolidated all the reactionary psychological and institutional tendencies in the existing social order, and put formal democracy to an easy rout.

Meantime the only organised force of revolution, that of the communists, went on quarrelling with progressives, demo-

crats and socialists of a less pink tinge. Fascism took advantage of this dissension in the democratic front, and with the backing of international reaction and the conscious or unconscious connivance of the existing formal democratic senile state, captured power. Because formal democracy had not ensured economic democracy, few felt any direct interest in the existent formal democratic order and none therefore fought seriously in its defence. Because formal democracy was not based on the day-to-day participation of the common people in the political functioning of local social units there was no institutional machinery with which democracy could combat the fascist onslaught and successfully smash its ambitions. As a matter of fact, parliamentary democracy, by its bureaucratic method of political administration and by its support to private monopolies in finance, industry and land, had sapped the very source of democratic initiative among the people. Hence when, with their organised instrument of the fascist party, the monopolistic vested interests bade for naked dictatorial control of social life in all its aspects, they had an easy walk-over, and the people, who had never been taught how to run their own lives, agreed without much resistance to become conditioned slaves.

The same tragic story was repeated with greater violence in Germany and later on, in the most decisive form, in Spain. In Germany, the state was involved in an overwhelming politico-economic crisis; communists and social democrats went on undermining in the process of their mutual quarrels the democratic front of the exploited people; meanwhile vested interests in an organised way took the offensive. The National Socialist Party took advantage of the senility of formal democracy, and raising the bogey of the bolshevik danger and with the inspired programme of Jew-baiting browbeat the undecided

sections of the lower middle class into passive surrender or hypnotised support of these gangsters; parliamentary democracy in Germany came to connive at its own transformation into fascism; and the formal democracies of England, France and America found themselves incapable of resisting the moral and financial support that the organised vested interests in these countries were giving to the German Nazis.

In Germany parliamentary democracy went down. In these other major formal democratic countries, the common people who had never experienced the process of day-to-day participation in their own political administration were naturally found incapable of realising the danger of fascism and hence of frustrating the machinations of their native vested interests to foist fascism on other countries.

In Spain, the senility of parliamentary democracy came out in its most naked form. The causes of the debacle of the republican government were primarily three. First, the republican government was never rooted in the social life of the Spanish people, politically, economically or institutionally. It of course wanted to become so, but did not get a start because from the beginning the "left" parties that agreed to make a common front could not see beyond their sectional interests or party perspectives and the front did not grow into a co-operative democratic institution all over the country. The appalling depth of this disunity was found later on when even after the triumph of fascism the various refugee parties could not come to any understanding and each conspired for a monopoly of leadership.

Secondly, fascism was organised into an international block and fascists in one country went to the help of fascists in others. The parliamentary democratic forces, however, even when threatened with an onslaught on an international scale,

remained nationalistic, blissfully unconscious of their international responsibilities and interests, practising political *laissez faire* in international relationships even in this death-hour and agreeing to be fooled by the fascists who with the slogan of non-intervention gave full politico-military financial support to Franco while parliamentary democracy relaxed in senile inertia. The third cause for the debacle of the Spanish republic, therefore, is the absence of a spirit of international responsibility and international action, an inertia with which parliamentary democracy imbues even its most sincere supporters.

The final and the conclusive episode in the story of parliamentary democratic obsolescence is the fall of France during the first year of the last war. The ignominious details of the unprotesting capitulation of the land of revolutions to the Nazi Wehrmacht is well known. The communists as an international force held back from this life and death issue; indeed they even helped the fascists in the fond hope of thereby eradicating their old enemy, the social democrats, with the help of their new enemy, the fascists. Inside France, the democratic forces were completely divided. Parliamentary democracy at home had no institution that could stand up against the onslaught of fascism. The people had no militant democratic organisation of their own. The parliamentary democracies of other countries with complete nonchalance witnessed the collapse of their ally. Fascism was internationally organised and moved in a monolithic way. Parliamentary democracy had neither international solidarity nor internal strength.

All these facts go to suggest three basic defects in the political philosophy of parliamentary democracy. First, it is institutionally atomised, hence it inevitably leads to bureau-

cratic administration. It is not a pattern of democratically functioning bodies from the bottom; individuals do not participate in the regular functioning of political life. Secondly, in spite of its principle of equal rights for all men, it sanctions an inequitable economic system of private monopolies in the means of production and in social resources. This fact negates its democratic principle. Thirdly, it recognises no international solidarity of democratic interests and is not prepared to take an initiative in the protection and development of democracy on an international scale.

Parliamentary democracy however, has many virtues. As against all forms of totalitarianism, it recognises the individual's freedom as the supreme value of social organisation. It also recognises the creative role of ideas and the specific contribution of the individual in social evolution. Further, in recognising the importance of individuals and ideas in social life, it on the one hand gives the so-called middle classes their historic due and on the other cherishes the principle of removing as many obstacles from the path of individual experiment in social living as is socially possible. It considers the individual as the end and society as the means to ensure free and developing individual life.

But for all this, it is not capable of applying these ideals in the actual institutional life of which it is the political expression. On the three scores referred to above, it succeeds only in defeating its own ends and in reducing democracy to a mere formality or farce. Parliamentary democracy is therefore democracy incapable of working its ideals out in actual social life; it is democracy incapable of defending itself. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that parliamentary democracy as an institution offers the best opportunity for transformation into real democracy. Incorporating as it does the

progressive principles of freedom, equality and democratic cooperation, it may be employed by conscious revolutionaries to completely rout fascism. That, as we shall see later on, is what has been happening in Britain during and since the last war.

Having considered the merits and the causes of failure of parliamentary democracy, we must now discuss communism. We must realise, the significance of the deservedly famous Russian experiment, as well as the role of the Communist International in defeating fascism and in ensuring real democracy. Here also as we consider the evidence we notice the inadequacies of communist political philosophy in solving the basic problems of modern social reconstruction.

The Russian Revolution was at the very beginning in a basic sense self-contradictory. It was not a revolution of the type visualised in the orthodox Marxist communist scheme of revolution: it was not a dictatorship of the proletariat that brought about the subversion of the senile Russian state. Instead it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution achieved through the joint efforts of all exploited classes of the Russian people. The instrument of revolution was not a class or its party alone: the instrument was the Soviets, which were people's organisations, rather than class organisations. From the very beginning the two principles of class dictatorship and organised sovietism indicated two different possible developments. During the first decade after the revolution, a number of experiments were made to reconcile the two principles. During that period the important controversy really centred round the two alternatives of reconstruction. With the beginning of the first five year plan, the development took a definite and decisive orientation towards the idea of class (which, in the last analysis

means party) dictatorship. During the three five-year plans, socialism was consolidated at the cost of democracy, planning was enforced at the cost of individual freedom, efficiency at the cost of experimentation and choice.

In administration, the exigencies of planning led to a gradual reduction of sovietism to the same type of formalism as happens in parliamentary democracies, and in practice execution became highly centralised with the communist party developing into the political vested interest of revolution. In December 1936, among the 2016 delegates to the Congress of the Soviets, 937 were members of the Central Executive Committee, directors of enterprises and specialists, responsible officials of the Communist Party and Trade Unions and higher army officers; 589 delegates were presidents of local soviets of collective and state farms; 430 delegates were Stakhanovites, and only sixty were simple workers and peasants. In economic administration, the relation between the elective factory committees with their red directors and the advisory Gosplan unit comprising directors of industrial trusts, managers, technicians and Stakhanovites, was completely reversed. The advisory body of experts now became the supreme executive heads; the office of the elected director was abolished, and the factory committees formed on democratic principles by all the workers, skilled and unskilled, were at first relegated to a formally advisory position and were later on abolished altogether.

In the economic life of the Soviet Union more ominous developments were taking place. In seriously trying to co-ordinate economic life, the communists immediately faced the weak spot of the Marxian economic forecast. Marx nowhere made clear what would be the exchange value of the labour unit in the transitional phase between capitalism and commu-

nism. The transitional economy, being not communistic, is bound to accept the wage payment basis of capitalist economy. On what principle, however, may the exchange value of any unit of labour or the relative exchange values of different units of labour to be assessed? Utility value is surely not a dependable criterion and Marx has expressly criticised it as utopian. The commodity basis, however, is impossible, as Marx himself pointed out in *Capital*, Vol. III. The principle of determining the exchange value of labour being not certain the apportionment of surplus whereby the bottleneck of capitalist accumulation may be cleared becomes open to arbitrary decision. In the Soviet Union there was at first a futile attempt to introduce an imaginary labour unit of exchange to resolve this problem. It was however found altogether impracticable in a very short time, and later on the capitalist mode of exchange and its medium of money was again resorted to.

The results of this development may be grouped into three interdependent processes. First, in the name of increased productivity increasingly disparate wage ratios were enforced. The disparity between the average Stakhanovite wage rate and that of the non Stakhanovite became in some cases as high as 600/1000 p. c. According to *Pravda* (Nov. 5, 1935) a non-Stakhanovite miner got about 400/500 roubles when a Stakhanovite miner got more than 1600 roubles. This wage disparity as an incentive to production has been greatly praised by American admirers "as a speed-up system which is like an accelerated Bedaux system".

The inevitable consequence of this disparity in distribution of income has been the accumulation of private savings in State banks and the reintroduction of a camouflaged system of private ownership in the means of production. In modern capitalism, the basic means of production is finance capita

It has been calculated that as a result of the adoption of the principle of reversed utility in wage payment, the upper 11 per cent of the Soviet population now receive approximately 50 p.c. of the national income. According to the Webbs, there are about 25 million depositors in the State savings banks who are encouraged by interest at the rate of eight per cent. Thus a new rentierclass is rapidly growing up in Soviet Society accumulating huge savings and through their investment in bonds or banks developing a vested interest in the means of production. This development is officially recognised, as we find in the budget of the Soviet Union a major item of State revenue to be the profit tax. How can there be profit (which according to Marx is the major item of capitalist exploitation) in a socialist economy? And yet in the 1941 budget published in *The USSR Speaks for Itself*, the revenue from profits tax is assessed at 31000 million roubles, which is an increase of about 9757'8 million roubles over the previous year's income from the same source.

Culturally, developments have been equally ominous. The principle of reflex-conditioning individual thought by party directive has been ruthlessly enforced since the introduction of the first five year plan. Art has ceased to be an individual response to the human requirement; it has been strictly narrowed to class interest and party policy. I have waited in vain all this gloomy decade to find a convincing repudiation of the charges framed by Max Eastman in *Artists in Uniform*. What I have found is invective or apologetics. Divorce, we learn from such a pro-Soviet source as Edgar Snow (in his recent book, *The Pattern of Soviet Power*), has been made extremely difficult by the State, coeducation among children is illegalised, and a high and progressive bonus is being offered to motherhood. The State is now

on good terms with the Church ; it is rebuilding church edifices and bearing the expenses for its refflorescence. All the ideals with which the great Soviet experiment started are being given a systematic burial in the name of the transitional dictatorship and defence of the Soviet fatherland. Even the fatherland itself is falling back on chauvinistic loyalties for its internal consolidation. The principle of class dictatorship is triumphing at the expense of the principle of sovietism or organised demoncracy.

Turning now to the role that the Communist International played in the building up of democratic socialism we find a reflection of the same fall back on obsolete ideas in the face of new emergencies. This consequence has been a world-wide series of disasters. The class monopoly of revolution, which in practice became a party monopoly of revolution, became in the international field a monopoly of revolutionary leadership by the Soviet State. As a result the leadership of the International became totally sterile, and when fascism menaced the future of human development they were found absolutely incapable of assessing its nature or devising the proper way to nip it in the bud. The sterility of leadership led to the break in the Sixth Congress of the International (1928) over the issue of the relation between communists and other non-communist democratic forces in the face of growing fascist menace. Those who had the common sense and courage to look beyond class grooves and party-interest were expelled as revisionists. The very charge itself-gives away the spirit that communism was developing among its followers: it implied a dogmatic faith in the absoluteness of Marx's wisdom. As a result of red purism and class monopolistic pretensions communists succeeded in unwittingly forcing the other democratic forces, either to be

routed helplessly by the fascist onslaught or to connive at its success. In Europe, and in Germany particularly, the communists were very largely responsible for the eventual success of fascism in disrupting the front of democracy and capturing all power. In the Asiatic countries, the red purist policy similarly led to the weakening of the people's movements and to the ultimate conversion of the freedom movements into a strategy of national fascists to step into the shoes of dying imperialism in the colonies.

Even when after the disastrous experience of the Nazi victory in Germany and national fascist consolidation in China the International at the Seventh World Congress (1935) adopted the once maligned idea of a united front of all the democratic forces, it did not give up the idea of utilising the united front to ensure class dictatorship and party consolidation. It had not the imagination to appreciate that the united front was not a temporary strategy, that through it the entire scheme of communist revolution was taking a new orientation, that the logic of the united front policy was to lead to the emergence of a people's movement for freedom (consolidating the class movement but going far beyond it) and that a democratic people's movement to defeat fascism on a world scale would finally mean the passage from contracting capitalism to democratic socialism without undergoing the risky and dubious phase of dictatorial transition. That it did not appreciate this fundamental bearing of the anti-fascist united front of the democratic forces became tragically obvious when finally under the pressure of historic circumstances the bourgeois democracies were forced to declare war on fascism and thereby got involved in the process of their own transformation into real organised radical democracy.

The Communist International failed the forces of social

revolution during the two and a half decades of its existence in two most fundamental respects. First, its class-cum-party monopoly reservation stopped it from organising a real people's front against fascism. Secondly, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia, its dialectical change of front from red purism to the united front developed into a false identification of people's solidarity with national solidarity. It failed to realise that in the era of fascism, in every country where exploitation prevailed, the nation was irreconcilably polarised between the people and the contracting vested interests, that between them there was no compromise, and that the problem of democratic social reorganisation can be resolved not by collaboration between the fascists and the people but by the complete subversion of the former by the latter. The united front cut as much through the national front as through the rigid class front. Failure to understand this point inevitably led to the strange modern deification of nationalism by the communist leadership all over the world.

The bankruptcy of communist leadership was at no time so tragically manifest as during the war against fascism. They had been talking of consolidating the forces of bourgeois democracy with themselves in the common human fight against fascism. When, however, under pressure of circumstances and the popular will, British democracy (though parliamentary) was forced to declare war on fascism and then under the same pressure to take up the war as a question of life and death significance. Soviet Russia on the one hand and the communist parties all over the world on other, were found ranged against the anti-fascist democratic front and thus directly (in the case of the Soviet) or indirectly helped the supreme enemy of human freedom, fascism on the offensive. Their whole anti-fascist profession of the preceding five years

appeared to be a worse fake than the pacifism of the bourgeois democrats. Molotov had the audacity to declare before the world that there was no difference, fundamentally speaking, between fascism and communism, to which Hitler gave his approval.

The Nazi attack on the Soviet Union was, as Molotov again declared without noting the catastrophic significance of his statement, an act of treachery. Treachery, forsooth! Did not the communist know that ultimately the fight was going to be between democracy and fascism on an international scale and that if the Soviet claim to be the supreme champion of democracy was not mere strategy, the fight was bound to develop into a life-and-death fight between the Soviet Union and the democratic forces of the world on the one side and Germany and world reaction on the other?

Not merely that. Harry Pollitt, who had the commonsense to see that the only consistent policy of any really democratic leadership in the context of the anti-fascist war was to participate in it whole-heartedly and to mobilise all democratic forces behind it, wrote his pamphlet *How To Win The War*, but had to swallow his common sense and democratic understanding and was browbeaten into agreeing to the communist policy of dissipation of the democratic front against fascism.

It was only when the war was on nearly a year that Stalin admitted its anti fascist character from the very start; and even then neither he nor the satellite parties of the dissolved International seem to be at all appreciative of the significance of the admission (e.g. R. Palme Dutt's interpretation of Stalin's statement). If they did, they would not be lending their support even now to nationalist reactionaries in the backward countries of India and the Far East nor be driving Britain to fall back on the U.S.A. for bare survival.

During the war the attack on the Soviet Union brought out for the second time the imbecility and anti-democratic sympathies of the communist leadership. Inside the Soviet Union, nationalist jingoism and the Church became the two main pillars for supporting the anti-fascist struggle of the people. Outside Russia, the communist parties for a long time (about six months) refused obtusely to recognise their revolutionary responsibility, and even the attack on their beloved fatherland did not dissuade them from opposing bourgeois democrats in their fight against the fascists and thus from indirectly helping fascism. The reason was not, as they thought later on, the operation of petit bourgeois prejudices; for the petit bourgeois had amply proved their ability in the attacked countries to assess the nature of the fascist menace and to rise against it in all their strength even if it was at the very last hour. The reason was their persistent class-monopolistic will to power and the absence of real democratic feeling among their leadership.

This absence became apparent after the Anglo-Soviet-American front was formed, when they went to the other extreme of championing a national front of the people and the vested interests as the only effective means to fight fascism. What logic! Fascism to be fought by a collaboration between the people and the fascists! That political cretin, Earl Browder, who virtually dictated communist thinking outside the Soviet during the war, had the imbecility to claim that in the fight for democracy, even American monopolies and cartels will play a revolutionary role and therefore revolutionaries should adopt a policy of collaboration with them rather than the usual policy of strikes. (Browder : *Teheran and America*). The depth of political servility that communism creates even in its best exponents may be assessed if one notes

that William Z. Foster, President of the Communist Party of America, while violently disagreeing with the absurd position of Browder, nevertheless agreed to swallow his democratic sentiments and to submit to party discipline. "Starting from a notoriously wrong conception, that U. S. monopoly capitalism can play a progressive role", he wrote in his Letter to the National Committee of the Party : "Comrade Browder looks askance at all suggestions tending to subdue the monopoliesIn calling for collaboration of classes, Browder sows wrong illusions of *tailism* in the minds of trade union members....." And yet after pointing this out, he agreed not to speak of his differences before the party membership and even finally gave his assent to the Manifesto on "National Unity" which declared that fascism can be routed only through national unity "composed of the patriotic forces of all classes" (See Duclos: "On the Dissolution of the Communist Party of the U. S. A." in *Cahiers du Communisme*, May 1945).

All the above facts go to demonstrate only one thing. Communism, which as such is based on the idea of class dictatorship as the inevitable means to revolution, is as incompetent to give leadership to the world-wide struggle of the exploited people against fascism as parliamentary democracy is acknowledged to be. We shall consider immediately how from a recognition of this ineptitude of both communism and parliamentary democracy, a new form of revolutionary struggle has developed during the last two decades and a half and how during the antifascist war a new philosophy of political action and organisation has come to the front, the politics of organised or radical democracy, which synthesises the progressive principles of both parliamentary democracy and communism but eschews the factors that led to the ineffectiveness of both in the face of the fascist onslaught.

So far our considerations have elicited only negative results. We now propose to note the positive pointers of political events since World War I and to indicate their bearing on the basic task of a stable social reconstruction that faces us today.

