

The Time is Now Ripe

Revolution
Without
Tears

304
MONTAGUE
GROVER

"THE sign of intelligence is not to know in your mind what you think should be done, but to know when it should be done."

— The Federal Attorney-General (The Hon. R. G. Menzies, K.C.) in the House of Representatives at Canberra on October 29, 1936.

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THE TIME IS NOW RIPE

Revolution Without Tears

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This Means You—Civilization

. . . neither money nor food on the premises. The medical evidence showed that death was due to malnutrition; he had not eaten for several days. The coroner said that deceased had evidently imagined that he was a poor man, though inquiries revealed that he had been in possession of considerable wealth. He had obviously suffered from delusions and had deliberately starved himself to death. A verdict of suicide whilst of unsound mind was recorded.

CHAPTER I

The Inevitable Revolution

WITHIN a few years we may expect the revolution —not the sort of revolution that Europe has known in the past, not a welter of bloodshed and barricades and guillotines and firing squads, but nevertheless a revolution of the whole social system as we know it to-day.

It is not a mere writing that is on the wall; it is a Neon blaze of 20-foot letters, proclaiming from Capitalism's skyscraper that its glory has departed.

So close is the revolution-to-be that it is up to us all to get busy and prepare for its advent. We must have a care lest it burst on us with such suddenness as to overwhelm all, its supporters as well as its opponents, and cast into the intricate machinery upon which we rely for its success a spanner to cause wreckage entailing a decade of restoration. It is to indicate methods by which such a catastrophe may be averted that I am impelled to put forward my own views.

I am not a Communist—I believe, rightly or wrongly, that the Communist method of wiping Capitalism off the economic slate, unavoidable though it may be in some European countries, is quite unnecessary in Australia. Neither do I believe that the Communist objective of “each according to his needs” will ever be workable. But I am a hundred per cent. Socialist and I firmly believe that the Socialistic doctrine of “each according to his deeds”—the basis of the present system under which the

Russian Soviet functions—will, before many years, form the foundation of every civilization in the world.

I happen to be a Socialist because I am a worshipper of efficiency. Bad planning, bad control, bad work—which is largely a matter of the planning and the control—make me sad and indignant. A perfect piece of organization, industrial, sporting, social, moves me to admiration which is almost emotional at times. Even the success of a smoothly-running piece of Capitalistic political machinery almost forces me to join temporarily the cheering Tuscans. My hatred of Capitalism is, first, of course, its gross and stupid inhumanity, but almost as deep is my hatred of its contemptible inefficiency; a junior football club managed in the same way that Capitalism is managed would go to pieces in a fortnight; a suburban hall would find the orchestra—if it turned up—playing to half a dozen dancers.

The casual spectator of the economic game is inclined to imagine that Capitalism is efficient because he sees its component parts raised to heights of efficiency which seem almost miraculous. He marvels over the wonderful organization behind the fabrication of manufactured goods, behind the multitudinous complicated processes involved in the treatment of minerals, behind the vast construction jobs that Capitalism embarks upon, behind the magic of transport and communication. He marvels over these just as the small boy marvels over the engine of a motor-car when the bonnet is lifted or over the machinery of a steamship if he is permitted to go "below." That small boy assumes, rightly, that the car and the steamer will be properly handled when they are in action. But his father—should he be one of the casual spectators—makes a huge mistake when he assumes that the triumphs of Capitalism's

individual efforts will be properly handled as a coherent whole. Under Capitalism, the car has to be driven on roads innocent of all traffic rules; the steamer has to be taken to sea without chart or compass. Little wonder is there in the fact that the roads and waterways of progress are strewn with the smashes of fine industries, and others are sunk without a trace.

Capitalism has failed. Not only has it failed to keep its implied undertaking that increased efficiency in machinery and method would bring prosperity to the world, but it has failed to attain its own sordid objectives. Some businesses achieve greatness, some have greatness thrust upon them, some just about break even; but the majority of private enterprises all the world over are rank failures. Not only numerically, but in terms of capital itself, do they fail. The astounding fact is that, for every million won from business as profit, there is more than a million lost through writing-off and sheer bankruptcy. The oft-repeated advice to "leave things to private enterprise" only means that we should leave them to incompetence, to something that fails to carry out its own aims, to a force which, in six cases out of ten, loses its own possessions and its shareholders' money and the jobs of its executives and its workpeople.

No reasonable person expects any enterprise to succeed without mistakes being made, even by the far-seeing and the conservative; but when such failures are constant and spread over the whole area of activity, it is fairly obvious that the basis of operations is unsound.

The assertion that Capitalism has failed is not a mere cry from a soap-box. It is a scientific fact provable by Capitalism's own statistics.

Gradually, recognition of this failure is permeating the understanding of Capitalism itself. Its inability to dispose profitably of the goods and services it aims to market has had a fine disciplinary effect, even in some cases an educative one. No longer do the mandarins of High Finance accept unquestioned the creed that theirs represents the best of all possible economic systems. The good old days when the Socialism of Bellamy's *Looking Backward* was received with patronizing superiority as a "beautiful impracticable dream" have gone forever.

Russia has proved that Socialism is workable; Russia is proving that Socialism can give its citizens—every single one of its citizens—a living. To-day, that living is a poor one. Though the general average is probably higher than in any other land, the standard of life of the Australian tradesman or labourer in constant work is unquestionably higher than that of the Russian in a similar position. The striking difference between the two workers is that the Australian looks to the future with apprehension, even terror. In this the worker is not the only sufferer. If his sleep is broken by his mental screen suddenly flashing pictures of unemployment, old age and ill-health, the sleep of his capitalistic employer is similarly broken by terrors of almost equal intensity. Russia has relieved its capitalists of their troubles by abolishing them; it has relieved its workers by instituting an economic system founded, not on tradition and prejudice but on simple common sense; and their dreams, if they have any, are dreams of hope for the better future.

The intelligent capitalist knows this full well; the stupid one contents himself by hiding his head in the sand, refusing to learn anything about the progress—the astounding

progress—of the U.S.S.R. and by repeating, to soothe his misgivings, the Coueistic formula: "Day by day, in every way, Russia is going back to Capitalism." But the application of faith-healing principles to crumbling josses is ineffective. No longer does the capitalist rest back satisfied that Mammon's in his heaven and all's right with the world, as he rolls roycefully home at five p.m.; he has misgivings—and in many cases those misgivings have crystallized into actual fear.

With the more philosophical of his breed, the attitude is one of acceptance of anything the future may bring. They realize that there are no Joshuas nowadays to command suns to stand still. They no longer assert the impossibility of a Socialistic Commonwealth functioning; they content themselves by asserting that it could never function as successfully as a nation controlled by Capitalism. They speak no more of what may happen "if" Socialism comes upon us; their speculations centre on what will happen "when" it comes. Meanwhile, they rest, satisfied to take the goods the gods provide and do their little to stave off the evil day when the captains and the kings depart from the realm of Finance and Industry.

As for the old hard-boiled Tory who was a common figure of public and private life a generation back, he is as dead as his great progenitor—the proto-Conservative who "went round on the day of the Creation imploring God to preserve Chaos."

CHAPTER II

Hail and Farewell

CAPITALISM was brought into being by the Industrial Revolution, in which not a shot was fired. In this respect its death will resemble its birth. It was born of the machine; a maintenance magistrate would be hard put to decide whether Watt or Stephenson or Hudson or Faraday was its father, for, in contradistinction to biology, it had many fathers.

Though the term was unknown when the Revolution took place, its aim was Mass-Production. It converted the back-room factory, wherein the master and his sons and daughters and sons-in-law laboured with primitive tools, into the machine shop. The machine shop grew during the succeeding century and a half into the mighty factory with its satellite scientists and artists and writers and psychologists and go-getters—all parts of a great mechanism with the respective functions all mapped out on graphs and blue-prints and each dovetailing into the other to make a coherent whole, ready, in fact eager, to make war on its rivals and rake in the profits obtainable from the sale of the commodities it turned out.

Unfortunately for the controllers of this wonderfully efficient combination of various activities which, in itself constituted another and larger activity, its rivals were just as alert. Their organization was perfected to the same degree; their efficiency differed in no respect from that of the first; they had just as capable brains behind them, and just as capable technical experts in their various departments.

Of course, not all of them were equally efficient. Some revealed weak spots and such enterprises found their way to the scrap-heap, with blocks of useless buildings and mountains of unwanted machines to worry their liquidators.

As in the biological progress of the world, the doctrine of the survival of the fittest was mercilessly applied. The race was to the swift and the battle was to the strong. The wise controllers of Capitalism's individual enterprises gave no thought to those of their number who had fallen by the wayside; they made profitable bargains by buying expensive machinery which they happened to require—at half-price—and by hiring expensive experts thrown out of work by the failure of their own enterprise—also at half-price. Then they turned to resume the fight with other capable survivors.

Bigger and better machinery was introduced, machinery which would reduce to the minimum the human element which had to be paid wages. Efficiency methods developed to render the employment of clerks and accountants less than half what it had been in the old inefficient days. Hundreds of thousands of workers of all sorts, from people possessed of considerable executive ability, down to labourers, were dismissed, not because the capitalist was an ogre who liked to see these people suffering, but merely because money could be saved by new installations; and money saved is money made. While one capitalist was doing this, his rival was keeping pace with him; he had to—or go under in the dog-fight which was in progress. . . .

Then, one sad day, both rivals awakened to the fact that the workpeople who had been deprived of their livelihood by the race for efficiency were no longer able to buy the commodities which Capitalism produced.

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Like all optimists, when things begin to go wrong, the capitalist turned into the worst of pessimists. He grew panicky; he rushed to crazy schemes of sabotage to restore his crumbling fortunes. With the assistance of the governments which he partly controlled, he caused to be instituted a system of destroying useful commodities, especially foodstuffs, under the fantastic belief that if there were less of these commodities in the world people would have money enough to pay high prices for what was left. The destruction was carried out, but the money was not forthcoming for the surviving commodities. That is where Capitalism stands to-day. It has no scheme for restoring itself. Though its friends have evolved numbers of such schemes, none seems acceptable to Capitalism or to the other reformers. It is forced to a policy of despair.

The citizens of the various nations watch their political parties engaging in much spectacular shadow-sparring. There is no referee to declare the contest "No Fight" and withhold the purse; but the bleacher seats are commencing to mutter "Schlenter" and the mutter threatens to become a roar. It would be a pity to see the mob rise and wreck a stadium which has cost so much money and thought to erect.

The odour of burning rubber fills the atmosphere of civilization, yet it persists in driving with the brakes on, and it is only a matter of time before the car bursts into flames.

Like the boy passing through the churchyard, Capitalism whistles to keep up its spirits. At business men's luncheons it tells itself that the corner is turned; but, in its heart of hearts, it knows that its end is near. All that is

HAIL AND FAREWELL

left to it is the hope of the despairing, the hope of the shipwrecked passengers who gather on the deck of the sinking liner and sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

Often it is said that Capitalism is in the condemned cell. The simile is not correct. Capitalism is not going to execution; it is just dying of senile decay. Its arteries are hardened; its blood-pressure rises day by day; it is only a matter of time before the stroke which causes paralysis and death. In fact, it is really dead now, though it maintains a semblance of life, like the body of Lenin; and for the same reason. It is enveloped in a vacuum.

CHAPTER III

Among the Hostile Tribes

WHEN I was a kid of fifteen I first recognized the shocking inequalities and unfairness and wastefulness of modern civilization, and decided that the only sane method of carrying on the work of the world was to pool all production and distribute it fairly from some central authority. A year or two later, I discovered that several persons long dead had stolen my scheme, and had evolved something to which they had given the name of "Socialism." I decided that Socialism would do me, and started to read up much that had been written about it. What I read confirmed me in my belief, and I have gone through life without changing my mind on any fundamentals.

I can here speak with authority on the subject of poverty and wealth. I have suffered both. Though I have never lacked a meal nor a place to sleep, I have walked daily twelve miles looking for work because I could not afford tram fares. I have gone through a Melbourne winter without an overcoat, because I could not raise the money to buy even a secondhand one. I have had dependent upon me four people, and only two pounds between us and destitution.

I contrived to get through. Later, I became a capitalist and tasted the Dead-Sea fruit of possessing a considerable sum of money. I know the whole range of economic adventure: the torment of having nothing, and the bitterness of having money and little else.

When I was old enough to get a job I worked hard, partly because, like the rest of us, I desired to "get on" in a world which was not of my making; but principally because I desired to see efficient work done by myself as well as other people. I can honestly say that the principal spur to my advancement was not the monetary gain but the work itself; and I firmly believe this to be the greatest incentive in all forms of industry.

I will go a step further and assert that the man who works for money only is a bad worker, whether he be a labourer or one of the "big shots" of international finance. The man who is of any value to the world or to his own enterprise works for achievement, to turn out a good job well.

There are probably plenty of people who work only for the money the work brings, but they don't count either in efficiency or in their trade. Whether he be a scientist or a capitalist or a bushranger, a man has to love his work or it will be bad work.

John D. Rockefeller chuckles like a schoolboy who has just kicked his first goal when he comes back from Wall Street with another million dollars to his credit; yet a million dollars, or fifty million dollars, can't improve his material position. He has every material thing in the world he wants except that extra million to add to his bank balance. It is the glorious triumph of having prized a million dollars off the savings of somebody else which brings him thrills and delights beyond measure. The man who works for money alone is merely a hewer of wood or a drawer of water and one who will never be heard of as the winner of a woodchopping competition at the Agri-

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cultural Show or as an engineer in the reticulation of an arid area.

Fast dying is the idea that, without the incentive of monetary rewards, the world will lose its most valuable human assets. The people of greatest value to the world are often denied the ordinary comforts of life. In every country, the most precious citizens are probably those engaged in scientific research, and it is unlikely that these average a weekly salary equal to the Australian basic wage. Farrar, the agricultural enthusiast who added a province to Australia's wheat area by evolving a long-rooted plant which would reach the lower moisture, died leaving twenty or thirty pounds. Luther Burbank, plant wizard of California, left less than a mediocre shopkeeper. Edison certainly got a fair share of the profits from his inventions, but only because he fluked big money from his initial deal and, later, acquired the shrewdness of business dealing through association with business men.

One of the professors of electrical engineering at a leading American University was not long back offered twenty thousand pounds a year to join a private firm—pounds, not dollars. "You boys have gotten another guess coming," he replied. "I can't do my research work and pull profits for you at the same time."

The average capitalist in Australia is not solely a capitalist—not a man who has put up the money and left it to others to make the profits. He is generally an executive himself, a worker in the industry; and, as he will boast—often with some truth—a worker who supplies more energy over longer hours than anybody in the concern. Such a man would worry far more were his work taken from him than his money; often he would die of inanition were

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he retired on a pension equal to his income. Like the war-horse of Scripture, he smells the battle from afar and longs to be in it.

The recent action of Lord Nuffield in giving away the greater part of his vast wealth and sticking to his work proves how little the money incentive actuates the man who loves his job and is worth something to the world.

My own desire to "get on" carried with it, I admit, a determination to get all the money out of it I could. I saw nothing heretical to my socialistic beliefs in this. Why should the capitalist who employed me take the money if I could force him to give it to me? I did all the forcing I dared and, when the opportunity came, I jumped at the chance of getting an interest in the enterprise. Thus I entered the capitalist class, made money, lost it, and finally contrived to salvage sufficient from the wreck to keep wolves from howling too loudly at doors.

My desire to be a capitalist was not based on the wish for luxurious life. I am personally too fond of comfort to endure the discomforts associated with luxury, and when a man has health, all the money in the world can give him no more material advantages than food and warmth. Even health, while money cannot ensure it, can be better preserved by having a credit balance in the bank. It is the immaterial things in life which count for happiness and not one of these can be obtained by the possession of wealth. One of the immaterial things I longed for was the privilege of saying precisely what I thought—speaking what I believed to be the truth. I set out to become a capitalist for the Great Ideal of being able to tell anyone to go to hell if I felt that way.

But what a disappointment it was to discover the truth;

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to learn, when I became acquainted with capitalists and was able to talk with them freely, that they were the most timid of mortals, so afraid of giving offence to their own system of Capitalism that the traditional poor clerk was a Paladin by comparison.

The robber-baron of the Middle Ages lived behind his portcullis in terror lest a stronger robber-baron or a combination of them might turn up to loot his castle. So the modern capitalist lives in constant fear that his ruthless fellows or his still more ruthless system may suddenly turn to despoil him of his spoils. What I regarded as the one reason for the desire to accumulate riches was swept away; the capitalist no longer appeared to have justification for his own existence.

I was closely associated with capitalists for several years—some of them were in the millionaire class. I found them much the same as anyone else except for their overwhelming cowardice. They had no antagonism towards the worker; in fact, I don't think there was one who would not have cheerfully doubled the wages of every one of his employees could he have done so without cutting into his own profits. And it has to be remembered that things are worked to such a fine point in the competition among capitalists that a rise of a shilling a day all round in the wages of many industries would mean that the company would go off the dividend-paying lists.

During my association, I encountered many instances of kindly human feeling on the part of capitalists towards the people working for them. Workers would frequently ask to be lent money by the concern to get them out of financial trouble—to meet a mortgage on their home; to finance an expensive surgical operation. Under the articles

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of association, the company was not permitted to lend to its employees; but, on almost every occasion, those capitalists used to go out of their way and spend considerable time to devise some method by which the money could be advanced without violating the law.

In point of ability, I found capitalists as a class to embrace all sorts—a few were men with great brains; the majority were mediocrities; some—and not always the Yes-Men—were just sufficiently intelligent to escape from being classed with the mental defectives. They were mostly courteous, kindly persons: courteous and kindly even towards the people they regarded as their inferiors—labourers, artisans, organizers, scientists, artists and philosophers. They bore no malice towards their employees, even when these demanded higher wages. I honestly believe there were few who would not have acceded to any union demand had it been possible to pass on the cost to the public.

But, being human, they showed malice at times and displayed it never more violently than against their fellow-capitalists. I have heard these described in terms which, if published, would lead to prosecutions for criminal libel; and the criticisms of the other side were just as bitter and just as extravagant. In the face of a common enemy, they were willing to sink minor differences and present a united front; but, in the sanctity of the board-room, their expressed opinions of their fellows ranked as classics of ribald invective. The wildest demagogue on the soap-box never says things half as hard against the capitalist as I have heard from people of the same economic faith. If the Socialistic state can only bring peace and goodwill among those who are now capitalists, it will be fully justified in going to bed

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satisfied with its day's good deed, like a conscientious boy-scout.

As for their morals, capitalists are just like other people. Some are lads of the village; some are virtuous to the limit of puritanism, with the majority somewhere in between—like the rest of us. But woe betide the sinner whose gay doings form a menace to profits; there is no mercy for such as he. One day, I met a capitalistic friend looking sad and indignant. Director of a Big Business, he confided to me that his office had been seriously upset over an internal scandal. The manager had ventured into a little-used room at the top of the vast establishment and there had found one of the accountants and one of the typists in a passionate embrace. The girl had been instantly dismissed and the accountant, who held a good position, had been reduced in salary by £100 a year.

