was a matter of major importance and which they described as a national scandal. They trumped all the promises made by their opponents and produced some of their own, in the frayed and familiar form of "public control" and "economic planning," which only the followers of Khrushchev were willing to match. And all through the campaign an important C.C.F. theme was that all the "important social legislation" passed in the Canadian parliament in the last generation had been first proposed by the C.C.F. and had been adopted only through the insistent prodding of C.C.F. members of parliament.

This last item deserves some attention. Its accuracy need not be considered here. What is worth noting is the fact that the C.C.F. made much of the claim that its existence in parliament as a minority group was fully justified on the ground that it served as an advisory body for Liberal and Conservative governments. It insisted repeatedly that its advice was useful to these governments and had frequently been acted upon by them; also that certain problems still existed, notably unemployment, only because more of its advice had not been acted upon.

A sad fate to befall the party whose valiant founders turned their backs on the "old line parties" a quarter century ago and set out independently to make capitalism in Canada a joy to behold! Reduced, at its own insistence, to the position of the proletarian tail that wags the capitalist dog — although it would no doubt frown at the proletarian reference, just as it would be bewildered at mention of the capitalist nature of the parties whose hind end it wishes now to be considered a part of. Surely no quest for votes could have brought greater indignity!

But worse was to come. The C.C.F. lost two-thirds of its seats in parliament, its numbers being reduced from 25 to 8, including its two leading spokesmen, Mr. Coldwell and Mr. Knowles.

**J. M.**

# The Class Struggle

The Class Struggle! When this term crops up one almost feels the vibrations as the neighborhood shudders and the heads plunge into the sand. "There ain't no such animal!" reports a muffled voice from the gritty depths. "Figment of a distorted imagination!" proclaims an indignant variant.

How often have we heard these thoughtful pronouncements levelled at those who think there are lions among the lambs on this gentle planet!

Yet there is a class struggle in society, right here and right now. What's more, the world has been witnessing the spectacle of classes in conflict for a long, long time.

It first came about in remote times, back some 6000 or more years ago. Man had expanded and developed his methods of obtaining the requirements of life to the point where it was possible for him to produce more than his own needs, a condition that led to the division of society into classes. These classes were made up on the one hand of those whose function it was to produce wealth and perform useful services, and on the other hand of those, at first assigned functions considered to be useful or desirable, who finally developed into a class with no function other than to surround themselves with wealth and privileges and means for protecting these conditions.

Men at this time stood in the relation to one another of master and slave and the earliest societies in which slavery prevailed were known as Chattel Slave societies. The Pyramids of Egypt, the Parthenon of Athens, The Colosseum of Rome, all were built during a period when slave society had reached a high degree of development, the slave states of Egypt, Greece and Rome being among the greatest in the ancient world.

Where there are classes there is servitude, and where there is servitude there is conflict. No account of early slave society is complete without reference to the struggles of the slaves to gain their freedom, struggles that sometimes reached massive proportions. Amongst the most noted of these struggles were those led by the slave, Spartacus, who rallied 100,000 of his followers in a bid for freedom against the Romans, to be finally killed in battle, his followers captured, 6000 of whom were crucified.

The slave states of antiquity were succeeded by Feudalism, which spread through Europe following the decline of the Roman Empire. Feudalism was also a class society, but the basic division was between serf and lord rather than between slave and slave owner as formerly. The serf was bound to the land, part of which he cultivated for himself and family and part for the lord. The shackles of this form of servitude were no less binding than were those of the chattel slaves and no less productive of rebellion amongst the victims, as shown by the peasant revolt in England under Wat Tyler in 1381 and the peasant war in Germany under Thomas Muenzer in 1525. These and other outbreaks in various parts of Europe during this period were crushed, often with great brutality.

We no longer live under Chattel Slavery or Feudalism, but mankind has not yet rid itself of classes. The society of today is a Capitalist society and the classes that face one another are the capitalist class and the working class. The form of bondage is different from the forms that prevailed formerly, but it is still bondage. The wealth producers of today are not bound to a lord or master as were the serfs and slaves. They may refuse their services to this or that capitalist. But they cannot escape from the capitalist class. They must deliver their abilities to some member or members of that class. In no other way do they have access to the things needed to preserve life.

And in spite of the often repeated claim in various circles that the classes of today have mutual and harmonious interests, the facts show a struggle between these classes as grim as any that preceded it. From the beginning of the existing form of society down to the present day there has been a never-ending conflict between the capitalists and the workers, on the part of the capitalists to squeeze every possible ounce of energy from the workers at the lowest possible cost, on the part of the workers to check these efforts and to try in turn to gain bearable living and working conditions for themselves. The Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 and the British General Strike of 1926 are among the more noted evidences of this conflict in recent decades, although there have been far more bitter manifestations in many parts of the world.

The class struggle has a very real existence in modern society. By means of the class struggle the capitalist class rid themselves of the restraints of Feudalism and became the dominant class in Society. By the same means will the workers rid themselves of the restraints of Capitalism—when they have come to know that efforts directed solely to easing the hardships of their own subservience are not sufficient and that they must, in their own interest and in the interest of all humanity, do away with all forms of human bondage, by doing away with the thing that divides humans into classes — the class ownership of the means of life — and transforming the means of life (the mills, mines, factories and so on) into the common property of all, operated for no other purpose than to bring security and happiness to the human race.

**Socialist Party of Canada**

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