The first event of positive significance is of course the great Russian Revolution. We have already pointed out that the revolution was effected neither with a class programme nor under a class dictatorship. Lenin's programme was bread, land and peace. While Marxian ideology was the predominant theoretical influence, it was not an orthodox Marxism that is exhausted by the description of being the mere philosophy of the proletarian class. The Marxist leadership of the revolution made a large concession in its programme as well as method to social democracy. For all his formal Marxist orthodoxy, Lenin had enough revolutionary sense to make the fullest use of the essentially unmarxian instrument of the Soviet. As long as Lenin lived and even sometime thereafter, the communist leadership of the Soviet revolution was essentially unorthodox, experimenting in a number of ways in democratic harmonisation both in internal social life as well as in international revolutionary policy. Though theoretically a purist, Lenin was in method and practice a most unorthodox revolutionary, open to alternatives and correction, allowing pragmatic probabilities, and always adapting means to the exigencies of the situation. Lenin's revolutionary politics was based on three principles: democratising the sanction of dictatorial state by systematic irradiation of power among the people, thereby gradually minimising the danger of class monopoly of social key-positions; democratising the monolithic centralism of the Communist Party through admission of alternative probabilities where such alternatives were posited on sound information and argument (e.g. the

difference with Trotsky re: the method of revolution, or with M. N. Roy over the role of the colonial bourgeoisie); and democratising international relations by giving proper recognition to the opinions and activities of non-communist democratic forces in other countries.

Unfortunately Lenin's democratic orientation of orthodox communism did not prevail in the long run. Orthodox communism as such was incapable of appreciating the value of such pragmatic liberalism, and before the first decade after the revolution had passed, orthodoxy began to assert itself in party organisation, in the method of 'social revolution, and also in the international activity of the communist leadership. The positive pointer of democratic socialism, while having its important bearing on revolutionary theory, was gradually lost in political practice.

The second positive event after the revolution was the successful assertion in 1920 by democratic forces in Britain of their common international democratic interest in frustrating the reactionary move to interfere in the Russian Revolution in the name of democracy and thus to crush it. The common people of Britain for the first time showed indications of outgrowing their parliamentary democratic atomisation and inertia and of exerting as an organised force their will and interest on the formally democratic state. The move of Churchillian reaction was successfully checked as British democracy ceased to act in a helpless atomised way and refused to participate in a holy war against the Soviet Union. This first collective effort on the part of the people however did not result in welding any institution of organised democracy, and hence the achievement of organised popular will remained a sporadic event and did not become the first act in a struggle to transform formal democracy into real democracy.

The next important pointer was the failure of the communists in China in 1927. A section of the communist leadership had recognised the urgent need of organising a front with the various democratic forces in the country to launch a successful offensive against Chiang Kai-Shek and his feudal militarist supporters. They however could not mould the decision of the party, which followed the ineffective path of orthodoxy, and as a result democracy paid heavily by getting trampled under the heel of the militarist lords and their leader, Chiang.

The same story was repeated with greater efficiency in Germany. The discussions in the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International (1928), which took place immediately after the Chinese debacle and some years before the German tragedy throw light on the theoretical developments in the democratic leadership. In the Congress, a section of the communist leadership realising the danger of fascism visualised the perspective of common democratic front based on a democratic programme to fight fascism on both the national and the international front. Once again the perspective was not appreciated by the majority who had been reared in the ideal of a class dictatorship. Nevertheless, the perspective visualised by the communist opposition is of great positive significance, as the actual leadership of the recent anti-fascist war and the possible leadership of the postwar democratic reorganisation were fore-shadowed in that perspective.

After the victory of the Nazis in Germany, the International theoretically recognised its catastrophic mistake, and in the Seventh World Congress (1935) they adopted the very policy of the united front of democratic forces for advocating which the opposition had been expelled from the orthodox communist church as heretics or revisionists. Theoretically

the need of the hour had been recognised; that recognition was a basic revision of the orthodox communist scheme of revolution; but once again in practice they could not outgrow their old monopolistic grooves, and as a result the united front became a front to engender bitterness between communist and non-communist democrats.

The two positive results of the united front policy were the Front Populaire government in France and the Republican government in Spain. They both were based on a theoretical recognition of the inadequacy of parliamentary democracy and communist dictatorship. They both adopted a programme of gradually liquidating economic-social vested interests and of politically constructing a pattern of organised democracy from the bottom. But unfortunately again the old influences were much too strong for the new wisdom. While recognising the correctness of such a social democratic programme, the democratic forces nevertheless could not outgrow mutual suspicion or desire for exclusive control over the State machinery, and as a result the newly built democratic states of Spain and France soon became weak from internal power-political quarrels, and the fascists, who were highly organised, subverted the internally weak democratic state and came to capture all power.

The Spanish situation has however another important lesson for us. While the so-called parliamentary states of Europe and America followed a policy of non-intervention, thus allowing the fascists a free hand to use their international resources against the divided democratic forces in one country after another, the only group of people to recognise the international responsibility of the democratic forces and to act upon that recognition were a section of the lower middle class intellectuals who formed a front and participated directly

in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Republicans. The first thing to note about this event is that this leadership came primarily from among the much despised lower middle class intelligentsia,—writers, artists, journalists, teachers,—people who are generally sneered at as vacillators and undependables. Secondly, the front was composed of persons holding contrary political opinions—there were anarchists (a very large section), communists, syndicalists, guild socialists, social-democrats—who were united in their strong anti-fascist sentiments and in the recognition of their international responsibility as democrats and of the need of a democratic front as the only means to combat fascism. The front proved the honesty of its democratic professions by sacrificing the precious creative lives of its membership in defence of the cause. The incentive behind their revolutionary struggle was not class interest but a strong feeling for freedom and human progress. Theirs was the front of a second international renaissance against the new barbarism; it was a renaissance of political and military action as much as of theoretical struggle.

The next important development took place with the beginning of the War. Before fascism on the offensive, the democracy of France lay helplessly prostrate. The socialist state of the U.S.S.R. extended its passive (if not active) support to the Nazi invaders of the democratic states. Once again it was the people of England, who had two decades before successfully resisted the Churchillian conspiracy to invade Russia, who asserted their democratic will and forced their unwilling, senile, pro-fascist state to declare war on Germany and ultimately to turn that declaration into a real life and death struggle. Those, who to the end believed that Britain did not take the initiative in defeating fascism, may be profit-

ably reminded of the fact that while the communists considered the Nazi attack on the Soviet to be a gross betrayal and did not raise a finger (even theoretical) to mobilise forces against fascism before they were attacked themselves, Britain not only took the initiative in declaring war but also (as the documents unearthed since the war was over conclusively show) resisted every offer to come to terms with the Nazis and to form a common front against the Soviet Union. This fact is so often forgotten by communists and anti-imperialists that it is important if one wishes to learn the truth from history to emphasise this supreme and sustained contribution of Britain in defeating fascism.

A study of the more salient developments in Britain during the war is of supreme importance for constructing the philosophy and strategy of democratic revolution in the postwar period. The first instinctive development was the assertion of the democratic faith against the fascist menace. The whole of Britain, with the rare exception on the political front of the Mosley hirelings and the communist cretins, and on the economic front of highly centralised trusts, monopolies and cartels, declared in favour of assuming leadership of a highly risky but supremely important struggle against fascism on the world front. It was this assertion of the democratic faith of the common people that led to the overthrow of the pro-fascist Chamberlain leadership and to his replacement by Churchill.

Fortunately, however, the assertion of democracy did not stop there. The exigency of struggle against fascism led to a number of basic institutional transformations in the parliamentary pattern. First, the Home Guard movement, which was the beginning of a process whereby democracy began outgrowing its atomic nature and constructing institutions for

organised work. Second, the demand for transfer of greater powers to local bodies to deal with emergencies. The Conservative Party was forced under pressure to submit to a very large extent to this demand and as the local bodies were rapidly developing into active democratic bodies in which local people began regularly participating, a new institutional pattern of active democracy based on local people's organisations emerged in the process.

Simultaneously with this, great economic changes were taking place. It is rarely noted in this country that during the war years profits, investments, prices and wages were controlled to such an extent that the so called entrepreneurial function became almost obsolete. The government controlled profits to the extent of ninety five per cent. The rate of exploitation was scissor-cut on the one hand by enforcing price fixation, rationing and distribution of produce through cooperatives and canteens, and on the other hand by wage fixation, ruthless taxation and increased employment.

These developments would be of dubious significance were they not accompanied by complimentary political developments. The three organisational principles on which the various economic controls can be integrated into a democratic reorganisation of society are: a pattern of active organised democratic bodies from the bottom to check the tendency of controls to work through bureaucratic instruments; a system of producers' and consumers' democratic bodies to guarantee against consolidation of a managerial class; and thirdly, a system of social distribution of surplus through free and equitable social utility services. The last is the logical pointer of the communist utopia which Marx left somewhat vague and which has been worked out by recent unorthodox economists like Keynes, Robinson, and Cole.

During the war only the political checks were in a process of definite development; the economic foundations of democratic socialism were being laid (unwillingly) by the state. The historic landslide in favour of the Labour Party proved the popular absorption of these new ideas and techniques for the construction of an effective democracy, which does not confuse formal political equality or formal nationalisation of industries and banking with effective democracy but seeks to guarantee economic socialism by active political democracy. The Labour Party in power has been trying to build up the foundation of organised democracy in Britain. It is democratising controls by transferring greater power to elective local functional bodies; it is democratising nationalisation by adopting the correct policy of resolving the problem of over-savings through extended free or cheap social utility services.

Simultaneously with these internal British war-time developments, events of revolutionary political significance were taking place on an international scale. The first of these was the magnificent gesture of Churchill to the fighting forces of prostrate France when he offered to merge Britain and France into one fighting unit against fascism. That was the first recognition in actual practice of the international responsibility of democracy which it had refused to discharge so far. The second was the equally progressive gesture towards the Soviet Union as soon as it was attacked by the Nazi Wehrmacht. Recognition of the need for a common front helped democracy to transcend its twenty years' memory of conflict and bitterness, to forget the harmful indifference of the U. S. S. R. in the early years of the war as well as the treacherous role of the official communists during that period, and, in the blood and tears of half a decade of struggle, to form the new axis of Anglo-Soviet cooperation which besides being the

backbone of the international anti-fascist struggle, is the only solid ground on which the foundations of an international democratic society in the post-war period may be laid.

Synchronously with the Anglo-Soviet axis grew up inside overrun Europe a common front of the insurgent peoples in which the various anti-fascist parties worked together as comrades in arms, forgetting their many theoretical differences and past struggles. Wherever the left political parties failed to outgrow their sectional interests, the resistance was ineffective and fascist control remained intact. It is only in countries like France, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, where the different anti-fascist parties agreed to work together on an equitable agreement, that the people ultimately could play a considerable role in the rout of fascism.

The building up of an international anti-fascist front of the common people was further strengthened by two historic developments. The first of these was indeed historic and irrevocable; it marked the end of an epoch in social development. The older imperialisms of Europe disintegrated completely under the impact of the war; they had already been hard hit in World War I, had entered on a process of obsolescence during the interwar period, were knock-bottomed by the great crisis of the early thirties, faced with dismemberment with the rise of fascism in Europe and the consolidation of the colonial bourgeoisie, and ultimately went down during World War II. British, French and Dutch imperialisms were liquidated as economic systems even before the anti-fascist war; with the close of that war, their political coup de grace has also been given. The only imperialism that has survived this war is the American; it has grown into that super-imperialism for visualising which Bukharin was once strongly taken to task by his Marxist confreres; but even America is threatened

with a crisis of unprecedented magnitude which may either dissolve its pattern into a new democracy or, what is more probable, may stiffen it into a neo-fascism of worldwide scale.

The second development is the dissolution of the Communist International. The political significance of this act on the part of the Soviet Government has been explained in a masterly monograph by one of the founders of the Third International. (See M. N. Roy ; *The Communist International*). In the context of our present analysis, the dissolution was a belated recognition by the Soviet Union of the utopian nature of its pretensions to a monopoly of revolutionary leadership. At least theoretically, it recognised the inalienable right of the communist parties in different countries to correlate their activities to the actual emergencies of the local situation; it further recognised the need of forming real people's fronts in these countries to resist national fascism. Unfortunately, the communist parties which had so long been tied to the apron-strings of the Soviet Union and whose guiding star in deciding national as well as international policy had been the narrow national interest of the proletarian fatherland, were found altogether confused when offered this formal opportunity of making their decisions for themselves. The evidence of this confusion is to be found in the writings of Earl Browder who, since Soviet participation in the war, had been recognised as the theoretical leader of the international communist movement outside the Soviet Union. Anglo-Soviet unity was catastrophically misinterpreted by him and his communist followers all over the world to imply a principle of national solidarity, solidarity which, according to Browder, included even the trusts and cartels of America, the very systems in which fascism had found and was going to find again its strong economic mooring.⁹ Further, instead of inter-

preting the decision to imply the necessity of transforming the communist parties into people's parties on a democratic programme, Browder recommended their organisational dissolution and merger into the so-called national unity front.

Nevertheless, in spite of false and harmful misinterpretations by those for whom the decision was taken, the decision to dissolve the International was of historic significance and was essentially correct. Happening as it did synchronously with the dissolution of the early imperialisms and the rise of world fascism, it definitely means that the world is today irreconcilably divided into two camps, the one of the fascist vested interests and the other of the common exploited people of the world; and that to successfully combat fascism and to build stable foundations of democratic peace, both communists and bourgeois democrats must outgrow their sectional prejudices and build up a common front against fascism and for a democratic society based on liberty (individual, politico-economic and institutional) and voluntary cooperation of the common people.

It appears that this revolutionary reorientation of orthodox communism has been recognised by the communist parties in only three countries where communists are strong enough to be able to afford some independent thinking and rational experimentation in political practice. In France, the communist sponsored constitution was drafted on principles that were essentially social-democratic, and in spite of the persistence of anachronistic tendencies in the relation of the French Communist Party with other anti-fascist democratic parties in that country, that constitution provides a basis for a democratic reorganisation of French social life. In China also, the recent declaration of Mao Tse-tung regarding the principles of reconstruction of the

social life of that unhappy country marks a definite break from the hitherto practised policy of communist dictatorship. In Indonesia, most of all, the social programme on which Sharifuddin in cooperation with Sultan Shariar is struggling hard to break the strong native fascist rump and to reconstruct social life shows most positive and adequate recognition of the new principles on which alone the foundations of a stable and equitable social order may be placed.

It further appears that in the Balkans the Soviet Union is at least theoretically introducing the new democratic principles. At first, the Red Army tried to enforce party dictatorships in these countries. But in spite of all their pressure, in the elections the democratic forces were found to be asserting themselves against this policy of Red Napoleonism. Finally, at least in several of the Balkan states, the Soviet Union has formally agreed to form democratic governments based on the cooperation of various democratic parties that fought the fascists during the war and have consented to work together to reconstruct social life on a common democratic programme. How far this new policy will be honestly allowed to go and whether it may not turn out to be a transitional measure of diplomacy, will be unfolded in the course of the coming few years.

All the above facts tend unmistakably to point towards one lesson. The triumph of fascism during the interwar decades was due primarily to the disunity in the front of democracy, to the senile helplessness and formalism of parliamentary democracy, to the dictatorial purism of the communists, and to the lack of a social philosophy which integrated the positive achievements of bourgeois democracy with the principle of really equitable and militant social organisation. The crisis of modern civilisation has been as much

socio economic as it is socio-cultural. The economic crisis points to a socialist reconstruction; the cultural crisis can be resolved only through a reassertion of the supreme value of individual liberty and democratic social organisation. When socialism is integrated into dictatorial methods and institutions, it becomes a new form of totalitarianism and plays a retrogressive role. When democracy refuses to integrate the principle of social distribution of power and resources, it becomes ineffective and turns out to be a feeble ally of fascism. The pointer of the last two decades and a half is towards a synthesis of socialism with democracy. Both in its means and end, the social revolution of our time must follow the principle of democratic socialism. The pragmatic and partial recognition of this pointer won the war against fascism; its correct theoretical recognition alone can ensure a stable peace.

Unfortunately while civilised man is always potentially capable of recognising necessity and therefore of rationally following that logic and of thereby freeing himself from fatalistic determination, the influences of the past and of our irrational inhibitions are always great, at times overwhelmingly so. This has been proved time and again in periods of great social and personal crisis. The social emergency of our times led the forces of human progress almost instinctively to adopt the pragmatic path of democratic socialism. The structural pattern for the emergence of the new democratic society is set; but its dynamics remains slow pending recognition of the pointer on the conscious theoretical plane. It happens therefore that in spite of the historic inadequacy of earlier political philosophies to cope with the new social emergency, they still monopolise between themselves the irrational loyalty of most people. While in the new context of developments, the true ideological conflict is between

democratic socialism and all forms of totalitarianism, the world remains falsely polarised between fascism and communism with parliamentary democracy precariously sandwiched in between. This is primarily due to the fact that humanity with its past of terror and helplessness has not yet outgrown its basic fear of freedom and therefore seeks escape in one form of dictatorship or another. And the politics of democratic socialism is based on the assertion of individual freedom, an assertion which so long as it is formal is no more than a mere potentiality out of many other potentialities, freedom which means individual responsibility in social reconstruction, freedom in which the individual is not only given the right of choice between alternatives but also develops the ability and courage to choose rationally, freedom which alone provides a guaranteed foundation for all democratic institutions. Both fascism and communism refuse to recognise the essential necessity of that spirit of freedom to make a progressive reconstruction of society possible; and parliamentary democracy asserts it only formally but does not introduce it in its institutional life. That is the basic fact of the present crisis of human civilisation; there are not enough really free men who can choose and thereby imbue others with the true ethical spirit. And so long as social as well as personal life is based on what Fromm so aptly describes as the fear of freedom, no amount of economic or institutional reconstruction can ensure a democratic social order.

The problem of democratic socialism thus ultimately resolves itself into a problem of social renaissance. The emergence of fascism has established the unpreparedness of most people to live in society as free and voluntarily cooperating individuals. It has at the same time by its challenge to humanity elicited the best that has been achieved so far;

for in the supreme struggle to defeat it, many people have emerged who staked everything out of no tangible interest but in order to defend those obscure possibilities to achieve freedom in social life which the history of social progress had arrived at so far and thereby to expand and realise those possibilities through the militant assertion of their human conscience. The antifascist war is the beginning of the new renaissance which promises to free people from mass-conditioning, whose supreme aim is, as Ernst Toller once tersely put it, to make men out of masses, to build up a society based on the principle of cooperation of free individuals. That is the positive pointer of our times; to be more correct, that is the pointer of human history which has today reached a climactic intensity with the menace of fascism confronting us. For, even though fascism is defeated on the military front it is not yet dead; indeed, it is already threatening human civilisation a second time on a still more gigantic scale. Till the second renaissance becomes a sufficiently strong world movement, the prospect of a second dark age will always loom large. The strongest foundation of fascism is within us, it is rooted in our own moral inertia, our helpless cowardice, our atomised existence, our irrationality and more than anything, in our fear of freedom. So long as fascism is not defeated in this its secret lair, military victories, though strengthening our cause, will always be a precarious gain.

