

## HE LEARNED MARXISM IN A CHURCH SEMINARY

# THE MAKING OF A LEFT-WING PARSON



by Reverend John Clarence Petrie

**L**EFTHAND parsons are not born that way. Somewhere along the line between boyhood and ordination they become indoctrinated with Marxist ideas. Probably no two have the same story to tell. One man became a Socialist while in college. He is still a very influential one, whose editorials in the church paper, of which he has been editor for several decades, never cease trying to make friends for the Soviet Union. "I entered the seminary," he told me, "because I saw the Church as the best soap box from which to advance socialism."

My own experience was quite otherwise. Reared to look upon socialism as sinful, I entered a seminary of the Episcopal Church which was honeycombed with Marxism. Like most men with cler-

ical vocations I had an abhorrence of social injustice. From childhood I had looked on in admiration at the annual Labor Day procession in my home town. My father's one employee was a union man. I was put out to board with families whose male members belonged to unions. My sympathies were always with the working class; but I never dreamed of class war.

As I look back I can think of nothing predisposing me to socialism and welfare stateism except that sympathy with the "underdog." Then I was suddenly catapulted into the atmosphere of a theological seminary literally saturated with left-wing talk. I say "talk" instead of "thought" for it seems as I look back that there was little real thinking involved. Every-

body was disturbed over social injustice. Wicked capitalism was at the bottom of all our ills. The profit motive, thoroughly selfish and unchristian, was an ineradicable part of capitalism. The remedy was for the instruments of production to become public property. There was no attempt to offer arguments against this Marxist line. No one mentioned that only by confiscating private property could public ownership occur. No one pointed out that public ownership actually meant control by political office holders. No one suggested that perhaps men who had spent their lives in the corporations were better equipped to manage it than men whose main qualifications were those connected with vote getting.

OURS WAS a simple gospel—that is, where social ills were concerned. It was the gospel according to Marx, fully inspired and infallible. The dogmatic certitude of this gospel was in startling contrast to the Gospel which the Church had been preaching for nineteen centuries. Who was Jesus Christ? What was the nature of the Scriptures? What was the Church? What of the Sacraments? What of life after death? What of judgment? The Church had been giving clear answers to questions from the earliest Christian centuries. But our seminary was vague, full of doubts. The New Testament was not taught us as the product of the early Church

which had vouched for its inspiration. It was a laboratory specimen to be picked at and analyzed as something utterly unrelated to anything else. Proof that it was fallible and much in error was sought by the teachers. Within six weeks I had come to believe that much of it was mythology, some of it superstition, and not a little of it fraudulent.

Christ, who was worshipped in the words of the Nicene Creed as “God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God,” became, in the light of what we were taught, a misguided fanatic who believed that the world would end, perhaps, in his lifetime. If not, then his death would bring it about. The creeds were so much human invention. Life after death was to be doubted. And, since Christ was only a man, his marriage views were of no value.

At the end of my first year I transferred out of that school to one that was faithful to the teachings of the Church and had no self-assured messianic role to bring in the kingdom of Marx. It was to take me 17 years to recognize that Marxism means surrender of freedom; that government ownership was a camouflage expression for slavery to politicians. It was to be another 13 years after that before full faith in Christ returned. Meantime I had spent the best 30 years of my life as an exile from the ministry for whose service I had been trained.

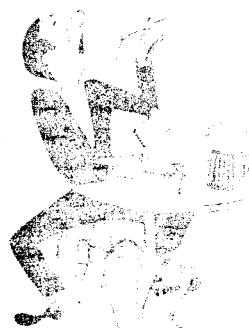
—from *Christian Economics*

*In Hollywood—*

**Even the Food**

**Must Perform**

by **CHARLES SANDLER**



**T**HE motion picture director mopped his forehead. A cameraman shifted uneasily in his chair. "Do you mean to tell me," the director said, "that you can't prepare gold-colored food?"

This question was directed to a lean, bald-headed man at the far end of the conference table. "I don't know yet," replied the man, who was Charles R. Parker, manager of the Commissary Department at Warner Brothers' Pictures, Inc.

"You see," said Parker, "it's no problem to make food gold colored, but the script calls for the cast to eat it. And every gold coloring that we know about is poisonous."

The scene they were discussing was an essential sequence of a banquet in "The Silver Chalice."

Chefs experimented with outlandish recipes, and Parker sought the advice of chemists and pharma-

cists and food people. They could not find the formula.

"Finally, someone told me that the Chinese have a dessert powder that produces a gold color," Parker relates. He visited Los Angeles' Chinatown, where, after searching for almost an entire day, Parker walked into a unique grocery store.

"As a man who used to be a grocer himself," Parker recalls, "I was fascinated. The store displayed dried squid from Hong Kong, shark fins from Mexico, and ancient preserved eggs from Formosa. I had a feeling that I had come to the right place."

The middle-aged Chinese grocer sold him the dessert powder and a few days later a movie queen was photographed daintily chewing a gold-colored pear.

Parker declares that "Movie standards are tougher these days on food