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The bourgeois revolution: Its attainments and its limitations

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The Bourgeois Revolution
Its Attainments and Its Limitations.

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Translated by Henry Kuhn

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Introduction

This little pamphlet was originally published in Die Neue Welt, a Socialist weekly published at Stuttgart, Germany, under the editorship of Karl Kautsky, numbers 4 and 5, 1890-91. Originally it bore the title: "Wie die Bourgeoisie tiber die Revolution Gedanken", and was reprinted in the WEEKLY PEOPLE, issues of July 31 and August 7, 1926.

It is an excellent sketch of the French Revolution from the viewpoint of the working class. With justifiable scorn Frenchmen hold the great George Plechanov holds the Great October Revolution as a mirror before the face of the present day bourgeoisie, and ridicules the latter's pretenses of respectability, and law and order.

It is a remarkable little pamphlet. Its own Revolution, under the title "How the Bourgeoisiesn under the title of Die Bourgeoisie have been printed in the WEEKLY PEOPLE, Vol. IX, 1890-91. Originally it bore the title: "Wie die Bourgeoisie tiber die Revolution Gedanken", and was reprinted in Die Neue Welt, a Socialist weekly published at Stuttgart, Germany, under the editorship of Karl Kautsky, numbers 4 and 5, 1890-91. Originally it bore the title: "Wie die Bourgeoisie tiber die Revolution Gedanken", and was reprinted in the WEEKLY PEOPLE, issues of July 31 and August 7, 1926.

Introduction
der." He makes clear that revolutions establish their own law and order, recognizing no code of jurisprudence but that which reflects the needs and purpose of the revolution. Incidentally, it reveals the modern proletariat in embryo as a factor in the bourgeois revolution, a factor, however, that served chiefly as a broom in the hands of the bourgeoisie with which to sweep out thoroughly the rubbish left by the collapsed feudal system.

To the reader not familiar with the various political factions a few words as to these may be in order. The Girondists, the Jacobins and the Montagnards reflected certain social and economic layers in society at that time. The Girondists represented the upper (though not uppermost) layers of the bourgeoisie—the well-to-do middle class. The Jacobins represented the petty bourgeoisie and that portion of the as yet unformed proletariat which was not absolutely on "the ragged edge." The Montagnards ("The Mountain") represented that vast number of propertiless proletarians which, however vaguely, sensed the fact that
they had little or nothing in common with the other groups. Each group played its part on the "stage" until, following chaos and threatening social disintegration, there appeared the "man on horseback," Napoleon Bonaparte, who at the psychologically right moment consolidated the revolution, definitely establishing the capitalist Political State which was to prevail henceforth, all surface changes notwithstanding.

For further reading the following books are recommended:

"Crises in European History," by Bang.
"The Sword of Honor," by Sue.

Few other books on the French Revolution are worth the attention of the busy working class reader, though the more studious will find Carlyle's dithyrambic work interesting and stimulating, and Krapotkin's "The Great Revolution" profitable despite its somewhat anarchistic bias.

Arnold Petersen
August 26, 1926.
The Bourgeois Revolution

A year ago there was celebrated in France, as well as in the whole civilized world, the one hundredth anniversary of that revolution which, quite justly, is called "the Great," because it forms the initial point of a new historic period. Many benefits followed this event—for the entire civilized world generally and, more particularly, for the bourgeoisie, the French bourgeoisie first of all. This revolution put an end to the rule of the nobility and secured to the bourgeoisie front rank in all the departments of public life. All attempts of the restoration to change back the status of things created by the revolution remained unsuccessful, the more so since the reactionaries did
not even try to eliminate the most important, that is, the social consequences of the great revolution. No one could even then fail to see that, in this respect, nothing can be changed any more; that despite all the ever so liberal "indemnification" of the feudal nobility, its leading role in the life of society had come to an end forevermore. With the great revolution begins the uncontested rule of the bourgeoisie.

Small wonder then that the bourgeoisie remembered this important event when it celebrated its centennial anniversary. Even some years prior to the celebration of the anniversary of the revolution, the bourgeois press trumpeted in all possible keys about the coming great festivity. But let us observe a little more closely how the bourgeoisie remembers its revolution. How was this momentous event pictured in its mind?