OUR MARXIAN HERITAGE

"The remaking of the world must be undertaken by philosophers, not by ruthless politicians and their theoretical apologists. Otherwise, there does not seem to be any guarantee against Marxist social engineering defeating its own end.

If politically Marx, in the last analysis, was a Platonist, philosophically he never deviated from Humanism".

M. N. Roy in the Marxian Way, Vol I, No. 3

"We pass from being mere reactors to stimuli of which we were previously unconscious, to active agents that plan and understand".

H. Levy: A philosophy for a modern man. P. 274

"Science must have something to say not only on how values can be achieved but also on our appreciation of values, and on the validity of the values themselves".

J.D. Bernal in Science and Ethics, ed. Waddington. Pp 115-7

Of the many tragic and fateful incidents in human history, that of the degeneration of Marxism into a closed and institutionalised system by its most ardent followers is probably one of the most catastrophic. Marx, who in his own life had been the Grand Heretic of his age, died to grow into the Grand Inquisitor of posterity. Whatever new idea happened to disagree with his perspective (necessarily limited by the limitations of his own time) came to be considered as reactionary. The most liberal description for even the most creative nonconformism would be opportunism or vulgar revisionism. As a result, in the eyes of orthodox Marxists, the Master's philosophy came to be regarded as the high point of a tradition of revealed wisdom. It was no joke for social progress when the three volumes of Capital came to be described as the Bible of the revolutionaries. In fact, it was a most tragic evidence of the inertia of human spirit that has made social evolution such a slow process. It was another

fatal corroboration of what Eric Fromm has aptly described as the *fear of freedom*¹. It is the fear to outgrow one's past and to venture into new ways of response to constantly developing emergencies—that spiritual inertia which provides psychological foundation for *revolution's vested interest*² and makes brute force the decisive influence in social coherence. It is the force that invariably leads to the counter-revolutionary anti-climax of revolutionary movements—leads to the continuation of grooves even after new forces have been released through structural conflicts.

And yet the very basic principle of Marxian philosophy goes against such spiritual inertia or institutional vested interest. For, Marxism, in so far as it is a philosophy, stands on the idea that existence determines consciousness. Now, if existence is not static, the pattern of human response to situational stimuli must undergo constant re-examination and adjustment. The adjustment should not only be with reference to the so-called physical foundations of existence but also to its ideological constituents. The logical consequence of this basic Marxist formulation will be the conscious scrapping of many of Marx's concrete formulations in the light of new technological and socio-cultural developments.

Considered from this point of view, it appears that a certain distinction may be made between the basic principle of Marxian philosophy and a number of concrete corollaries that Marx or Engels deduced from it in the context of nineteenth century social milieu. The political creed of nineteenth century European society was predominantly that of liberalism; its economy was that of *laissez faire*; and its philosophical idealism was definitely anarchistic. The concrete formulations of Marx and Engels were largely determined by a negative reaction to that pattern. The twentieth century interwar

period on the other hand, is marked by a completely different social situation. The dominant political creed now is that of totalitarianism; its economy is monopolistic and is basically oriented by the idea of planning; its major philosophies have an immobile monistic outlook.³ Naturally, therefore, the nineteenth century formulations have ceased to be adequate. New formulations have now become the primary responsibility of all true Marxists.

The basic principle of Marxian philosophy as we understand it provides for the liberation of the human spirit not only from the vested interests of politico-economic life but also from its own ideological inadequacies. Being involves not only a pattern of relations but also the various modes of response. Even when the pattern may not have completely broken down, the existing range of response-modes may be found inadequate by some of the more sensitive members of society and new modes may emerge to liquidate the existing pattern. Otherwise, the history of creative ideas will be altogether inexplicable. At the same time, it must be noted that the breakdown of the pattern of institutional relationships (both economic and socio-political) definitely contributes to precipitate the emergence of new modes. Nevertheless, there is no empirical justification for believing that the breakdown of a pattern and the consequent urgency for new modes necessarily result in the emergence of the same. Such a belief would be only a camouflaged expression of the pre-Darwinian teleological attitude, it will be a continuation of the infantile pleasure principle in the adult taking a theological form⁴. The infant believes that the universe is planned to satisfy his requirements; as he grows up, he is continually being "disillusioned" by the absolute indifference of the universe to his requirements; he therefore wants to plan the universe to his

desire. But with his totally inadequate equipments he finds himself unable to do so. As a consequence he becomes (a) either with the mystics, a believer in some negative absolute, demanding complete voluntary merger of the individual in the Great Negation (the *Abhidamma* of the Buddhist philosophy); or (b) he adopts the less logical (but more reassuring) device of imagining some benevolent teleological process (with an Absolute in the centre) which makes for the best of best things for the chosen race (i.e. man) in some transcendent eternity, or, (c) invests the actual process of history with some inherent progressive purpose (the *inrebus* concept of Aristotle)⁵. In the first case, progress or evolution is conceived of as an illusion; no, evolution itself becomes a process of being removed from the heart of Absolute Nonbeing (e.g. in Calvinism), a process to be discouraged voluntarily if one wishes to be free from the prison of individuality, which, for these thinkers, is due to ignorance. To these people individuality is associated with the merely negative emotion of pain resulting from incessant effort to preserve certain 'artificial' contours of distinction that are always under stress of forces tending towards their dissolution⁶. The contours to remain need unceasing resistance and adjustment. These philosophers find no compensation to this experience of pain in the feeling of exhilaration that also comes from this effort. Hence the highest wisdom, according to the philosophers, is to let the forces to obliterate the contours, to allow distinctions to get dissipated in the Great Negation, to embrace dissolution in the homogeneous totality.

This type of response to adverse circumstantial pressure forms a major strand in human history, both psychologically and socially. It is a rationalisation of what Freud vaguely described in his Introductory Lectures as *death instinct* or of

what Fromm has more aptly called the fear of freedom and Karan Horney as insecurity psychosis⁷. Freedom implies a sustained painful fight against the neutrality and anarchy of circumstances; its purpose is to mould circumstances to the benefit of the individual. To the weak people, however, the logic of this fight leads to the directive: no freedom, no pain. We find evidence of this type of response in the Buddhist ideal of *Nirvana*, the Vedantist concept of *Moksha*, the ethical sensationism of the empiricists, the Schopenhauerian negation of the will to survive, in Bergson's concept of *elan* and the Spenglerian visualisation of Dead End⁸. We find it at work in Pascalian conception of Original Sin and estrangement of man from Godhead, in the aesthetics of surrealism⁹, in the political ideal of surrender of individual liberty to the Absolute State¹⁰. Gandhism in India is a synthetic expression of the various aspects of this ideology; fascism and national socialism in Europe were climactic developments of this mentality.

As for the second alternative, while it shows the will to survive at work, it nevertheless involves a very weak and inept effort at defence manoeuvres against the adverse onslaught of circumstances. It lacks in the dynamic of purposive change and is essentially passive in attitude. It ultimately implies strengthening of mental inertia and subservience to the mechanical pattern of occurrences. The subservience is complemented by a fallback on some heartening utopia. In consequence, it implies a social system of anarchy, cowardice and oppression compensated by sentimental imaginings about a just heaven where all actions are linked by the logic of one's personal idealism. In its social foundations, such mentality implies a *status quo* of disorder; its cultural correlates are insolent complacency, irrational instinctivism and pathological ambivalence in behaviour.

The third alternative, however, has different possibilities of development. So long as it remains tagged to some form of teleological mentality, it is barren and passive like the other two. When its approach to social development, however, is freed from false transcendentalism, it begins to orientate towards a naturalism with dynamic possibilities as may be noted in Aristotle, Spinoza or Hobhouse. The universe is then seen to be a field of various forces in operation experimenting in infinite alternatives of organisation according to laws of logic and mathematics. With the emergence of man these experiments become more and more purposive and self-conscious. Human evolution, in so far as it is evolution and not mere temporal sequence of occurrences, is marked by a growing consciousness of the need to ensure maximum harmony among larger and larger number of individuals with minimum ironing out of their distinctive features and lines of development. Every effort to reach such harmony becomes on the one hand a creative idea and at the same time releases forces that tend to liquidate any vested interest in that idea. There is therefore, logically speaking, no dead end of development though there is always some imagined *ultima thule* of absolute harmony. The effort however may often result in breakdown of the existing order without the perspective of a new order having emerged as a positive response to that breakdown. As a result the arrangement of forces may revert to obsolete forms and we have a process of devolution or what more emotionally inclined people prefer to describe as counter-revolution. History is littered with plenty of evidence regarding such a process. While the need for the emergence of a new order or form of harmony is always there, its actual realisation is a most rare event in history.

The progressive contribution of Marxism as a philosophy

lies in the fact that it systematically combatted the first two alternatives outlined above and sought to extricate the third from its prevailing theological orientation. That Marx did not fully succeed in his effort and to the last remained under Hegelian influence is true; this defect ultimately caused the early obsolescence of many of his concrete formulations. Nevertheless, in emphasising that every pattern of relationship involves in it the tendency towards its liquidation and that consciousness (or our modes of response) requires continual experiments in adjustment, Marx had maintained the strand of creative dynamism in human history against the static absolutism of his philosophical predecessors and contemporaries. In this he was really purifying both eighteenth century materialism and seventeenth century rationalism of their implied mechanical approach. He was virtually liquidating the scholastic legacy in his own system when he stressed the importance of continuous re-adjustment of ideas in terms of the changing situational milieu. That his philosophy to the last retained a large dose of teleology may be explained as the result of disproportionate reaction to the mechanical approach of contemporary empiricists and positivists; his over-stress on the economic factor in social change is a recoil from the pseudo-idealism of neo-Hegelians and anarchists; his own response was after all largely determined by the socio-cultural setting of his times¹¹. Nevertheless, one must not miss the fact how he and Engels would very often reconsider their earlier formulations (and if necessary, revise also) in the light of new knowledge and experience and how in their basic formulation of the process of human history they strongly underlined the inevitability of their own obsolescence with newer experiments in human adjustment.

This brings us to the next strand of essential progressivism

in Marxian philosophy. In spite of the inadequacy of Marxian formulation of this second point, it did (and in the context of the utopian mentality that still prevails, even now does) contribute to free mankind from intellectual inelasticity and moral inertia. This strand lies in the repudiation of apriorism as a method of deducing values.¹² That repudiation is definitely implied in the materialist interpretation of history. The criterion of value, according to this theory, is to be found in the relevance of ideals to the task of finding out ways for a more harmonious order of the existing forces. While knowledge in itself is always a potential value, the deduction of a pattern of ideals from the available resources of knowledge must always be motivated as well as judged by its ability to help to bring about a better harmonisation of the existent forces in social and individual life. The value criterion for any ethical or politico-economic formulation is their bearing on the task of concrete reorganisation of discordant forces of contemporaneity in a more harmonious mode. It is from this point of view that Marx found bourgeois culture and bourgeois politico-economic pattern progressive in the context of feudal immobility. It is from this point of view again that Marx so strongly criticised the utopian socialists, the young Hegelians, the anarchists, the positivists as well as the Blanquist method of revolution. The final thesis on Faurerbach is a rather simplified statement of the Marxian position-vis-a-vis the relation between philosophy and practice. Nevertheless, the idea broached in this thesis and worked out in *Anti-Duhring*, the *Poverty of Philosophy* and in the book on Faurerbach, has two very important implications. And even when the earlier ten theses (concerning epistemology and the deterministic influence of foundations on superstructure) require substantial modification to be valid today,

Marxian position regarding the organic correlation of ideas through values, programme and plan of action to actual human needs of the time retains its soundness and progressive significance.

What is exactly this position ? It must not be confused with the naïf theory of ideas growing out of economic stress; nor must it be identified with the philosophy of knowledge being the demiurge of matter. Marx in strong opposition to the empiricists and mechanical materialists had stressed the creative role of knowledge in human development; only without the advantage of modern psychology and sociology of knowledge, he did not fully grasp the nature of that creativeness. But his ideal of organically correlating knowledge to the actual contemporary requirements of mankind and of thereby formulating a philosophy of planned rational behaviour contains in it the basic principle of progressive change. As we have said already, it has two implications. First, it implies that knowledge becomes creative of value when it ceases to be mere theoretical deduction from empirical observations and is employed to formulate a perspective of existence, i. e., when it ceases to be limited to departmental sciences and grows into a comprehensive philosophy. Secondly, it implies that the value of ethical and politico-economic formulations depends on (a) how far they are correct deductions from such a comprehensive philosophy, (b) and also on how far they contribute to realise the perspective of a superior pattern of harmonisation visualised in that philosophical perspective.

As for the first point, it appears that the general lack of appreciation of its supreme importance has resulted in our own time in a terrific hiatus between the knowledge accumulated in the various departmental sciences and the mental

make-up and behaviour of individuals and the masses. While science has taken big strides in the course of the last five or six decades, people still think and live in the most irrational way, are divided within themselves, tend more and more towards mechanisation of individual life, live as slaves or robots, and are being offered as mass offering to the god of war and ruin once in every two decades. The sciences have not been coordinated into a rational philosophy of life, the scientists themselves are mostly ambivalent in their mental make-up, and inspite of immense scientific and technological advancement, men still live as masses and freedom remains a far cry. The failure of modern civilisation to offer a philosophy of life coordinating the theoretical achievements of the various sciences and the practical prospects opened up by modern technology constitutes a major aspect of contemporary social life. It is this failure that largely contributed to the success of fascism in using modern science to consolidate anachronistic influences and atavistic tendencies.¹³ In stressing the need for the co-ordination of knowledge to offer a perspective of life and in its positive response to that necessity (however inadequate) Marxism made a large contribution to human progress.

Turning now to the second issue, it again on analysis is found to contain two pointers. The adequacy of any system of values (ethical or politico-economic) is to be tested, first, in terms of the achievements of contemporary sciences. Marx criticised idealist ethics and political economy very severely on this score. In this he was continuing the true rationalist tradition of renaissance enlightenment and freeing rationalism from its mystical aberrations. Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza developed on the one hand their philosophical systems on the conclusions of contemporary mathematics, astronomy and

other newly developing sciences. On the other, Descartes indulged in the mystical concept of *niscus* towards godhead, Leibniz in theological deductions from the monadological pattern, and Spinoza in the ethics of *amorus dei*.¹⁴ Marx sought to salvage rationalism from all this scholastic debris. Once again for all his failure, his endeavour is of great progressive significance. For, even after Marx had repeatedly emphasised the need of basing value systems on theoretical data provided by the various sciences, the barren scholastic effort to spin ideologies out of one's precious navel still predominates contemporary philosophical systems as may be seen in the apriori logistics of Bradley, Gentile, Alliotto and many of our neo-thomists, neo-vedantists and neo-Kantians.

The second pointer is still more important and is somewhat more complicated. The values that are deductions from philosophy in its bearing on conduct and human relationship must also posit some practical method for their realisation in social and individual lives. So long as they remain mere ideals, they can have little creative influence in moulding social or individual life. For example, the philosophical systems of Bergson or Alexander and the implicit or explicit moral and politico-economic derivatives from those systems indicate no clear visualisation of the concrete process in which their implied perspective of future development is to be realised through organised human effort. We do not know how the individual may concretely contribute to the working of the Bergsonian *elan* or the Alexandrian *niscus*. Both creativity and emergence therefore remain attributes of superindividual forces or pattern of forces. Hence we have ethical and politico-economic obscurantism that may conveniently be given different interpretations. Thus it is that we find both Marxists and fascists interpreting the concrete implications of

Bergsonism and emergent evolutionism in quite opposed ways. The utopian nature of this type of philosophy may be gathered from the experience of Bergson himself in the closing years of his life. He, who had been believed to be a philosopher of fascism refused to serve the fascists when they came to power and had to die an obscure death in internment and seclusion.

(The above criticism stands apart from the criticism of the above mentioned philosophies on the score of their internal incoherence, and, more than anything, on the score of their false deductions from the sciences of *Biology and Mathematical Physics* on which they respectively claim to stand).

Taking all the above considerations together, the truly Marxian position vis a-vis the issue of philosophy, science and practice may be summarised in the following general statement: Knowledge becomes value when it is coordinated into a philosophy; philosophy must on the one hand comprehend all the theoretical data of contemporary sciences and on the other deduce from the same a total perspective of life as a process; the perspective must result in the formulation of a coherent system of values that will guide human relationship and conduct and provide incentive for the working out of the perspective of a better harmonised life logically visualised in the philosophy; and finally, the system of values must lead to concrete formulation of a method whereby the perspective may be realised through human effort. The Marxian philosophy itself grew as the response of the high points of nineteenth century human consciousness to the nineteenth century situation in accordance with the above formulation. It sought to coordinate (however inadequately) the various contemporary sciences to evolve a philosophy of existence (see in particular Engels's *Dialectics of Nature*). It also visualised a perspective of development and worked out (though not sufficiently

clearly) a pattern of values, both in their ethical and politico-economic formulations. It offered also a specific method for realising that perspective through organised human effort. The defect of that philosophy or of those concrete formulations of values or method is very largely due to the inadequacy of the scientific and cultural resources of the age. Any historic evaluation of Marxism must, however, distinguish between the essentially correct and progressive formulation of the issue and the concrete details of the system.¹⁵

So far our main concern has been to elaborate and emphasise the progressive contribution of Marxism to human history. We have explained how in its basic philosophical formulation Marxism is essentially correct, progressive and revolutionary, and how therefore that formulation must be integrated into any progressive philosophy that may lead our own generation from the clutch of the contemporary social crisis to further revolutionary development

Nevertheless, it must also be pointed out that some of the specific major categories that Marx deduced from this basic principle involve various inadequacies and in certain cases even imply a going back on the progressive significance of the basic formulation. We propose to consider here three of these defective categories. It is not suggested that they are altogether mistaken or that they must be scrapped wholesale. Instead, we invite all social revolutionaries who subscribe to the elaboration of the basic principle made before to make these categorical specifications more fruitful, adequate and in keeping with the actual facts and requirements of social history through incorporation of certain other essential strands which Marx and Engels seem to have noted but the importance of which they could not fully realise owing to the circumstances of their age.