"Why didn't the manager walk on and pretend he hadn't seen anything?" I inquired. My friend shuddered, as if I had committed blasphemy.

"But," he almost yelled in horror, "it was in office time."

Both the Communists and the people who are opposed to them differ from me in contending that it would not be possible to change over from Capitalism to Socialism without a revolution involving violence and bloodshed. Like Private Murphy, I am the only man in the regiment who is in step, for I regard the revolution—using that term to mean a violent revolution—to be not only unnecessary but impossible.

A revolt of Communists would be stamped out in a few hours. The Government possesses and controls all the arms and organization, and arms and organization have both improved out of sight since most of the revolutions

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of the world occurred. The Russian Revolution hung in the balance for months, if not years, and would have had no chance whatever had it not been for the soldiers, returning from the Great War with their arms, throwing in their lot with the Bolsheviks.

The arms at the command of the governments to-day do not comprise merely guns and cannons. Science has given them the aeroplane and various gases capable of rendering any number of insurrectos powerless in a few minutes. The Communist idea is that the Party will insidiously push its members into the army and the police force and so white-ant them that, when the signal to rise it given, sufficient will go over to the rebels. The Communists overlook the fact that there is an extremely capable intelligence branch attached to all military departments, and that, in all probability, it has its agents already in the inner circle of Communist leadership, and will always be fully aware of the extent of white-anting and possible defections in the military services. A successful uprising of Communists and their adherents is simply fantastic optimism.

When I assert that it is possible to secure Socialism by constitutional means, the Communist's reply is that, no matter how large the majority cast at the polls in favour of the new system, the capitalist will not let his possessions go without a fight, and that he will raise Fascist bodies to combat the will of the people. I retort that the capitalist chance of a successful revolution against the people is just as ridiculous as the project of the Communists themselves. It will necessitate a perfect organization of forces to seize the arms at the disposal of the government at the precise moment the poll is declared; and, if the Socialist majority

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is so lax as to make no counter preparations for resistance, as has just happened in Spain, it deserves all it gets.

But there is a further and more fatal objection: where is Capitalism going to get its rank and file of Fascistry? I assume that when the voters of Australia declare for a Socialistic system they will do so, firm in the belief that they will receive the basic wage of six pounds weekly which Russia will then be paying.

It would be a job beyond the powers of any capitalistic spell-binder to make men believe that they would profit by throwing up a certain peaceful job of six pounds weekly to carry a rifle in the interests of people who wish them to continue at half that sum. It can't be done.

CHAPTER IV

Parlour Pinks and Infra Reds

MY friends of the Communist Party—the rude ones—tell me contemptuously that I am a “parlour pink,” if not actually a petty bourgeois, because I refuse to cut the throat of the capitalist in the revolution they anticipate. In spite of their contempt, I still decline the job of throat-cutting. I know too many capitalists who are decent fellows—just as decent fellows as the Communists or my own associates among the parlour pinks—most of whom might be more correctly designated infra reds seeing that they are really red but fail to reveal their true colour to the public gaze. I lack the snobbishness which ascribes all the virtues to my own class—whatever that may be—and all the vices to my opponents. Like the lord in “Iolanthe,” I firmly believe that:

“Hearts just as pure and fair
May beat in Belgrave Square
As in the lowlier air
Of Seven Dials.”

Therefore, I turn down the job of throat-cutting definitely and refuse with equal determination to join the hate-complex chorus so often raised against the individual capitalist. I can quite understand bitter feelings on the part of the man who has suffered—or, worse, seen those dear to him suffering—through the existing system. The half-baked economist—and most of us on both sides are

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half-baked—looks for a scapegoat and imagines that he has found him in the boss who sacked him last month. He does not realize that the boss did not sack him for the sadistic joy of seeing his children under-nourished. He sacked him probably because orders were slow in coming in or the man himself was slow in turning out his products—either of which contingencies would eventually mean ruin to the business and the boss himself and unemployment for all his operatives. There is no reform to be effected by hating the boss. There is by getting him to listen to reason and to realize what is good for himself and his children and humanity generally. It's a big job, I'll admit; but I persuade myself that it can be done.

It is being done at the present time by that despised class, the parlour pinks—professional men and women, intellectuals, business people and even actual capitalists whose sense of fair play and whose studies of the economic system have caused them to realize the efficiency of Socialism and its inevitability. There are more parlour pinks in the community than their fellow "Nice People" imagine.

Some of the greatest surprises I have encountered in recent years have been given me by men who, as soon as they realized my own feelings in the matter, would remove the mask they wore for business purposes and announce themselves to be in full agreement with me. Of course, when they met their business acquaintances and their social acquaintances and their fellows at the luncheon clubs, they took good care not to parade the fact that they were tinged with the slightest shade of pink. But when they were in company where it was no longer necessary to conceal their

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genuine beliefs, they were as ready as I to further the cause of Socialism and as sure as I that it was coming.

Though most of such men and women kept their true faith well hidden from those who might cut down orders or pull in overdrafts, there were a proportion whose positions rendered them independent. They were free to do their propaganda and, believe me, they are doing it—white-anting the bourgeoisie solidly and effectively by reason of the knowledge of the subject they are advancing. There are others, liable to victimization because they occupy public positions. These safeguard themselves by throwing in every now and again the phrase: "Of course, I'm not a Communist, but——" This is probably quite true, as their judges are usually incapable of distinguishing between a Communist and a Socialist. But for that ignorance, they might make things extremely uncomfortable for the speakers.

The parlour pinks don't want any revolution. They want to see a hundred yards along the road before they accelerate to a pace which might otherwise wreck everything. They don't want to provoke a cataclysm for an ideal and then find that the cataclysm has involved everybody and everything they value, the ideal included, with murder, loot, cholera and typhus prevailing over all. They are selfish in that they prefer the devil they know to the devil they don't, and there are many thousands of people who are not parlour pinks, people who would be classed as proletarians, who feel similarly.

All the same, convinced that the revolution can be effected without violence, the parlour pinks continue their good work, and I am confident that such work has done

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more to convince people generally—and people who would otherwise be hostile—of the advantages of a Socialistic system than all the speeches from soap-boxes, all the waving of red banners, all the street clashes with the police. These, at best, only solidify the ranks of those already convinced; the white-anting of the parlour pinks makes converts and those converts are growing in numbers and in depth of conviction day by day.

Our parlour pinks encounter the greatest opposition, not from those whom they naturally expect to be the most bitter obstructionists—the capitalists—but from the people of moderate—often extremely moderate—means. The intelligent capitalist has studied the question and, like the experts he has paid to think his way, has found no bridge over the abyss before the world. All the intelligent capitalists I know freely admit that “things can’t go on,” but when I ask them for a solution they one and all reply: “God knows.” They are in an economic fog and many of them, I feel satisfied, would be ready to embrace any reform which would relieve them of the worries which afflict them now. The Communist asserts that the capitalist is not going to give up his possessions without a fight, without violence; but many of them realize that it is only a matter of time before—revolution or no revolution—they have no possessions.

More aggressive is the unintelligent hostility that comes from the small capitalist and the middle-class people who are always in the position of being more or less hard-up—the class which used to be known as the “shabby genteel,” people who see life through a rear-vision mirror. The objections of these people to a Socialist order are based

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on pure snobbishness; they regard the manual worker as belonging to an inferior class, if not an inferior race, and they look with horror on a time when they would have to meet the butcher or the baker on terms of equality. Their belief that the butcher and the baker are rough, uncouth savages will not bear analysis; their own butcher and their own baker, they will admit, are quite decent courteous people, but they are of course, exceptions to the generality of butchers and bakers. Then, among the people they mix with on terms of social equality—even in the stratum many degrees above that in which they move themselves—are men who, they know, were butchers and bakers only a few years before they accumulated their fortunes.

Among my personal acquaintances are two men who now figure in social gatherings of the most exclusive sort. They have been honoured by knighthoods and are invariably mentioned as being “among those present.” But, in my youth, I remember having purchased pounds of chops wrapped by the more or less fair hands of the one and having drunk pots of beer pushed over the bar counter by the other. Those two men are men of intelligence and as much education as their present-day fellows; they are fit to pass muster in any society and society gives them admittance, not because they are gentlemen by nature but because of their financial standing. Was the first still a butcher and the second still a barman, the petty bourgeoisie would never dream of inviting them on the first Monday of the month.

But another knight of the British Empire whom I know is still the same arrogant, blatant and ignorant pig he was when he delivered milk to my mother’s back door. Were

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he still a milk-ho, none of the Nice People would endure him for five minutes, and I wouldn't blame them. What I do blame them for is their accepting this boor into their social gatherings because he happens to have had his passport vised by the financial consuls.

CHAPTER V

George's Job

MANY of my acquaintances—possible converts—on whom I am getting in my fine work of proselytization—have asked me: "But how are you going to do it?"

We are not going to do it; we are going to let George do it—George in this instance being represented by the forces of Conservatism and Reaction, the party of many aliases which in Australia at the present moment is known by the name of U.A.P. We are not going to convert the U.A.P. leaders; we are not so optimistic as all that; the trend of world events is going to convert them against their will. They will recognize the inevitable; they will make the best of a bad job—and a mighty bad job civilization is to-day. There will be no fighting to the final ditch, no Last Commando dying gloriously for a lost cause; the numbers against them will be too big, so they will take the politician's way out.

Just as Constantine, erstwhile Pagan of the Pagans, became first and most devout Christian Emperor of Rome when he noted the growing power of the Christians, so will the stalwarts of the U.A.P. suddenly realize the good points of Socialism.

It is the success which Soviet Russia will achieve in the next few years which will bring about the change of heart—a success to make the achievements of efficient, high-grade Capitalism look like the output of a beginners'

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class at an elementary technical school. To a number of friends who are frankly hostile, I put the following question:

"Do you think it is possible to hold back the rest of the world when Russia is paying a basic wage of six or eight pounds a week—not in roubles but in present Australian values?"

Each of my friends has shaken his head. "I don't suppose it would. But Russia will never be able to do it."

In that event, all my argument goes to nothing; but Russia will do it and there is every indication that Russia won't be long about it.

I base my opinion on the immense progress which the U.S.S.R. has made since the completion of the first Five Year Plan—a progress achieved in the face of handicaps well-nigh insuperable, a progress not approached by any other country in history, and a progress which still carries an impetus which no brakes yet devised can halt.

Mildred Fairchild, Associate Professor of Economics at Bryn Mawr College—one of the most exclusive and conservative educational establishments in the United States—quotes figures which she says she has checked and found accurate. Those figures show that in 1924-1925 the lowest-paid workers in the U.S.S.R. were those engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing, and their pay averaged only 201 roubles a year. It is idle to try to translate the rouble into the money terms of any other nationality; the rouble has varied, and still varies, both in exchange and in purchasing power, but the fact remains that 201 roubles must have sufficed to keep these workers alive in 1924. Otherwise they would have died of starvation and exposure, and there would be nobody on whom to base any statistics. In 1932,

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those same classes of workers received an average payment of 940 roubles a year—more than four times the sum necessary to keep body and soul together in 1924. Once again, the value of the rouble is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain, but the outstanding fact is that the prices of commodities have dropped very considerably during the intervening years, and have dropped in still greater ratio between 1932 and 1936. It is not too optimistic to estimate that the standard of living of the workers is to-day at least six times as great as it was when they just contrived to keep alive; and a six-fold increase on a bare subsistence standard is something that very many Australian workers would be glad to accept to-day.

The total average wage of all workers in the U.S.S.R. advanced from 450 roubles in 1924 to 1,427 roubles in 1932, with a drop in the cost of commodities and an extension of State services; and, as a further 30 per cent. drop has taken place since 1932, the condition of the Russian worker, low as it is, largely through the absence of ordinary comforts and conveniences, compares not so unfavourably with that of the worker in other lands. Everything is Red in Russia except the traffic lights of progress. These shine luminously and brilliantly green as a beacon to civilization.

London *Financial Times*, hardly to be regarded as an organ of Communistic propaganda, recently published an article to reveal the sufferings and privations of the Russian people. It estimated that the average wage in the U.S.S.R. towards the end of 1935 did not exceed 33/- weekly in English money. This sum would approximate to 48/3 in Australia—worked out on bank exchange rate—and 48/3 is a weekly return far greater than the average

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worker obtains in Australia to-day. It has further to be remembered that in Russia, as in other lands of Continental Europe, the majority of the women work outside their homes, and receive wages for so doing. This would mean that many a Soviet household has, on the showing of the *Financial Times*, an income of £4/16/6, Australian, to which must be added social services only at the command of the well-to-do in other countries. The sustenance worker in Australia would welcome such penury with open arms.

It will soon be impossible to conceal the truth about the U.S.S.R. much longer. Already admissions of the solid advance of the vast country are filtering in to reach the residents of foreign lands. Strangers are visiting the Soviet in tens of thousands annually, and the great majority of these—even those bitterly hostile to a Socialistic system, and extremely critical of the administration—are unable to hide their admiration for the material advancement already made.

For seven years, there have been no unemployed in the U.S.S.R., and every worker—even the Mongoloid in Central Asia who, five years back, was an illiterate nomad, is receiving a greater wage—once more in values—than 50 per cent. of our fellow-Australians.

Russia is the only country in the world which has turned that corner we've heard so much about, and its boast that it will surpass the peak period of American prosperity by 1947 seems a conservative estimate. Of course, America did not pay every one of its workers a wage of six or eight pounds a week during its peak period. But the United States was not a Socialistic Republic; that makes all the difference.

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All the blunders, all the cruelties, which have been laid to the door of the U.S.S.R. are attributable to national, not economic, defects. Sloth, ignorance, technical shortcomings, incompetent organization, ruthlessness towards opponents, even critics, of the Government, are part of the Russian temperament—the old Czarist Russian temperament which is being slowly, but surely, transformed by the economic advance.

When the workers of Australia learn that the workers of the U.S.S.R. are really getting the equivalent of six or eight pounds a week in Melbourne or Sydney, they are naturally going to ask why they are not getting the same amount from a country indefinitely better provided with the means of doing it. They are not going to get out their guns, or throw bombs or erect barricades; but they are going to be an intolerable nuisance to everybody, an added burden of taxation, and a daily-increasing menace to whatever Government is in power.

Whether Labour or the U.A.P. is sitting on the Government benches, the Opposition is going to spray it nightly with red-hot shrapnel and prevent any legislation going through. If Labour is in power, the U.A.P. is going to become astoundingly virtuous, demanding to know why the party which professes such solicitude for the under-dog should hypocritically permit it to suffer while worse-situated foreigners are drawing six or eight pounds a week. If the U.A.P. is governing, Labour is going to be mightily indignant that the hirelings of Capitalism should deny the mass of the people the bare necessities of life.

Meanwhile, the finances of Australia will be shot to pieces. The currency will be debased by the continued

issue of Treasury bills; in fact, the Treasury bill will probably become a currency in itself, and people will buy ice cream and pay tram fares in these precious documents. As for redeeming the issue by the old device of floating loans, this will long have been scrapped, for the simple reason that it will be impossible to float any loans. The Government will have no policy but one of panic. If it be a Labour Government, it will probably ride for a fall, not having sufficient intestinal fortitude to put its own principles into action.

The U.A.P. will come into power, form its Cabinet, find the Treasury empty, and the public clamouring just as vigorously as it did before the elections, in view of the news from Russia that conditions there continue to improve. Then, when the House meets, a Strong Man—probably Mr. Menzies—will announce the policy.

“The time is now ripe,” he will observe towards the end of his speech, “for a complete revision of the whole social system. The Government proposes to take full control of all industry, and run it under Commonwealth supervision.” (Sensation and uproar.)

Labour cries: “Socialism! Socialism!”

Mr. Curtin: “You have stolen our policy.”

Mr. Menzies: “Nothing of the sort. I will grant that to the short-sighted, who do not realize our intentions, this may savour of Socialism; but members will find it something very different in its application. It is not Capitalism, it is not Fascism, it is not Technocracy. To coin a word, I call it Sanocracy, for it is the only sane system under which a modern civilization can be carried on. (Labour cheers.) I think

that, when our supporters fully comprehend the position, they will be perfectly satisfied with the decision we have come to—the only decision, I may add, in the circumstances. Each of the various industries will be placed under the control of qualified experts.”

Mr. Scullin: “Commissars.” (Laughter.)

Mr. Menzies: “I prefer to call them commissioners; it is much more euphonious.”

Mr. Forde: “And when will the new order start?”

Mr. Menzies: “It has started now. To-morrow, at eight a.m., the whole of the industries of Australia pass over to the Commonwealth automatically. The enabling Bill, which I desire members to pass through all stages to-night, will now be circulated.”

CHAPTER VI

Comrade Menzies's Task

LET us carry the prophecy a little further. The House of Representatives, by reason of the huge U.A.P. majority and the support of Labour, has carried the measure. A few malcontents on both sides have endeavoured to hold up the passage, but discipline has been brought to bear by their leaders, and the Bill has been transmitted to the Senate and passed without amendment. The Governor-General has given his assent.

Next morning, Mr. Menzies awakens to discover himself to be Comrade Menzies, head and forefront of the Socialistic Commonwealth of Australia, with hopes and fears, confidences and misgivings whizzing through his brain as the water falls on him from the shower. The U.A.P. has got the machine; the next thing is to get it moving, and, at the same time, to placate all its own supporters, who will, naturally, look askance at anything which appears to threaten their position.

There are the representatives of Big Business, who have subscribed so liberally to the party funds. Their first impulse will be to cry out that they have been betrayed. There is the Women's National League, which may rise as one woman from its cocktail parties to march on Canberra with another Demoiselle Theroigne at its head. There are the insurgents of the Young Nationalist Party—twenty thousand of them to know the reason why—with their various sachems trying hard to look like Hitler or Mussolini as they stir their followers with fiery speeches.

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There are the ragged remnants of the New Guard straining at the leash for a word from Colonel Eric Campbell to throw off the mask and seize the reins of Government. All these turbulent elements have to be rendered satisfied with their lot under the Menzies régime.

It is not difficult to imagine the contrast between the triumphant excitement of the night before and the sobering effects of realization of the tasks before it which confronts the Cabinet meeting of the morning after. The more timorous Ministers will shake their heads, and murmur that it can't be done. But it can be—by the extremely simple process of confiscation.

It is not usual to call confiscation by its real name unless it refers to something suggested by political opponents. It masquerades under hundreds of aliases; but, beneath all, it is just the same old confiscation which has existed almost as long as history and which is the basis of all civilization.

To most people, the word conjures up visions of bailiffs seizing furniture, of re-possessed radio sets, of gross injustice and oppression within the law, and of gentlemen without the law shoving a gun under your nose as you alight from a tram and demanding all your loose change.

But these forms of confiscation touch only a few. The wider forms embrace the whole community, and there is not one of us who does not cheerfully consent to some of his rights being confiscated for the common good. When the first collection of honest men decided to stamp out the depredations of bandits, they confiscated the vested right of the bandit to cut throats and loot property—a right which had existed without question up to that date. And,

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doubtless, the bandits felt it a gross injustice, and scathingly denounced the menace of Socialistic and grandmotherly legislation at the luncheon clubs of the period.

