

## THE FRUIT OF COMMUNISM:

# SOCIALISTIC REDISTRIBUTION

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THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION is spreading apace over Asia, Africa, South America, the Middle East, and even our own land. This has stimulated effective oratory and well-documented books aimed at alerting our citizenry to the godlessness of the philosophy and the bloodiness of the revolution at the core of communism.

Sometimes, however, those who denounce the violence of the communist revolution support the economic aims of the communists in the redistribution of the wealth by the power of the state and thus give aid and comfort to the enemy they are combating. Others -- including an increasing number of

influential clergymen -- recognize that the economic aims of socialism cannot be attained apart from violence and so join in advocating the bloody revolution.

Profound scholars have clearly pointed out the economic fallacies and follies of socialism but their works have been neglected. Too few see the relationship between the philosophy of the communists and their economic goals. Few also recognize the fact that these economic ends demand a philosophy of violence in order to attain them. The communist threat to our civilization makes it imperative that we deal both with the underlying philosophy of communism and also with its economic end of redistribution. Only thus may we be prepared to offer a

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viable alternative to communism.

Confusion exists as to precisely what communism is and how it differs from socialism. Karl Marx, the father of socialism, designated his views "scientific socialism." "Communism" was originally used to describe the utopian state reached after the economic factors of production had so changed man and his environment that classes and conflict no longer existed, the state had withered away, and men lived in harmony on earth. This was to be the final synthesis arising out of the conflict between the capitalists and the working class. Socialism, which involved an absolute dictatorship, the dictatorship of the proletariat, was to be a temporary and intermediary stage which would lead to full communism. Communism in this sense has never existed and never will.

Marx and others, however, also spoke of their revolutionary movement to effect socialism as communism. Communism today refers essentially to the Marxist ideology and may be described as a means of inaugurating socialism. All communists are socialists. Communist Russia is designated, "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." On the other hand, not all socialists are communists. In fact, many socialists vigorously repudiate the open violence of the com-

munists. Also, communists generally reject such socialists as not true Marxists. Both, however, agree in supporting the main end of socialization of the means of production. Both want to abolish (though there are degrees of thoroughness of this abolition) private property, and substitute for it state ownership in the means of production.

Karl Marx, however, reached his conclusions on the basis of a specific philosophical position. This basic philosophy has become the driving force behind communism. Some reject this atheistic, dialectical philosophy and yet support socialism for other reasons; even some Christians claim that it is a system in accord with the Word of God. Basically, the economic ends of communism and socialism are identical, though the underlying philosophies may differ.

### ***The "Scientific Socialism" of Marx***

Karl Marx was an atheist before he was a communist. He said, "Religion is the opium of the people. I hate all gods." The idea of God and all religion was for him the result of the attempt of people to compensate for their own defects and weaknesses. This atheism of its founder constitutes an integral part of the communist teaching. In communist lands there is a systematic attempt to stamp out all

religion, especially Christianity. At particular times it may suit their ends to let up temporarily on their persecution, but even that is toward the end of weakening its defenses and promoting its final destruction. Atheism is taught in the government schools; other schools are prohibited or drastically restricted. The church is tolerated or subverted and used to advance the ends of communism. Because communism is militantly atheistic, there can never be a *modus vivendi* between Christianity and communism for they are two hostile religions. While Christians tolerate atheists and consider it their duty to seek their conversion to Christianity, the communists seek the utter destruction of Christianity.

This blatant atheism of the communists helps explain the violence of their activities. There is no God to whom they consider themselves responsible, no divinely given moral code or law as the norm for acceptable ethical conduct; whatever promotes the ends of the communist cause is moral. This rejection of Christian morality and all God-given standards accounts for the fact that one cannot deal with a communist or a communist nation as he would with a person or nation where God is feared. When the nations learn this important truth, there will

be fewer unholy alliances with such godless powers.

### ***Dialectical Materialism***

Karl Marx also based his socialistic views on dialectical materialism. Unlike the philosopher, Hegel, who was an idealist and advocated a spiritual monism, holding that reality was spiritual in nature, Marx held to a dialectical materialism, contending that reality was material. Hegel taught that God reveals himself in history in a dialectical process. One historical movement constitutes the thesis which gives rise to its conflicting antithesis. Out of this conflict emerges the synthesis which takes that which was valuable in the thesis and antithesis and forms a higher stage of the manifestation of the Absolute. Marx adopted a dialectic explanation of history but held that the thesis, its antithesis, and the synthesis which arose from their conflict were the result of material economic factors. The culmination of history for Marx and the communists would be the result of the antithesis between the capitalists and the workers which would erupt in a violent bloody revolution which would in turn usher in the synthesis of socialism. This dialectic underlies all their thinking.