The first of these categories deserving such critical consideration is the materialist interpretation of history. Existence determines consciousness. We have already noted how this formulation is essentially correct and how it has positive revolutionary implications for modern science, social organization and revolutionary struggle. But Marx was not satisfied with the elaboration of the principle in such a flexible and comprehensive manner. Instead, he went further and specified the form in which existence determines human consciousness. For him, the basic influence is economic. Even here, he expressly makes the nature of the foundations more precise when he stresses the mode of production as its basic design.¹⁶

This approach to history has however been found to be essentially inadequate—to be derived from a lack of sensitivity to the dynamics of social progress. Economic foundations, and the mode of production in particular, have of course important contributions in determining the pattern of social development. But with social evolution ideological and cultural factors tend to have more and more decisive influence. These cultural influences cannot be resolved into a mechanical pattern of foundations and super structure. Instead it very often happens that new ideas and philosophies evolve in direct reaction to previous ideas and philosophies without necessarily undergoing a process of economic determination.¹⁷ How can one otherwise explain the appearance of a Galileo? Is it not a barren display of scholasticism if, without any actual facts to establish it, one merely applied the economic interpretation of history and sought to explain the appearance of Galileo or an Einstein as the result of some economic crisis and not as the response of some accidental genius to a basic cultural crisis.¹⁸ While knowledge and values, or to use the more comprehensive word, culture, form definite elements of

existence or the situational pattern, they cannot be resolved into mere reactions of the social ego to the mode of production and its inability to cope with the forces of production. How, one may ask, can one explain Marx himself in terms merely of his socio-economic context?¹⁹ Capitalism as an economic system had only reached a new phase of expansion and prosperity. The proletariat had not yet become the major social class. It took more than another half century for the economic contradictions of capitalism to land that system in the cycle of crises. Engels himself described this period (1850—90) as the "forty years' winter sleep of the proletariat." (Also cf... "the English proletariat is becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois, of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy, a bourgeois proletariat *as well as* a bourgeoisie" Engels to Marx, 7 Oct, 1858). The emergence of a person like Marx is one of those rare events of history which cannot be calculated by mere considerations of economic emergency; it is clearly an individual phenomenon and therefore unique. Further, the setting in which the social prerequisites of such an individual emergence and line of development are found is essentially ideological and not merely economic. A study of the history of ideas and of their dynamics will conclusively prove that though they may have a certain basis in economic foundations, they are primarily developments in reaction to ideological settings. In other words, philosophies have emerged as responses to earlier and inadequate philosophies. Their acceptance by a large number of individuals however was largely determined by socio-economic foundations.

Marx considered this approach to history and in his much-quoted preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, as also in some of his correspondence with Engels, he seems to have

vaguely realised its importance. Nevertheless, this realisation does not seem to have fully gone down into his mind, and as a result in most of his elaborate attempts at interpreting social phenomena he is found to over-emphasise the purely economic factors and to show an indifference to the ideological influences amounting almost to callousness. He is always found to trace the evolution of ideas and values to conflicts in the economic foundation. In his letters he indicated the need to revise many of his rather naive formulations but he never worked them out, and in the sacred texts of what passes for orthodox Marxism there is always this misplaced over-emphasis on the economic factor.

As a result, the creative principle of social development can never be explained in the perspective of orthodox Marxism. But the facts of cultural history and recent researches in the sociology of knowledge contradict that perspective of history. While Engels late in life regretfully admitted the inadequacy, he never recognised its fundamental character nor did he make any serious attempt to sense the early formulations to make them more correct and comprehensive. A modern philosophy of history, while fully subscribing to the basic materialist postulate that being determines consciousness should correct the confusion of being with economic forces and drives, and recognise the creative role of ideas and accumulation in knowledge in dissolving culturally obsolete social patterns and in evolving new modes of organised response to the world.

In this, such a philosophy will have to orientate Marxism in the light of the spiral concept of cultural development logically formulated long before Marx by the Italian philosopher Giovanni Battista Vico and to integrate the various pointers on this issue made long ago by Plato, Bacon, Cam-

panella and Winstanley among others. This does not mean any rejection of the economic interpretation or its replacement by idealistic historiology. The real point is to balance the economic interpretation with a due recognition of ideational and individual factors—or, to use a term coined by Mannheim, to develop a “relational” perspective of social change²⁰

Turning now to another fundamental conception of Marxist-communist philosophy—dialectics—in certain aspects it is also found to suffer from inadequacy and a scholastic approach and to offer an incorrect and twisted perspective of universe and social development. Dialectic, as is well-known, had evolved in Pre-Periclean Athens as a method of argumentation. It was particularly employed by the Sophists who could earn considerable remuneration for their counsel to litigants in the Athenian Courts. In their hands, it was a method which sought to establish the validity of one's claim by exposing the weakness and absurdity of the opponent's case. Consequently, dialectic became a clever but unscrupulous method to vindicate either side of a dispute as required, irrespective of birth or morality. The moral idealism of Socrates and Plato rescued Dialectic from its degenerating associations and perfected it as a highly effective method to distinguish truth from error and to discripate intellectual inertia. Long, long afterwards, Hegel abstracted the logical principles underlying this method of enquiry and employed it most effectively to establish the dynamic interdependence of Kantian Categories. As these Categories were the have forms that shaped the world of idea; and as ideas were for Hegel the only reality: dialectic, which has been established by Hegel as the ultimate law underlying the relationship of Categories, also came to claim as the have law of existence in evolution. Marx, for all his lifelong endeavour to outgrow his Hegelian indoctrina-

tion, remained to the last unconsciously tied to the apron-strings of the Master. While his epicurean antecedents and acquaintance with the French rationalist philosophies saved him from landing on the Hegelian quicksand, they never became strong enough to free him from its dialectical mirage.

Even from an epistemological point of view there are other ways of apprehension, beside the dialectical. There is for example the Gestalt or configurational way of apprehension. While, on the one hand, knowledge can be considered as a conflict of polar opposites tending towards synthetic development in a dialectical way, there is also the other dynamic pattern of an infinitude of distinct apprehensions tending towards various significant harmonisations. This concept of a plurality of distincts making various attempts to reach a harmony alone can offer us a proper picture of the process of social evolution. By harmony we mean adjustment of the distincts through co-operation in such a manner that maximal distinctiveness of each is preserved without subordinating any to any other.

Turning from considerations of epistemology to those of a perspective of social evolution, the concept of harmonisation of distincts is a vital and essential supplement to social dialectics to interpret progress or significant change. Neither Hegel nor Marx properly appreciated the role of distincts as the major lever of progress.²² While vaguely admitting harmonisation as the ideal of what he called history proper, Marx did not note that the long and painful process through which social evolution has passed and is passing even before the ideal phase of "history" proper is attained, finds evolutionary significance only in the context of that unending movement towards harmonisation. When we speak of significant harmonisation we mean primarily this—that it gives more and

more scope to each individual to choose between a large number of alternatives, and in the case of the more gifted, to make their creative contribution to the socio-cultural pattern with the least amount of institutional resistance. Unable to appreciate this process of significant harmonisation, the social consequence of both Marxism and Hegelianism has necessarily been a totalitarian ideal—conceiving of the pattern of progress as a conflict between amorphous masses (be it class, group, nation, state or party) and deducing from that pattern an ideal of mass society, reflected in the instrument of the monolithic fascist and communist parties and the dictatorship of one class or the other.

Not merely that. The insensitiveness to the pattern of continually readjusting harmony of plurality resulted in a dogmatic approach to science. Those who have cared to read Engels's *Dialectics of Nature* with a rational mind must have been troubled by the unhappy combination of a basically revolutionary with an inherently dogmatic approach to the alternative suggestions of contemporary science. In Lenin's *Teachings of Marx* it is dogmatically stated that not only human society but even the biological and the planetary universe work by the dialectic process. The reasons for such assertions are mostly esoteric, a priori and to the initiated frankly unconvincing. We have as a result in all orthodox applications of Marxism to various spheres of science and art a scholastic *a priori* methodology which instead of investigating reality seeks to fix it into a preconceived pattern. That explains the barrenness of the so-called Marxian method in throwing up new vistas in the various departmental sciences as well as in aesthetic criticism.

This must not be taken to mean that the dialectic does not apply to epistemology or even to a study of social history.

Yes, ideas are opposed dialectically; social groups are ranged in conflict. But that is only one pattern and in all probability it is not the creative pattern. There is also the other pattern of pluralistic distincts making various experiments to reach significant harmonisation, the pattern (in a social context) of individuals outgrowing the group and making creative contributions to the progressive reorganisation of the group. Marxism in not appreciating this pattern (which ultimately is the true philosophical pattern of what is vaguely described as freedom) suffers from the dangerous possibility of leading to a disastrous formulation of human values

And that brings us to a critical consideration of the third basic concept of Marxism. Communism which is the logical culmination (as an ideal) of the economic interpretation of history and of class dialectic as the exclusive lever of social progress, places its major emphasis on the group entity as separate from and superior to the individual. Communism is based really on the idolisation of the group ego—in "pre history" it works as class, in "history proper" it is the commune. In either case the individual is only a part of the group entity. While recent social psychology tells us that this group ego is the basic atavistic influence that holds back the individual from a realisation of his multifold possibility and is the consolidator of the individual's fear of freedom, communism stands by the group entity and considers the individual as a mere Platonic imitation of the group. This comes out in the communists' conception of class conflict, in their ideal of middle-class intellectuals turning into proletarians, in their faith that only the proletariat can lead as a class the human struggle for freedom to-day, the monolithic structure of their party machinery, their concept of dictatorship of a class as beneficial for all individuals, in their idea of party

cells, and their ultimate visualisation of the commune pattern. The curtailment of individual liberty that we see in practice in the Soviet Union is not a mere accident or a feature of the so-called transitory phase; it is the logical culmination of the orthodox communist approach to existence. In no other way can one explain the suicide of Maiakoffsky, the exile of Pilyak or the importance given to a third rate writer like Ehrenberg.

Marxism is primarily distinguished from other philosophical systems as a philosophy of social action. It not only formulates a coherent interpretation of existence, history and knowledge or a body of ideals but also deduces from such formulation the specific method and means whereby such ideals may be realised in social life. We have already noted the essentially progressive nature of the Marxian integration of science with social practice. The adequacy of any philosophy must, therefore, by Marxian standards, be measured as much by its comprehension of available knowledge as by the correctness and practicability of the method and means of social change that follow logically from it. Any proper estimate of Marxism therefore is required to evaluate the methodology of revolutionary action on which the entire structure, function and political programme of the communist movement may be logically expected to be based.

What are the method and means by which communism (by which term is meant the pragmatic-utopian aspect of Marxism) is proposed to be realised in social life? The Marxian theory of socialist revolution was formulated in the notorious slogan, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Many Marxists, however, have sought to relegate this theory to incidental significance. Marx and Engels themselves considered the proletarian dictatorship technique of revolution funda-

mental to "scientific socialism", and though in one or two special cases they admitted the possibility of social revolution taking a different course, such cases were considered exceptions that established the rule all the more firmly.²² In the justly famous letter to Weydemeyer (dated London March 5, 1852), Marx categorically stated: 'Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove; (1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular, historic phases in the development of production; (2) that the *class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat*; (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society." In the *Communist Manifesto*, in the *Poverty of Philosophy* in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, in the famous letter to Bibbel of 18-28 March, 1875, and in all their writings on the Paris Commune incident, the founders of scientific socialism very definitely emphasised the historic inevitability of proletarian dictatorship as the means to the communist utopia.

The idea was of course relegated to the background during the heyday of the Second International, but that was mostly from opportunist considerations. Lenin once again made it the foundation-stone of the Third International, and though later on, as he learnt from actual practice, he was forced to give up his methodological purism, he never admitted the theoretical unsoundness of that formulation. To speak of proletarian dictatorship as incidental to the Marxian theory of revolution is incorrect.

Any estimate of the significance of a theory must begin by making a detached and unprejudiced formulation of that

theory. If the formulation is incorrect then the estimate becomes irrelevant. We give below what we consider to be a dependable though extremely brief and necessarily simplified formulation of the orthodox theory of communist revolution as formulated in the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The Marxist theory of revolution conceives of modern society as polarising into irreconcilably opposed economic classes, the capitalist and the proletarian, and the people in between (the so-called petit bourgeoisie or the middle classes including the peasantry) are conceived of as being historically debarred from taking any *initiative as a class* in the struggle for a classless society. For the communist, the problem of the middle classes vis-a-vis the revolutionary struggle can be solved only in two ways; (a) through completion of the social polarisation process so that society has only two classes and the middle strata are completely eliminated; or (b) that being an abstract visualisation which is not found corroborated in social life, the second alternative is to allow the proletarian class a temporary right to dictatorship (both ideological and organisational) so that it may compel the other vacillating classes to follow its lead in the class struggle and to bring into being the so-called transitional society. This makes the dictatorship of the proletarian class essential in the first phase of the social revolutionary struggle.

But it does not end there. As the capitalist class is defeated, their monopolies abolished their state subverted, it becomes necessary to consolidate the conquest before the ideal of a communist society can be realised. This is generally described in communist literature as the transitional phase of socialism which precedes communism. Such consolidation

can be made only by a state with dictatorial power. Now, according to communist analysis, the state ceases to be a state in a classless society; the existence of the state as a state proper implies class domination. The dictatorial state of transition, therefore, is a class state, and it is natural that the class that had the monopoly of leadership in the first phase of the struggle will also assume dictatorial state power in the transitional phase. Thus from the dictatorship of the proletariat in the phase of revolutionary struggle, we pass on to the proletarian dictatorial state in the phase of social transition.

It is now visualised (and all the above methodology is primarily theoretical) that the dictatorial state will wither away through a process of *gradual* transfer of power and responsibilities from the state to society as a whole, and finally state and society will become one and the same institution. Thus we reach the utopia of the classless communist society¹³. (Those who object to the epithet utopian may do well to remember the famous description of communist society that Marx has given in *German Ideology*: "In communist society" wrote Marx, "where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity, but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today, another to-morrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic." If this is not utopia, then we do not see how that term may apply to More or Winstansley or even to Plato.)

So far the method or process of revolution. As regards the means, the proletarian class as a whole is not actually

developed enough to give centralised leadership to the struggle. Of course the theoretical leadership is objectively theirs; for the programme of socialised production and exchange specifically reflects the line of historic development of the proletarian class. To enforce their theoretical leadership on the revolutionary movement in its organisational aspects a highly centralised party is required with homogeneous de-individualised cells for its units and run by a body of highly efficient executives. No differences may be tolerated inside the party. The party is to be made into a machine or instrument of action, and being composed chiefly of a professional cadre it is the party that virtually exercises dictatorial control inside the proletarian class over the entire body of the exploited people.

In the formation of the party instrument and in the employment of the dictatorial method, communism considers class interest as the only constant or dependable factor. Conscience or moral idealism, social sense and love of liberty are subject to constant banter in the hands of Marx, who consider such drives as petit bourgeois, utopian even opportunistic. Class interest being the only incentive to planned and persistent action, values become primarily class values and the idea of a *human* transclass standard of social progress or of an individual conscience based on the recognition of such a standard is considered idealistic and utopian (which is petit-bourgeois and hence an abomination). The categories human and individual are resolved into the category class, and the existence of these categories as a decisive influence is conceded only in what Marxists describe as "history proper" or in the class-less society of the future. In its anxiety to maintain the dialectical symmetry of its interpretation of prehistoric, Marxism repudiates "marginal" consciousness.

Finally, in the phase of transition, the principle "to each according to his work", is adopted as the guide to equitable exchange. The first act of the dictatorship is to take over the means of production and exchange in the name of national ownership; private ownership of the means of production and exchange are as far as possible abolished; the next task is to arrange distribution on the principle of fixing wages according to work. These radical changes in the social economy are expected to create conditions whereby first, the over-production bottleneck of capitalist economy is resolved and secondly, the bureaucratic power-monopoly gives way to effective democratic participation of the people in the state administration. Gradually, both the economic contradiction of capitalism and the politics of a state-monopoly of power are replaced by a community economy and a socialised state.

The above gives an outline of the means, method and incentives by which communism proposes to bring about a radical reconstruction of society. The method being dictatorship and the means an exclusive monolithic class party, the process of subversion is generally visualised as forcible or violent.

Now that we have the picture before us, we may pass on to a consideration of the many inadequacies and dangers implied in the communist methodology of action. The criticism falls into two parts; on the general theory, and on its applicability in the context of fascism and the basic problem of social reorganisation today.

If all values are class values, then by what standard may one measure social progress? The progress from one form of society to the next becomes progress for a class; for humanity as a whole it is mere change. Hence such an approach to social struggle cannot attract other people than those who

may hope for a monopoly of advantages as a class in consequence of the social revolution.

All ethics being class ethics, there is no scope for choice; hence, ultimately, scope for moral action²⁴. The class is necessarily related to its historical task. History conditions its particular behaviour. Hence the members of the particular revolutionary class do not choose; they act by historical necessity. The other classes are also barred from choice and initiative; if they come, it is only because they are declassed by a supra-individual process. So long as they are not declassified objectively they are not dependable. Hence the dictatorship of the historically conditioned revolutionary class is inevitable. But then, having no scope for human compulsive or individual choice, the dictatorship cannot logically wither away except by another historical subversion of the dictatorial state by the people. The process of that subversion is not logically established by Marx; instead, it is conveniently assumed. Marxists criticise the Fabians very strongly for their fond belief that radical changes in the structure of society may take place *gradually* without encountering strong institutional resistance from the vested interests and therefore without requiring any violent outburst; the theory that social revolution is the culmination of a slow, peaceful and spread-out process of social evolution is, rightly enough, explained by them as an utopian projection of wishfulness. But is the Marxian belief that after the dictatorship of the proletariat the political vested interest of the state will *gradually* wither away, any less fond, utopian or wishful? The basic problem of revolution, how all vested interest in social power may be liquidated for good, is not even properly touched by Marx or his orthodox followers; to claim that their technique of revolution resolves that problem is sheer pretension.

The individual being eliminated (temporarily, it is argued) and there being the need for class-dictatorship, the revolutionary class must be considered to be homogeneous ²⁵. But such homogeneity to actual life is an abstraction; it may be approximately achieved only by a homogeneous group inside the class with a single will. This is the Party. No communist party may have the loose or heterogeneous membership that is usual in the social-democratic, labour or liberal parties. The party of the proletariat can function only by imposing homogeneity and unilateral direction on its membership, and through it on the proletarian class and finally on society as a whole. The processes involved in bringing about this mass-homogeneity are those of reflex-conditioning and hypnotic suggestion. Social stimuli are not allowed to reach the cerebration of the individual responder; through conditioning and suggestions the response pattern is pre-determined; it traverses only the sub-thalamic system; and individuals tend to lose their distinctive contours and to grow unconsciously into automata. The communist utopia is thus completely negated in the process ²⁶.

The dictatorship of the class thus resolves itself into the dictatorship of the party. But the homogeneity of the party, like that of the class, is only hypothetical. The fact of the inequality of individual endowments (due partly to biological circumstances, partly to opportunities of growth and development) is inexorable. As a practical consequence, inside the party the key positions go to the more organisationally capable, who develop vested interests in those key positions. The party being monolithic and highly centralised, the executives now form a bureaucratic hierarchy which has a monopoly of power and runs the party in the literal sense.