When Moses descended Mount Sinai with the tablets under his arm, he confiscated the right of the public to commit ten deadly sins—at least, they became sins from the moment he gazetted them and thus completed his work of confiscation. Up to that time they had simply been accepted pastimes. When a Parliament decides to impose a dog tax, it confiscates the right of the citizen to keep a dog unless he pays a fee for the privilege. When the City Council compels you to drive on the left-hand side of the road, it confiscates your right to execute figure eights and slaloms with your car in front of the Town Hall. In fact, every Parliament and every governing body, in every part of the civilized globe, exists and has existed for the sole purpose of confiscation—that is, confiscating some right which, up to that time, had been the property of some individual or body of individuals.

Draco, the famous Greek lawgiver, established certain confiscatory measures, and then decided that there should be no more—that anybody who suggested amendments to his laws should be put to death. The Medes and Persians are also understood to have frowned on criticism by standardizing their laws and applying the principle of anticipatory confiscation to future legislators who might imagine they could improve matters. But nothing could check the onward march of confiscation, and to-day not a Parliament meets without the most Conservative of its members suggesting the amendment of some law—in other words, advocating the confiscation of some existing right.

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The objection to confiscation on the part of most people is that it will deprive them of some liberty or some property. Regarding the liberty, they are generally content to grumble and submit; but when property is attacked—unless it be by the device of camouflaging the confiscation by calling it taxation—they are ready to risk their lives in their opposition.

But there are few citizens indeed who would resent the confiscation of any or all of their possessions if they could be persuaded that they would be just as well off as they were before—in fact, better off, for they would enjoy a security of position which is impossible to obtain even with the most wealthy and powerful of us under Capitalism.

It will be the duty of Comrade Menzies to persuade his supporters outside the House that such is the case under the U.A.P. scheme of Sanocracy. This should not be difficult for anybody who has thoroughly grasped the idea and has the faculty of conveying his own thoughts to those who listen. To a practitioner and advocate as able as Comrade Menzies, it should be a work of easiness, and, within a day or two, the sun would rise on the representatives of Big Business calling him blessed, the Women's National League returning to its bridge tables, and the Young Nationalists and the New Guard cheering excitedly as their captains lustily lead the chorus of "The Red Flag."

CHAPTER VII

The Big Bookkeeping Entry

THE democracy must rule. The right to be wrong is recognized by the Australian as something sacred, and it is beyond comprehension that he would ever submit to a dictatorship or to the oligarchy which was inevitable in the U.S.S.R. on account of the immense numbers of backward citizens.

Even though the democracy asks for Barabbas a million times, it is preferable to submission to the will of a Mussolini or a Hitler backed by a body of armed gangsters.

But democracy needs a lead, and, when the lead is given and it is made to understand the position, it will readily follow the sane political rule and "keep to the Left." The time is ripe, as Mr. Menzies will tell Parliament, to give such a lead. Possibly, it may be necessary to act unconstitutionally in one unimportant respect; time must not be wasted over the tedious and long-drawn process of abolishing the States by referendum, requiring a majority of the electors in a majority of the States, with the bitter opposition of State members and other synthetic magnificos who would fight to the death against their trumpeterly dignities being stripped from them. Whether the supremacy of the Commonwealth can be effected by this means or others, or by enduring the delays incidental to a constitutional change, will be one of the matters the Cabinet will have to face. The simple method would be the issue of a

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pronunciamento from the Government wiping the States off the political map.

Parliament will naturally consist of a body of members with only one end in view. There will be no oppositionists as we know them to-day, though Right Deviationists and Left Deviationists will probably develop, and individual members will naturally want all the big enterprises centred in their own electorates, as they do now. But the division into two parties, one bitterly, and often senselessly, hostile to everything the other suggests, will speedily pass out of the realm of practical politics. The first session under the new order will necessarily be a scrappy one; the Cabinet which was in possession of the Treasury benches at the time of the political revolution will continue in office until an election is fixed. After this is held, the members will assemble and elect a leader. That man will assume virtual dictatorship until he is deposed. He will be a dictator with the provision of recall. He will choose his own Ministers; Parliament may criticize his judgment on the floor of the House, but unless a motion of want of confidence is moved and carried, depriving him of his dictatorship by reason of his lack of judgment, he will remain supreme, with the right to dismiss or appoint his Ministers throughout the time he occupies the position of Prime Minister.

There will be no interference with the spirit of democracy in this; the people will exercise their franchise at the ballot box, as they do now, and, just as they do now, they will have no say in the government of the country until the next elections. If the dictator retains the confidence of the House, but forfeits the confidence of the electors, they will have ample opportunity of showing their disfavour at

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the ballot box. Until such time, there will be a disciplined control and a continuity of policy which are utterly impossible under the system which functions now.

It is unlikely that Comrade Menzies or any of his successors will fill his Cabinet with all the men associated with him previously. There is little foundation for any fear of that sort. Not one Prime Minister who has ever steered Australia through the tricky channels of Parliamentary Government would not have jumped at the chance of sacking some of his incompetent and shady colleagues, and filling their places with clean, able men from the other side. The appalling weakness of party government is that the most erudite and capable man in the House is not chosen to administer the department for which he is eminently suited, but that a dozen influences are brought to bear in the selection of a Cabinet. The members to be considered must be men who were returned with large majorities; it casts discredit on a Government to have its Ministers defeated at subsequent elections. The prospective Minister must stand well with the political organization which controls the party outside the House—the "Machine." There is one machine-made legislator who has held important offices in one Australian Parliament whose fellow-Ministers often described as a dirty rat and a crook at that. There is Big Business to satisfy in the selection of a U.A.P. Cabinet and, strangely enough, some big capitalists to satisfy in the selection of a Labour one.

On occasions, departments which work like well-oiled machines are thrown into confusion by some incompetent meddler who is given charge after a change of Government. One State Cabinet contained a Minister of Lands who was so conscientious that he insisted on reading every

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document which came into the office. After a couple of months, when land seekers were howling loudly that they were held up from occupation of their blocks, and the building was filled with unread papers, the Premier of the day appointed another Minister, who promptly ordered a rubber stamp of his signature, and instructed an office boy to stamp every darned paper he could see lying about.

It is highly probable that no Prime Minister and no Premier, present or past, would not have gladly substituted some capable members of the Opposition for the duds to whom he had been forced to allot portfolios, because they were of the same political colour and could exert external pulls.

Even under Capitalism, some countries are sufficiently sane to elect their Ministries. For years, Mr. Branting, a Socialist, was Prime Minister of Sweden, in a House the majority of whose members were anti-Socialistic. Those anti-Socialists had sufficient sense to recognize the ability of a good administrator, even if he did subscribe to a political creed they abhorred. The task of a Prime Minister is to run a country in the most capable way, and the most capable men are those most likely to do it.

With no rates to draw upon, the municipalities will continue their work with a State subsidy of equal value. Later on, they will be placed under managers appointed by the Commonwealth, with local advisory councils. The department controlling municipal work will aim to distribute population more widely. The big cities and towns will not be permitted to grow more unwieldy; efforts will be made to erect factories in proximity to raw materials, and to

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develop rural centres to a degree enabling them to enjoy the ameliorative conditions now a monopoly of the city dweller. Each provincial centre will have its properly equipped theatre, with comfortable seating, where the best city companies will appear in turn. There will be no property-owners to dictate where bridges shall span creeks or where roads shall deviate. If sentimental reasons—for there can be no others—should impel advisory councils to plan in unsuitable spots, the manager will promptly veto the decision, leaving them the right to appeal to the head of the department if they feel they have a good case.

All municipal work will be carried out with the idea of stimulating production, simplifying distribution, and increasing the comfort of the people as a whole. If local residents desire to preserve a township liable to be submerged under an irrigation scheme which will add to the general prosperity, that township will be submerged. At present, it is often submerged just as deeply if the interests—generally profit-seeking interests—are sufficiently powerful, while, on the other hand, profit-seeking and covetousness on the part of Capitalism have many times stood in the way of a progressive Government constructing public works to benefit the country as a whole as well as the surrounding residents.

From the date of the Commonwealth Parliament passing its confiscatory measure, the basic wage will be raised to six pounds weekly—again present values—and the whole of the 300,000 unemployed in Australia—for that is a fair estimate of the number of people who want work and can't get it—will punch the bundy.

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To-day, we are embarrassed by over-production. We have too much foodstuff, too much clothing, too many boots, and too much of everything. But, within a few weeks, there will be a howl to speed up production; there won't be enough of anything to satisfy the demands of the new purchasers. The silos and the warehouses will pour forth their contents with everybody in employment, for, in addition to the former unemployed, another half-million or million people will have an extra couple of pounds a week to play with every Friday.

Demand will not end there. When the new order functions fully, the wiping of many useless activities from the economic map, and the rationalization of industry generally will leave, easily, another million without their former occupations. Work will have to be found for these; the majority will be absorbed into the public departments, which will necessarily expand to enormous dimensions; the rest will be allotted to the task of catching up the leeway of the one commodity which is not over-produced—the supply of decent housing for the population.

The job of providing homes for the people—decent modern homes, where the earner of £6 weekly may live in comfort with his wife and children—will not be approached in the half-hearted, scrappy manner which has characterized the controlling bodies of town-planning in every country under Capitalistic rule. Not mere patches of slums, but whole suburbs, built in the dark days before home-construction became an exact science, will be marked for death. Park areas will be taken for building purposes where required, and building areas will be turned into parks. Streets will be plotted to meet traffic requirements, and everything will be swept away to make way for them.

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The width of narrow thoroughfares will be largely increased, corners will be splayed to minimize traffic dangers, and garden boulevards will replace all the main roads leading to country centres.

Incidentally, there will be sports grounds and swimming pools every mile or so in the cities and in every country town, and throughout, in the centre of every block of residences, there will be children's playgrounds, where the kiddies may enjoy themselves without fear of passing traffic.

Rebuilding the cities and the townships, and substituting proper accommodation for the flimsy huts which now disfigure the landscape in many rural localities, will provide work for all the "unemployed" we can raise for another ten or twenty years. It has been estimated that two or three hours of work daily will suffice to maintain a population in tolerable comfort; we have, therefore, another four hours every day to devote to the necessary tasks of surrounding ourselves with things of genuine value—things which are hygienic and things which are beautiful. The bugbear that the Socialistic State is bound to fall into the errors of the past, and suffer from over-production, as Capitalism has done, is not worth considering. Even in the distant future, when all the homes are built, and all the boulevards are made, it only needs a reduction of the hours of labour to prevent a repetition of the existing glut of consumable goods.

Many more workers will naturally be engaged in producing what are now regarded as luxury goods—motor cars, radio sets, better-class furnishings and better-class clothing. Further, there will be considerably more places of entertainment to meet the requirements of a prosperous

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population; there will be more theatres, more movies, more dances, and bands will play in every place where there are sufficient people to appreciate them. Transport, at any rate at week-ends and holiday times, will be doubled, and the Interstate traffic, by rail, aeroplane and motor 'bus, will assume proportions which the present Railway Commissioners never dreamt of in their most optimistic moods.

CHAPTER VIII

Putting the Capitalist on the Dole

COMRADE MENZIES will accomplish this astounding miracle by a bookkeeping entry. While he will confiscate all capital, he will guarantee all income, so that the man or woman who has luxuriated in the expenditure of five thousand pounds a year will go on spending that five thousand a year until he dies. The Socialist State will guarantee that; in other words, it will submit to blackmail, to avert trouble and to make the new order work smoothly from its inception. Like the victims of Chicago's racketeers, it will pay for "protection."

All property will be confiscated—property, in this instance, meaning investments, land, buildings, plant and machinery, and that asset so profitable to ambitious Capitalism—goodwill. While all these pass automatically to State control, personal belongings will still be permitted to remain in possession of their owners—household furniture, and all those minor gadgets which people value, and with which they like to surround themselves. Their homes—such as they occupy—will also be left to them without rent, for such rent constitutes part of real income. But the capital of their investments, their businesses and their professions will vest in the State. The monetary value of the rents they received, the dividends they collected, the profits they made out of their businesses or professions will continue to be paid as before; the capital of their investments or their callings will become the property of the State.

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Incomes will be calculated on taxation returns averaged over the previous five years, less taxation which would have had to be paid under a continuance of the Capitalistic order, and less also—this is extremely important—the amount they had saved or re-invested.

Not many years back a Capitalistic friend was chagrined because some of those damned Socialistic agitators had declared from the soap-box that he was "among the plutocrats who spent ten thousand a year."

"I don't spend ten thousand," he protested to me. "If I spend three thousand, it's an over-estimate. I'll admit that I make ten thousand, but I don't spend it."

"What do you do with the extra seven thousand?" I inquired.

"That goes back into capital," he explained.

He felt quite annoyed when I suggested that that was an excellent reason for taking it from him. According to his own showing, three thousand was sufficient to gratify all his luxurious tastes.

That man, under the new order, will be paid the three thousand he spent previous to the changed system. The Socialistic State is not going to encourage new extravagances by paying him the whole ten thousand—for, of course, there would be no chance of re-investment and pyramiding profits as there is to-day. The poor fellow will have to rest satisfied with the money he found ample for his desires and his joys in the days when Capitalism ruled.

In respect to incomes derived from property, there would be some solid savings by the provision regarding re-investment. Outside the playboys who suddenly inherit for-

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tunes, there are extremely few big investors who spend the whole—even the half—of their incomes. The re-investment of profits is the device by which nearly all the heads of Big Business rise to positions of eminence from being the heads of Moderate Business. Among the capitalists whose names we all revere, we all know many who surprised us by suddenly “launching out.” From a small suburban shop they moved into a palatial city store; from a dingy office in a back street they splashed overnight into a magnificent combination of walnut and chromium, covering an entire floor in a new office building. These people have made the advance largely as a result of re-investment—which is another word for “saving up,” held out to us in childhood as one of the seven deadly virtues. They cheese-pared with their earnings or their profits until they had put aside sufficient to do it handsomely. It is they who, long before Lenin coined the phrase, accepted the maxim of “starving themselves into greatness.”

Such of these mandarins of finance who had been content to live on their interest or rents or dividends without learning a useful trade, would, of course, become a charge on the State. They would be on the dole—the dole of three thousand a year, or whatever was the sum they drew and spent. But there are few of them; the vast majority of our capitalists turn in mixed schedules—part of their receipts from property, part from personal exertion.

This applies particularly to those men who are of value to the community—organizers and administrative heads—who, drawing large incomes, live in comparative modesty, and sock away the balance in Commonwealth bonds or blocks of flats. Their position will be unaltered

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except that their re-investment must cease. They will receive from the State as much as they spent in the past; they will not have to bother about bad debts or unlet premises. The only catch in it is that they will have to spend the whole of their incomes. This provision can easily be enforced by a system of dated money—money which will go bad if it is not used, like a periodical ticket on the railways or the licence disc on a motor car. It will be found that few, if any, of the really capable ones will relinquish their work until age forces them out, though many will probably relax their labours considerably.

Chief among these will be the fashionable surgeons, who are now so overworked that they cannot do justice either to themselves or to their patients. Better organization, such as is practised at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester (Minnesota), will probably enable double the number of operations to be carried out in the same time, and, in that event, the sweating of highly-paid surgeons will disappear.

For such delicate and responsible work as major surgery, no man should be called upon to undergo the physical and mental and nervous strain of operating on his fellow-creatures for an average of more than four hours a day. If he devotes another two hours to study and keeping himself conversant with the advances of surgery elsewhere, he will have fully justified his existence. The actual difficulty will be to keep these surgeons away from their labours—to chase them into the golf links and the tennis courts. The vast majority will be eternally tempted to violate the law by sneaking into operating theatres to watch their fellows at work, or reading surgical works concealed within the covers of “Das Kapital.”

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So much for the fashionable surgeons—the men who perform bodily miracles on the idle rich for huge fees, and the same bodily miracles, with equal care and devotion, on the proletarian for nothing. Faced by a compulsory reduction of hours, and an infinitely larger number of patients awaiting operation, the fashionable surgeon of to-day, even with vastly improved organization, will not be able to cope with the demands made on him. The unfashionable surgeon—the man who lacks the sense of publicity, or has failed to carry out some job sufficiently spectacular to attract attention—is frequently just as capable as the surgeon who is pulling down his thousands, though he may have to struggle along as a general practitioner in an industrial suburb or a country town.

That man will have his opportunity; the Menzies Sanocracy will give him a chance to show his ability, and will reward him far more generously than Capitalism ever did.

Apart from the big surgeons, the medical services will need to be enlarged out of all recognition. A frequent cry from the sufferer from economic psittacosis is that the medical profession is overdone; so it is under the Capitalistic system. Regarded from the standpoint of adequate provision for all sufferers, and adequate research into the prevention of disease, there is no calling which is so starved.

One of the troubles to be faced will be to secure sufficient men trained in medical subjects to compass the necessary work. Under Capitalism, a sick man is simply put off by his employer, and apparently nobody loses anything but the sick man himself. What is frequently overlooked

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is that the sick man constitutes a loss to the whole community, by reason of his dropping out of the army of producers and remaining in the army of consumers. Unless he dies quickly, he becomes a charge on the community, even though he is paid nothing out of the Invalid Pensions Fund.

More thought will need to be given to finding suitable jobs for the barristers and solicitors, but many of them are exceptionally gifted men, and the great majority now receive only a fraction of the prizes which fall to hundreds of lesser ability in other occupations. With the enormous expansion and improvement which is to be expected in every activity of life, it is not likely that many lawyers would be left to accept as a pension the money they earned during the previous five years.

People are apt to imagine that all members of the Bar are highly-paid men. This fiction is generally accepted because, every now and then, one of the big shots has his brief marked at five hundred guineas, or even one thousand guineas. But there is, unfortunately, a veritable regiment of barristers and solicitors who correspond to the struggling general practitioners among the medical men.

Litigation, as we know it to-day, will diminish almost to vanishing point. The preparation of mortgages and leases, and similar by-products of the legal system, will be no more. Criminal work will slump seriously, and the courts will not be called on to deal with financial disputes. The lawyer will find the greater part of his occupation gone; but there are many other occupations to which lawyers may be transferred, occupations in which their natural ability and training will be invaluable. There

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should be little need to worry about placing the lawyers; with the exception of the bad eggs and the incompetents, a wise dispersal of them in various industries should be all to the good.

Clergymen will continue to cater for the requirements of their various denominations, and will draw their stipends from the State, instead of from a source which, in the case of the most earnest and devoted men, has a habit of trickling all too slowly at any time, and sometimes of drying up completely. It is more than likely that many of the better class of clergymen will only be too eager to come to the assistance of the Government in its preliminary ameliorative work. Their experience in dealing with the problems of poverty in the bad old days of Capitalism should be so valuable that Comrade Menzies will certainly take advantage of it.