Dialectical materialism, in its

denial of God and assertion that all is matter, in reality sets up an idol god. Man is the highest form of matter and the communist state the highest expression of his material brain. Thus, God is replaced by the state. This state becomes the recipient of the honor of the citizens and the absolute master of their lives, though there is no logical reason whatsoever why the dictator and his cohorts who constitute the state should be a higher manifestation of matter than any individual within that state. This state grants to the individual slaves under its rule the right to live. It controls all property and parcels it out according to its own whims. Thus, the state becomes the father and God to the subject. It is not a crime in Russia or Red China for the state to slaughter millions of people who are deemed to interfere with the progress to socialism. The state becomes God. Atheistic communism is in a real sense a religion, albeit the diabolical religion of state worship.

### ***Economic Determinism***

Closely related to dialectical materialism is the doctrine of economic determinism advocated by Marx. Man's life, his thoughts, his class, and even his religion are determined by his economic environment. Such a concept logi-

cally would destroy all responsibility. Without responsibility man is no longer man. Yet communism holds men responsible, not to God or to a divine law or norm, but to the Communist party and state. They have no right, however, on their own premises, to hold men whose thoughts and even religion are determined by their economic environment responsible to any other man whose thoughts and life are also economically determined.

The Marxian and communist philosophy is also characterized by a utopian idealism. There is no room in the system for this idealism, yet this is the end toward which the dialectical process relentlessly drives with the irresistible force of an inviolable logic. In this classless and conflictless society, human nature is so radically changed by the material factors of production that all is well. Marxian idealism pictures a material heaven on a material earth with men who are no more than matter living together in perfect peace and harmony. Yet, a heaven without God, without morality, and with no hope of anything but the dust at death is in reality a picture of hell.

The institution of the family on which our civilization has been built has no place in the communist society. This godless phi-

losophy denies all Christian morals, approves mass murders and the perversion of sex. Deceit, thefts, and blasphemies form a part of this vicious system. Surely, no Christian could for a moment support it! To describe it, and this description accords with the description of the communists themselves, is sufficient to condemn it. Communism is built on a philosophy antithetical to the principles upon which our civilization has been built. Should this philosophy prevail, that civilization cannot endure for long.

### **Rejection of Moral Absolutes**

The economics of the welfare state socialists is not significantly diverse from that of Karl Marx. Whether consciously so or not, both spring from an underlying philosophy which denies moral absolutes. This philosophy may or may not be Marxian; in either case it substitutes for the Moral Law of the Creator a relativistic standard of man. When leading churchmen adopt the philosophy of violent revolution to attain their redistributionist ends, their underlying philosophy closely resembles that of Marx. Both reject the right to private property and thus the right to life.

Marx's tome, *Das Kapital*, deals with economics. Marx did not like the way he found wealth distrib-

uted and proposed the solution, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his need." The rationale for his objection to the distribution of property he found in his labor theory of value, surplus value, and exploitation by the capitalists of the working class. He contended that the value of a product was determined exclusively by the labor that went into it. The capitalist who hired the laborer, on the other hand, refused to pay him the full value of the product but retained "surplus value" for himself in the form of profits. Since the laborer was not getting his due from his employer, a conflict necessarily arose. The solution to this conflict, according to his dialectic, lay in the revolution of the exploited laboring class against the capitalists which would result in the dictatorship of the proletariat and the eventual communism of the classless society.

It has been clearly demonstrated (see Böhm-Bawerk's *Capital and Interest* and Ludwig von Mises' *Socialism*, as examples) that Marx's theory was erroneous. Marx made the serious mistake of failing to take into account the time element in production. What he demanded was the present value of a product which would not be finished until later. Also, he erred in his idea that labor was the sole

source of value. He selected his data to "prove" his case and ignored a vast amount of data that refuted it. Such biased selection and manipulation of data characterized much of his writings.