What is the logic of this whole chain of development?

We have a class dictating to the rest of the exploited people (for, barring the vested interests, all others are exploited in our present society); then a party dictating to the class; finally a body of executives dictating to the party. The culminating point of the process is the Leader of the executives, who becomes the conscious absolute of social reflex-conditioning.

Turning now to the transitional state itself, the dictatorship is temporarily posited by the leadership of the proletarian class into the all-powerful state. The basis of the class-state, according to the Marxist analysis, is economic maladjustment. The proletarian state seeks to resolve this, first by nationalisation of the means of production. In the transitional phase, nationalisation divested of formality means state ownership, i.e. ownership by the party or its executive which temporarily controls the state apparatus. The next step is adjustment of distribution and exchange to production. The guiding principle in the transitional phase is: to each according to his work (except of course invalids). Here comes the most dangerous inadequacy of the pragmatic utopian aspect of the Marxian scheme. According to the Marxian formulation of the labour theory of value, the value of a commodity depends exclusively on the amount of "socially necessary labour" involved in its production. But how to assess the exchange value of a commodity and thus of the labour involved in its production?²⁷ So far as capitalist economy is concerned, Marx resolves this issue by taking over the subsistence theory of wages and reducing the exchange value of labour (in capitalism) to what is needed for the subsistence and procurement of that labour itself. And as through division, co-operation and technical development, labour goes on multiplying its value, there develops a growing volume of margin (again in capitalism) between this exchange value of labour

(wage) and its actual value (the total produce) The margin constitutes the surplus and is transformed into capital through exchange, and thus capitalism functions

But the subsistence measure cannot be expected to apply to the transitional economy. How then will the exchange value of the labour unit be assessed so that the margin of surplus may not swell to an irresolvably growing volume, threatening, as in capitalism, a cycle of crises? Here Marxian economics faces a difficulty. In communism, the problem of the exchange value of the labour unit is resolved by total abolition of the individual wage system and its replacement by a compulsory and universal social service system (This idea which is implied in the Marxian prognosis has been concretely worked out not so much by Marx's direct followers as by fabians, social democrats and similar "deviationist" and heretics). In the transition, however, prices and payments are, in terms of the then prevailing principle of distribution, bound to be assessed in terms of individual units, and unless there be a logically acceptable standard, such assessment is sure to be arbitrary. Marx in *Capital*, Vol. I, Ch. 3, states the nature and the reasons for the actual disparity between the real value and exchange value of labour; but he does not show how that illogical disparity is necessarily removed in the transitional society by the mere act of nationalisation. On the other hand, pressed by this very practical and vital problem of correlating the exchange value to the real value of labour, he finally admits, in the third volume of *Capital*, that such equalisation cannot be done on the exchange value terms of reference. If so (and we agree that it is very largely so), how can the transition principle of "to each according to his work" be acted upon? Marx himself points out in *Capital* Vol. III that there is no such thing (in capitalism) as

an isolated commodity or isolated labour unit.⁴ It is therefore all nonsense, he points out, to claim for the individual labourer any right to his commodity or whole produce. Prices of individual commodities are, according to Marx, mere devices by means of which the capitalist class shares the pool of profit. Now, if that is so, such a method of paying individual workers on the basis of their labour units can logically mean only the continuation of the capitalist mode of exploitation. Remembering that the state is dictatorial and in the transitional control of a centralised group of men, it is not unreasonable to apprehend that the fixation of exchange value (unless the subsistence principle is retained, which may be more dangerous) will be arbitrarily determined by the same body of men who (as the state) own the means of production. There being no clearly formulated principle of distribution and exchange, the transition economy is forced to follow capitalist methods in a more planned manner (the communist methods being regarded as impracticable in the transitional phase) and the only guarantee against nationalisation being made a means to plan economic inequality seems to be the good will of the state.

The above criticism is essentially theoretical. It only shows that even as a philosophy of action, the inadequacies of Marxism have a rather dangerous significance and contain an implied tendency to negate the very end it sets before itself as its social utopia. The actual happenings in the Soviet Union are only the logical consequence.

It may be said that granting these inadequacies and implied danger the story of social development is a story of class struggle, and humanity has progressed under these limitations. Thus the last defence of a faith, that it is

historical and pragmatic, may be offered. But the facts of history cannot really absolve the Marxist philosophy even on that ground.

First, the so-called revolutionary class rarely, in actual practice, is found to offer the social leadership of the revolutionary struggle. Even when they offer their help and in many cases their full support in the later phases of the struggle, they are never found to have any monopoly of the leadership. Even in the bourgeois revolutions of Europe, the initiative in the struggle for liberation came primarily from the literati and a dissatisfied section of the feudal classes along, of course, with certain elements of the bourgeois class. The socio-cultural movement called the Renaissance was no special achievement of the bourgeois trading class. A considerable section of the leadership of that movement came from people who can be classed neither as aristocrats nor as bourgeois. Rationalism and even protestantism, in spite of the class use to which they were put later on, had for their basis principles which knew no class limitations but asserted the right and responsibility of the whole of mankind to free and rational thinking and behaviour in all spheres of social and personal life. It is only because certain groups of vested interests entrenched themselves in key institutional positions that the extension of these principles (which, theoretically, have validity for all men) was forcibly limited only to the privileged few.

Further, in movements for social betterment or progress, we find people taking an initiative who have outgrown their mere class limitations and can think in terms of the good of human society as a whole and are moved to action by that sentiment. That was the cornerstone of the Platonic conception of philosopher kings. The leaders of the communist

movement, Marx, Engels and Lenin (in so far as they were not actuated by any will to power) are themselves instances of this process.

Finally, while class conflict is one of the basic features of social discord (about that no dispute is conceivable), the emergence of new ideas, values and techniques which are the main levers of social change is primarily conditional upon (1) the sensitiveness of individuals to the *demand pattern of earlier ideas, values and technology* and the possibilities of the available resources; and (2) the intensity of the individual's feeling for freedom and social good and not mere personal or class interest. While class interest may go to strengthen this social sense in many cases, the basic urge is this social sense and not class interest.

The above inadequacies were not of such catastrophic significance before World War I. With the emergence of fascism as a world counter progressive movement, however, the inadequacies have become menacing. Besides, the argument that in the epoch of expanding capitalism no other class except the proletariat can take the initiative in the subversion of existing institutions has ceased to have even that partial validity which it may once have had, as today capitalism is definitely in its contracting phase. This contraction is not merely economic but also political and socio-cultural; the so called middle classes are being forcibly "expropriated" of all their vested interests in the present social system through politico-economic regimentation, state ownership and state control and forced abolition of all the progressive achievements of bourgeois civilisation. As a consequence, they are also driven to take an initiative in defending their achievements and values. Fascism has dissipated the geographical and class barriers among the exploited peoples of the

world. Society is now divided into two clearly polarised contending forces: the people as a whole and the handful of fascists. The conflict between the capitalists and the labourers forms a sector, but not the only important one, of this basic social conflict. In this new phase of revolutionary struggle, to work on the principle of class dictatorship is not only inadequate but is sure to cause division in the ranks of the democratic forces, to drive a large section of people to moral desperation and thus contribute to the consolidation of the forces of counter revolution. The only way of revolution in the era of fascism is that of radical democracy, that is democracy not only as the ultimate end but democracy in the means and method as well.

The inadequacies of Marxism as the philosophy of social revolution thus come out most clearly in the concrete context of modern counter-revolution. Its ineptitude has become no less obvious than the obsolescence of parliamentary democracy. Neither communism with its class dictatorship method and class interest motivation, nor parliamentary democracy with its atomised institutional pattern and basic economic inequities, could or can mobilise people effectively in an organised fight against counter-revolution to build up a truly democratic society.

The above observations indicate two alternative perspectives for Marxian philosophy. If Marxists still persist in over-emphasising the socialist dictatorial and deterministic tendencies at the expense of the individuating, democratic and moral requirements of social revolution, the philosophy of the Master will end tragically in the ultimate liquidation of its own progressive heritage. On the other hand, if those requirements are properly integrated into those tendencies, Marxism may still become the harbinger of a new social renaissance.

In the following sections we will humbly venture to indicate the probable lines on which Marxian philosophy may be expanded and re-formulated to grow into the integrated philosophy of the modern renaissance and democratic revolution. Such a philosophy alone, we believe, can save Marxism (and with it our present civilisation) from facing an inglorious dead end. And that surely is the best homage that we can pay to the greatest philosopher of the last century and one of the greatest social revolutionaries of all time.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RADICALISM

"Certain ideologies and certain myths seem to be indestructible, and centuries pass without witnessing their decline. They have been based on certain 'constant' of the human heart, and thus call forth an echo at all times "

H. Arthurs : La Genese des Myths

"Let us then be guided by the great myth of socialism, of love, of humanity, of liberty, basing our action on science, which offers us the sole means of one day converting this myth into reality"

S. Chakotin : The Rape of the Masses, p. 288.

"The defenders of human liberty should boldly oppose both causal and transcendental necessity, so closely bound to each other in many harmful ways, but there is no need to go into battle, as they often do, against the logical necessity of historiography which is indeed the very premise of that liberty."

B. Croce : History as the Story of Liberty, p. 31.

Communism had emerged as a philosophy and a movement as capitalist culture and social pattern began to show definite signs of exhaustion. Radical democracy emerged as a philosophy and a movement when communism had ceased to be a mere revolutionary utopia, had been put to practice, and found to be undergoing the process of obsolescence.

On the other hand, it must not be thought that the radical democratic movement and philosophy is a merely contemporary phenomenon. Communism also has a long tradition that goes back to days before capitalism had become a socio-cultural reality. The ideas and values emerged as direct response to other patterns of ideas and values and hence may be traced back to periods which may not have any adequate socio-economic correlates to explain their emergence. The communist utopia can therefore be traced to periods which can be described only by scholastic *tour de force* as offering adequate structural explanation. Similarly, the philosophy

of radical democracy has a tradition that is almost synchronous with the history of human culture. Its basic values, its attitude to life, its interpretation of history, its major philosophical concepts may be traced back in their crude form to early rationalists and democrats. If one cared to trace back its philosophical tradition, one may find in the sweep a queer assortment of thinkers and systems that may be apparently antagonistic to each other...e.g., Plato, Epicurus, Zeno, More, Vico, Bacon, Leibniz, Fourier, Wynstansly, Paine, Rousseau, Marx, Proudhon, Lassalle to refer of hand to some of the more prominent among them. Each, however, has his or its many sided distinctiveness and though the formulation of the radical democratic philosophy of history and revolution owes much to their enquiries and ideals, none of them will surely care to take the responsibility of what is tentatively formulated for considerations in the following pages.

Radical democracy as a philosophy and a movement of crucial historic significance crystallised only during the inter war decades when on the one hand all the atavistic systems of the past had come to consolidate in fascism and communism was found wanting in the imperative task of consolidating the progressive values of past human history and offering the way out of the universal socio-cultural crisis with which we were faced. It emerged as the response of the forces of revolution to the contemporary catastrophe as the Renaissance had emerged against the Dark Ages, or Marxism against capitalism. Thus while radical democracy is no novel phenomenon in the history of human progress towards freedom and harmony, it is at the same time a definitely contemporary movement that has emerged out of the requirements of the contemporary socio-cultural crisis.

The word socio-cultural is used purposively. The crisis

is not, as many thoughtful people seem still to believe, merely socio-economic. Fascism is no-less cultural than a politico-economic phenomenon that has resulted not merely from the decay of capitalism but also (and this I believe is equally important) from the complete inadequacy of communism to lead the forces of progress. The inadequacy of the philosophy and perspective of communism led to the winning over of masses of people by the forces of reaction and the cynical inertia of the intellectuals who refused to welcome reaction but who were not enthused by the prospect of a communist line-up. The crisis therefore is very largely cultural: the pressing issue has been, during the interwar decades, the emergence of a new philosophy of life which offers as a necessary corollary the plan of a new society and a practicable method of realising the same with the material available.

It is as a response to this socio-cultural emergency that the philosophy of radical democracy, its perspective of social organisation and its method of realising that perspective emerged during the interwar period. The close of the present war found the emergency reaching its crucial phase. Social forces all over the world are found to be fumbling their way to the radical democratic response. The structural pattern for the emergence of radical democratic society is set; but its dynamic will remain slow till it finds a functional correlate in the consciousness of those forces that can build it up. Hence it is of vital importance to history that the perspective and philosophy of radical democracy be clearly formulated and that it penetrates into more and more individuals so that an organised international leadership of the next social revolution may emerge.

The present paras endeavour to outline a method (from recent scientific investigations bearing on that issue) which

may help to guide philosophical systematisation of available data. I have myself followed this method in the earlier critical observations and in the following constructive venture. Such readers (who may be many) who are more interested in the formulation than in the principles of the method underlying it and who may find the present section rather abstruse, are advised to skip over section five. The validity or comprehensibility of the general argument, I think, will not theretoby be affected.

The first test of any philosophy is its epistemological formulation. How is knowledge formed? It is the answer to this question that determines whether a philosophy will be empiricist or idealist, materialist or metaphysical. Most of the earlier philosophies foundered on this issue. As a consequence, they constructed a false duality between illusion and reality which ultimately lead to the irreconcilable polarisation of existence into matter and consciousness, theory and practice, pure reason and categorical imperative. This false duality, for these earlier philosophers, could be averted only by resolving reality into either of this pair of categories to the total exclusion of the other.

The data of modern science bearing on this question of epistemology makes such dualism untenable. Instead, it provides for a more adequate and consistent explanation of the nature of Existence and of the process by which knowledge is formed. The so-called subject or knower in the act of knowledge forms a point event in the objective continuum of endless point-events which is the reality of modern science. The existence of the continuum can be proved only through its apprehension in the individual point-events. At the same time, however, the continuum itself exists objectively and compasses within it the individual point-event as an element.

This perspective of relativity physics therefore solves the duality of subjectivism and objective reality. The subjective exists in the objective but the objective itself becomes the object of knowledge only through its reflection in the subjective.

But at first sight, the problem of illusion remains. If as relativity physics says, the continuum appears different from every point-event, then how can one reach any objective general validity in knowledge? This problem can be solved only by including in the above perspective three further considerations brought to prominence by the researches of physics, biology and psychology of knowledge. They are the law of approximation, the law of probability and the law of epistemological progress.

There is no moment in history when absolute knowledge may be reached. But at the same time the point-events are in a continuum. Therefore, the response of each point-event to the total has a certain common denominator: the continuum itself. Knowledge thus involves the individual point-event which is unique and the continuum which is public and common. That alone makes communication of response possible. To each point-event, the continuum is the other which is apprehended. The apprehensions of the continuum are then formulated by individual point-events; they are compared and a certain common pattern which is the denominator of the continuum itself emerges out of that comparison. The deductions from the comparison gives the various categories which then form the design of the contemporary knowledge of existence. The relative validity of that knowledge depends on the range and number of the responses that have been compared and out of which the categories have been deduced. The second criterion of validity is the coherence of the cate-

gories among themselves, i.e., in how far they are consistent with each other. The validity however is always approximate. The source of uncertainty and development in knowledge (and the resulting attitude of scepticism) is to be found (1) in the inclusion of more and more point events in the apprehension of the individual point event; and (2) in the very dynamic nature of the continuum itself. Greater approximation to validity in knowledge comes from the inclusion of more and more data into the ranges of apprehension of individual point-events and the achievement of greater and greater coherence among the categories reached through the incorporation of new data.

Relativity physics in its philosophical implications, therefore, throws much light on the difficult and vital question of scientific method. That method incorporates both the principles of empirical induction and the laws of mathematico-logical coherence. First, the categories of knowledge are reached through the collection and comparison of data (or the responses of the point-events to the continuum) and they are therefore neither *apriori* nor absolute. In the process of collection and comparison the principles of induction are strictly followed. These principles are themselves neither final nor absolute, but change and grow.

The inductive method is then necessarily supplemented by the symbolic or logico mathematical. The inductive investigation of the empirical data results in the formulation of categories. The categories then are considered as symbols of relationships subsisting among actualities. As, however, the accumulation of data becomes unwieldy and extremely complicated to be merely handled through inductive reasoning, it becomes necessary to evolve a science of these symbols themselves and to study their internal logic. To conclude from

this development that reality thereupon becomes abstract and ideational, as many philosophers seem to do, would be to confuse a method of logical understanding with existence as a whole. What happened in fact however provides no justification for such confusion. The science of mathematical logic is concerned with evolving a methodology for the study of categories which have been empirically reached but which, for this science, constitute the data for investigation. It thus constitutes only a developed stage in process of scientific investigation and has nothing to do with the metaphysical resolution of the objective world into symbols or abstract ideas.

This leads us to the second and third pointers in our methodology of knowledge, the concept of probability and that of knowledge as a development. In no moment does one point-event comprehend consciously the entire continuum. That being so the categories are never absolute; they are subject to the necessity of constant revision in the light of new aspects of the continuum coming within the liminal level. Hence in so far as our knowledge is concerned, the one dimensional relation of cause and effect between one pattern of events and another requires vital modification. The conscious correlation of the total point-event pattern in the continuum being fractional or inadequate, the perspective of deterministic relation between the causal pattern and the effect pattern ceases to be scientifically valid. Instead, the relation is one of multi-fold probabilities of development of which some may loom large in the light of available data. This does not mean, however, the absolute of scepticism. All that it means is greater approximation to the objective pattern of change through incorporation of the element of probability. On the one hand, this makes the mechanistic formulation of absolute determinism altogether irrelevant; on the other, it liquidates the

dualism between illusion and reality by incorporating the principles of flexibility and expansion in scientific formulation. This pointer further has a very large and fundamental bearing on practice, in particular on social planned practice. The duality between pure and practical reason is resolved; in formulating a perspective of social developments and normative response, the formulator is now expected to take into consideration the various probable alternatives and to allow for adjustment of practice to the probability that may become more prominent. This however must not be misunderstood to imply any sanction for opportunism. Instead, it saves one from volte face manoeuvres that characterise most 'practical' theoreticians in every crucial phase of history.

The third pointer is the logical corollary of the first two. In the context of incorporation of new data and the allowance for the probable alternatives of adjustment, knowledge can be visualised only as a process and never as a result of revealed wisdom. Knowledge becomes an endless historical process and the concept of omniscient absolute revealing itself becomes altogether redundant.

It may be more convenient, if, before proceeding to elaborate the details of the philosophy of Radicalism, we formulate its basic principles. These principles are deduced as much from our critical consideration of humanism and Marxism as from an application of the aforementioned method to social history.

The philosophy of Radicalism is essentially materialistic It is materialistic in the sense that it incorporates the logical implication of modern sciences concerning the nature of what is vaguely described as reality. This reality has its own existence apart from knowledge; it is not exhausted in the apprehension of the individual point-event. In this, Radicalism is

thus opposed to both subjective idealism and empiricism. It further submits that the categories of knowledge are but approximate formulations of the laws of the continuum and that the continuum itself may not be identified with the epistemological symbols. In this, it is thus opposed to objective idealism as well. It considers science to be an approximate formulation of reality, hence it is only an aspect of reality and there is no reason to consider it to be the whole of it.