There is no necessity to worry about the architects and engineers. There will be enough work before us to keep busy every architect and every engineer—civil and mechanical—that we have got, or can get, during the next twenty years.

As for those who occupy positions already well-paid, outstanding acumen or energy on their part may be recompensed by investing them with the the Order of the Blue Bunyip, or something similar, to tickle the vanity inherent in us all.

While nine-tenths of the population of Australia will have their material positions improved at least a hundred per cent., while dirt and many diseases and malnutrition will have become as obsolete as witch-burning or sedan chairs, not one honest person will be one whit worse off.

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In fact, the erstwhile capitalist will himself be better off, inasmuch as he will be relieved of all anxiety.

The only individual who will suffer is the ingenious person who has for the previous five years consistently falsified his income-tax return to dodge taxation. He will not be able to squeal audibly but his anguish will probably shorten his life.

CHAPTER IX

Sorting out the Jobs

CONSIDERABLE care will have to be taken in allotting the present business man his place in the new order. Business men are born, not made. Unlike other callings, thoroughness of training, obedience to copy-book maxims, possession of all the Christian virtues and ninety-nine other different sorts of ability count for little; the man who has none of these supposed advantages often leaves the man who does possess them far in the rear. There are, moreover, many brands of success in business; one is achieved by suave and gentle methods; another by fierce and ruthless aggressiveness. The psycho-analyst is up against a brick wall when he endeavours to dogmatize about the causes of business success. There have been authenticated instances of persons who ran grave risk of being classified as morons or dipsomaniacs raking in considerable fortunes.

Still, it is not difficult to sort out the shrewd, brainy men who have revealed their capacity to organize in a manner which is apparent to all. Upon these depends a great part of the future of the Menzies Sanocracy. Among the subordinates of such men at present are, further, numbers of brilliant youngsters who lack only the opportunity to make good, and the job of picking these out will be one of the most important functions of the commissioners of the new departments. Systems of co-ordinated production and collection and distribution will need to be devised, and suggestions for time-and-distance-saving and economical

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working will have to be invited from everybody, and duly examined by those in control.

Wasteful handling of commodities will be cut out, and straight-line production introduced into as many manufacturing concerns as possible. The principle of sterilizing the unfit will be rigorously applied to obsolete and obsolescent plants and processes. These will either be scrapped or brought up to date. The really capable business men who will be confiscated from Capitalism are well fitted to carry out such a task, if they are given a free hand without interference from the duds and wangers who contrive to make reputations in the business activities of to-day.

A vast army of minor business men—suburban shopkeepers, clerks, canvassers and commission workers—will be dispossessed of their old jobs by the change over, but these do not constitute a serious problem. The shopkeepers, by reason of their experience, will be drafted into the big Government stores—covering nearly all requirements—which will rise every half-mile in each metropolis and large city. The small suburban shops will be remodelled temporarily to house the slum dwellers during the reconstruction period. The clerks and canvassers will certainly be required at once to cope with the clerical work which will bulk so large in all the Government departments—the existing ones grown to huge dimensions, and the new ones consequent upon the establishment of Government control.

Women as well as men will be employed in these departments, as they are now in private enterprises, with this difference—every unmarried woman will be expected to work for a living, and the principle of equal pay for equal work will invariably be applied. Private enterprise wastes

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much male labour which might be better employed; the man who buys a collar in a store is seldom so modest that he would object to being served by a girl. Every big city in the world throws away the labour of battalions of sturdy men by forcing them to act as waiters when young women would be just as efficient. Serving and waiting are both occupations suitable for girls; so are many others which now occupy men who might be more profitably employed.

The married woman will not be required to work unless she chooses. She will find plenty to do looking after her children and her home, but will have considerably less to do with the health and care of the children provided by an extension of baby health centres and kindergartens and creches, where it will be possible to leave the children safely during the absence of the mothers from their homes. The widespread extension and development of the electric system will further lighten the burdens of the married women, and, in the thickly populated areas, the formation of public dining-rooms and public laundries will bring additional relief.

At the earliest possible opportunity, the whole basis of agriculture will require to be revised. The policy of "closer settlement," with which the various Australian Governments have been obsessed for thirty years, will be killed and buried. It has proved a rank failure—something out of step with all modern industrial ideas—and, had it succeeded, it would have done nothing more than inflict on Australia the peasant system of older countries, and raise in time a race of moujiks.

Farming is the one industry which was missed when the Industrial Revolution took place. While the woollen mill replaced the spinning jenny, and the locomotive re-

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placed the stage coach, the farm continued to be run unscientifically by the farmer and his wife, and his sons, and his daughters, and his sons-in-law and his daughters-in-law.

Farming remained a museum piece, something out of the Dark Ages of industry, as great an anachronism as a dinosaur would be galloping down the straight of Flemington on Cup Day.

It is not necessary to look to the U.S.S.R.'s State and Collective farms to show how farming may be carried out in accordance with the latter-day ideals of industry. Back in the 'nineties there were a few wide areas in Australia where wheat was grown by mass production—not mere farms, but wheat factories, with their implements properly cared for in fully-equipped machine shops, and their labour organized as factory labour is organized. It was years later that Henry Ford pointed out that farming was the one industry of the United States which remained in the same condition of ghastly disorganization that prevailed when the American colonies revolted from George III. It was Henry Ford who showed the Soviet that there were better ways of producing wheat than by cutting it with a sickle and walloping out the grain with a flail; it was he who inspired the establishment of the State farms and the formation of the Collectives.

But, before Russia could act, sundry capitalists in Henry Ford's own country got busy. Wheat corporations took up vast areas in Minnesota, and worked them with the same efficiency as other industries were worked. Two of these corporations have been functioning for some years, and, when it cost the private farmer of the United States

a dollar to produce a bushel of wheat, they were able to turn it out for fifty cents—precisely half the price.

Farming in Australia is a heart-breaking business. The average farmer is a man who works hard from half-past jackass time till a quarter to pitch dark, and gets nothing out of it but a mere existence. His wife, and often his children, are shamefully sweated, and as a rule he is heavily in debt to the local storekeeper, who is, in turn, heavily in debt to the bank. When he can afford essential agricultural machinery, he cannot afford a suitable shed in which to house it, and, when it is not in use, it lies out in the open for the sun and the frost and the rain to reduce its value, and eventually to ruin it. He has no machine shop, and, if he loses a nut from any of his implements, he has to hold up everything while he writes to the city agents for another.

His holding is generally too small—thanks to the policy of closer settlement—to utilize a man-size tractor economically, which means that, when things are cut fine, he is producing at a loss, while his neighbours with the big tractors can struggle through. The Australian—or any—farmers who can afford to use a combine—or auto-header—to harvest their crops are few indeed; a farm requires to be an out-size one to justify the use of such a huge mechanism.

Yet experience has shown that it may make all the difference between profit and loss. With a combine it is estimated that no less than two and a half more bushels of grain are harvested from every acre, other things being equal. That is to say, by the use of the ordinary harvester two and a half bushels of grain—reckoned on the present f.a.q. standard of 63 lbs. to a bushel—are left on the soil to

waste. As there are 14,000,000 acres of Australia under wheat, this means that the universal use of combines, with mass production farming, would add over 30,000,000 bushels to our annual harvest, or nearly £5,000,000 to the cheque we receive for the sale of wheat.

Probably the worst trouble of the Australian farmer, prosperous or struggling, is that he suffers the isolation of a man on a desert island. He and his family form a little community which has small and difficult communication with the outside world. The occasional visit to the nearest township assumes to them the importance that the city man ascribes to an Interstate trip.

Under a sane system, the farms will be brought together, the best of them, for there are many which, like certain city factories, must for sheer economical working, be sterilized out of existence. With the areas aggregated, a little village will be built in the most convenient spot—a village wherein the farmers and their families may live in comfort, and have their daily intercourse. The whole will be under the management of a capable organizer, and with him will be a scientist—probably two or three—to conduct in the laboratory continuous experiments dealing with local plant growth, fertilization, insect and other pests, and all the points of contact between science and agricultural production.

There will be a machine shop, adequately equipped, with a staff of skilled mechanics and a full supply of spare parts. There will be a transport system to carry the produce to the nearest railway station, or direct to the market, for, under the Menzies Scheme, there will no longer exist the loss of time and money which results

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from the bickerings as to which has the right to carry the freight.

The farmer will be paid his basic wage of six pounds weekly—more if he is capable of an expert or administrative job. He will lose his "independence." He will no longer be able to boast the title of a "sturdy yeoman," and there are few farmers in Australia who would not rush to make the sacrifice.

Dairying districts will be reorganized similarly. Though the villages will probably be more scattered, there is no reason why there should not be equally pleasant places of residence. Sheep and cattle stations will necessarily cover much wider areas, but their administrative centres will be so rearranged and enlarged in the interests of science and efficiency and increased production as to improve the conditions of life one hundred per cent. in the most remote spots.

CHAPTER X

What of the Underworld?

ONE of the greatest difficulties in handling the underworld will not be presented by the actual criminals, but by the unemployables of to-day and the large numbers of questionable characters who gain their livelihood by devious ways on racecourses and in the city streets.

The criminals will naturally take full advantage of any dislocation incidental to a transition period, and will need to be firmly dealt with. Unfortunately, public opinion would resent the methods of direct action which have proved so effective in other lands. In the old days, when "bad men" roamed the Western plains of the United States, it was customary for a peace-loving community to elect its quickest and straightest shot as sheriff. Then, when a known "bad man" appeared in the township, the sheriff asked no questions, but killed him on the spot. That ended the matter. To-day, America has found it necessary to apply the same principle to its cities, and "G-Men" patrols with sub-machine guns, used to bump off any known gangster who may happen into the line of vision.

During the most troublous days in Moscow, Trotsky sent out a detachment of the Ogpu one night to clean up the robbers and murderers who were terrorizing peaceful comrades. They did the job thoroughly, and two hundred thugs were shot in that one operation of the flying gang. Modern Russia sends her more serious offenders—such as are not shot—up among the "white bears." We have no

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"white bears" in Australia, and immurement in Koala Park would hold insufficient terrors for the malefactor.

Australia is too gentle for the methods of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The criminal will have to be dealt with much in the same way as he is dealt with under Capitalism. With this difference, he will be subjected to scientific as well as legal investigation, and, after conviction, the efforts will be more reformatory than punitive. There will be no more of the spill-over legal processes of the eighteenth century in criminal procedure or criminal treatment.

Crime under the new order will practically disappear. It must be remembered that the high-class criminals constitute a mere handful. One of the heads of Scotland Yard remarked that, if a hundred men could be kept in gaol for life, there would be no further big crime in England. That expert may have been a trifle optimistic, but it is a fact that the great majority of the men in Australian gaols are doormat thieves and daylight housebreakers—men generally of poor mentality, who would gladly forsake petty crime for the certainty of a decently-paid job. The new order would not improve them morally—they would be just as dishonest by nature as they ever were—but it would remove the incentive to steal.

Offences against the person would be slightly reduced by reason of many having their origin in some dispute regarding property rights; but, on the whole, there would be nearly as many murders and assaults as there are to-day. An improved economic system cannot guarantee to make angels out of everybody, though, in the course of years, morals would probably be greatly improved.

The so-called unemployables constitute a much more difficult problem than the actual criminals. A depression

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lasting for half a decade has a most demoralizing effect on those cast into idleness. They have acquired the habit of loafing, and resent a return to regular work, even as the most energetic of us resent it when our annual holidays come to an end. When the holidays—uncomfortable as they may have proved—extend into five years, it is not difficult to imagine the distress occasioned by the prospect of laborious days ahead.

All the same, the objection to work is largely an objection to a certain class of work—the class of work which offers to the man who is out of a job. Let the man choose the class of work which attracts him, and there will be little justification for the cruel gibe that the unemployed demand work and pray to Heaven that they won't get it.

One of the most profound students of international affairs I ever met—a man whose wealth of knowledge and whose memory would have made him invaluable at the cable desk of any newspaper—earned his living selling fish on the pier of a Victorian seaside resort. Another acquaintance had mastered every Latin language, every Teutonic one, and had a working knowledge of Russian and Bulgarian, as well as possessing an almost religious devotion to the Keltic dialects of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and the Crimea. That man was an undertaker's assistant.

That fish vendor and that undertaker would find it difficult to return to their trades if they had been five years workless; they would jump at the chance of giving the world the benefit of their knowledge of European politics and European languages. Misfits of this sort are to be encountered everywhere.

It would, of course, be ridiculous to expect that the new order would permit every member of a navvies' gang to be a bacteriologist just because he wanted to be one; but the aim of those in control will be to give every man the class of employment which suits his tastes.

Work which is especially arduous or especially unpleasant or especially dangerous will be rewarded by shorter hours and extra pay, though it is possible to allot certain objectionable tasks to minor offenders against the law. There will be few dangerous jobs, because most of the industrial dangers which exist to-day can be overcome by the expenditure of money on preventive measures. Some, such as seafaring and aviation, cannot be rendered absolutely safe, and it will be the duty of the community to pay well the men who take the risks, and deal generously with them and their families in the event of mishap.

Repetitive work is not likely to be rushed. It will, therefore, need to be better paid than unskilled work, in which there is variety and interest, instead of being, as it is to-day, paid at probably the lowest scale. Much criticism has been levelled at modern machine methods for the number of repeated processes involved, and nervous disorders and mental weaknesses have been ascribed to the mass production system. But, centuries before the advent of the machine age, men had to spend many hours daily performing the same operation with a pick over and over again. I knew a man who picked his way from the centre of Melbourne to one of the outlying suburbs when the first tramways were being laid—a distance of five miles. The machine-shop hand who spends his day putting the same screw into the same hole has an easier job, and one no

more monotonous. No wonder that my friend laid down his pick and became a policeman, never to raise it again. In fact, repetition jobs have existed from time immemorial; the slaves who built the Pyramids—if they were well organized, which appears to have been the case—probably faced as many repetitive jobs as the workers at Ford's factories in Detroit.

But there will be this difference between the worker at Ford's and the people who do the repetitive work under the Menzies Scheme. It will be part of the duty of the management to encourage every operative to attain a higher degree of skill, not for the profit of the factory, as in the case of Detroit, but for the benefit of the worker himself and of the community. He will be given time for study and for the practice of experiments which will turn him into a full-fledged competent mechanic does he possess the necessary ability; and it has to be remembered that we shall be dealing with a man who has had a chance of a decent education, not a semi-illiterate from the backblocks of Europe, as many of the Ford workers are.

Nor will the man whose nerves suffer from repetitive processes continue at his bench, because he knows that his wage will cease and his children suffer if he takes a day off. The medical officers of the factory will watch the staff closely and continuously, and any signs of weakness means that the sufferer will be laid off without loss of wages to recuperate in a rest-home; the health of the people will be recognized as the first line of defence against failure, and the few days lost in a rest-home will mean infinitely less cost to the community than the responsibility of looking after a broken man for a lifetime.

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When a man does break up beyond repair, either from his work or from inherent weakness, he will be retired at once on a pension—a pension equal to, say, two-thirds of his earnings at date of retirement. The same will apply to those over age. There will be no pittance of seventeen and six or a pound a week to the man of sixty-five who has laboured a lifetime and given the community the benefit of his labour. The old-age pensioner will receive a pension of two-thirds of his latest earnings, whatever they may be, and will be able to spend his remaining days in comfort.

Recognizing that the classification of a worker as a comrade does not convert him automatically into an angel, he will be relieved as much as possible from the financial responsibility he has towards his children. The community will grant a child endowment, but the community will see to it that the child gets the benefit of it. Therefore, the endowment will be more in kind than in cash. There will be no attempt to remove children from home influence unless the influence is proved undesirable. But the children will be the first charge on the home, and, when the Socialistic State is functioning fully, the allotment of wages will take such a form as will enable complete provision for the health and comfort and education of the youngsters.

There is no proof that a man getting six or sixty pounds a week will not spend it all on himself and leave his children without adequate food and clothing. Though such individuals are happily rare, they come before the Courts occasionally. But there are many who, through ignorance, fail to give their children proper nourishment or proper treatment for minor ailments which may develop into major ones. The Socialistic State will take suitable action

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in such cases, and ensure that every child is fed and treated in accordance with modern scientific methods.

If such action is to be interpreted as an interference with family life, family life is going to be interfered with. The safety of the children is more to the community than any academic definition of liberty.

CHAPTER XI

The Fate of the Highbrow

WHAT of that most insignificant and despised class, the intelligentsia—the artist, the writer, the musician, the philosopher? These need have no fear that they will be pushed into road-making or machine-feeding. They are going to have, not the time of their lives, but the time of their history. Never since Ung, the Maker of Pictures, scribed his first outline on a bone, will they revel in such freedom of action and comfort of life as the new order will offer them. The poet will be as prosperous as the pawnbroker of to-day, the painter as the pugilist.

Every single intelligentsium—assuming that is the correct singular form of the word—will be provided for adequately if he is worth his salt. No longer will Rudolph and Mimi starve in a garret; they will live comfortably in a neat cottage or a flat with central heating, running hot water, a refrigerator, and all mod. cons. The only obligation will be that they turn out sufficient work of the quality expected; Sanocracy will become impatient with the poet who tends to spend day after day with Mimi in the surf waiting for inspiration. It will order into a productive job the musician who expects to be maintained in comfort by issuing one worst-seller a year. The philosopher will need to give the world the benefits of his thoughts; he will not qualify for his salary by mere thinking.

The administration of the cultural occupations will not be left to gentlemen who have acquired capital by selling

sausages or cornering wheat, as at present. Those in authority will be duly qualified intelligentsia themselves—men who have served their apprenticeships, made good in their particular lines, and know all the tricks of the trade. They will not be imposed upon by eccentric clothing, bizarre attitudes or obscure remarks. They will be highbrows, inasmuch as they will know what constitutes good poetry, good drama, good music, original philosophy; but they will be chosen carefully, lest, by much walking with kings, they lose the common touch. The public is not to be forced to accept the productions of small and insignificant cults. There will be nothing to prevent these carrying on the work they believe to be so important; but they will not be able to claim State assistance unless they present an appeal either to the public or to those controlling the department.

For instance, the Conists, whose animating principle is to represent all human beings as cones, may hold their exhibitions, and attract their worshippers and scoffers, as they do now, but they will not be entitled to the artistic stipend unless they can persuade a fair proportion of the public or the art department of the State to regard their work as worthy of attention. Otherwise, they will have to turn out their masterpieces after they have done their fair day's work as railway porters or typists. Those in control of the cultural activities will resemble the professorial board of a modern University; they will be men of equal academic qualifications, but wider and more human outlook.

The poet and the artist and the dramatist and the musician will come, in the first instance, from the ranks of the people. In order to devote himself entirely to his art, he

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will need to qualify, to show that the State will not be throwing away its energies in providing him with a salary and a leisure which give no return. Just as a University now declines to waste its time over a youth who cannot pass his matriculation examination, so will the departments of art and literature and philosophy decline to accept aspiring intelligentsia who cannot prove themselves worthy.