Once, in the midst of a blistering African desert on the backs of plodding camels, my co-worker and I came to the unhappy discovery that the guide we had hired for the trip had never previously seen that country. Uncertain of *when* or *if* we would reach a source of water, our meager supply suddenly increased in value. We would not have exchanged our jerry tin of water for the price of a camel. Value, contrary to Marx, does not reside in the object itself as the product of labor-hours but is subjective; it is what the prospective buyer or seller is willing under the particular circumstances to give up in exchange for the object.

### **Savings Benefit Laborers**

In the United States and other countries where between 85 and 90 cents of each dollar a product realizes goes to the laboring man who helped produce it, it can hardly be said that the laborer has been exploited. It is often ignorance of the percentage the laborer actually receives that leads to this conclusion. Besides that, much of the remainder goes to purchase better machines and to

build up the business which will result in cheaper products and more people employed. About \$20,000 has been invested to provide for each job in our land.

This is something radically different from the concept of exploitation condemned by Marx and the socialists. The reason wages are lower in many parts of the world is because there is a lack of capital invested to provide the tools for production on the farms and in the factories. This capital must come either from the savings of the people or from outside investment.

To have to depend solely on savings is a slow painful process accompanied by much suffering, long hours of work and low wages for a long time until sufficient capital is accumulated. This accounts for the suffering, child labor, and long hours of hard work in England in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. There was no other way at that time to transform an economy from a more primitive form to a more advanced industrial economy. This, and not exploitation, accounted for much of the suffering in those days.

The other method to hasten the transformation from a primitive to a more advanced industrial economy is by the investment of foreign capital. This, however, re-

quires honest and stable government, lack of oppressive taxes, a reasonable hope for profits along with the conviction that there will not be government expropriation of the factories or of the profits of the investors. The lack of such conditions largely accounts for the continued low standard of living in many parts of the world. Yet, communism and socialism prevent the formation of capital by their ideas of redistribution. The philosophy of socialism keeps the world in a state of poverty, war, and chaos.

#### ***Privilege Based on Coercion***

The end of communism and also of socialism is the redistribution of property by the coercive power of the state. The communists propose to effect this by violent revolution which aims at bringing the whole world under the iron heel of communism and reduces men to slaves of the dictator. The high concentration of power necessitated by the pursuit of this objective almost certainly and ironically precludes the attainment of this end; hence, communism in reality, by eliminating one class, substitutes for it a privileged class. This class attains its privilege, not on the basis of its merits or the will of the people, but by violence. Hence, the inevitable tyranny of communism.

The more moderate socialists reject such open violence but seek the same ends by more peaceful means. Yet, let it never be forgotten that the difference is only a matter of degree; there is no difference in principle.

The socialist program calls also for violence, though less naked violence than that of the communists. The communists annihilate the opposition; the socialists merely confiscate their property. Both lead, at different paces, to the absolute dictator, for the socialist redistribution cannot be effected apart from the dictator. Socialism requires that the distribution of the wealth be according to a single plan—one man's will. This can be effected only by force, or the threat of force, which is the same thing.

It is naive in the extreme to think that the economic control demanded by communism and socialism will not also include control of the lives of the people. Freedom of religion, travel, speech, and political freedom are inseparable from economic freedom. Control the economy, and you effectively control the lives of the citizens. Economic freedom means the freedom to seek to satisfy one's material needs. Economic activity consists essentially in the scaling of our wants to determine which ones have priority. This

scaling, however, is related always to our ultimate ends; hence, economic activity cannot be isolated from the spiritual realm.

The socialist control of the economy involves the control of man's basic freedom of religion and of expression. The press is controlled by the control of property such as buildings, type, and paper. Religion is controlled by regulating the use of church buildings, religious publications, transportation, and taxes. The pulpit and its message are controlled by economic restraints on those who oppose the communist ideology. Minds are directed by prohibiting the use of books not approved by the government, by making all education state education, and by providing lucrative jobs for those who follow the party line. The socialist state, as Great Britain discovered, in order to effect socialism has also to control labor. Workers are not permitted freely to move or to change jobs. Even today, advertisements in British publications are restricted in order to prevent highly trained men from leaving British soil for more lucrative employment abroad.