Before us lies the book of one of the patented scientists of the French bourgeoisie, Paul Janet ("Centenaire de 1789, Histoire de la Revolution Francaise," par Paul Janet, Paris) who, sometimes—he him—
self does not seem to object—is counted among the philosophers. The circumstance that Paul Janet stands in some sort of, and to us incomprehensible, relation to the science of philosophy, in this case comes very handy to us, because a bourgeois philosopher better than any one else can enlighten us about the bourgeois philosophy of the great revolution. Let us therefore, with the aid of the aforesaid book, search for this philosophy.

But first a brief preliminary observation. England passed through her revolutionary storms in the 17th century, and there were then two revolutions: the first, among other things, led to the execution of Charles I, while the second ended with an animated banquet and the rise of a new dynasty. But the English bourgeoisie, in the evaluation of these revolutions, manifests very divergent views: while the first, in its eyes, does not even deserve the name “revolution” and is simply referred to as “the great rebellion,” the second is given a more euphonious appellation; it is called “the glorious revolution.” The secret of this dif-
ferentiation in the evaluation of the two revolutions has already been revealed by Augustin Thierry in his theses about the English revolutions. In the first revolution, the people played an important role, while in the second the people participated hardly at all. When, however, a people mounts the stage of history and begins to decide the destinies of its country according to its power and best understanding, then the higher classes (in this case the bourgeoisie) get out of humor. Because the people is always "raw" and, if the revolutionary devil begins to pervade it, it also becomes "coarse"; the higher classes have a way of always insisting upon politeness and gentle manners—at least they demand these of the people. This is the reason why the higher classes are always inclined to put upon revolutionary movements, if prominently participated in by the people, the stamp of "rebellions."

The history of France is particularly rich in "great rebellions" as well as in "glorious revolutions." Only in France, so far as the historic sequence of events is concerned, mat-
ters happened in a manner inverse to the one customary in the England of the 17th century. In England, for instance, "the great rebellion" preceded "the glorious revolution," while in France "the glorious revolutions" usually had to give way to "the great rebellions." This fact repeated itself in the entire course of the 19th century. Upon the heels of "the glorious revolution" of 1830 in Paris followed the rather sizable "great rebellion" of the weavers in Lyon, which gave the whole bourgeoisie such a great fright; upon "the glorious revolution" of February, 1848, glorified even by Lamartine, followed "the great June rebellion," which prompted the bourgeoisie to seek refuge in the arms of a military dictatorship; and upon the "most glorious" September revolution of 1870 followed, finally, in March of the subsequent year, the "greatest of all French rebellions." The bourgeoisie now claims that the "great rebellions" always have injured the cause of "the glorious revolutions." We cannot here consider the correctness of this claim in its application to the 19th century, but must yield
the floor to the bourgeois philosophers about the events of the 18th century.

Toward the end of that century there took place in France a "great rebellion" and a "glorious revolution" of 1789 and "the great rebellion" which played its part largely in 1793. After what has already been said, the reader will now be able to predict with certainty what the bourgeois philosopher, Paul Janet, thinks of those revolutionary movements.

In the final chapter of his book, Janet says: "In order to arrive at an objective evaluation of the French revolution, one must in regard to it differentiate three moments: the purpose, the means and the results obtained. The purpose of the revolution—to gain civic equality and political freedom—was the most sublime, the most legitimate a people has ever striven to attain." But the means were bad: "only too frequently they were forcible, terrible."

So far as results are concerned, civic equality, according to Janet, has been fully attained and leaves nothing to be wished for; "political
freedom,” however, “obtains in France since the revolution only spo-
radically, and to this day is more or less endangered.” It will be secure
only when the French people shall dispense with all forcible, unlawful
methods and once for all have learned to look upon their revolution
as finished, and, finally, when the revolution itself has passed into the
historic past as irrevocably as has already been the case with the rev-
olutions in England and in the United States. “The attainments of
the revolution should be held fast, but there must be renunciation of the
revolutionary spirit and of forcible and unlawful means.”