Mistakes will be made—many of them—just as Capitalism has made mistakes in permitting many of its greatest artists to live and die in poverty and misery. But, under the new order, the poets and the musicians will not live in poverty. They will earn decent livings in offices and factories, and, in their spare time, turn out masterpieces to confute the judgment of the highbrow authorities and prove them wrong. If these have any sense—and as far as possible men of sense will be chosen—they will rejoice to find that the lad they had rejected has made good; they will welcome him into their ranks, and he will be given at once an opportunity to devote himself wholly to his art.

Newspaper work is not highbrow work; many of its critics would regard it as distinctly lowbrow, but the newspaper man is a writer, and there is no other category in which he can be placed. But it is not the newspaper worker that I am considering. His position will remain practically unaltered. It is the political policies of the newspapers to be circulated among the people.

In Australia, when the Socialistic order comes into being, it will come by democratic means; it will have the majority of the people behind it. Once established, it will stand or fall by its own merits or faults. Russia runs State newspapers, which are wholly on the side of Socialism; Australia to-day runs newspapers which are wholly on the

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side of Capitalism. Both systems are vicious; unconscious bias alone is sufficient to prevent the public learning the truth.

Russia endeavours to keep its managers and foremen and workers up to the mark by encouraging what is known as self-criticism. It exhibits, in all its factories, wall-newspapers, to which workers contribute criticisms of the bosses and fellow-workers, more or less justified, but often unfair, and even grossly libellous, according to Western ideas. Such a system may, on the whole, tend to reforms, but it presents a grave danger of impairing the discipline and morale of the whole concern. But when it comes to the policy of the Soviet itself—the decisions of the Communist Party—the newspapers speak with one voice. There is a limit on self-criticism; whoever oversteps the line is liable to be regarded as a "counter revolutionary," and make the acquaintance of the white bears.

Under a Socialistic Commonwealth, established on a democratic basis, Australia has no need to fear counter-revolutionaries. There will be no White Interventionists liable to invade us to restore Capitalism. We should aim at self-criticism of the top as well as of the bottom. Full understanding of the work to be done, and the problems to be solved, can only be secured by full and frank—even unfair—criticism.

Our newspapers will necessarily be State-controlled, as well as State-produced, and a sane administration, so far from forcing everyone to speak with the same voice, should deliberately encourage opposition.

Every city and town should have two newspapers at least: one advocating the cause of the administration, and

the other strongly attacking it. Even if this journalistic Devil's Advocate is game to defy public opinion and menace its circulation figures by having an anti-Socialistic policy, it should be permitted to do so. The Government should pick its editors and its staffs from people of opposing views—if any hostiles can be found—and tell them to go for their lives.

Supporters of Socialism need have no fear of the results. They will be infinitely better served than by a press devoted wholly to Government support. The efforts of the Opposition organ to discredit the work of the Government will act as a sharp spur on the flank of the authorities; its eternal vigilance to justify its own existence will check corruption or nepotism or inertia on the part of the politicians, and minimize the tendency to bureaucratic rule.

As for the news side of the paper, the entertainment side, the housewives' page, and the comic strips, they will continue to brighten our lives. We shall miss the solid mass of advertisements which make a modern daily newspaper as heavy as the old-time Family Bible, and we shall miss the thrilling information that Miss Birdie Smith wore pink organdie at Sir Georgius Midas's cocktail party. Birdie will be working for her living then, and will get her picture published only if she is especially capable at her labours or beautiful enough to be photographed diving from Portsea Pier. She will have no "social position" under Socialism, and the snobs who survive will have to be content turning up the yellowing files and maundering over the brave days of old.

CHAPTER XII

The Martyrdom of John Smith

NOW, let us consider the case of John Smith, who has won a competency by the exercise of all the capitalistic virtues, and lives in comfort with his wife and family in a cosy, well-furnished suburban villa. All his life he has laboured hard for that competency. He has revealed foresight, he has administered his business with diligence and intelligence and scrupulous honesty. His employees have been well treated, and he has been generous and charitable to the deserving. This is the man who is to be butchered to make a Bolshevistic holiday.

John rose from the ranks of the proletariat. His father was a working miner, who sent John to the State school, where a scholarship carried him to one of the big secondary schools. Thence he entered the office of a manufacturer of buttons, and speedily showed himself to be such an intelligent and obliging lad that he won promotion, first to the rank of town traveller, next to the headship of the bone-button department, and finally to a partnership in the whole concern, which he is holding when Socialism comes along to wreck his life.

He is married, and has a family of three boys and three girls. The eldest boy and the eldest girl, nearing their twenties, are at the University; the younger ones are at "good" schools; John, in his present position, could not bear to think of their starting at the State school, as he did. All the same, John is not a snob. If he does feel a trifle embarrassed in the presence of a knight of the British

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Empire, he meets members of Parliament on equal terms, and has something of a feeling of superiority to a mere J.P. There is no patronage about his relations with the "lower orders," and he is ready to tell the latest story to the gardener, or sympathize with the butcher about the badness of the times—wholly due, he will explain—and firmly believes—to those damned Socialistic agitators.

John is drawing annually from his business the sum of £1,000, out of which he has to pay taxation and rates which eat up, in the aggregate, over £100, and he is required to pay another £100 as interest on the mortgage on his home. He has £800 left, with which to meet the household expenses and the cost of educating his children. John is one of those men who would be classed as capitalists by his economic critics; in reality, he worries considerably about making ends meet.

In comes the "hydra-headed tiger of Socialism," and without notice sweeps away from him his business and any investments he may have made to supplement his income; by one stroke of the legislative pen he becomes a pauper. But his outlook is not so black as it probably appears to him when he opens his *Argus* or *S.M. Herald* on the morning following that fateful gathering at Canberra. When he gets beyond the headlines, and reads the body of the report, he will find that, even if all his worldly possessions have been filched from him by a predatory act of confiscation, he will be in much the same position as he occupied previously. In fact, as he thinks matters over, he will realize that he will be able to enjoy a freedom from anxiety which, throughout his working life, has always been behind the door, and on occasions has made open threats.

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No longer will he be sent into cold shivers by reading of some inventor who has revolutionized the manufacture of buttons, or of some arbiter of fashion who has decreed that buttons be no longer worn. He will have no bank overdraft to blow upon him and give him a stiff neck. His employees will no longer worry him with hard-luck stories to take away his appetite for lunch. He will not need to do endless sums to ascertain how he is to pay for the University fees of his elder children or the school fees of the younger ones. The future of buttons will be assured; even in a buttonless world, he will continue to live the life he has led for years, with infinitely less responsibility. He will go on drawing his net income, and the torment of insecurity will be dispelled into nothingness.

Being the sort of man he is—a man who loves buttons and the poetry they inspire, the very thought of retiring on his pension will fill him with horror. He will return to his office overjoyed with the prospect of continuing the great work of turning out buttons, and will be able, for the first time in his career, to produce the sort of button he deems the best. For years he has longed to do this, but vested interests have been too strong for him. Now he can turn out a better button at lower cost than he has ever been permitted to do under Capitalism. John Smith won't give up his job; he will return to it with an enthusiasm he never felt before, even on the occasion of his first promotion.

Despite his prosperity, one thing has always worried John—the possibility of his death—especially after a long, lingering illness, which would run into immense medical and nursing expenses. Of course, he had insured himself—for £2,000—and on occasions had had to curtail

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several of his personal luxuries to pay the premiums. Still, he worried about leaving his wife and family to carry on with a capital of £2,000, which would mean about £100 a year. They would, of course, receive the dividends from the business; but the greater part of his £1,000 a year is represented by salary, and this, of course, would terminate with his death. He was wont to feel uncomfortable about his children, with their expensive courses of education unfinished, and his widow that was to be.

But if John Smith were to die after the advent of Socialism, he would leave his wife and family in a position that could not be ensured by a man twice or three times as well off. It is not intended to cut the dependants of such well-to-do citizens down to the basic wage at once—though dividends, insurance, and all would give Mrs. Smith under Capitalism little more than the £6 weekly which will form the minimum wage. The children would continue at the University and the secondary school without payment of fees, and with provision made for their maintenance. Mrs. Smith would continue in occupation of her home, and would receive a sum equal to the basic £6 weekly, plus the interest she would have received from her late husband's insurance money, and plus the amount of dividends she would have received from his business venture.

When Mrs. Smith died, her home and her dividends and her insurance interest would revert to the State, though her personal belongings would be willed as she wished. Her elder children would probably, by this time, have completed their education, and been drafted into the service of the State, while the younger ones would enjoy the educational and other advantages which the State would grant to all its boys and girls.

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And, right through, neither John Smith nor his wife nor his children would incur any expense for medical treatment. The health of the individual would be part of the responsibility of the Commonwealth, and no matter how lingering the death, or how complicated the operation found necessary, the family itself would not suffer the slightest material loss.

CHAPTER XIII

The Forty-Niner

TO one type of so-called capitalist—the Forty-Niner Socialism will prove a blessing and a relief. The Forty-Niner of the last century was a sturdy miner who worked hard in the alluvial diggings of California, and won a living—on rare occasions a fortune—out of the gold he washed from the dirt. The Forty-Niner of 1936 is a member of that group of unfortunates who hold forty-nine per cent. of the stock in a capitalistic company, and constitute the playthings of the shrewd birds who control the fifty-one per cent.

When the company is floated, the Forty-Niners read the prospectus with the avidity with which a youngster devours the comic papers. They see their fortunes made, and they invest the savings of a lifetime, confident that their old age will be well provided for by the dividends they are certain to collect. It is in the ranks of the Forty-Niners that are found the aged washerwomen, the retired clergymen, and the orphaned families who are so often trotted out as types of Capitalism who would be injured by ameliorative legislation.

For a year or two the Forty-Niners collect the promised dividends—dividends of as much as ten per cent. Then there is a reduction to seven per cent., then to five, then to nothing at all, and—until it is absorbed or reconstructed—the enterprise totters along, just paying its way, putting a few hundreds to reserves one year, leaving a deficit another. The Forty-Niner, a capitalist only in name,

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experiences the feelings of the punter who walks home from Flemington or Randwick, save that the troubles of the punter are over more quickly.

But, strangely enough, the Fifty-Oner suffers no such financial disasters. Somehow or other, he contrives to live even better than he did previously. Whenever a new model comes out, he changes his car; his cocktail parties are chronicled in the social press; his fellow business men regard him with ever-increasing respect. He is the embodiment of genuine Capitalism, the sort of man who has a stake in the country.

He is able to accomplish this seeming miracle by reason, firstly, of the fact that he has been given double the amount of capital to play with; and, more important, that he is able to juggle the profits of two or more companies all the time to his own advantage.

He is, for example, a shareholder in a timber company, which sells nearly all its commodity to a firm of toothpick-makers. Though his own name does not appear on the registers, he controls a large block of stock—at least fifty-one per cent. of it—in both concerns, when each is paying a dividend of five per cent. Naturally, such a paltry profit is regarded by a great captain of industry with well-merited disgust. Owning more shares in the timber concern than he does in the toothpick company, he promptly raises the price of the raw material. The management of the toothpick company—unless it is in the know itself—protests, and threatens to obtain its timber elsewhere. It can't do it. The control of fifty-one per cent. of the stock in the toothpick company by the manipulating capitalist makes it mandatory to give the orders to that one timber company. Meanwhile, the dividend of the timber concern has risen

to ten per cent., and as the holder of the control has, in anticipation, now increased his holding until he now owns three-quarters of the whole business, he is not doing badly. The toothpick shares, previously somewhere about par, have, through the passing of its dividend, drifted to ten shillings. It is time to make a big killing.

With the timber shares bringing thirty shillings on the Exchange, the Fifty-Oner cleans out his entire holding, gradually and dexterously, so as not to alarm the market, and just as gradually and dexterously increases his control in the toothpick company from fifty-one to ninety-nine per cent. Of course, his own name does not appear in any of these transactions; the scrip is generally in small lots, bearing the names of people unknown in the financial world.

At the psychological moment comes the announcement of the chairman of directors of the toothpick company that he has pulled off a wonderful contract with a new timber company, and in future will be able to obtain supplies at a price hitherto unheard of. The shares of the original timber company promptly slump to five shillings, and those of the new timber company—in which the shrewd capitalist has, by this time, secured another fifty-one per cent. holding in case of accidents—soar up to thirty shillings, running head to head with the gloriously recovered toothpick shares, which again take their place on the Exchange list close to the gilt-edge stuff. The captain of industry does a little sum, discovers how much he has cleaned up, and, after a round of golf, returns like a giant refreshed, seeking new worlds to conquer.

As for the Forty-Niner, he is frozen out. He is the innocent bystander who is foolish enough to get

between the rival gangsters when the bullets start to fly. His place in the scheme of Capitalism is simply to provide the real money which the captains of industry use as counters in their great game of raking-off a luxurious living without the necessity of working for it.

Under a Socialistic Government, there will be no captains of industry as the term is understood to-day. There will be genuine ones—the men who get the timber and the men who know everything that is to be learned about the manufacture of toothpicks. But the gambler who stands between two important industries, controlling both and juggling with both, without being able to distinguish jarrah from Baltic pine, will have no finger in the manufacture or the distribution of the commodities.

Neither will there be any Forty-Niners. They will be relieved of their losses and their tribulations, just as the other men will be relieved of their profits, for the State, in guaranteeing the continuance of legitimate income averaged over five years, will certainly not allow itself to be robbed annually of the big gambling prize which a manipulator pulls off on the Exchange. The owner of the Cup winner will not be permitted to bump up his average income by including his £8,000 stake and any additional winnings.

Returns from legitimate earnings and legitimate investment will be honoured, but the person who occasionally sweeps thousands of pounds from the pockets of the people by more or less scrupulous methods, or methods which are, at the best, methods of gambling, will not be handed a pension amounting to his average winnings of the past five years.

Where receipts have been regular, as in the cases of

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sharebrokers, jobbers and bookmakers, their incomes will be regarded as such, and will be duly honoured, but the man who wins a £20,000 sweep is certainly not going to be paid £4,000 a year for the rest of his life. His money will be regarded as capital, and will be confiscated with the rest. If he has invested it previous to the Great Taking-Over, he will continue to draw the return he drew previously; if it is still standing to his credit in the bank, he will be paid a fair average rate of interest for it during his lifetime.

CHAPTER XIV

Corruption

CRITICS of Socialism often express the fear that there will be corruption under it. Of course, there will; there will always be corruption, no matter what political system is established; but there will be far less corruption than exists now. Not that the official will be any more honest by nature, but that there will be no capitalists—using the term in its widest sense—to do the corrupting.

Contrary to general belief, corruption has always reached its peak in the most Conservative countries—in Russia during the Czarist regimés, in England during the seventeenth century. The most flagrant examples that New York or San Francisco could produce were trifling as compared with these. Czarist Russia's lost wars against Japan and against Germany were wholly due to the corruption which permeated politics and the army and its associated activities.

Under Socialism, there will be no small private enterprise to offer a pound to an inspector to look the other way, no barrow-pushers to subscribe to a political party, or both political parties—for that practice is not unknown—that larger profits may come their way through discriminating legislation. The reason for corruption will have been almost wholly wiped out by the Socialistic system, and all that will remain will be the corruption which takes the form of handing a railway porter a cigar to get a corner seat and similar enormities.

There are more forms of corruption than plain bribery. There is the corruption of placing personal acquaintances into positions which would be better filled by strangers; the corruption of giving favours, possibly out of mere honest friendship, possibly in the expectation of other favours to come. An earnest young Communist I know asserted roundly that there would be no corruption under a Soviet.

"Let's see," I said. "Assume that you are the head of an office, and you have to choose between two girls who apply for the job of secretary. One is 100 per cent. efficient, according to her papers. She is a hard-faced, vinegary-looking person, unattractive in manner. The other is a bright, pretty damsel, full of charm, but only 90 per cent. efficient. Which are you going to give the job to?"

He smiled. "You win," he admitted.

Another man to whom I told this tale held that, if no love-making took place between the parties, they would be likely to accomplish more and better work by reason of there being no antagonism, and because a man—even the most puritanical of us—prefers to work in pleasant surroundings. On the other hand, such people might be liable to waste considerable time in talking of matters not connected with actual business, which would set off the lack of sympathy of the hard-faced maiden. A psycho-analyst may work this out; the fact remains that the average man, of rigid respectability, would succumb to the corruptive influence of the comely damsel and hand her the job.

It is idle to imagine, when Comrade Smith is told officially that all the sleeping-berths on the Socialistic Interstate train are filled, that he will be content to wait until next day if he can get a friend with a pull in the depart-

ment to wangle him a place. The lad who is the crack goal-kicker of his team, and has no desire to be transferred to a distant town where the football is elementary, will find some means of remaining; if he doesn't himself, the secretary and committee will see to it.

Even when the Order of the Blue Bunyip is conferred on the honoured worker, it is probable that some of the recipients will be really less qualified than some of those omitted, and the usual question laughingly put every King's Birthday: "But what on earth has he got it for?" may be just as widely repeated under Socialism.

All the same, the volume of corruption will be greatly minimized; it will be unimportant in its nature; and it will do the system little harm. There will be perquisites of office as there are to-day in every walk of life. The saleswoman in the capitalistic shop is now able to get her new dress at a price lower than the ordinary customer pays; the Minister of the Crown uses his gold pass when he pays a visit to a friend; sometimes he even has the audacity to use the Government motor car to take him home to dinner. These are literally conveniences and comforts for a privileged class, but do they really matter, and don't they serve the public welfare by reducing time and freeing the Minister's mind of minor worries? While he is seated comfortably in the Government car, he is able to think out affairs relating to his office; he would never be able to do that had he to scramble through the turnstile and sit in a crowded ferry or railway carriage, or hang on the strap of a tramcar.

Such privileges as these involve no loss, and are no more to be regarded as corruption than the action of a Government clerk is to be adjudged larceny because he

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writes a private letter during dinner hour with Government ink. The number and volume of the perquisites which officials and workers will be able to wangle from the Socialistic State will certainly be fewer than they wangle from Capitalism, and infinitely less important.

One form of corruption which is rampant now, and which adds materially to the cost of living, is the practice of giving and receiving secret commissions. In some of the Australian States the custom is illegal, but it is difficult to define, let alone prove, and the rake-off in some instances comprises the sole source of income to men who live comfortably, if not luxuriously. There will be, obviously, no secret commissions—in fact, no commissions at all—under Socialism. People will be paid for their service, and will be expected to give that service. A salesman will have no reason to conceal the defects of the wares he handles, and there will be no rival wares for him to decry. His task will be actually that of an expert and technical adviser to his customer. He will not make himself an intolerable nuisance to his “prospect,” pushing his trade at inconvenient times and places, and his customer, knowing that all prices are fixed and unalterable, will not annoy the salesman by trying to beat him down.

The shrewd person who offers to make the purchase if the salesman will cut up the commission fifty-fifty will disappear from the earth as soon as he learns that commissions are no more. Until he does so learn, he may have to explain his action to a Court which will regard such actions with extreme seriousness.