Radicalism is anti-mechanistic and asserts the creative role of knowledge in the dynamic process of reality. Mechanistic materialism logically implies a static pattern of universe. There are of course mechanists who profess to believe in change. But for them change is preconditioned by the setting preceding. But once the absoluteness of this preconditioning is allowed, change itself becomes logically unnecessary and inconsistent.

Radicalism, on the other hand, considers change as the basic law of existence. The nature of change has however taken a qualitative orientation with the emergence, in the process, of sensate organisms capable of making choice through partial inhibition of external stimuli and canalisation of response. In formulating this position, it draws largely from recent findings in the biological and social sciences. With the entry of the element of choice in the process of change, change itself begins to take a partially purposive orientation. Responses begin (especially, and probably for the first time, in the case of homo-sapiens) to be systematised into categories and laws; these in their turn provide means whereby the process of response to the situational pattern may itself be controlled by the responder. From chemico-physical logic of reaction we pass to a new phase of vital response. That of course does not eliminate the earlier logic; only that logic is further enriched and complicated by new factors. These

factors necessitate a restatement of the earlier laws. Logic and mathematics cease to be merely science of symbols of inorganic forms but take more and more a human orientation. Change itself becomes more anthropocentric; the pragmatic claim of making man the measure of things (a vain boast probably when first formulated) comes to have increasingly decisive bearing on the laws of the changing continuum. This qualitatively new development in the pattern of change can be explained only when the creative role of knowledge and ideas is properly recognised. Thus the modern scientific knowledge of the structure and working of atom may lead to not only revolutionary changes in the structure of human society but in the structure of the universe as a whole. The face of the earth was greatly changed with the discovery of the different trade routes with the various inventions in mining, road-building and other forms of engineering. The world of the microbes felt this qualitative orientation in the pattern of change with the discoveries of Pasteur. Science has come to canalise very largely the process of change. It is only because even today the sciences have not been coordinated to offer a philosophy of life that this anthropocentric orientation of universal change still remains erratic and undecided; the emergence of such a synthetic philosophy will make the creative and decisive role of knowledge in the shaping of the pattern of change more obvious and definite. Radicalism, in opposition to mechanical materialism, therefore points to this emerging trend in history, this gradual humanisation of the so-called neutral processes of the universe.

It is of course true that as yet this human control over the neutral processes of the Universe is not significantly intensive nor covers a sufficiently wide range to effect any over all qualitative change in the world process. Nevertheless

what is to be noted is that with organic evolution, the purposive behaviour of organisms is coming more and more to mould their environment to a gradual subordination of non-organic influences, that social evolution is a story of the intensification and extension of such purposive influences on environmental process, and that in the age of atom, we stand very near to the probability of a humanly controlled world revolution.

Radicalism is essentially rationalistic and admits of no proposition which is not consistent with the findings of contemporary science, which can not be logically formulated and which claims to transcend experimentation and analysis. This does not mean that it accepts modern science as absolute. Instead, it more than any thing else considers science to be a process and therefore is insistent on continuous examination of its postulates. Nevertheless, so long as the conclusions of contemporary science are not proved inadequate through new research, it refuses to allow validity to any formulation that is inconsistent with these conclusions on mere sanction of authority or mass acceptance. It takes due note of the prevalence and working of irrational forces in human response; as a matter of fact it emerged out of such recognition. But it refuses to accept any irrational explanation of the phenomenon of irrationality. It seeks to go to the roots of the various psychoses and to find out in terms of the categories of science their true nature. It allows no special prerogative to illusions, it considers them as data for thorough investigation. It also allows for no obscurantism in the formulation of correlation between events.

The perspective of Radicalism may be described for lack of better terms as one of pluralistic monism. It is monistic because it allows reason to be the only dependable instrument for the

investigation of occurrences; also because it traces some objective pattern of mathemeticological laws underlying not only knowledge but also the entire space-time continuum; and lastly because its criterion of progress is harmonisation. But harmony is definitely opposed to homogeneity. The concept of harmony implies on the one hand a monistic pattern and on the other the existence of an infinitude of distincts. Radicalism finds in history a movement from homogeneous masses to the evolution of distinct individualities experimenting in various forms of harmonisation between themselves. It recognises that this movement is not direct, unilinear or unchecked; as a matter of fact history has too many examples of failure in this endeavour; it has happened time and again that the distincts that have evolved through a long painful process have again lapsed back to homogeneous mass forms. It is also true that in the process of the emergence of distincts, they are often found amassed into opposed groups. Nevertheless, the basic pattern of evolution, in so far as it is evolution, is to be found in the emergence of distincts and in the opening prospect of their relatively unfettered experiments in harmonisation among themselves. Radicalist approach to the history of human civilisation finds in the development of ideas a relatively autonomous process of interaction and emergence. At the same time, however, it points out that process of ideational development is largely (though not absolutely) a reflection of developments in the material pattern. What, however, is emphasised is the fact that the ideational and the material elements form points in the total whole of the situational pattern and also that with evolution the ideational elements begin to find progressively decisive importance in the shaping of total developments. The acceptance of new ideas in institutional life however depends on the material (and very largely

on the politico-economic) setting. The combined resistance of institutional inertia and the low national and cultural standard of the common people may prove, at least for a period, too much for the new idea to irradiate in a social movement and its metabolic effect may not be immediately noticeable in social life. It is only when the emergence of a new idea or set of ideas does not remain the mere response of highly sensitive individuals to the inadequacies and requirements of existing ideas but also is the expression of aliveness to the basic social need of the age, that it finds the historic possibility of general social acceptance and employment.

The attitude of Radicalism to the future of humanity is neither optimistic nor pessimistic but is a *synthesis of activism with* what Mannheim has described as *relationalism*. While analysing the actual human situation, it allows no intrusion of desire or will. It traces the available resources, finds out the various possibilities, indicates the necessity of a certain type of response from the point of view of human interest and formulates the means and method of helping to bring about such a response from a decisively large section of humanity. At the same time, being not a mere analyst, it urges action on the part of those who admit of these formulations. If it finds the resources or the response to be inadequate, it all the more stresses the need for concentrated effort. It however holds no false hope based on an anthropocentric teleology. Without being pessimistic, however, it seeks to adjust the methodology of action to the possibility of available resources. In short, Radicalism may be described as a philosophy based on the application of science and reason to individual behaviour and social relationship.

The Radicalist value criterion is the synthesis of a twofold consideration. The first is maximal distinctiveness for indi-

viduals, the second, maximal harmonisation between individuals. Both of these may, in their two concrete aspects, be described as freedom and progress. Whatever institution or code of behaviour conduces to produce greater individual freedom and social progress is valuable. The greater its conduciveness to this effect, the greater its value.

By freedom is meant opportunity of the distinct to make experiments in its response to the situational pattern. This is of course the perspective of a code from the individual's point of view. By progress is meant the diminishing chances of an individual's experimentations obstructing the freedom of another. It is thus the code as looked at from the social point of view.

In one phrase, the criterion may be described as the harmonisation of distincts in some institutional or organised form.

Judged from this point of view, reason becomes the supreme value. So also, sincerity is valuable; also technological invention, symbolic precision, cooperation, distribution and production according to actual human requirements, moral integrity, flexibility and sensitiveness, love of men, aesthetic sensitivity and creative powers etc., etc. Whatever personal or social function goes to obviate difficulties in the way of individuation and cooperation becomes a value for a Radical Democrat.

Turning now to the politico-economic formulations of Radical philosophy, there is the great advantage of having Marx's life long industry behind such endeavour. Nowhere probably the indebtedness of contemporary revolutionary thought to Marx is more clearly and universally acknowledged than on this issue. Marx established with overwhelming evidence and unambiguous logic how capitalist economy is involved in a basic contradiction between the mode of production and the mode of distribution. This contradiction has today

reached a stage where unless distribution is completely readjusted to production, all economic institutions are bound to disintegrate in a process of long persisting crisis, and in reaction, to tend towards precapitalist modes. The problem is to liquidate the bottleneck of accumulating surplus and this can be done by accepting the principle of production for use in the place of production for profit. The acceptance of that principle will mean the planned correlation of production to actual human demand, the liquidation of monopoly, the control of investment, the rejection of what Marx called money fetishism, and its replacement by the concept of exchange as a means to adjust resources to requirements, equal-distribution of surplus through raised wages, lower prices and most of all through expansion of universal social utility services.

Further, pressing the logic of capitalist development, it is found that as it expands, capitalism finally tends to smooth out the initial disparity of development between national groups of capitalists and thus leads logically in the period of its international exhaustion to the process of decolonisation and de-imperialisation. This only means the emergence of world capitalism and in no way posits any improvement in the condition of the initially backward peoples. But at the same time such international smoothening out of capitalist development tends to bring the entire human society (barring the few exploiters) to a recognition of its common interests irrespective of class, national or group affiliation, and thus to the emergence of international democratic forces against international reaction. The struggle for freedom and progress thus ceases to have a merely class or national character; it becomes a common international social struggle against international anti-social elements.

While adjustment between production and distribution

necessarily means social planning, that planning must not only be social but also democratic. This means that planning must provide adequate safeguard for individual freedom and initiative. It means that planning must not only assure increasing productivity and better standard of living, but also increasing opportunity to individuals to make experiments. The institution of cooperatives, both producers' and consumers', form the basic pattern of democratic planning.

Politically, the radical democratic state must ensure individual freedom against any form of power monopoly. It is possible only by organising individuals into cooperatively functioning social bodies and by negating the tendency towards individualistic atomisation, bureaucratisation of administrative functions and executive specialisation. The concrete formulation of the units of such organised democracy is to be found in the radical democratic conception of the people's committee, which is basically akin to the idea of the soviet. Liberty of opinion should be permitted to the point where it does not go direct against the very principle of individual freedom. On the other hand the right of the people to subvert any state machinery that seek to use power against popular will and interest forms the basic law of Radical Democracy.

The politics of Radicalism can be realised in the form of a state only when people cease to be masses, become individuals, are organised on the basis of active cooperation, and the state becomes a function not of groups, classes or parties but of society as whole.

The bearings of the philosophy of Radicalism on the method and means of achieving social change are probably the most important and constitute a major departure from most of the prevailing views concerning the same. Though their formulation is derived from a general consideration of

civilised human history, it has a specific relevance to the exigencies of the contemporary social crisis.

In the present context of Fascism, the established state can not be subverted to the end of achieving social revolution by any class dictatorship or by any monolithic party. The leadership of the revolutionary movement must itself be democratic in composition and in its method of struggle. Class dictatorship can not be successfully opposed by another class dictatorship: we mean by success, the achievement of social emancipation and not some political *coup d'état* or capture of state power by a group of people. The leadership must have a multiclass composition, or rather, it is not of a class character but of the nature of a social opposition to a decreasing minority of anti-social elements. In this phase of decadent capitalism, the basic struggle is not so much a class struggle as a social struggle, not primarily between capitalist and proletariat, but between a few anti social elements interested in maintaining the present decaying order and the overwhelming majority of the people with a common interest of subverting that order and of constructing a planned but libertarian society.

The political struggle for social emancipation must be synchronously supplemented by a countrywide renaissance movement. The cultural liberation of the masses, of course, can be completed only after politico-economic power has been transferred to their representatives, but it would be wrong to conclude therefrom, as many so-called revolutionaries seem to conclude at least in their attitude to struggle, that the philosophical revolution on a social scale will happen only after the political movement has led to transfer of power to the revolutionaries. That is an entirely false (and quite dangerous too), approach to the process of democratic revolution. The

revolution itself is not possible unless a sufficient number of individuals emerge out of the masses to assume leadership of the movement, and such emergence is not possible without the ideological movement assuming a decisive proportion. The renaissance movement must go hand in hand with the process of politico-economic organisation of the people on democratic lines. The disdainful attitude towards renaissance activities that prevails in major political circles, therefore, betrays a lack of appreciation of the nature of democratic revolution; if it stiffens into a positive attitude, as it did in Nazi Germany, it becomes expressly counter-revolutionary.

The democratic leadership of the political movement must work through the organisation of the people's committees, which through a pattern of pyramidal inter relationship will constitute the democratic people's states within the state of the existing vested interests. The people's committees will be constituted of the representatives of the local people on unrestricted adult franchise basis and must function as the state unit of the locality organised. When such committees are formed in sufficient number and are distributed over the length and breadth of a certain state, they link up and become the sovereign people's state *in law* which they had already become in practice. In the context of such political development, it may be expected that the existing state is no more in a position to function or exert its will and therefore voluntarily consents to its formal liquidation. If, however, it does not accept the logic of the situation, its forcible overthrow becomes a mere matter of gesture.

The movement for democratic social revolution to be initiated, however, needs a leadership. This is the Party. But the aim of the Party is to outgrow all its monolithic tendencies and to grow into a democratic party of the people.

The process is to expand the local Party units into functioning people's committees and ultimately to make the Party resolved into country wide institutions of organised democracy. Thus while initially, there is a distinction between the Party and the masses of people, the process towards social revolution implies the gradual spreading out of the Party among the people by transforming its own units into units of active and organised democracy and finally resolving the Party into the social organisation of the people themselves. This is the significance of describing the Party of radical democracy as a people's party and not a class (proletarian) party. This orientation of party organisation alone can ensure the emergence of a truly democratic society in the course of struggle with the present society of vested interest and negate the possibility of the emergence of a new oligarchy out of the struggle for social emancipation. That alone may ensure democracy against the eventual development of class or party dictatorship or any form of elitocracy or power monopoly.

After the previous outline statement of principles, we may now venture to a comparatively detailed elaboration of such among them as have direct bearing on the problem of social revolution. In particular as Radicalism is primarily a philosophy of social revolution, it is imperative that the following issues are clearly raised and an unambiguous approach is presented concerning the same. The issues, as treated below, respectively are : What are the major incentives of revolutionary action ? What is the criterion of social progress ? What are the factors for social change ? What may be the means and method by which the much needed democratic revolution may be achieved in our age ?

There is action and action. The ideal of Radicalism can be worked out only by human beings; hence the type of action

with which radical philosophy is concerned is human action. Here again the ideal of Radicalism is a social ideal; human action in this context is primarily social action. Further, radical action is concerned with changing the foundation of the present order of life, otherwise it will not be radical at all. The changing of the foundation through social action requires conscious understanding of the laws of social change as also a correct appreciation of the present pattern of social living both in its superstructural and foundational aspects. The action must therefore be conscious and rational. Besides, the knowledge of the present and the conscious working for the future implies choice. The action is therefore moral as well. And because the subversion of the present pattern from the foundations warrants little personal benefit in the immediate context and tremendous organised opposition from the existent institutions, the action is not only moral but to a certain extent highly idealistic or, to use a much maligned term, utopian, requiring great moral integrity and strong and sustained power of imagination.

It is action of this type which alone can be described as revolutionary, at least from the subjective point of view. The incentive for such revolutionary action is twofold. The first of this is a basic desire for freedom; and the second is a recognition of the organic relationship between the individual and social weal. Without these incentives, there may be mechanical convulsions in social life; but unless these incentives orientate such convulsions, they can only end in counter-convulsions and can not be properly described as social revolutions at all.

It was not recognised until very recently how the incentive of freedom is suppressed in most people by a stronger psychological force, that of the fear of freedom. This might appear

surprising to many, but history provides small evidence to prove that the incentive of freedom was ever strong enough with a sufficient number of people to guarantee institutional life against degeneration into power monopoly by the few. That has been and still is the basic problem of democratic organisation. Organisation implies certain amount of discipline and concentration; unless individuals are sufficiently developed morally and intellectually, even the most democratic of all institutions may succumb to one type of trusteeship or another. The world wide triumph of Fascism is no more a politico-economic than psychological phenomenon. It has established beyond doubt that the majority of human beings are neither competent nor willing to run their institutional life themselves: they prefer to hand over their personal responsibilities to a body of so-called superiors. They prefer to be reflex conditioned masses than to be moral individuals. The supreme problem of our time is to devise means whereby humanity ceases to function as masses and society becomes a cooperative institution of individuals. The working of a sufficient number of individuals in cooperation, moved by the incentive of freedom and seeking to instill into others the same spirit can alone save humanity from the fascist goosestepping.

What then is this incentive of freedom? Freedom means conscious choice between alternate ways of responding to environment. Freedom is essentially a rational and moral concept. It implies understanding of the relation between stimuli and response, not the physiologist's knowledge of course, but a strong and disciplined common sense apprehension of the relationship. It then implies a knowledge of alternatives, for there is always an alternative to conditioning by foreign forces, the alternative of defiance and persecution. Then there is a certain standard by applying which the choice-

is to be made. The two final standards of *mora* action are the two incentives themselves. That which assures greater scope for free choice to the individual is to be chosen to the alternative that may eventually narrow the range of choice. The second consideration is based on an extended application of the first principle to society as a whole. That which assures greater freedom to the individual without causing any constriction of the range of choice of other individuals is naturally the better choice to that which offers freedom to one at the cost of others. This second principle constitutes the second incentive for revolutionary action. The basic incentive is of course love of freedom. That love leads to the realisation that the constriction of the freedom of another is basically a prospective menace to the freedom of oneself. One's own freedom can be best assured when it is grounded in the freedom of others. Because, in that case others will be equally anxious to protect your freedom when their freedom is organically conditioned by the maintenance of yours. Democratic society can be based only on a rational reconciliation of the freedom prospects of the maximum number of individual constituents of the society.*

The basic incentives of true revolutionary action are therefore neither class interest, nor economic crisis nor political breakdown. These factors of course may go to accentuate the incentives of freedom and social good; as a matter of fact the

*Comrade Spratt thinks that 'freedom is an abstraction', that the primary 'incentive is love of men'; I think, however, that love of men is a secondary, though very vital and valuable, sentiment and is the emergent of a historical process in which the primitive group instinct is being purified of its unconscious, passive and self abnegating character by a sense of personal responsibility, rational choice and need for voluntarily formed human ties. The expression, 'love of men,' stands for, I believe, the stage when the inductively reached recognition of the need for social harmony becomes so habitual as to be an instinct with the individual.

subversion of the existent social order can be achieved only through sufficient manpower pressure, and such pressure is largely brought about by the crises, political and economic, and the resultant amassing of human forces into groups or classes. An economic crisis results in the pauperisation of a large number of people; it throws many out of employment; it deprives a number of smaller exploiters of their means of exploitation. In consequence, it may make these people interested in the subversion of the present social order and drive them willynilly to accept the lead of the revolutionaries. Further, the crisis weakens the bonds of the existent institutions and thus makes their subversion less difficult. Similarly a break down in the state machinery means the disintegration of that very pattern of power which holds together the design of the existent society. Nevertheless, all these concatenation, however favourable, can not bring about a social revolution. It is a painful fact of history that inspite of a series of political debacles and economic exhaustion, a social order may continue to presist even in a state of putrid decomposition without being replaced by a better social order. On the other hand, there are instances where the revolution started as the afore mentioned incentives began functioning in a few sensitive and courageous people even though neither politico-economic crisis nor fullscale class polarisation had come at that moment to complement that process. The breakdown of mediaeval social order was overdue. It did not happen for centuries because the incentives were not sufficiently strong with a significant section of the people. The socialist challenge to capitalism began long before capitalism was exhausted or the polarisations of modern society into the capitalist and the proletarian classes had reached a historically significant stage. The social convulsions that had resulted from

of choice, and fourthly, does not impede the exercise of choice by other members of society. An act will be considered better than another when it approximates the above requirements to a greater degree. From the point of view of institutional ethics, an institution is considered superior (or more progressive) which, on the positive side, provides for greater opportunity of freedom for a large number of its membership as well as stronger incentives for the exercise of that opportunity and, as a necessary corollary, brings about maximal harmonisation of interests and, on the negative side, obviates formal rigidity or resistance to individual choice and creates conditions for the elimination of conflicts between individuals as well as groups. To achieve this end, the society must increase the productivity of its labour resources, must equate the modes of production and distribution, must seek to negate any concentration of power into the hands of a privileged few and must plan irradiation of opportunities, rights and utilities on an equitable basis. It shall have to ensure the highest standard of living possible at the moment when it exists and functions, standard both material and cultural, to the maximal number of its membership. The criterion of social progress therefore becomes not mere technological advancement (which is a means, though undoubtedly essential) but its employment to ensure greater scope for freedom to the largest number of people and greater harmonisation of interests with minimum dissipation of resources.