Very good. But let us not forget that revolutionary means were em-
ployed since 1789, that is, not only at the time of “the great rebellion,”
but also during “the glorious rev-
olution.” Is “the glorious revolu-
tion” to be condemned by Paul Ja-
net because of its forcible means?
But no—on the contrary. In his
description, the acts of force prac-
ticed during “the glorious revolu-
tion” appear fully justified, highly
useful and thoroughly efficacious.
He speaks very commendingly of the popular insurrections directed against royalty, aye, he seeks to prove that, without these uprisings, the government would have smothered all the reforms of the national assembly in embryo, and that the great aims of the revolution would then have remained unattainable. The storming of the Bastile he hails as “the first victorious appearance of the people of Paris on the revolutionary stage”; and in the same approving manner he expresses himself about the second appearance of the same people on the same stage, about the events of October 5 and 6, and also about the storming of the Tuileries. Arrived there, nota bene after Janet has proved the inevitable necessity of eliminating a king negotiating with the enemy at the very outset of the war, he adds in a melancholy vein: “France became gradually accustomed to solving political questions with such sorry means.” But he does not tell us with what other means the given and unpostponable task might have been accomplished.

Only after the storming of the
Tuileries, that is, after this last necessary uprising, according to Janet, the Paris people, under the pen of our historian, gradually becomes transformed into a mob governed by the lowest passions. Now it becomes clear: a "rebellion" is quite acceptable, only one must not permit himself to be led astray by low passions—does the bourgeois historian want to be understood in that sense? Not at all. We are at once informed that now, "the glorious revolution" being over, all insurrections lack both sense and justification. Now we have it at last. The king has fallen, the nobility has been destroyed, the bourgeoisie has been lifted on the shield—what more does the heart wish for? Now be quiet, after you have on this earth done all that belongs to the earth. Who, unless it be the common mob, would think of insurrection?

Next! As could not otherwise be expected, Paul Janet extends his sympathy to all the parties that successively stood at the head of the movement, except the party of the Mountain. Upon the latter he pours the whole vial of his wrath, for this
party he reserves all his strong language and epithets. Between these miscreants and the "manly, generous Gironde," Janet draws this interesting parallel: "The ones, like the others, wanted the republic......" But while "the Girondists aimed at a free, lawful, mild republic, the Montagnards strove for a despotic, cruel republic. Without attention to liberty, the latter prized only equality. True, both parties favored the sovereignty of the people, but with the difference that the Girondists righteously wanted to include among 'the people' all the citizens, while for the Montagnards, in keeping with the perversity still current today, the people consisted only of members of the working class, of persons living by their own labor. Consequently, according to the Montagnards, to rule should be the prerogative of this class alone."

The political program of the Girondists differed therefore essentially from that of the Montagnards. Whence this difference? Paul Janet himself gives us sufficient information about that. The difference proceeded from the fact that the Moun-
tain party, as we have seen, conceived the mutual relations of the then existing social classes in a way different from that of the Gironde. The latter "would have it understood that the people included all the citizens," while the former considered only the working class as "the people"; the other classes, according to the Montagnards, were no part of "the people," and were not because they believed that the interests of these classes were contrary to those of the working class. And, strictly speaking, the Girondists themselves did not include in "the people" all the citizens, i.e., the entire French nation of the time, but only the Third Estate. Did they include in the people the aristocracy and the higher clergy? Not at all. Did not Abbe Sieyes himself, who never went so far as the Girondists, in his brochure "Qu'est-ce que le tiers-état?" set "the people," that is, the Third Estate, without compunction against the small aggregation of the privileged, i.e., the nobility and the higher clergy? The Girondists, who fought the "privileged" far more decisively, no doubt agree with Sieyes
about that. If, for all that, their conception of "the people" was so different from that of the Montagnards, then this may be explained only in that the Mountain party had gone one step further, in that it considered as "privileges" also such social institutions as to the Girondists appeared sacrosanct and necessary. It was a contested question which classes really must be regarded as "privileged." But that shows—and Paul Janet's explanations leave no room for any other interpretation—that according to the Montagnards all persons and classes that live by "labor," but the labor of others and not their own, belong in the category of the "privileged."

We must now seek to clear up the point of why the defenders of the cause of the working class incline toward a "despotic and cruel" republic. Why did they not rather appear as adherents of a "lawful, free and mild" republic? This circumstance must be traced back to two causes, one external, the other internal. Let us turn, first, to the external cause, that is, to the relations then existing between revolutionary
France and the other European States.

The condition of France, at the time the Mountain party seized power, was most desperate, aye, it was hopeless. Janet says: "Enemy troops invaded French territory from four sides: from the north, the English and Austrians; in Alsatia, the Prussians; in the Dauphine, proceeding as far as the city of Lyon, the Piedmontese; and in Roussillon, the Spaniards. And all this at a time when civil war raged on four sides: in Normandy, in the Vendee, in Lyon and in Toulon." Aside from these open foes must be considered the secret adherents of the old regime scattered all over France, who were ready surreptitiously to aid the enemy.