CHAPTER XV

Oversea Trade and Interest Payments

A USTRALIA to-day produces twice as much primary produce as it uses; the balance has to be exported. It will continue to be exported to meet the interest payments on foreign loans and foreign investments, for the foreign investor will be placed in precisely the same position as the local investor. Those interest liabilities will gradually diminish over a course of years, until they are finally extinguished. It is not intended to apply a system of tapering confiscation; the extinction will be accomplished by payment in full from our enormously increased volume of exports.

In the meantime, the exports will more than meet the demands; there will be a considerable, in fact, an embarrassing, surplus, even at the low prices which may be expected to rule henceforth. We shall have no more worries about the balance of trade; as our imports will be insignificant, the whole trade will be on our side. Added to this, there is the strong probability that primary production, because of the scientific methods and added efficiency of Socialistic control, will multiply tremendously.

Experts have expressed the opinion that the existing acreage, fully utilized in the light of modern agricultural knowledge, is capable of turning out four times the quantity of wheat, butter and meat that it does now. That this is no exaggeration is proved by the experiments of the various agricultural colleges, and by the fact that one district of Victoria, though it possesses 18,000 fewer milch

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cows than it did eight years ago, now boasts four times the butter-fat production. The useless scrub cattle, which ate more grass than they paid for, have been killed off. But there are many districts in Australia where they have not.

Payment to foreign bond-holders and investors will be made, not by money or credit, but by goods, which constitute Australia's currency for exchange purposes. We will fix a fair market value on our wheat, our wool, our butter, our dried fruits and the rest. These prices will be standardized, and no matter what the world's markets may bid in the future, the payments will be liquidated at standardized rates.

For instance, if wheat is selling at 3/6 per bushel when Comrade Menzies assumes control, it will remain at 3/6 as long as we have any overseas indebtedness. Next season, Mark Lane may be offering 2/6; in that case the British investor will lose some of his income. The following year, it may rise to 4/-; that will enable him to luxuriate in a trip to Monte Carlo, if his holding is sufficiently large. The chances he will be obliged to take are no greater than the chances he takes every day in solid, sound industrial stocks; and any possible variations are not nearly so great as the variations which have taken place in the capital values of Australian stocks during the past five years.

Our excess imports will be similarly applied to liquidating our capital liability overseas—paying off our loans on the lay-by system.

We will no longer have to bother about trade balances; but we have to remember the spill-over of wool which

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exists to-day and may exist at any time. Japan has taken much of our wool in the past: so much that there has been a big balance of trade in favour of Australia. On the other hand, we buy a tremendous quantity of goods from the United States and she buys little or nothing from us. We can balance things by paying the United States in wool and letting her sell it to Japan or anybody else. She may take it or leave it. If she chooses to leave it we can obtain our cars and our petrol and our movies from other sources.

As far as petrol is concerned, one of those sources is the U.S.S.R., which not so long back offered to take our wool in exchange for petrol at a landing cost of 4d. a gallon. Seeing that there will be no duty on petrol under Comrade Menzies, and that the U.S.S.R. has a population of 160 million people, all growing sufficiently prosperous to wear woollen clothing, we may not have to wait long before we are able, should we desire, to bid good-bye to the trade of both Japan and the United States.

There are few things that we need to import at all. We wish to employ our own people in making everything we require, realizing that this is the very best means that can be taken to defend the country and to give full scope to the individual which—paradoxical as it may seem to those who revere the fetish of Private Enterprise—is one of the principal aims of the Socialistic State.

Australia is capable of producing everything that it requires, with the sole possible exception of petroleum and its derivatives, and our interest bill is considerably in excess of what we spend in petrol and oil. Even if we should be forced to do it, we could turn out enough petrol for our own purposes. The price will be great, but price

does not come into consideration under Socialism as it does under Capitalism. There is a mountain of shale at Newnes, New South Wales, from which can be produced a high-grade petrol, and if we care to apply some of our labour to it we need not bother about importation. The U.S.S.R. has not, so far, been able to grow rubber anywhere within the vast area it controls; it uses largely a synthetic article produced at high cost, but it finds that cost less than the cost would be if it used nothing but imported rubber with a consequent reduction in the living standard of the people.

Eventually, Australia will be able to consume the whole of the excess primary products itself—for the populations of the world will simply rush the Socialistic land which is paying every able-bodied intelligent breadwinner six pounds or more per week. The immigrant will provide the back-loading for the ships which carry the primary products to Europe, and ships will have to be so constructed as to provide for them. Our real difficulty will be to provide for absorbing the tens of thousands—the hundreds of thousands—who will wish to pour into this country every year, and the powers of the organizing bodies will be taxed to do it.

We shall be able to pick and choose our immigrants; the types which, in the past, arrive to become rouseabouts in tenth-rate hotels, will be left behind. So long as other countries permit Capitalism to rule the roost, we shall be able to skim the cream of their population and leave them with the by-products of humanity. To be accepted as an immigrant for Australia will confer a distinction on the European; he will have to possess 100 per cent. physical and mental fitness before he gets his admission passport

from the High Commissioner. He will be a sort of Rhodes Scholar in reverse.

While the population of Australia grows, the interest bill will diminish, and the necessity of sending primary products abroad will fall in increasing ratio. There will be more local mouths to feed—the mouths of the immigrants and mouths of the native-born—for the better standard of living will mean that the birth rate will return to that of the 'sixties and 'seventies. It may always be necessary to export a trifle of our primary produce to pay for luxury goods, the demand for which would not justify the establishment of a local industry. In the dim future, when all the debts are paid off, and Australia consumes all it produces, it will only be necessary to throw a few more acres into cultivation to provide the wherewithal for any additional luxuries. In all other respects, Australia will be self-supporting and self-contained.

By that time the immigration rush will have died down or other countries may have followed Australia's lead and made their own lands fit for heroes. If not, conditions will be so much improved here that a visit to Europe will not be the monopoly of the idle rich; the worker on the lowest scale will be able to let his annual leave accumulate and by a process of deferred pay enjoy a trip to old-world centres at least once during his lifetime.

In this respect, it would be advisable to approach the question of reducing hours of daily work with caution. Three hours a day is estimated to be sufficient to maintain everybody in comfort, and many Socialists put this forward as a tempting ideal. But to introduce a three-hour day now would simply mean an agitation to finish all

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work by mid-day and devote the afternoon to "leisure," which in many instances would usher in a golden age for the hotel bar and the two-up school and the bridge table, not to mention other vices. Better would it be to retain the seven-hour day, which would make everybody twice as well off, and devote the savings to a longer annual holiday. This generally means a family holiday, during which drink and gambling and other vices have little appeal. Interstate trips would be within the reach of all and, by permitting an accumulation for a few years, the means of travelling to Europe or Asia or America would be provided.

Associated with the whole question of oversea communication arises the matter of shipping facilities. The Commonwealth must, of course, own its own line and its own line must be conducted with the same efficiency as private lines reveal to-day. Wasteful and undisciplined as were the crews of some of our bay liners while they were under Commonwealth control, there is little doubt that the line served an extremely useful purpose and had the effect of reducing freights to primary producers to a remarkable degree.

Interstate shipping would, of course, pass over to the Commonwealth with the rest of the local industries—that is, the shipping of companies locally owned. Companies not locally owned would be advised to move their ships elsewhere; if they did not, they would simply find that there were no passengers and no freight for them to carry. With the railways, the tramways, the airways, the motor bus lines and the motor truck lines, the shipping would pass to the control of the Department of Transport, which

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would be so arranged that the greatest convenience and efficiency would result.

There would be no more fierce fights; no "gentlemen's agreements," on the one hand, and no price-cutting wars on the other. Goods would be delivered by the speediest route; whether they were carried by ship or by train, or by truck, would not matter one ha'porth to anybody—the aim would be to get the goods to their destination safely and quickly, and to serve every centre and every individual up to the point incapable of improvement.

CHAPTER XVI

The Flag, the Church, the Home

SEVERAL intelligent people to whom I have outlined my policy have immediately demanded to know whether the inauguration of a Socialistic order will mean cutting the painter from Great Britain, whether it involves the suppression of all forms of religion and whether divorce on the say-so of one party, as in the U.S.S.R., will be part of the programme. Originally, I had not intended to touch any of these matters because I failed to see how they were in any way involved in a matter which is purely economic. But, as friendly critics appear to regard omission as a sign of weakness, an endeavour to dodge difficult problems, I realize that it would be as well to explain my views.

Because Russia has adopted a Socialistic system is no reason why another country which adopts Socialism should make itself a mere replica of Russia in every detail. Stalin has laid it down definitely that the component republics of the U.S.S.R. should be "Socialist in content; national in form." The Uzbek is not encouraged to turn himself into a caricature of a European Russian; on the contrary, every effort is made to develop his language, his culture, his customs and his amusements. One of the cheerful customs of Russia and, it must be admitted, many countries of Continental Europe, has always been to deal sternly with anybody temerarious enough to oppose or even criticize the the party in power. Many years back, a press colleague had occasion to interview the consul for Czarist

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Russia and, at the conclusion of the interview, the consul observed: "Ach, I see you haf a str-rike here. . . . In my country we manage things better. There would be a long r-row of dead men." That was the custom of the country and when the Bolsheviks got the upper hand there was another long row—but of a different class.

Australia does not deal in long rows of dead men and is not likely to regard them any more trivially under Socialism than she does under Capitalism. We are not going to make it compulsory to drink tea out of samovars or sing to the accompaniment of the balalaika because we happen to adopt an economic system which, as far as the meagre scraps of history reveal, was originally British—neither German nor Russian, but British. That the Russians are the first to make it a success is only a matter of opportunity—and great luck.

Australia's brand of Socialism will be national in form and will be democratic—it cannot be anything else—and in each of the three matters which so agitated my friends, the will of the people will necessarily prevail, just as it does under Capitalism. There is no reason to imagine that the sentiments of the voters will go into reverse because they happen to be living more comfortable lives.

A Socialistic economic order will not carry with it the corollary of abolishing the British connection. That will endure just as long as the people wish it to endure; the King will remain the head of the various Dominions whether they be Socialistic or Capitalistic. It is quite possible—but scarcely probable—that the citizens of the Menzies Sanocracy may even desire His Majesty to appoint an imported Governor-General. The State Governors will disappear automatically with the adoption of a

system whereby the States as we know them to-day will pass out of existence.

Associated with the British connection is defence. A Socialistic Commonwealth will make just as much or as little provision for defending itself as it deems needful, and it will secure the very best means of defending the country in the immense armies of immigrant—"picked men, all on 'em," as the late Bill Adams would say—which will certainly sweep into a country providing such great attractions. With unlimited money—that is to say, labour intelligently applied—the tempting areas of the North and North-West will be adequately populated and a co-ordination of civil and military aviation will make Australia infinitely more secure from attack than she has ever been.

Australia has no desire to attack any other country and it will further develop the greatest defensive weapon ever devised—the submarine. With aeroplanes and submarines and patrol boats and such land forces as the military experts deem necessary, this country should prove a hard nut for any envious power to crack.

In the event of Britain becoming involved in a war, Australia would be free—just as she is to-day—to throw in her lot with Britain or stand out of the conflict. The decision would be wholly in the hands of the people of the Commonwealth.

Similarly, the voters would have the power to decide what attitude should be taken by the government towards religion; but there is no reason to imagine that there will be any change of spiritual attitude on the part of the public. They will probably continue to attend their different churches, just as they do—or don't—to-day. Their clergy-

man will be better able to minister to the religious nature of his flock; he will have his salary to himself and his family, instead of having to put his own hand in his pocket to relieve distress week in and week out.

Because the State decides to run its industries in the most efficient manner does not imply that the people are going to become atheists any more than they are going to become stamp collectors or golf addicts. There is absolutely no connection between the two. Religion will be left severely alone and the church schools will continue to function as before, though it is likely that they will suffer from the competition of the State's super high schools which will certainly arise every few miles.

Neither does the adoption of Socialism mean a suspension of all the laws of sex-morality and the introduction of an era of promiscuity. Following the Revolution, Russia went through a period of poultry-yard morality and this has been widely attributed by its enemies to its economic system. In reality, it was due to the dangers and turmoil and dislocation of civilization generally; throughout history, wars, famines, revolutions and similar disasters have always been followed by such periods. When people feel that to-morrow may be their last day on earth, they are apt to make the most of the night before them.

Russia introduced a system of divorce on the decision of one party; it was only necessary for the husband to notify a wife that he was going, or vice versa, and that was the end of it. They were divorced. But Russia has not found the system to work as well as expected and strong propaganda is being pushed all through the Soviet Union to discountenance alliances entered into more or

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less temporarily. Already, it is impossible to obtain a divorce free of charge; the applicant has now to pay a fee about equal to 7 per cent. of the annual income of the basic wage-earner, with substantially increasing fees for subsequent divorces.

The citizens of Australia would be the arbiters of the laws governing divorce and marital relations and possibly they may be liberalized. Divorce by mutual consent would probably be the reform most logical and acceptable. A couple desiring to terminate the marriage contract would be required to register an application and some months later to confirm it. This obligation would prevent a man and woman who may have had a disagreement from acting on impulse. Few of those who made the preliminary application would be found to turn up to secure the decree absolute.

A further question put to me is whether I would give six pounds a week to the boys and girls of twenty working in shops, offices and factories. I was asked with a smile to suggest what would happen to them if they left their places of toil on Saturday mornings with twelve pounds between them. I was advised that numbers would never be seen again until the money was gone and that there would be a long line of wrecked cars between Melbourne and Sorrento and between Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

But the suggestion is not to give every grown man and woman six pounds a week. Such a wage would, at the outset, be reserved for a family, and a proportion of it would be so allotted that the children would obtain the benefits without the parents handling it. Regarding the

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normal average young man and young woman, it would be advisable to defer a certain proportion of the earnings until marriage or the attainment of a certain age. It is therefore obvious that Bertie and Gertie will not draw twelve pounds between them to spend in riotous living. The State has no concern with their morals, which will probably average out much the same as the morals of people of twenty right through history. It will be deeply concerned about their economic position.

The principle of equal pay for equal work will be rigidly adhered to; a woman will not be paid 50 to 60 per cent. of her rightful earnings because of her sex. If she cares to continue working after her marriage, she will have full liberty to do so, for she will be cutting nobody out of a job and she will be augmenting the national wealth. But, while she is single and healthy and competent, she will be required to take her place in the firing line in the army of production.

Like corruption, prostitution will exist in a surreptitious form, but, also like corruption, it will be reduced to insignificant proportions, with its evils greatly minimized. With the State health department having unlimited powers over the whole Commonwealth, it should be possible to stamp out venereal disease completely, as has been almost accomplished in the U.S.S.R.

Birth-control clinics will probably be established in every centre and the education of the public in this matter deliberately encouraged. It is not likely that the population figures will slump. With a community prosperous throughout and, with the early marriages which always accompany prosperity, it is more than likely that the birth-

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rate will rival that of the gold-digging days when there was scarcely an old or even a middle-aged person in the land.

As for drink, the democracy once more will decide. If people wish to continue to consume alcoholic liquor, they will be free to do so; if they favour prohibition, the manufacture and sale of liquor will cease. They will really cease for, under Socialistic control, the laws will be enforced, save possibly in a few instances where fanatics make a private still and turn out fiery stuff for themselves and their friends.

But whether the people vote wet or dry, the polls will be conducted without prejudice. The influence of the Liquor Interests—a big factor in the finances of both political parties to-day—will no longer exist.

The preservation of infant-life will improve beyond all belief and the extension of centres for child-study will result in many thousands of youngsters who now grow up stunted and weedy attaining their manhood as fine physical specimens. Malnutrition at the present time is not confined to the slum areas and the poorer families; medical experts give appalling testimony of the sufferings of children of all classes, due not only to insufficient food but to improper food.

The Socialist State will see that this position is altered; the scientist will be ready with his advice and his advice will be passed on to the parents. If the parent thinks he knows better and acts according to his lack of knowledge, he may have ample reason to complain of the tyranny of a Socialistic government. He will do what he is advised by the people who know as much as there is to know about

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the feeding of children. If he chooses to defy them, he must take what is coming to him and that will not be pleasant.

The right of the parent to murder his child through ignorance and pigheadedness is going to be confiscated from him with his capital.

CHAPTER XVII

Sport and Gambling

GENUINE sport will receive, under State control, a greater encouragement than it ever received when it depended on the largess of gentlemen who aimed to catch votes or build up the goodwill for selection by a political machine. As for the profit-making concerns which exist for the purpose of piling up money for individuals or corporate bodies by an appeal to the gambling instincts, they will probably fizzle out from inanition. Horse-racing, dog-racing and similar devices for extracting money from one pocket to put it into another will have no assistance from the State, though, if they choose, they may take their chance under a control which is purely amateur and be run by those who are enthusiasts in "improving the breed" of horses or dogs.

As it is, Flemington and Randwick and their satellites merely provide the machinery for gambling. That horses happen to be running round a track instead of balls running round a concave disc is only a matter of choice. They are nothing more than huge, expensive roulette tables and not 5 per cent. of the people who attend the big fixtures would know the difference if well-groomed hacks were lined up at the barriers.

California, some years ago, prohibited betting on horse-races. A few zealots got together and constructed a race-course where the breed of horses was to be improved without the aid of gambling. The first meeting was largely boomed. It was attended by just about sufficient members

of the public to pay the wages of the ticket collectors. At the same time, races at Tia Juana, just across the Mexican border, where the lid was off, brought dozens of special trains filled with enthusiastic Californians eager to blow their hard-earned dollars under the free flag of Mexico.

Cut the gambling out of Flemington and Randwick and the rest and they would suffer the same fate as the Colma (Cal.) racecourse. But, assert the protagonists of these alleged sports, gambling is a natural instinct of humanity and if people are prevented from gambling on one thing they will gamble on another. All this may be very true, but the gambling which takes place between individuals is a very different thing from the professional gambling which results from horse-racing, dog-racing and similar expressions of capitalistic energy.

It is the poor man who keeps going the whole vast establishments connected with racing to-day—the magnificent courses with their palatial structures, with suites of rooms for the entertainment of the wealthy for a few hours yearly, their associated entertainments for a privileged class, their decorative lawns and gardens, their racing stables with their armies of trainers, jockeys and stable-boys, not to mention another immense army of hangers-on and semi-criminal "followers of racing," the perfectly-appointed stud farms and the tremendous transport of people and horses.

All the expense of these activities is paid out of the money raked off the punters—mostly men earning less than £5 a week—the unfortunates who, hoping against hope, and in defiance of all experience, trust that this time they may strike a winner. The tote takes 10 per cent. of the money lodged for each race. There are six races during

each average race day, so that for every £100 taken out to the course by the punters, they carry home with them £40. Sixty per cent. of the punting fund, as economists would term it, is lost every day that a race meeting is held; yet the punter never realizes that fact; his desperate determination to make the money he needs so badly dims his judgment to blindness.

The man who indulges in unorganized gambling—in backing his fancy at a football match or a pedestrian event against that of a shop mate—is exercising that natural instinct for gambling so often quoted. The unfortunate who takes part in professional gambling, either on the racecourse or the dog-course or at the professional two-up school, enters into the game for the express purpose of making sufficient money to satisfy his wants, money which is denied him under the Capitalistic system.

