• From Our Mail Box •

TRANSITION PERIOD

Just as we go to press comes the sad news of Comrade Bob Walker's death on January 27 at the age of 78.

This last message from an old stalwart rebel who was an inspiration to all whom he contacted serves as a Memorial to him.

More in the next issue.

From Comrade Bob Walker of British Columbia comes word of an interesting aftermath to Com. J. D'Arcy's visit to Vancouver last September. It seems that a "commotion" was raised within the Stanley Park C.C.F. Club about Com. D'Army's unorthodox views on the "Transition Period."

In order to grasp the reason behind the "commotion" it must be made known that in recent times, the Stanley Park C.C.F. Club has been influenced by a group of that romantic, 19th Century type of revolutionary commonly known as **Trotzkyist** So the fact that Com. D'Arcy had maintained the obvious fact that the only "Transition Period" that could be conceived of prior to the establishment of Socialism is taking place right here and now; that any so-called socialist regime could do nothing other, short of establishing socialism, than what is taking place right now and that the Bolshevik theory of a Transition Period between capitalism and socialism is thoroughly unrealistic disturbed them.

In spite of Comrade Walker's poor health he has been attending the meetings of the C.C.F. Club regularly and he managed to talk the group into permitting him to speak before them on the question of the Transition Period.

It seems that the C.C.F. maintains it is socialist but not Marxian Socialist, and sets forth the difference as one between peaceful transition to socialism by means of parliamentary institutions and the transition by "force and violence" as advocated (according to them) by Marx and Engels. This was the theme of the differences between the C.C.F. Club and our views as stated by Comrade Walker.

The difficulty, as Com. Walker was able to prove to them, is that they seem to confine their quotations in support of their contention to writings of Marx and Engels produced prior to the Paris Commune. Not only the "peaceful" transitioners of the 2nd International (the C.C.F. type), but the more blood-and-thunder species such as are found in the 3d and 4th Internationals base their position on the Transition from the writings of Marx and Engels prior to the Paris Commune.

Com. Walker produced copies of Value, Price and Profit, The Communist Manifesto, Socialism — Utopian and Scientific, Origin of the Family, and the Civil War in France. All of these works were either written or had new prefaces written subsequent to the Paris Commune and Com. Walker challenged any of the audience to show where Marx and Engels advocated the use of force and violence or had in any way contradicted Comrade D'Arcy's statements on the Transition Period.

Com. Walker then went on to develop the difference between labor and labor-power, showing that is is not his "labor" but his labor-power which the worker sells. The difference is manifested by the feeling between coming and going to work. "He goes in high gear, but goes home in low." He has definitely left something behind after his work day is done and this something takes the form of expensive buildings, offices, apartments, chain stores, theatres, gas stations, restaurants, hotels, etc., "just a mouthful of what he produces and leaves behind: All those means of transportation, with their fleets of taxis, buses, railways, steamships, which span the world. All the values attached to the State, armed forces, governments and all the paraphanalia that goes with it. The values the worker produces and leaves behind are incalculable."

Com. Walker went on to show further illustrations of the colossal amount of wealth produced by the workers which they leave behind, of the billions of dollars of potential investment capital lying idle because sources of profitable investment could not be found, while at the same time millions of workers who are anxious and able to work cannot find anyone to "employ and exploit" them. All of this sort of thing staring us in the face on top of two World Wars in our times and the threat of an even more horrible one to come, and still we have working-class organizations talking about "transition periods," a period after the workers have seized political pow-

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THE WESTERN SOCIALIST

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE FOR SOCIALISM! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR CHAINS

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OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

Medical and social sciences are not as closely allied as salt and pepper, or Amos and Andy. On specific points one may be as cold as an Eskimo pie, and the other as hot as Lana Turner's love letters. The topic we have in mind is the old folks problem, and how it is handled by those who function in the field of medicine, and those who confine their practice to political and social operations.

In the past fifty years medical science has wrought marked changes in the human span of life. It has added almost twenty years to the period that formerly elapsed between the cradle and the cemetery. At the turn of the century it was considered quite a feat to reach the age of 65. Nearly everyone tried it but only 3 million American men and women managed to do it. There were too many hurdles to jump to make the race easy and popular.

Within the confines of the nation there are at present 15,000,000 men and women over the age of 65, and even this number is going up instead of down. The crystal ball gazers assure us that by 1975, minus entire evacuation, one person out of every ten will be over 65, instead of one out of 25 as in 1900.

Medical science has contributed much to the turn in human affairs. The elimination of disease-breeding sewers and swamps, the reformation in diet, the deletion of injurious food preservatives, the introduction of miracle drugs, to combat a host of diseases, as well as many minor innovations have lengthened the time we can spend playing solitaire, and digging clams.

But this dragging out of the lifeline has not been accomplished without resultant grievous problems in the social field. The anticipated joys of the "golden years" are faded and lost in the shuffle. It was pleasant to look forward to a period of undiluted leisure when elderly specimens of both sexes could travel and see the world they missed in youth. Watch the spinning of roulette wheels in the gaming casinos of Monte Carlo, hear the yodeling around attractive Swiss chalets, inhale the fragrance from Oriental cherry blossom festivals, or lazily loll about the beaches at Acupulco, or Palm Beach.

There are in this peculiar land people over 65 who can fell afford to indulge in such felicitous pastimes. They belong to the fortunate element that owns and controls property which guarantees an income capable of coping with any charge on the luxuries of life. Their twilight years can be and are supplied with what it takes to make people happy and serene.

But there happens to be another side to the picture. A dark uncongenial, and repellent side. 30 percent of those who reach the 65 year landing have no incomes of their own. They never got enough wages or