The government, which had taken up the struggle against these innumerable inner and outer foes, had neither money nor sufficient troops—it could dispose of nothing but a boundless energy, the active support on the part of the revolutionary elements of the country, and the colossal courage to shrink from no measure, however arbitrary, illegal, ruth-
less, so long as it was necessary for the defense of the country.

After the Montagnards had called to arms the entire French youth, without being able to supply the newly-formed armies even insuffi-
ciently with arms and food out of the slender means flowing to them from taxation, they resorted to requi-
sitions, confiscations, forced loans, decreed rates of exchange for the “assignats” — in short and in fine they forced upon the scared possess-
ing classes money sacrifices, all in the interest of an imperiled country for which the people sacrificed blood. These forcible measures were abso-
lutely necessary if France were to be saved. There was no depending upon voluntary money contributions — Janet himself admits that. The iron determination and energy of the government was also necessary to spur to the limit of effort all the fresh forces of France—Janet ad-
mits that, too. But he, Paul Janet, would rather have seen the dictator-
ship in the hands of the “noble and magnanimous Gironde,” than in those of the abominable Jacobins. Had the Girondists emerged victori-

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ous from the struggle with the Mountain, then, according to the au-
thor, "they, too, would have been placed in the same position as was
the case with the Montagnards; they
too would have been forced to quell
the royalist insurrections, beat down
the opposition party, repel the inva-
sions, and it may be doubted wheth-
er, without the dictatorship, they
would have been able to cope with
all these evils. But their dictator-
ship would have been less blood-
thirsty and would have given more
scope to law and liberty."

But upon which layers of the
population would the gentle Giron-
dists have been able to lean? When,
after their defeat in Paris, they
sought help in the provinces, they
found there only the passive help of
—to use Janet's expression—"the di-
latory and lukewarm" middle class
and the malignant support of the
royalists, which they themselves had
to reject. And could they reckon
with a more effective support on the
part of their adherents in the strug-
gle with the foreign foes? The Gir-
ondes never did and never would find
favor with the lowest, the most rev-
olutionary layer of the population, least of all in Paris. That part of the population evidently entertained views about "the people" and its interests quite different from those of the Gironde, so vastly admired by Janet because of its magnanimity. It was just this circumstance which brought about the fall of the Gironde and the victory of the Mountain. The former was therefore almost exclusively confined to the forces of "the dilatory and lukewarm middle class." Could anything substantial be accomplished with such allies? No, the moderate and liberal Gironde never would have been able to rescue France from the critical condition in which she found herself enmeshed in 1793.

It was the external situation of France which made the dictatorship, the one of the Montagnards, a necessity. And once there must be a dictatorship then all the talk about a "free, lawful and mild" republic becomes simply ridiculous. The revolutionary dictatorship necessarily had to be as rigid and as ruthless as were the external foes who had called it into being; just like the
manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, and like the threats of a reactionary Europe against France.