Give the wage-earner a decent wage and this frenzied desire to gamble would disappear. There would still be gambling. People would still back their fancies at various sporting events or indulge in a mild flutter at an improvised two-up school; but the vicious effects of gambling would be practically wiped out by the disappearance of the biggest incentive.

Genuine sport—athletic sport—would be under the control of the State and the eternal and ever-growing anomalies of the amateur definition would be settled once and for all, seeing that there would be no other than amateur athletes. The State would not pay vigorous young men a poor salary for playing football once and training three times weekly. It would not put up tremendous purses for its pugs. to fight for—purses which, in reality, return the men who enter the ring only a slight proportion when

expenses are paid, leaving them to live in straitened circumstances between much-advertised fights. The pugs. would have to work for a living, like the rest of us.

If the head of the Department of Sport were an enthusiast—which he should be—he will probably use his influence to ensure that athletes should be given sufficient time off to prepare adequately for important events. Moreover, every athletic association of any size would have associated with it a State-appointed coach and trainers and a medical officer to examine all contestants—especially the women competitors—and ascertain that they are able to endure the strain likely to be put upon them. The medical department would also act in an advisory capacity in recommending certain sports to correct certain weaknesses; for instance, the youth with a small chest measurement or small lung capacity might be advised to take part in rowing or some such exercise calculated to enlarge his breathing powers. The man or woman whose arm or leg measurements failed to reach normal would be brought under the notice of the physical culture experts and so exercised as to develop the lagging muscles. Special attention in this respect would, of course, be paid to the children and from the very earliest age they would be physically exercised with a view to turning them into strong, active adults.

Sports meetings would be of frequent occurrence with trophies provided by the State, and special efforts would be made to develop teamwork as much for its psychological effects on the general progress of the people as for its inherent value.

Test matches would not cease. The Board of Control would be supplanted by the cricket experts of the State—

and possibly many cricket enthusiasts may be converted to Socialism by that prospect. The trips to England, South Africa and India would be continued, and probably extended to other places not now considered. The visits of the Rugby football teams to England would go on; the English players would come here and the Davis Cup contests would loom as large as ever to the tennis followers.

Most important of all will be the Australiad, which will be held annually in the different capitals in rotation and with the whole expense falling, not on the local citizens, but on the Commonwealth as a whole. Similarly, Australia would be able to take its turn, long overdue, as the venue of the Olympic Games. Many years ago the games should have taken place in the Commonwealth, but Australia has never made a real endeavour to secure them, principally for the reason that it could not face the tremendous expense of preparing the necessary accommodation and machinery. Under Socialism, there will be no misgivings of this sort. There will be ample money—that is, labour—to do the thing in a manner which will make Los Angeles and Berlin look amateurish.

Australia's control of sporting events on the arena is second to none in the world; the management of some of the past Olympic Games in certain countries would make the secretary of an Australian sporting club weep over its incompetence. We want the athletes of the world to come to Australia to show them how the business should be managed, and we will be able to if we manage our national business as well as we manage our sporting business now.

This perfect, intensive control of sporting events in Australia is another instance of the devoted work people will accomplish without thought of payment. The acme

of perfection was reached many years ago when the old Austral Wheel Race meeting was held on the Melbourne Cricket Ground—when hundreds of heats were run off in the course of an afternoon and the meeting never finished five minutes late. As a perfect example of organization, the Austral meeting challenged comparison with any of the triumphs of high-grade Capitalism—and they were accomplished by men, who, for the greater part, were paid nothing for their devotion.

There would be no compulsion to participate in sport, but there would be every encouragement to do so; and the encouragement would begin among the tiny tots of the kindergarten. But physical culture would certainly be compulsory for both sexes until reaching the age of, say, twenty. It might become necessary, in the case of children especially weedy and undeveloped, but not suffering from any ascertainable disease, to subject them to a special course best obtainable by the creation of institutions where they would live, receiving, as well as general education, medical supervision and the diet and exercise required to convert them into good human specimens.

CHAPTER XVIII

Where's the Money Coming From?

READERS will doubtless think I have painted a rosy picture of life under Comrade Menzies and will be inclined to echo the question put to me so many times: "Where's the money coming from to do all this?"

In the first instance; that is, for the first few months, the money would come from the same source which has been keeping us going for the last six years. It would come from inflation—let us call things by their genuine names. Credits would be issued to finance the works projected and to assemble order out of the chaos of Capitalism. The inflation would be frank and honest. It would not be disguised by issues of treasury bills to be liquidated, while the going is good, by floating loans and thus piling on further interest burdens. But money of any description would not long be wanted except in its true sense as a medium of exchange.

Here is an appropriate place to point out that there is no intrinsic value in money. Whether it be discs of gold or pieces of paper, it is merely a voucher entitling the holder to receive a certain quantity of goods or services. A scribble on the back of an envelope: "Please give bearer one bottle of beer and charge to my account," is just as valuable as actual cash, if signed by a "Good mark." It is, in effect, money. If money had any inherent value, the marooned buccaneer, sitting on a chestful of pieces of eight, would be a rich man. In reality, he is a starving pauper; whereas the naked blackfellow across the straits

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with a score of fruitful banana trees is possessed of useful, tangible assets—real wealth. Money is only a certificate of wealth and wealth is a certificate of labour; even the banana tree of that primitive savage had to be tended and its fruit collected. As Weary Willie said in the comic drawing: "There's always some catch in things; if roast ducks grew on trees, you'd have to get up and pick 'em off."

If you have the labour and the brains to direct it, you will be rich. The trouble about Capitalism is that it hasn't had the brains, and that is why it is poor. Russia has shown the world during the last eight years what can be done by labour without money.

Russia had practically no money. The Great War left it broke. The Revolution failed to mend matters and, just as the new order started to try, it had to go to war again. This war was hardly over before the White Interventionists were on it with three or four armies converging on Moscow from all directions. The Soviet had to fight altogether on no fewer than twenty-nine fronts before it drove out the Whites to face another war with Poland, a famine, an epidemic of cholera and an epidemic of typhus. Then it had the cheerful task of cleaning up the roving bands of criminals who had taken advantage of the disorder to murder and loot peaceful citizens. Having established some semblance of order, it took stock.

If ever a political party started out with a hopeless task it was the Bolshevik Party in Russia. It had to face a mass of human raw material of an impossible sort. Pre-Revolution Russia comprised what was probably the most vicious aristocracy the world has seen since the days of

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Louis XIV of France; a church which was an oppressive horror; an immense population of which at least 70 per cent. was illiterate and ignorant of ordinary civilized life, and a handful of intelligentsia who, from Western standpoints, appeared to be as mad as snakes. Through each of these divisions was scattered a larger proportion of crooks and cranks than any other European country could muster, and as most of the cranks and crooks joined the party on top, which happened to be the Bolshevik Party, they constituted a grave problem to the leaders until they were gradually "liquidated."

For the next ten years, the Soviet floundered, and that it finally won through was wholly due to the grit and determination of a few of its leaders who refused to know when they were beaten. Lenin, greatest of them all, "the man not of the century but of the millennium," as one of the most bitter opponents of Socialism calls him, was finally forced to admit Capitalism temporarily in order to save the entire population. But, as recovery came, it was once more expelled and, on Lenin's death, his mantle fell on the capable shoulders of Stalin, who set the whole vast country to work out the Five Year Plan projected during Lenin's lifetime.

Russia's progress really dates from the beginning of the first Five Year Plan. During the ten years previous to that, it had contrived to get industry going in a sort of a way and to feed its people also in a sort of a way; but had things been left to evolve, a century would have elapsed before the country reached the position it occupies to-day.

Under the Five Year Plan, the people of Russia had to suffer great hardship. They had, as Lenin put it, to starve themselves into greatness. The labour which, in other

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lands, would be applied to turning out foodstuff and houses and clothing, had to be devoted to "heavy industries"—including two of the world's industrial wonders, Dnieperstroy dam for generating electrical current and Magnitogorsk steel works in the Urals, where a mountain of ironstone lay awaiting development.

As it was impossible to obtain credits from other countries, the imports of essential machinery had to be paid for with foodstuffs and the local population had to go without, the result being that Russian butter was selling in London for pence while similar butter cost the Soviet citizen a shilling. English pence were worth more to the Soviet than its own shillings.

All these sacrifices were deliberate and were planned for a purpose—the purpose of defending the country, for the fear of another war of intervention on the part of combined capitalistic countries has not yet been entirely eliminated from the Russian mind. So it was that another huge expenditure of labour—which was Russia's only currency—had to be made to establish the Red Army and turn it into the perfect military mechanism it is to-day.

Possibly the Soviet leaders really feared a second intervention; possibly they regarded it as good tactics to make the masses believe that invasion threatened. Such a fear would prevent them from growing restive under their continued privations. Whatever the reason, the people not only endured bravely but grew more and more enthusiastic for the Soviet cause until, to-day, sympathy with the old order is seemingly confined to those who were past their first youth at the date of the Revolution.

The second Five Year Plan was designed to provide for the light industries, which meant that the citizens were

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to be more liberally treated in the matter of obtaining the comforts of life. All the stories of writers on recent Russian conditions and all the observations of returned visitors to that land indicate that such is now the case and that the standard of living has grown to approach that of other countries. Seeing that during the past eight years the capital accumulations of the U.S.S.R. have amounted to five times more than those of the United States, it only needs a division sum to show what this sum would be distributed in the form of comforts among the people.

The lowest-paid Russian worker of 1936 occupies a position much the same as an Australian worker receiving about 25/- a week, or £2/10/- a week for a man and his wife, seeing that the Russian wife is also classified as a worker and leaves her home for the factory like her husband. In the matter of housing, the Russian is distinctly worse off. His rent is much smaller, but so is his accommodation; and the influx into the cities, due to sudden industrialization, renders it impossible for building to catch up with the demand. If he is worse off as regards housing, he is infinitely better off in the services provided him by the State; there is nothing to approach these in any other country and, as is only right and sane, the children get the preference in everything.

Russia is still struggling. It has many, but not all, of the tools of trade which it requires, but it has not yet learned to use them to the best advantage. It is still obsessed with the spectres of foreign attack and counter-revolution, which leads to the perpetuation of the secret police system inherited from Czarist days. The more timorous of its population still move in fear of being shot or sent among the white bears for some simple error of

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judgment interpreted as sabotage. Its leaders are working overtime endeavouring to secure the best men for the most important positions, and it is only since March, 1935, that the railways have been converted from a state of chaos into proper working order.

The estimate of six pounds Australian values weekly within a few years is not fantastic, seeing that Russia is paying a man and his wife nearly half that sum already. The public company which struggles for eighteen years and contrives by the end of that period to pile up immense assets and to pay a dividend of 3 per cent. is not far from paying one of 6 per cent. Any capitalist will admit that, and any capitalist of ability would rush to buy the shares of such a concern were they selling at par.

During its struggle of eighteen years, Russia made many blunders—which is only to be expected. Australia will not make so many of those blunders because she is already industrialized and because she has a population educated very differently from that which Russia possessed at the date of the Revolution. But Australia does not want to repeat a single one of those mistakes which checked the progress of the Soviet, and directly Comrade Menzies establishes his system, one of his first acts should be to despatch a committee of capable men, preferably of mixed political views, to Russia to study Russia's past blunders and ascertain their causes.

To those who have closely followed the progress of the U.S.S.R. during the past ten years, the probability of its surpassing the production of the United States at its peak period by 1947 does not seem a possibility; it seems a certainty. The old Russian is dying out; the new Russian, highly educated, possessed of technical skill surpassing

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that of any other nation and filled with a fanatical devotion to his system which compares only with the fervour of a mediæval zealot, is growing in numbers daily, and soon will comprise the whole population. The Russian has taken his old motto: "Nitchevo" from the wall with his ikons and hung in its place the slogan: "Do it now." He obeys the ideal of service to the community with super-Rotarian fervour.

With leaders who have already proved themselves as capable and self-sacrificing as any the world has seen, and the whole mass of the people working for the accomplishment of a great ideal, nothing short of an external war with a combination of first-class powers can stay the advance of the Soviet.

It is only a few months since the railways were 30 per cent. inefficient. To-day they are running to 100 per cent. of plan—an improvement which altered the whole face of industry. Scarcely had this been accomplished than the Stakhanov movement rose and swept like a bushfire through the whole of the federated republics. Stakhanov was a coal miner who evolved a new system of getting coal; it was not a matter of speeding up; it was a matter of organization, of brain not brawn. The results of Stakhanovism have been almost unbelievable. Unskilled and semi-skilled workers have been taught so to harmonize their labours that they have made the outputs of highly-industrialized countries working on the old methods look insignificant; and in the U.S.S.R. every extra pound of output means an addition to the wage of every man and woman in the land. The Stakhanov movement has streamlined industry.

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So enormous appear the possible production figures of the U.S.S.R. and so high the possible standard of living for all, that it will, by 1947, probably be sending out its Donald Thomsons to investigate the condition of the backward races of Britain and Australia and the United States and see if something cannot be done to bring these poor ignorant people out of their Egyptian darkness.

But the chances are that, long before that date, the other lands will have realized their primitive condition and taken a leaf out of the book of the U.S.S.R. If they don't care to adopt a system which will make for universal peace and contentment, the U.S.S.R. reveals no signs of any intention to utilize armed conquest for the purpose of forcing their beliefs down the throats of the unbelievers.

There will be no need for arms; in time, the conquest must be accomplished biologically. If the lesser breeds without the law continue to worship the golden calf, they will simply be absorbed by sheer force of numbers. The population of the U.S.S.R. is increasing at the rate of three millions a year, and its babies—thanks to the Socialistic system—are surviving. In almost every other nation, the birth-rate is stationary or very near it, and the conditions of Capitalism enforce an annual massacre of the innocents which makes the crude birth-rate a mere mockery.

If Russia remains the only Socialistic country in the world, it is only a matter of time before all the rest have dwindled to extinction and the victorious Russians simply walk in and inherit assets for which there is no other claimant.

If the Russian were interested in the opinion of the rest of the world—which to-day he isn't—he could meet

all the criticisms of opponents with a smile—the assertion of paucity of raw materials, incompetence of workmen, lack of housing, lack of sanitation, lack of many comforts of ordinary life, charges of cruelty and persecution, criticisms of the Red Army discipline and a dozen other shortcomings. Then he could point to the statistics of the birth-rate and the preservation of infant life and ask the world to “laugh that off.”

CHAPTER XIX

Efficiency of State Enterprise

DESPITE the astounding and continued progress of almost every industry in the Soviet Union, there are still people who profess to believe that State management is bound to fail and who carefully ignore the condition of Russia's industries in the past and contrast the Soviet's present half-built structure with that upon which the Capitalism of Britain and the United States spent a century of thought and labour.

The cry “State enterprises always fail” is a handy one for the ignorant, but the sane opponent of Socialism knows better and refrains from making ridiculous statements, glad though he is to hear somebody else do so.

State enterprises don't fail; as compared with private enterprises they are a howling success. The biggest of all Big Businesses—the most extensive industry in the world—is not only nationalized but internationalized—the postal system. And so excellently is it managed that in almost every country it returns fine profits to its department and serves its patrons so well that not one letter in several millions ever goes astray. This astounding miracle is achieved in the face of tremendous handicaps. Letters have to be sent from one end of the earth to the other. They have to pass through the hands of people speaking half a dozen languages. They must be carried by every form of locomotion known to man, from aeroplanes to illiterate, barefooted semi-savages. Yet so few are the

mis-deliveries that when one is recorded it assumes the magnitude of a scandal.

Any error in a State enterprise gains fictitious importance, first by reason of its being an offence against the State—against the whole community; and second, because opponents of State enterprise, political or press, are invariably eager to denounce a system which threatens them and to magnify peccadilloes. Further, the sufferer from State carelessness or dishonesty registers his kick knowing that it will secure full publicity. If the State railway department fails to deliver goods on time, he writes a letter to his favoured newspaper or complains to his local member of Parliament. But if a private carrying firm is slack in its delivery, he contents himself with using abusive language to its representative. He has no illusions about obtaining publicity. The only way in which he can publicly denounce the unsatisfactory carriers is by taking his place on the soap-box next Sunday. He will need to be careful of his facts and his inferences should he do so, lest the carrying firm take action and hit him for heavy damages. Nobody bothers about accuracy when he reviles a public department. It cannot—or does not—bring suits for libel. The fierce light which beats upon a throne is a poor illuminant beside the floodlights which play upon every State enterprise year in and year out.

Another assertion of the ignorant is that our railways don't pay, meaning that they don't show a dividend as private companies engaged in transport would be expected to do. But the railways do pay—they pay the people who invested in the loans which made the railways possible and pay them considerably higher rates of interest than the average privately-owned railways in other parts of

the world pay their shareholders as dividends. That they sometimes show an apparent loss in not making sufficient profit to liquidate the whole interest bill is largely due to the loans having been issued at rates now not obtainable by investors; but partly to the fact that the railways are not run wholly as profit-making concerns. Were they private companies, numbers of producers would not find their produce carried at rates which do not pay the department which carries them; they would be stung for all the traffic would bear, as they were by the private companies of the United States until legislation forced them to relax.

Possibly more important still, there would be no lines built for developmental purposes; in fact, it is doubtful whether any of the lines of Victoria or New South Wales, apart from the suburban systems and the main traffic routes, are financially sound propositions. It is their unsoundness which is largely responsible for the development of the backblock areas of Australia.

Australian visitors to America often return to tell glowing stories of the telegraph and telephone systems conducted by private enterprise. The 'phone service in the United States is admittedly excellent, and it should be, seeing what the public has to pay for it.

While I was in San Francisco I had occasion to call San Diego—a long-distance call of three minutes' duration after 9 p.m. Later, I spoke to Melbourne from Newcastle, New South Wales—the same distance as between the American cities. The Australian Socialistic call cost me 2/9; the American private enterprise call cost me 17/6.

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Telegraph costs are also considerably lower in Australia; it costs as much to send a white wire in America as it does to send a red one here. Public convenience is aided here by every post office being a telegraph office, as the Australian visitor to the U.S.A. realizes when he has spent many minutes searching for a place to send a wire and, having located it, has to ascend twenty floors to the small apartment which serves the public as a telegraph office.

Had the telegraph and telephone systems been left to private enterprise, the public of Australia would have found itself served not 50 per cent. as well as it is to-day. A State is willing to undertake development work; it does not demand immediate profits; and the private company which is so altruistic as to embark on the task of developing the country is liable to go the way of many of its fellows. Under private enterprise, we would not have a network of wires covering this wide continent; there would be wires only where they could be reasonably expected to pay expenses plus dividends for their shareholders and Capitalism would not have had half the chances it has now of prizing such immense profits off Socialistic enterprises.