Once you give to the state the ownership of the means of production, as socialism demands, you have given it the power which if fully exercised will result in complete control of the lives of the

people. The communists recognize this and openly advocate the absolute dictator. Socialists try to avoid the implications of their position; they strive for economic control while retaining a semblance of religious and other freedom. The logic of this position, however, inevitably leads the followers of both camps down the same road to slavery; except that the communists arrive there sooner than the socialists. Their early arrival makes it easier for them to eliminate the socialists and others who refuse to accept the full implications of the communist position.

### **A Distortion of Justice**

The stated end of socialism of the communist and noncommunist types is the increased welfare of the people through forceful redistribution of the wealth by government. The means chosen to effect this end, entirely apart from the obvious moral issues involved, are incapable of effecting the desired goal. It is as though a tribal chief from Africa should set out by mule to reach New York. His intentions might well be the very best; the fact would remain, however, that the method chosen to achieve his end was inappropriate.

The confiscation and redistribution of property in socialism can never effect improvement in the



general well-being of the masses, as has been amply demonstrated wherever socialism has been tried. Socialist states exist today because their bankrupt economies are bolstered by the largess of the capitalist countries. Eliminate that aid, and socialism will die. It will either be replaced by a freer society or revert to primitivism and starvation.

The socialism of Russia and of the welfare states involves coercive redistribution and thus necessitates the imposition of the will of one man upon another. The rule of law is replaced by the rule of man. Right becomes what the leaders or rulers in the state judge to be the proper distribution. This is a radical perversion of a justice which regards all men alike under the law. Just as it is theft for the individual to steal, so it is theft for the state to redistribute. Justice is blind. It has no respect to the person, wealth, position, race, sex, or learning of the individual. Perversions of this Christian concept of justice lead to advocacy of socialism. Socialism by its nature,

denies the validity of such a concept of justice and substitutes for it the rule of the strong man who defines right and wrong by his own concept of who ought to receive what. Socialism, in its efforts to make men economically more equal, must treat them unequally, taking from some to give to others. It is acceptance of this distortion of justice which leads to the moral decay and increasing violence in the world. Those who support socialism thereby contribute to the rotting of the moral fiber of our nation.

Not only is it necessary to reject the underlying godless philosophy of communism; it is just as imperative that we reject the economic principles of socialism. Both deny the right of the Creator to set the norms of conduct in his creation. Marxism is characterized by a professed atheism; socialism by a practical atheism. Those who adopt the redistributionist principles of socialism have thereby forfeited their right to condemn the philosophy of violence of the communists. ♦

#### IDEAS ON LIBERTY

#### *False Freedom*

THERE is an important difference between having freedom and having "free" goods and services. Whenever goods and services are "free," the people aren't. The government which gives goods and services for nothing must force people to work for nothing.

J. KESNER KAHN

## STALEMATE IN KINGSPORT

SYLVESTER PETRO is a teacher who knows the ins and outs of labor law, and he has written many first-rate books and articles about the place of unions in a free society. But, as he says, most of his earlier work could have been done in a study and a law library. His latest book, *The Kingsport Strike* (Arlington House, \$5.00), represents a "new Petro," for much of it consists of material gathered on the spot in the Appalachian town of Kingsport, Tennessee, either on the picket lines of the five unions which have been striking the Kingsport Press since 1963, or in union halls, restaurants, homes, or the offices of executives. What we have here is Petro, the reporter (and a very good one), in addition to Petro, the legal philosopher.

Petro has tackled this particular job of reporting with a mind singularly free of clichés. Although it was apparent to him almost from the start that it was a particularly stupid strike, he approached the strikers as human beings who have the normal human attribute of pride, which can

make people persist in ineffectual action for the noblest of motives. In the same even-handed way he resisted categorizing workers who decided to go back to the shop and who crossed the picket lines, or who took the jobs of last-ditch strikers, as "scabs" or "rats." He capped all this by putting the hardest of questions to the Kingsport Press management, and to those among the national officers of the five unions who were willing to talk with him. The book grows out of recorded conversations and eye-witness descriptions. So direct and circumstantial is Petro in his reporting that the reader must believe him when he says, in conclusion, that the Kingsport strike was a vast mistake which a majority of the workers at the press did not desire. It has been kept going by the national leadership of the printing trades unions for reasons which have very little to do with local desires in the Kingsport, Tennessee, area, which happens to be an island of comparative affluence in a mountain region which qualifies generally as a depressed area.