From the above point of view, changes in institutional adjustment may be due to the operation of not one or two but a large number of factors. Among these, three may be catalogued as having decisive influence: First, the total pattern due to its inherent institutional inertia tends at every moment to become inadequate to provide sufficient oppor-

tunities for operation of new individual elements : these new elements may be individual men, new experiences, scientific or technological inventions and discoveries, or even new ideas and ideals. The new factors then constantly impinge on the existing pattern and seek to expand or subvert the same. Secondly, there are internal contradictions in the existing adjustments and these contradictions constantly demand harmonisation, bring about a cycle of crises and ultimately disintegrate the present institutional ties. Thirdly, institutions so far have always led to concentration of power and privileges in the hands of minorities and the consequent deprivation of the majority of people of the benefits of social life. A section of the minority (or even various sections) naturally begin to demand a more equitable distribution of resources, opportunities and power. We have, as a result, a series of conflicts in social history, conflicts between individuals and institutions, between new ideas and old forms, between new resources and old modes, between contradictory modes or laws inside the same institution, between vested interests and the deprived people, and between group and group, class and class, nation and nation.

These constitute the structural aspect of social change. Such changes however, can become progressive only when their dynamic is definitely oriented by the incentives referred to before. Unless social conflicts and convulsions come under the ideological hegemony of these incentives they remain barren and destructive. Conflicts become creative of better social adjustments only when the forces of social subversion are motivated by the idea of ensuring greater freedom to individuals and better harmonisation among them on an equitable basis.

The same analysis applies to the issue of personal adjust-

ments. The pattern of personality at any moment is torn between old elements and new and is also constantly under assault from widening ranges of experiences, necessities and ideas. These lead to internal disturbances, ambivalence, various psychoses, internal disequilibrium and pathological developments. At the same time, they open prospects of richer readjustment of mental make up and growth of personality. The best personality adjustment is the one that provides for maximal scope for new influences and stimuli to be harmonised with the minimal inhibition of drives. Progress in personal change is to be assessed in terms of the widening ranges of factors composing the pattern of personality and the degree of internal coherence and flexibility of that pattern. Such morals and institutions may be considered good as facilitate development of individual character in this way.

Social convulsions take place as old forms exhaust all possibility of peacefully adjusting themselves to the pressure of new forces and of resolving their internal contradictions. A social convulsion basically needs two factors : the complete exhaustion of old forms and accumulation of new forces to the point of physically forcing a break up of the existing bottleneck.

A convulsion takes revolutionary significance when the leadership of the subversive forces are consciously motivated by the incentives of greater freedom and better social harmonisation. A convulsive movement oriented in this way becomes a revolution proper when actually through planned co-operative work greater freedom and superior harmonisation are achieved for the old and the new forces through the creative emergence of new social institutions, codes and relationships.

While the revolutionary incentives start with the individual, their successful working out (to bring about the necessary

social mutation) is not possible on the basis of individual effort. The task of a revolution is not merely to change the make up of a certain individual or even a number of individuals, but to radically transform a certain institutional pattern with its complex body of relationships, laws and modes of living. Every existing social institution so far has been found to be based on the creation and preservation of certain monopolistic vested interests. These interests, while always a minority numerically speaking, are also the most well organised, having devised the entire institutional apparatus to protect their individual and group interest. The institutions of political and social administration, of the church and the law, of the army and the experts, the machineries of production and exchange are all devised to serve as instruments to uphold their power and privilege monopoly. Naturally, no individual, however integrated or intelligent, strong and freedomloving, can hope to combat the organised strength of existing vested interests all by himself. Truly speaking, the picture of Aeschylean Prometheus is much more historical than the highly inspiring hero of Shelley's lyrical play. No Prometheus can subvert the order of King Zeus unless he has organised behind him a large section of the oppressed people of the earth. Further, any institutional subversion brought about by any Prometheus with mere passive mass support is bound to lead to the erection of a new monopoly of power; the only security against the degeneration of a social struggle against existing vested interests into the consolidation of a new form of power-monopoly is the active and conscious participation of a large section of common people not as masses but as co-operatively organised individuals in the struggle against the present order and in the creation of a better one.

Hence the means to bring about social revolution is not the lonely effort of a freedom-loving individual, but the conscious and disciplined organisation of the revolutionaries. Such an organisation is described in common parlance as a revolutionary political party. While a revolutionary movement can and does generally start with the active nonconformism of individual revolutionaries, it can not reach the phase of a significant struggle unless the activities of these individuals are co-ordinated into the form of an organization. Such an organisation is indispensable for the successful revolutionary subversion of the existent order and the effective introduction of the new.

What will be the composition of a revolutionary party? In the phase of decay of an existent social order, none but the small group of people enjoying monopoly of power and privileges can have any conscious interest in its preservation. Hence except for that small body of vested interests, all the remaining members of the society may be made to participate in the subversion of the same. Further, if the programme of the revolution is sufficiently wide and flexible to promise expanding opportunity of freedom and benefit to the people as a whole then the entire people may also take direct part in the building up of that society. The composition of the revolutionary party, therefore, is not restricted to any particular section of society. It only excludes the vested interest section of the society and even then, some of the members of this group have often been found to outgrow their sectional interest in the hour of the social crisis and to join the forces of revolution. The revolutionary organisation, to achieve the end of the social revolution, must not be monopolised by any class or group. It must be an organisation of the people: every individual recognising the obsolescence of the existent

order and moved by the incentives of freedom and social weal may join the revolutionary party. The party of revolution must be a people's party and not a class or exclusivist party.

It happens nevertheless that while the basic incentives to revolution remain constant, the specific forces that press for social transformation change with every new phase in social history. These forces are primarily structural developments; further, certain social group or other is the human correlate of the new forces. Naturally, they have a greater proneness than others to take the social initiative in the struggle. The group, however, by itself can not even completely subvert the present institutions: it is altogether impossible for it to complete the programme of social revolution so long as it works as an independent group. Revolutions take place only when such groups succeed to mobilise behind them the organised support of the common people by agreeing to a programme which assures to the people more freedom and social good.

A third contributory influence (which since the general acceptance of the economic interpretation of history has come to be generally neglected, but which nevertheless is of most decisive importance in social history) may also be noted in this connection. In every social revolution, the moral and ideological initiative is found invariably to come from the more freedom-loving and socially minded section of the intelligentsia. It has become a common fashion even on the part of the members of the intelligentsia themselves, to ascribe vacillation, treachery and opportunism almost exclusively to this section of the people. Yet it was the membership of the intelligentsia that fought and shed their blood against forcible preservation of obsolescent social institutions

from the days of the Greek, the Vedic, the Chinese or the early Egyptian civilisations through the dark ages of holy Inquisition down to our own age of fascist goosestep. The Inquisition was fought not so much by traders as by the humanists ; Fascism was first combated not by the proletariat in any country but by writers, artists, scientists, teachers, by the humanists of our own age. It is true that by themselves, their opposition is not socially effective ; it needs the support of political parties and through them of the people. Nevertheless, the initiative always came, and even now does come, primarily from this section of society. The reasons for the prevalence of such revolutionary mindedness among the intelligentsia may be found in their greater sensitiveness to ideas, in their proneness to logical response, in their more thorough and systematic acquaintance with the pattern underlying contemporary social life—in short, in their very “intellectualness” itself. Their knowledge and reasoning power make them understand earlier than others the contradictions involved in the contemporary situation and also visualise the probable alternatives by which the same contradictions may be removed for a more harmonious order.

It appears, therefore, that there are three distinct (though not independent) sources of revolutionary leadership. The first is the general process of social polarisation whereby the people are potentially ranged against the vested interests. The second is the specific structural development antecedent to any particular social convulsion in which a specific social group largely identified with the development of new forces inside the existent social institutions develops with the potentiality of taking initiative in the struggle. Thirdly, there is always a section of highly sensitive, intelligent and socially minded people who are inspired by the ideals of freedom and

social good and who therefore constantly wage war against the existing system of social monopoly and exploitation. The combination of all these forces finally provides the leadership of a successful revolution.

While a definite chronological picture of the process of revolution is difficult to formulate, the normal scheme may be suggested. On the one hand the existent institutions begin to grow obsolete and new forces begin to accumulate inside its inadequate framework. On the other, a general mass discontent develops simultaneously with the emergence of the new social group which is associated with the new forces. The present order begins to face one disturbance after another; there are local fights; ultimately, it reaches the phase of a country wide struggle between the existent state and the disturbing forces which may either end in the subversion of the state or in the crushing of the insurgents.

That however is the mechanical-structural side of the struggle. Simultaneously with it, there is another distinct, but not dualistic, development. *That development is not inevitable as some revolutionary teleologists believe; but unless it takes place, no revolution is possible.* It begins with a number of individuals, inspired by the ideal of freedom and social good, strongly sensitive to their absence in the existent order, highly rational and morally integrated, who investigate into the deficiencies of the present order, formulate the pattern of the next stage of social development on an estimate of the available resources and immediate requirements, and who then begin their work of systematic propaganda among the people to make them understand their task and to inspire them to fulfil their role. The next stage is the organisation of these individual revolutionaries on a voluntary cooperative basis. That is the party. That party is at first composed of a cadre who agree to the

programme of the revolution and pledge themselves to undergo all personal inconvenience to bring about its achievement. But so long as the party remains restricted to its cadre the revolution is not possible. The party must expand, take root in the life of the common people, must draw them into a real people's party. Both to make revolution possible and to ensure against the degeneration of the revolution into reaction, the party must outgrow its sectional character and become the institutional foundation of the peoples' state which is to emerge from the subversion of the existent monopolistic state. It is thus a peoples' party which is the only dependable means to achieve a real democratic social revolution.

Usually political workers think in terms of two methods of social change : the insurrectionary and the constitutional. The first method lies in forcible capture of state power by a small and disciplined cadre party with the help of arms. The second method implies utilisation of the formal opportunities offered by the existent laws of the state to bring about change in the state machinery. The first is the path of organised violence resorted to by a small band of disciplined revolutionists; the second is the path of loosely coordinated liberals who prefer to pay in terms of time what they imagine to gain in economy of human resources.

The first of these methods, in the context of modern totalitarian state, has been found altogether impracticable; the second utterly ineffective. Even if the first method were not impracticable, it is by itself a risky process which has greater proneness to bring into being a new group of political vested interests than of making the social order more libertarian. Insurrectionism can not usher in a democratic society; the very process is anti-democratic. The second method, on the other hand, by itself has little strength : without internal

organisation and mass basis, it can normally bring about little effective change and in a period of crisis is ruled out by the militant state machinery.

The method of revolution therefore is neither constitutional nor insurrectionary. It incorporates the effective principles of both these methods. but taken as a whole, it is a new way of revolution. It may best be described as the radical democratic method of revolution. This is so because it is not only democratic in its incentive and end but also democratic in its means and method. It learns from insurrectionism the value of organisation and militant action; it learns from constitutionalism the importance of effectively making use of all the formal or *de jure* potentialities of the existent social order to work for its subversion. But unlike the insurrectionists, its organisation is not restricted to an exclusive cadre; it is to grow into the organisation of the people before the truly democratic state can be effectively established. Similarly unlike the constitutionalists, it refuses to depend merely on the sanction of the established jurisprudence or to submit helplessly before the offensive of the state. Synthesising the positive achievements of both the methods but going further than they can imagine, the radical democratic method of revolution has devised its own specific weapon to build up an effective democracy out of the subversion of the existent state in the institution of the people's committee.

This is how the new (and in the modern context, the only effective) way of revolution is to work out. We have already spoken of the instrument, the revolutionary party. The party begins to spread out into the various local units. It forms its units there. These units then go on enrolling members in these areas. Any one who agrees to the programme of the revolution (which represents the interest of all sections of

people except the small body of vested interests) may be made into a member. The next task is to make these ideologically agreeing membership to function. This is to be done in two ways. On the one hand, a small and highly integrated minority among these memberships will develop through strong conviction and disciplined work into the active cadre of the party. The majority, however, may function not as the cadre members of the party but as members of the local people's committee. The people's committee will be composed on the basis of single non-transferable vote of all the adult individuals who agree to the minimal principles of equitable democratic social life. This will exclude only the small body of local vested interest, e. g., the bigger landlords, or big financiers or big private traders etc., and the bigger fries in the bureaucratic machinery. The remainder when properly made to understand their position and their role, may naturally be made into the active and organised participants of the people's committees. The committee will, as it proceeds to function on the basis of popular sanction and popular participation, arrogate to itself all the social responsibilities and gradually exercise all the executive rights of local governance. It will begin by taking advantage of the *de jure* constitutional rights that are allowed by the existent order. The committees then will convene countrywide conventions to consider the constitution of the new state which will culminate in the National Constituent Assembly where representatives of the people will sit together and frame the principles on which the People's State is to be run. These principles will naturally incorporate the principles already obtaining in the organisation of the People's Committees; it will include further other principles to cover the wider and more complicated functions of the People's State, principles which however should be in

keeping with the principles on which the said committees are being run. On the basis of the People's Constitution, the machinery of the State will now be elected. The existent state which is sure to give opposition in the process will be fought all along by the party with this countrywide instrument of the people's committees and finally given its *coup de grace* by the People's State which will declare it illegal and assume sovereign power. As in the process, the new state will have already rooted itself in the people, the struggle between the old and the new states cannot be protracted; in all probability, it will be a matter of political gesture.

The new state will be democratic in its composition as well as functioning. It will be built up in the process of struggle and not emerge suddenly as the consequence of an insurrection. Besides, its very existence and functioning is based on the active and conscious participation of the common people in the administration of their collective life. The state thus will become a function of the society; the rise of a new dictatorship will be altogether obviated; the risky device of a transitional undemocratic state will be unnecessary. Power, being acquired not merely in the name of the people but by them through their own organised effort, will logically remain with them. There will be no middlemen of revolution to survive as such after the revolution.

What will be the role of the party in the process of revolution? What will be its relation with the people's committees?

The first task of the party is to educate the common people in the fundamental task of running their social life themselves. It will bring them that opportunity of training themselves about their affairs of which they are purposively deprived by the bureaucratic monopolistic state. It must give the leadership in effecting a social renaissance without which democracy

can never be achieved. The party will teach the people to think for themselves, to resist the temptation of depending on political trusts, or leaderships; it will further inspire them with that love of freedom the absence of which always leads every revolutionary upheaval to a counter-revolutionary end.

The second task of the party will be to develop a sufficiently large cadre from the common people who consider freedom and social weal to be greatest values of life and who through their integrity, rationalism and organisation will form a strong bulwark against the offensive of the vested interests and the state.

The third task of the party will be to take the initiative in building the peoples committees and to give the necessary political guidance to the newly formed and inexperienced committees till they are strong and developed enough to carry on the struggle on their own initiative. In the process the party will gradually expand till it is ultimately absorbed in the network of people's committees and becomes part and parcel of the people's state.

The relation of the party unit and the people's committee will be twofold. The party will enrol its cadre of revolutionaries through the functioning of the committees; it will also transform itself into the people's party by rooting itself in local life through the working of the committee. The motto of the party will be: transform the local unit of the party into the local people's committee. Thereby the general membership of the party will be organised into effective functioning.

This is the radical democratic way of revolution. It implies constant and relentless struggle against the existent state and the social vested interests; it means increased participation of the people in the struggle; both constitutional means and direct conflict are involved in it; it works by building up the foundations of an organised democratic society in the course of the struggle for the same.

NOTES

1. While fear of freedom is a common phenomenon in social psychology, it figures intensely and sharply in periods of marked institutional decay and social revolution. This is so because in such periods freedom appears more in its *relative* than in its *positive* form—as freedom from existing inhibitions and social ties, which by itself means loss of old moorings without the security of the new. Such freedom consequently leads to a psychosis of nostalgia, based on a negative feeling of insecurity and lonesomeness. Unless freedom takes a clearly positive orientation and is rooted in the basic requirements of contemporary life, it is associated in individual mind with the feeling of pain. Hence fear of freedom. Among post-Freudians Eric Fromm and Karen Horney have contributed most to bring into relief this aspect of social pathology. Also see M. N. Roy: "Problem of Freedom" for concrete application of this concept to the study of Indian politics.

2. Every social revolution implies the emergence and acceptance of new set of ideas and institutions. These ideas and institutions evolve as the existing ones become totally inadequate and non-expansive; with their general acceptance, however, they themselves become rigid and incapable of meeting the requirements of the post-revolutionary developments. Two factors stand in the way of constant adjustment: the proneness of the organism to prefer habitual response to constant experimentation and choice; and the desire of those who have come to positions of power with the revolutionary changes to maintain those institutions and habits which have secured them that privilege. Hence the Shavian aphorism: "Revolutions have never lightened the burden of tyranny; they have only shifted it to another shoulder".

See K. Mannheim: Ideology and Utopia.