It must never be imagined that Capitalism is genuinely individualistic. It is in reality semi-Socialistic; it wants just that amount of Socialism which will ensure its own safety and augment its own profits. The most ardent protagonist of sturdy individualism is ready to complain bitterly to the police and write vigorous letters to his newspaper if another and more sturdy individualist proves that the battle is to the strong and the race to the swift by knocking him down and running off with his watch and chain.

This is, of course, an extreme case; but the average

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capitalist and capitalistic institution would be like a ship without a rudder were it not for the assistance which the State affords it—frequently affording it without payment other than the taxation applicable to all citizens.

In sober fact, Capitalism generally subsists largely on the largess of the State. It is the souteneur who batters on the State, which he forces to prostitute itself for its benefit. It is pauperized just the same as the man on the dole is pauperized; the difference being that the man on the dole is often grateful for the assistance the State gives; and even if he is not, recognizes that the assistance is given. The capitalist, on the other hand, derides Socialistic enterprise and "grandmotherly paternalism" in one speech and in another demands State assistance to make his own profit, without seeing anything anomalous about his arguments.

An immense amount of money is distributed annually to the capitalist by the differential railway freights. Admittedly most of this charitable relief to Capitalism goes to small capitalists—some of them so small that they simply struggle along on their farms with a standard of living comparable with that of the city slum-dweller. Still, they are capitalists according to all the definitions, and they are invariably pushed to the front ranks by the bigger capitalists as suitable recipients for a charity which is expected to spill over into the coffers of the more opulent.

But the big shots of Capitalism are not always content to rake off the earnings of Socialism by side tracks. On occasions, they resort to direct action and come along with demands that the much-abused State should cough up large sums of money in order that some desirable industry should be established for the purpose of raising the indus-

trial status of Australia and—what is far more important—paying dividends to their shareholders. Sometimes it is a concession which is asked for—the right to mine or fish or use certain land; sometimes it is a straight-out request for real money, as a subsidy.

Under the system governing us to-day, the demand for these subsidies is not always vicious or grasping; in some cases—aviation, for instance—it would be almost impossible to raise the necessary capital to give a company a fair start. The State is justifiably asked to contribute to an enterprise which is expected to improve the comfort of the citizens and contribute materially to the development of the back country. But all these reasons form excellent arguments for the State doing the work itself, without bothering about private shareholders. The same applies to the subsidies on wheat, sugar, butter, dried fruit and the proposed subsidies on almost every other necessity of life. Industries which cannot exist by their own efforts and are compelled to loaf on the State have no legitimate complaint if the State says: "If you are too incompetent to do your own work, we'll do it."

But it is not only in open subsidies, differential freights and similar easily-recognizable forms of charity that the poor downtrodden capitalist benefits at the expense of the whole community. There is scarcely an industry which could exist but for the help the State gives it or has given it in the past. The whole vast scientific organization of the universities, established and carried on at enormous expense to the taxpayers by devoted and underpaid men and women, is placed at the disposal of private enterprise. Experiments are conducted free of charge or at a nominal cost, and the accumulated wisdom of the ages, held in trust

for subsequent generations by the laboratory workers, is utilized by Capitalism for monopoly and exploitation. Various other activities of the State—the agricultural department, for instance—spends huge sums in research work into plant development and the eradication of pests, animal and vegetable, ostensibly to help the work of production, but really to put profit into the pockets of the capitalist, to relieve him of the necessity of paying for such research himself.

In one of the Australian capitals is a man who, desiring to rid his garden of a certain insect pest, wrote to the agricultural department of his State seeking advice. The department forwarded a recipe which he used with such surprising success that he conceived the idea of capitalizing his acquired knowledge. He invested a few pounds in a set of scales and a quantity of chemicals, hired a man to mix and pack and placed on the market a mixture to which he gave some such striking title as "Bugcide." The mixture proved so remarkably effective in clearing pests out of gardens that it became widely known and highly popular.

It was precisely the mixture which the agricultural department had broadcasted free of charge to all who applied, but the vast majority did not apply and were content to pay the clever person who profited by State enterprise four times the value of the component materials. He did not make a fortune of out of "Bugcide," that particular capitalist, but he added a few hundreds a year to his income by his firm grasp of the opportunity offered by the State.

Of all the easy marks which form the prey of Capitalism, the State itself is probably that most freely imposed upon. It is the poor boob who strays into the company of the shrewdies of the pony course and the two-up school.

If the State were ever to get nasty, to realize how it was being rooked by a gang unwilling to pay the cost of its own experiments, it would move to one side. Without its support, Capitalism would just topple over into the gutter.

Another parrot cry of those who think they are individualists but are really hybrids between Capitalism and Socialism is the assertion that Socialism has failed wherever it has been tried. They base this statement largely on the failure of small isolated collections of enthusiasts who endeavoured to carry out their principles in the middle of a capitalistic community and upon the mismanagement which has attended so many attempts of Australian governments, Labour and anti-Labour alike, to establish certain industries in communities hostile and graft-ridden and with Big Business using any weapon to secure their downfall.

Soviet Russia is now proving that Socialism may be made a success; but it is only half-way there at this date. A land which achieved almost 100 per cent. success was Great Britain during the Great War. It was not long after hostilities had begun that private enterprise broke down—broke down badly—in what was, at that period, the first essential of public safety—the provision of munitions for the British army. The State had to go out with the lifeline to rescue the country which the professional lifeguard had so hopelessly failed to do. It not only accomplished this work, but extended its activities into almost every walk of life and, with all the able-bodied men in the fighting line, contrived, with the labour supplied by women, cripples,

old men and youths, to reach a figure of productivity which high-grade labour under Capitalism had been unable to approach.

When the Armistice was signed, Britain possessed the most perfect industrial machine the world had ever seen. Every part was functioning like a well-oiled motor engine. Distribution, despite the dislocation incidental to warlike needs and military movements, had reached a stage of perfection that Capitalism never knew. Everything was ready for the repatriation of the fighting men, the slipping of them back into civil occupations, and the transfer of the gigantic munition factories which had arisen to the arts of peace. The organization was complete; only the details were required to make England as great a producer and distributor of the requirements of peaceful life as she had been of the requirements of battle. A signature affixed to a document would have done the trick and turned England into the land fit for heroes which Lloyd George had promised from his Downing Street Pisgah.

But instead of causing that signature to be affixed, Lloyd George threw a spanner into the works. Obsessed by the fanaticism that private enterprise was necessary for the progress of Britain, he forgot how private enterprise had slipped four years previously, how the State had taken up the fallen tools and constructed a machine so perfect that it needed only the shifting of a belting to abolish all the poverty, much of the crime, much of the drunkenness and much of the unhappiness which had existed from time immemorial. He threw the spanner and there Britain stands to-day—in line with nearly all the other civilizations in the world, ragged, starving and unkempt.

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If the U.S.S.R. to-day had its industries moving as the industries of Britain did in 1919, it would probably be paying its wage-earners, not the six pounds weekly it will soon be paying, but double that sum, and the serious problem of its commissars would be to apply its vast surplus labour to sufficient schemes of luxury and beautification to keep it employed.

CHAPTER XX

Australia's Five Month Plan

A USTRALIA needs no Five Year Plan; five months would be ample. She is already industrialized: too highly industrialized, if the demands for secondary products are considered. By working full time for three months, the boot factories of one capital city alone can supply Australia with all the boots worn in the course of a year. There is another factory devoted to making woven woollen goods which is capable of meeting the requirements of our seven millions of people by working eight hours daily. If it were run for three shifts, we could probably supply half Europe instead of sending it our raw wool.

We would not need to build up our heavy industries; they are already built up. We have all the light industries we require. Our only task would be to sort them out, to utilize those capable of producing their goods with the least effort and the least expense. We would be starting where Russia will be in ten or twenty years' time. Construction for production would be wholly unnecessary. Our only task would be to arrange production and distribution on the most economical lines.

In considering this matter fairly, it is essential to scrap the money tradition, to forget that there is such a thing as money and to think wholly in terms of goods and services which are all that anybody, even the most covetous, desires. If the production of Australia as a whole advances, the wealth of the individual will increase similarly. Under

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Capitalism, the total income of Australia amounted last year to £300,000,000, according to the Commonwealth Statistician; £400,000,000, according to certain individual economists of repute. A few years back the official estimate was £600,000,000. It might reach double the last-named sum without nine-tenths of the people being one penny the richer. But, under Socialism, the advance of a million pounds in the general value of production would mean that every man, woman and child would have three shillings more annually. It would not be in cash; it would be in goods and services, of which cash is only the token at present.

The Commonwealth's present income of £300,000,000 stands for an average of about £44/17/10 per head, or something approximating to the basic wage now paid for man, wife and two children. That does not sound too promising for the new order. On the face of it, it would imply that, when the capitalists were pensioned off, it would be possible to pay £6 weekly to all households only by continuous and disastrous inflation, which would result in the £6 a week being worth ultimately about six shillings. But the presumption is that each family will receive, not cash, but present-day values, and those would be available from the wealth which would roll into the State's coffers just as soon as industry got properly going.

It has been estimated that the industrial production of Australia, with the plant, machinery and other facilities now existing, could be increased fourfold if the demand justified such speeding up. Several business men to whom I quoted these figures demurred at their accuracy and suggested that they had been grossly exaggerated. To each, I put the question that, if he had unlimited orders

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how greatly could he increase his output. "Ten times," was the reply of the most pessimistic—and, in some instances, I happened to know personally that their plants were far from being as efficient and up-to-date as they should be.

Even did Socialism fail to improve the condition of industry in individual and co-ordinated efficiency, its annual income would not be a paltry £300,000,000, but at least four times that amount, enabling the payment of the capitalists' doles in full and leaving three times the present annual income for allotment to the workers.

But the industries of Australia are not going to follow the lead of Capitalism and be conducted according to the rule of that great Lyncurgus of Capitalism, the late Mr. Rafferty. They are going to be planned and co-ordinated. Anything that is planned in advance and carried out according to its blue-prints and specifications is done better and more cheaply and more expeditiously than things which are permitted to be put together "all anyhow." Even Capitalism knows that; the brainy capitalist—even the half-brainy one—does not enter into any worth-while enterprise without every detail being mapped out and prepared and estimates worked out to many places of decimals—which provokes a repetition of the great truth that, while capitalistic enterprises are individually as efficient as they can be, Capitalism as a whole is ramschackle and incompetent and chaotic.

Socialism intends to plan out its complete industrial system to ten places of decimals if needs be. Even in its present hopeless condition, planning of the industrial system under Capitalism would probably raise our returns from £300,000,000 to something approaching £600,000,000.

There is not one person—no matter what his political colour—who has not at some time stood appalled at the waste involved in faulty co-ordination or expensive handling which might be avoided.

The fourfold increase in production which would mean a fourfold increase in wages—less, of course, the amount needed for the pensioners—would be further enhanced by the advent of the 300,000 people now unemployed, every one of whom would be converted from a liability to an asset. To these would be added the vast numbers of “respectable” unemployed—representatives of the white-collar class. Such people do not register as unemployed; they demand neither dole nor sustenance; their relatives and friends bear the onus of “seeing them through” the prolonged periods when they are workless.

In addition to the classes named are the huge armies of trained people, who are now engaged in tasks for which there is no logical reason. They produce nothing; they perform no services useful to anybody; in effect, they are vagrants, though the most of them are decent-living people who seriously believe they are performing necessary work—agents, canvassers, brokers, and their hordes of satellites.

Australian cities possess such large numbers of these, apart from genuine producers and those who serve the public, that roping in all these present-day parasites, together with those out of employment, would mean that over a million more useful citizens would be added to the wealth-producers of the Commonwealth. As every one of these would return a profit on his labour, the fourfold increase of the present income would be extremely likely to become a sixfold or an eightfold one.

Next comes the matter of distribution—an extremely important one. From the standpoint of Capitalism, the distribution of secondary products in the United States is acknowledged to be fairly efficient. Probably it is more efficient than that of Australia. Yet the cost of distribution there amounts to no less than 60 per cent. of the aggregate retail prices of all articles. Of this, probably not more than 10 per cent. is a legitimate charge—the cost of carriage and delivery. The other 50 per cent.—half the amount paid over the counter by the ultimate consumer—is absorbed by intermediate profits for a long line of middlemen, the useless hauling of goods in and out of warehouses and shops and freight cars and trucks, advertising, go-getting, and ridiculous ornate wrappers, torn off and thrown away by every customer. One firm which manufactures a popular brand of tooth-paste allots no less than 40 per cent. of its gross expenditure to advertising alone, the whole of the cost being loaded on the ultimate consumer.

In addition to these needless costs on the finished products, there are a multitude of intermediate profits and useless handlings involved in getting the raw materials from the spot where they are raised from the soil to the spot where they are manufactured fit for consumption. Made at the point of original production, or as close as possible, distribution costs would probably be reduced another 5 or 10 per cent.

All of which means that, if Australian distribution is cut down to the essentials, retail prices will be at least 40 to 45 per cent. lower than they are now; or to put it another way, wages which will then be wholly spent on consumable goods or services will be raised to the same degree.

Further profit to the State will surely result from the impetus given to scientific developments. Capitalism has always been disinclined to utilize scientific discoveries which show no prospect of returning dividends, though they may be of incalculable benefit to people generally. As the capitalist himself puts it epigrammatically, he is not in business for his health. Owing to the lack of co-ordination between competing enterprises, two or more firms may possess inventions which are useless as they stand but which would revolutionize certain processes were they embodied in one machine. Of late years, industrial research has been given greater encouragement by capitalists with a modern outlook; but there is still much to be done in utilizing discoveries which are treated with contempt because they fail to reveal prospects of immediate profit. These and a hundred other handicaps on productive industry, enforced by adherence to the principles of private enterprise, would be swept away if it were possible to plan a capitalistic system—which hundreds of the brainiest men in the world have been vainly trying to do for the past five years.

Under a Socialistic system, industry will be planned, production will be speeded up and distribution simplified in its essentials. A hundred and fifty years ago, there was only horse-power and mighty little of that; the most important factor in production was man-power, which is reckoned to be one-tenth horse-power. To-day, the power at the command of civilized, industrialized countries is 3,000 horse-power for each inhabitant, which is another way of saying that, if people could keep body and soul together a hundred and fifty years ago, each inhabitant to-day should receive at least 30,000 times as much.

It requires only a superficial study of the advances of production, industrial and agricultural, even during the past ten years, to realize its enormous possibilities in the near future. Factories with a bigger output than they boasted with twice the number of operatives in 1920 are a commonplace. Newport Workshops, run by the Victorian Railway Department, now employs 1,700 men; it turns out more material of a greater value than it did ten years ago with 3,000 workers.

There, in the workshop, is a machine which has displaced six men; it needs feeding in the morning and clearing in the evening. Meanwhile, it works without cessation. It has no lunch-hour and no smoke-oh, and—better than all—no trade union. It is the ikon of Capitalism.

Many similar machines are going to be perfected during the next ten years; but they are not going to become the slaves of Capitalism. The Socialistic State will own and utilize them, not to save the wages of the workers but to increase them. The labour-saving devices which science gives to industry in the future will cease to throw people out of employment: they will scatter benefits to those already working.

Australia is peculiarly well-situated for the establishment of Socialized industries by reason of the enormous reserves of power at her command. The hydro-electric scheme of Tasmania could be developed to send its wires all over the island and provide work for a couple of million people. Yallourn in Victoria has already reached its tentacles over every part of the State where capitalistic enterprise justifies its use and has even crossed the border

into New South Wales. If it should prove insufficient to drive all the wheels that Riverina can use, the completion of the Hume Reservoir and the development of electricity from the Burrinjuck Dam should suffice to serve practically the whole of southern New South Wales. As for Queensland, the possibilities of hydro-electric schemes have not yet been adequately investigated; but, even if they should prove impracticable, there is not a port in North Queensland that has not an undeveloped coalfield behind it. The Northern Territory has neither water-power nor coal, but the limitless tidal power suggests that when it is possible to harness this, it will be in a better position than any other part of the continent. South Australia and West Australia, as far as we know now, will have to depend on coal supplies for their power; but as Capitalism has had nothing else to rely upon, there is little justification for weeping over their poverty.

Rich people are surprisingly few; there are only 13,000 people in the Commonwealth with incomes of over £1,000 a year. Those with £500 or more number only 35,000. Ninety per cent. of the wage-earners get less than £5 weekly, while 60 per cent. struggle along with less than £2 weekly. Forty per cent. of the income-recipients are paid less than £1 a week, but that figure probably applies largely to boys and girls, the majority of whom should still be at school.

Many people imagine that Socialism proposes to take away the rich man's money and divide it equally with everybody. There is a story about a Red who forced his way into the presence of one of the big American millionaires and commenced to make a speech on the inequalities of wealth. The capitalist interrupted.

"I know what you're going to say," he announced. "I've had it all worked out and I find that if all the money in the United States was divided equally, everybody would get one dollar eighty-five cents. Here's your dollar eighty-five cents. Now we're square."

The argument of the capitalist was perfectly sound; but the aim of Socialism is not to take the capitalist's money and divide it—which even some people who imagine themselves to be Socialists think. The whole of the incomes of the rich and the well-to-do of Australia amount in the aggregate to less than one-tenth of the total production; they constitute only "chicken feed." A crude evening-up process would do no more than reduce everybody to the basic wage plus, perhaps, a few pence weekly.

It is not the money which Capitalism takes out of industry which makes it an evil; it is its obstruction to capacity working of the industrial machine.

Sometimes, it does this deliberately, restricting output after the manner of the Scotch miner who goes ca' canny. Occasionally, it reveals its hopeless incapacity by open, direct sabotage such as has occurred in the burning of cotton, the slaughter of pigs and the dumping of coffee into the sea.

Right through the piece, Capitalism has been the devoted protagonist of the I.W.W. doctrine of Go-Slow; it is the contraceptive of production. In "normal times," it prevents industries functioning to their limit; when it grows desperate, it becomes a vandal and a frenzied wrecker. It is not the profits which Capitalism rakes off which leaves the man who should have 3,000 horse-power at his command poverty-stricken and helpless; it is the fact that it

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stands at the door of the store wherein is piled wealth and potential wealth and cries: "They shall not pass."

Out of our total earning population, probably half are engaged on useless jobs. They are not producers nor do they render any useful service to the community. Socialism will double the number of producers by making everybody perform some work of utility. By so doing, it will easily double the production of the Commonwealth and turn the annual figure into one which will meet the requirements of the capitalists' pensions and pay the basic worker a weekly sum considerably in excess of the £6 suggested as a beginning.

That will be accomplished by the initial process of putting everybody to work of some value. The effect of a planned economy and the effect of the impetus which will be given to scientized industry will follow speedily.

Only the best plants and the best machines will be used, relieving industries of those which drag at their tail. Wasteful handling will be eliminated and organization will be tightened up to make labour 100 per cent. efficient. Encouragement will be given to inventors; and devices which have been kept in cold storage for years by Capitalism will be thawed into activity.

The weekly wage will creep forward and forward until Australia reaches the point which, according to Henry Ford, represents saturation point—everybody will have a motor car. What will be the ultimate limit of the workers' wage it is difficult to forecast.

The sky's the limit.



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