3. Note how the brunt of Marx's attack was primarily directed against liberal and near liberal socialists. e. g., Proudhon, Lassalle, Mill, the early English radicals and the later Social Democrats, etc. Liberalism and democracy were Marx's bete noire. The following quotation from Engels' letter to Bernstein dated March 24, 1884, reveals how 'a fairly justifiable approach in the age of Reform will now be quite incorrect and even harmful. "The conception of democracy", wrote Engels, "changes with every *demos* and so does not get us a step further. In my opinion what should be said is this: the proletariat too requires democratic *forms* for the seizure of political power, but like all political forms, these serve it as means. But if we want to make democracy our aim today, then we must support ourselves upon the peasants and the petit bourgeoisie, that is upon classes in the process of dissolution, which as soon as they try to maintain themselves are *reactionary* in relation to the proletariat.....the democratic republic always remains the last form of bourgeois domination, that in which it is broken to pieces." (Marx-Engels Selected Correspondence. pp 383-4. Italics Engels). Apparently, Marx and Engels could not think of any democracy other than the formal or parliamentary. The dissolving classes still continue to cause theoretical aches to the revolutionaries. Even today, they constitute the major strata of world population and no revolution can be thought of today without the active and conscious participation of these classes. Today, a true marxist would rather direct his dialectical slashes against the totalitarian state and its ideology, for, alas, democratic republic has not proved to be the last form of bourgeois domination. As typical exponents of totalitarian absolutism in our time, mention may be made among others

to the systems of Gentile, Bergson, Pareto, Spengler, Spann, Gandhi etc.

See M. N. Roy: *Fascism*.

4. Teleology (from Greek Teleos) means a theory of reality based on the belief that existence involves some moral design and that all movement is necessarily directed by (and towards) some final cause. The teleos or end may be transcendent or immanent. The strength and weakness of teleological approach is to be found in its classical form in Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*.

The theory that the instinct for pleasure orientates human desire and basically directs human action and thought (though curbed by a sense of reality and the institutional authority of the super-ego) forms one of the basic postulates of Freudian psychopathology. Later, under criticism of Jung and others, he modified his early position by incorporating the "death" or destructive instinct to explain pathological phenomena.

5. The Buddhist position, however, is not altogether negative. From a philosophical point of view, abhi dhamma means the fundamental categories underlying reality. In so far as scientific comprehension is concerned, it is quite valid (though only to a point) to insist on abstract precision and to resolve the confused multifold of individual features into relatively static and simple relations. But that is only a limitation of method; besides, modern investigations in methodology emphasise the vital importance of individual shades and complexities. Further, to make out of the limitations of investigation a moral ideal is illogical and, as subsequent discussion shows, harmful. Buddhist philosophy, however, impregnated its ethical negativism with a radical pluralist perspective.

For Abhidhamma and Buddhist philosophy in general, see Mrs. Rhys Davids: Buddhism. Also Prof. Stcherbatsky: Central Conception of Buddhism.

6. Schopenhauerian ethic is a classic illustration of this attitude. For a theological formulation, see Pascal's *Pensees*; in Baudelaire's *Journal Intimes*, it is in the raw. Cf. the following from Gerard de Nerval: "I donot ask of God that he should change anything in the events themselves, but that he should change me in regard to things, so that I might have the power to create my own universe about me, to govern my dreams in stead of enduring them". J. T. MacCurdy in his *Problems in Dynamic Psychology* points out: "of reality is difficult to endure, and if acute consciousness is developmentally connected with the recognition of eternal reality,.....then a most natural regression would appear with a dissolution of consciousness associated with some expressions of return to the earlier type of existence. One would expect the latter to be formulated as ideas of death...."

7. Karen Horney: *Neurotic Personality of our Time*. Also her : *New Ways In Psychoanaysis*. Like Fromm, but in a more concrete manner, she bases her presentation of psychopathological phenomena on social and socio-economic foundations.

8. Nirvana is the hypothetical end-point of a process of self-refinement in which the individual object is completely de-individualised and resolved into the ultimate law or Dhamma.

Moksha is perfection of self by its absorption in the Absolute.

Hume and his empiricist successors abstractly visualised the total disintegration of the individual into an infinite possibility of sensations. Epistemological abstractions were

conferred ontological validity and the painful stress of choice, responsibility and development was hypothetically eliminated. Empiricism is logically amoral and the derivation of utilitarian ethic is not theoretically valid. In the so-called *fin-de-siècle* period of the last century, aesthetes and impressionists made a cult of gemlike sensations on the sanction of empiricist metaphysics.

Bergson's *elan* is dynamic homogeneity which implies the dissolution of individual contours in the so-called 'pure duration'.

See among others, Mrs. Rhys Davids: *Buddhist Psychology*; Prof. Poussin: *The way to Nirvana*; S. K. Belvalkar: *Vedanta Philosophy*. Also M. N. Roy: *Materialism; Fascism*. John Laird: *Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature*; and R. Adamson: *The Development of Modern Philosophy Part II*, may be profitably read for dependable introduction to empiricism.

9. Surrealism, though primarily an art movement, explicitly bases itself on a certain philosophy. Surrealism assumes that there are other and more vital planes of existence beside the one in which we live in our working every day life. (D. Gascoyne: *A Short Survey of Surrealism*). In this other or the 'oniric' (dream) plane, as Gascoyne calls it, the domination of reason and morality is overthrown and life becomes free and instinctive. Surrealism claims that this revolt against reason and morality 'is really a form of social revolution' and one of its artist theoreticians has contended that dialectical materialism constitutes its philosophical basis. (Andre Breton: *What is Surrealism?*). This instinctive union of the individual with the oniric domain is believed to result in 'the liberation of man which is the *sine qua non* of the liberation of mind'. (Also see Herbert Read, ed. *Surrealism*).

Surrealism left its mark on modern art and aesthetics. But pressed closer, the surrealist argument is found to be another expression of negative response to contemporary institutional-cultural decay. Surrealist nonconformism (Breton's phrase) tends to make the individual organism more easily susceptible to suggestion and conditioning. In his classic comparison of the rhapsode to the Bacchantes and Corybantes Plato had already ably diagnosed the surrealist psychosis. The dissipation of reason and the voluntary weakening of the ability to choose lead not to freedom but to greater slavery to circumstantial influences. The real tendency of surrealist attitude is given out by Gascoyne, himself a surrealist, in his description of the various surrealist rituals like auto-hypnotism, medium-making, table-turning etc. as preludes to creative inspiration. This phenomenon has been described by Montague Summers, a critic of surrealism, in his *Gothic Quest*, as the "castle problem" which involves assiduous cultivation of neural susceptibility to atmospheric influences.

Since Louis Aragon's defection over the "Red Front" scandal, many surrealists have abandoned their early infantile stand and some have remained to grow towards a maturer and more objective attitude to life.

10. For an early and authentic formulation of totalitarian philosophy in its politico-ethical aspects, see Hegel: *The Philosophy of Right*. Fascism is a concretisation of this philosophy. For criticism of totalitarian ideal, see besides the writings of M. N. Roy, the following among others: E. Harevy: *L'Ere des Tyrannies*; Polanyi: *The Contempt of Freedom*; L. v. Mises: *Omnipotent Government*.

11. That at least Engels was conscious of this inadequacy in Marxian theory is evident from his correspondence during the closing years of his life. Note, for example, the following

in a letter to Mehring, dated July 14, 1893 (about two years before Engels' death):

".....there is, however, one point lacking" (Engels is here referring to Mehring's exposition of Marxism) "which Marx and I always failed to stress enough in our writings and in regard to which we are equally guilty. We all, that is to say, laid and were bound to lay the main emphasis at first on the derivation of political, juridical and other ideological notions and of the actions arising through the medium of these notions, from basic economic facts. But in so doing, we neglected the formal side—the way in which these notions came about—for the sake of content...This side of the matter, we have all, I think neglected more than it deserves. It is the old story: form is always neglected at first for content." Marx and Engels: Selected Correspondence. Pp 448-49.

12. The grounding of moral idealism on science and its conscious direction to meet the requirements of social engineering, though an old demand of every civilisation, has never been more imperatively necessary than today when the hiatus between science and social practice has reached cataclysmic proportions. The efforts of scientists like Levy, Haldane, Hogben, Joliot-Curie, Julian Huxley etc., are highly significant from this point of view; they do credit to them both as scientists and as true social revolutionaries.

13. The experience of the fascist warmachine is still too raw for us to forget how the most destructive and irrational social system may put the achievements of science and technology to intensify its inherent destructiveness. The experience of the Maidene horror camp, writes Edgar Snow, convinced him that "it is perfectly possible to coordinate the utmost scientific order and means with the utmost barbarity of ends". (The Pattern of Soviet Power, p. 46)

14. Cartesianism is the first systematic philosophical expression of the European Renaissance and as such, the investigations and pointers of the Cartesians have very vital bearings on the second renaissance which we desperately need today. Descartes' methodological formulations as well as his theory of the reflexes, for all their naivette in the context of modern scientific data, are a heritage not to be foregone. And in the Ethics of Spinoza and, more than any other, in the monadological pattern of Leibniz, we have very able though abstract and *a priori*) formulation of the fundamentals of a true democracy. With a very undeveloped scientific background and in a not yet overthrown feudal society, their rationalism, however, was bound unfortunately to take a theological rather than a secular-social form.

For an easy and dependable account of rationalist philosophy, R. Adamson's *The Development of Modern Philosophy*, Part I may be profitably consulted.

15. Any critical estimate of the above formulation will require atleast a dependable acquaintance with following texts of Marx and Engels: *The German Ideology*; *Poverty of Philosophy*; *Feuerbach and Anti-Duhring*. Among later interpretations and criticism of Marxism, I may suggest my readers to go through the following for their unorthodoxy in approach and clarity in treatment: Benedetto Croce: *Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx*; Sidney Hook: *Towards an understanding of Marx*, and Hegel and Marx; G. D. H. Cole: *What Marx Really Meant*.

Among the orthodox but intrinsically valuable treatments of Marxian ideology, the following are particularly important: Plekhanov: *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*; Lenin: *The Teachings of Karl Marx*; Bukharin and Others: *Marxism and Modern Thought*; Thalheimer: *Dialectic Materialism*; and The

Text Book Of Marxist Philosophy published several years back from Moscow. I will in particular recommend Plekhanov and Thalheimer.

16. This economic fundamentalism is repeated time and again in the philosophical, social and historical writings of Marx Engels. Even when, under stress of criticism, they were forced to modify their original position at times, the fundamental would invariably turn up at the end like Jesuitic Original Sin. We may cull haphazardly one or two specimens of such recalcitrant modification from their correspondence. "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc, development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic base. It is not that the economic position is the cause or alone active, while everything else has only a passive effect. There is rather inter-action on the basis of economic necessity, which ultimately always asserts itself". Engels to Starkenburg, June 25, 1894. That 'interaction' is the concession, the 'ultimate' is the basic fundamentalism. Again: "once an historic element has been brought into the world by other elements, ultimately by economic facts, it also reacts in its turn and may react on its environment and even on its cause". Engels to Mehring, 14 July, 1893. Even in the justly famous letters to J. Block and Conrad Schmidt (dated 21 September and 27 October, 1890, respectively), where he protests against vulgarisation of the materialist interpretation into mechanical economism and speaks of social change as a process of 'interaction of various elements' and elaborates on money, state, jurisprudence, religion and philosophy as 'distinct' but 'relative' and 'interdependent' social phenomena; Engels nevertheless cannot forget to assert that in "the interaction of all these elements.....the economic movement finally asserts itself as

necessary". Selected Correspondence, p. 418. Again in the course of the same argument: "...all the same they (i. e. these distinct phenomena) themselves remain under the dominating influence of the economic development" (Ib. p 424). The analogy of foundation and superstructure is also retained. After this, is it very reasonable to exhibit, as Engels time and again does, pained surprise at the mechanical (undialectical) abstractionism of such critics as find in the Marxist historiography an undue overemphasis on economic influences?

17. In the letter to Schmidt (27 October, 1890), Engels reluctantly concedes this point, but again with reservations. There is, however, no record of Marx Engels ever trying to modify the more elaborate and concrete formulations of their philosophy in the light of the above admission. There Engels wrote: "But the philosophy of every epoch, since it is a definite sphere in the division of labour, has as its pre-supposition certain definite intellectual material handed down to it by its predecessors, from which it takes its start... I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development in these spheres too, but it comes to pass within conditions imposed by the particular sphere itself, in philosophy, for instance, through the operation of economic influences... upon the existing philosophic material handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing absolutely new, but it determines the way in which the existing material of thought is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly, for it is political, legal and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy" (Selected Correspondence, p. 424-25).

18. In the letter to Starkenburg about a year before his death, Engels made a sympathetic gesture to a similar pointer. "Men make their history themselves, but not yet with a collec-

tive will or according to a collective plan, or even in a definitely defined, given society. Their efforts clash and for that very reason, all such societies are governed by *necessity* which is supplemented by and appears under the forms of *accident*. The necessity which here asserts itself amidst all accidents is again ultimately economic necessity. That is where the so-called great men come in for treatment. That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at that particular time in that given country is of course pure accident. But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found". (Selected Correspondence, p. 454) I will accept the statement with two objections: the adverb 'ultimately' before economic necessity is dogmatic and arbitrary; the clause 'substitute will be found' is teleology and not history. To me atleast that clause behind its pseudo-scientific garb smacks of messianic prophesy.

In this connection, Prof. Sidney Hook's monograph, *Hero In History* may be profitably consulted. Hook is something of an eclectic marxist with deep traces of early training under Dewey.

19. Engel's own explanation is inadequate. "While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot, and all the English historians upto 1850 are the proof that it is being striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that indeed it *had* to be found". (Selected Correspondence, p. 454) This is only a tangential admission of what I have described later on as the 'demand pattern of ideas' which is of course grounded in the general social pattern of demands and resources but the response to which is never determined by economic teleology. Besides, the real (as dis-

tinguished from the ideal or desired) story of evolution does not assure us of any inevitability of positive response. It is a common event in biological and social history that what had to be found *ideally* has never been found *really*.

20. See K. Mannheim : *Man and Society in the Age of Transition* ; also his *Ideology and Utopia*.

The misunderstanding that in recolling from economism we revert to the even more inadequate historiology of idealism is what we particularly desire to warn readers against. We fully recognise the vital importance of economic factors. We would also add to it logical and institutional constituents as elements in the anatomy of social change. But simultaneously with that we note that science, fine art, morality and various ideological developments (which are ultimately expressions of biological drives modified by the exigencies of social order) are no less essential factors of the social movement "in its *engrenement*" (to use an expression of Fourier somewhat vulgarised by Proudhon and wilfully caricatured by Marx). In other words what we endeavour to do is not to replace economic teleology by idealist determinism (both are inherently dualistic and untrue), but to construct a more comprehensive and objective interpretation of human history in which economy and ideology are not related as foundation and superstructure or as stimuli and reflexes, but as mutually interacting elements, each organically correlated to the other to result in the concrete complex of social phenomena.

21. On this point Croce's criticism of Hegel and Marx bereft of its metaphysics appears to be sound in spirit. See B. Croce : *What is living and what is Dead in Hegel ; Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx*. His later book on *Historiology, History as The Story of Liberty*, is an abstract but highly valuable statement of the

liberal idealist approach to history. Croce, like his contemporary and one time associate, Giovanni Gentile, began as a neo-Hegelian. But unlike the latter, he soon reacted against the Master's absolutist idealism, realised the dangerous limitations of the dialectical approach and began his life long endeavour to reformulate liberal idealism to meet the criticism of Hegelianism and mechanical materialism. In spite of his 'intuitionist' metaphysics, Croce's positive contribution to the contemporary fight against neo-scholasticism may not be missed. It is interesting to learn from his Autobiographical notes that in his youth he was 'deeply stirred' and his imagination and moral sensibility fired by Marxian idealism.

22. Marx made an exception of England and America. To the latter he extended the benefit of probability. Lenin, however, in *State and Revolution*, chapter 3, section 1, categorically asserts that in the epoch of "the first great imperialist war, this limitation of Marx (regarding Britain and America) no longer holds."

23. Marx wrote in *The Poverty of Philosophy*, final section, : "As it develops, the working class will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism and *there will be no more political power*—properly so-called—since political power is an exact official summary of the antagonisms in civil society".

Also in the *Communist Manifesto* : "When, in the course of development class distinctions have disappeared,...*the public power will lose its political character*. Political power properly so-called is merely the organised force of one class for oppressing another". See also Engels' letter to Bernstein, January 28, 1884. The idea is elaborated in *Anti-Duhring* and in Lenin's *State and Revolution*.

24. Comrade Philip Sparrtt points out : "Men could choose,

on any given occasion, whether or not to do as the class-ethical system suggested". That ofcourse is true. What I wanted to note, however, is that in the Marxian scheme, choice of an individual at any given moment is imagined to be determined dialectically by the 'super-ego' (to use a modern expression) of one class or that of its opposite. Morality is resolved into group (class) compulsives and no personal basis is conceded to morality. Marxian casuistry is the application of an impersonal logic of history to personal behaviours and the psychological factor behind the voluntary or involuntary acceptance of that logic by the individual is believed to be just class-interest.

Comrade Spratt, from a different starting point, has reached the conclusion that Marxism is non-moral because (and in so far as) it is strictly materialistic. Thus Marxism is caught in a dilemma : so far as it is materialistic, it has no distinctive ethical theory; while in so far as it is a 'practical philosophy', it imperatively needs such a theory. Com. M.N. Roy, however, considers this dilemma to be rather superficial and has tried to reconcile Marxian materialism with a liberal ethics. See P. Spratt : Marxism and Ethics in the Marxian Way, vol 1 i, and the Editorial notes by M. N. Roy in the same and the following issues.

25. Mr. Sikander Chowdhury (author of Planning for Plenty) thinks that a revolutionary social philosophy, unless it proposes to remain a mere theory of history, is bound to plan in term of groups, institutions or organised units and that Marx, primarily a philosopher of revolutionary social engineering, emphasised the category of class with that purpose. We wholeheartedly submit the relevance of this pointer. What however, we as social revolutionaries ourselves, want to remember is that in the zeal for planning and organisation,

the ultimate unit (which is the individual) is not neglected because such neglect will lead to the degeneration of 'practical' revolutionarism into its own negation. The institutional categories require to be fecundated with a due recognition of the complex dynamism of the individual entity; that alone may constitute some effective guarantee against the stiffening of planning into goosestep and consolidated mass-inertia.

26. M. Serge Chakotin in the *Rape of the Masses* has made a brilliant study of the fascist menace in its socio-psychological aspects. While, as will be apparent in the constructive part of this monograph, our suggestion of a method to achieve libertarian socialism in face of the fascist onslaught is somewhat at variance with the positive part of his argument, Chakotin's critical observations on fascism we believe, is largely correct, and to a certain extent (though of course less acutely) applies to the practical foundations of communist political philosophy as well.

27. Mrs. Joan Robinson, in her critical homage to Marx, notes this point of weakness in the passing, but being not concerned with revolutionary practice, does not care to press it. Incidentally, *An Essay in Marxian Economics* is one of the rare books in which Marxism, in some of its intrinsically valuable formulations, has been critically considered without adulation or malice.

Note—All the italicised words in the quotations from Marx-Engels are their own and not ours.

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