Let us now proceed to the internal causes which made it impossible for the Montagnards to find a "free, lawful and mild" republic to their taste. Here we must first of all direct the attention of the reader to the famous rights of man and of the citizen. Among these we find many rights which conform to the interests of the lowest class of the population; but we also find among them one toward which this class, from the very outset, was compelled to maintain a peculiar and contradictory attitude. We refer to the right of property. How would, for instance, a Paris "sansculotte" (literally a man without pants [culottes], a nickname resembling the English word "ragamuffin") conceive this right, when his very name shows that he himself is bare of all property? How could he proceed to exercise this wonderful right conceded to him? There was no lack of examples lying near to his hand. The bourgeoisie had taken unto itself many a piece of aristocrat and
church property—why should not he now do the same with bourgeois property? The sansculotte had at that time to pass through many hard, albeit many merry days. Often he had to endure hunger in the most literal sense of the term, and hunger, as is well known, is a bad counselor. Thereupon our has-nothing begins to exhibit a great nonchalance toward bourgeois property. The bourgeoisie resists that as well as it knows how. How this social struggle was bound to affect the political life is obvious. The "mob" gathers in a party of its own and raises the Montagnards upon the shield. The "mob" of that day knew how to fight and soon obtained control. And then there was obviously nothing left for it to do but to use the political power just attained to call into being social institutions under which the right to property would no longer sound like bitter mockery. But for the proletariat of that day, as well as for the modern proletariat, this was possible only under one condition—the total abolition of private property in the means of production and the social organization of production.
But the latter, under the conditions then prevailing, was simply unthinkable for two closely connected reasons: neither did the proletariat of that day possess the requisite capacity, nor did the means of production of that day meet even the elementary requirements for socialization. Therefore, neither the proletariat of the time, nor its most advanced representatives could even conceive of the idea. It is true that in the pre-revolutionary French literature we find a few Communist Utopias, but these, for the reasons stated, could not find either currency or recognition. Under these circumstances, what was left for the momentarily victorious “mob” to do? If socialization of the means of production was not to be thought of, then private property therein necessarily must continue, and the indigent populace was limited to casual and forcible encroachments upon its realm. And because of such encroachments, the “mob” is being blamed by all bourgeois historians to this very day. Forcible encroachments upon the realm of private property made a “lawful” republic
an impossibility, because the law was framed to protect just that private property. And no more could the republic be "mild," because the possessing classes naturally did not tolerate such interference with their property with their hands in their laps but, on the contrary, eagerly sought for an opportunity to put an end to such nonchalant "mob rule." The struggle between the proletariat of that day and the possessing classes, fatedly and inevitably, had to be fought with terroristic weapons. By means of terror alone, in a condition replete with insoluble economic contradictions, could the proletariat then maintain its rule. Had the proletariat attained a higher stage of development and, on the other hand, had the then economic conditions been sufficiently advanced to secure its welfare, then there would have been no need for it to resort to measures of terror.

Let us have a look at the bourgeoisie, praised so highly by the historians because of its penchant for "lawfulness." By no means did it leave its enemies in peace, and in critical moments did not shrink from
decisive measures; but its cause stood then upon such firm footing that it had no need to fear an opponent. Come to power during its "glorious" revolution, the bourgeoisie introduced the social order suited to its needs, and did it with such thoroughness that even the most stubborn reactionists could thereafter scarcely think of abolishing it; and if they had essayed an attempt in that direction, they would soon have become convinced of its utter futility. Under such circumstances it was easy for the bourgeoisie to talk about "lawfulness"; when your cause has won and your enemies are hopelessly defeated, then the order of things most suitable to your interests becomes "lawful"—would you then still resort to unlawful means? You are certain that henceforth your privileges will be amply protected by law. The bourgeoisie strove for lawfulness in politics, because historic evolution had fully secured its triumph in economics. In its place, the proletariat could not and would not have acted otherwise. That the spokesman of the "mob," the Montagnards, no less than the Girondists,
held on high the principle of liberty and law, is proved by the constitution they formulated, the freest ever written in France. The constitution introduced direct legislation by representatives of the people and limited the powers of the executive to a minimum, only it became impossible for the Montagnards, due to the entire external and internal condition of France, to apply the constitution.

Generally speaking, it may be regarded as a rule permitting no exceptions, that a given social class or layer of the population come to power, will the more readily resort to measures of terror if its chances to retain power are small. In the 19th century, it had to become clear to the bourgeois that its rule over the proletariat was becoming more shaky every day and, in consequence, it now strives more and more for terroristic subjection of the same. Against the June insurgents it proceeded more ferociously than in 1831 against the weavers of Lyon; and in the suppression of the Communards of 1871 it acted far more atrociously than in June 1848. The
terror practiced by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat overshadows by far the atrocities of the Jacobins which, by the way, have been greatly exaggerated by the reactionaries. Robespierre, when compared with Thiers, looks like a veritable angel, and Marat, put side by side with the bourgeois press cossacks of the bloody May week, appears like a mild, benevolent being. He who looks deeper into the French history of our century must fully agree with the Russian writer, Herzen, when, after the June days, he said that there was no more ferocious government, and there could not be a more ferocious one than that of the shopkeeper running amuck.

It was just this shopkeeper ferocity which made impossible a permanent consolidation of political freedom in France. The bourgeoisie must be held solely responsible for the reactionary lapses that typify the history of France in the 19th century. Even during the time of the restoration the victory of the reactionaries was made much easier because the bourgeoisie, mortally afraid of the workers, for a long
time prevented their entrance upon the struggle.

And now, for the sake of tranquili
ing the bourgeois writers, who shudder at the mere thought of the Jacobin rule of terror, we shall present a truth which to us seems irrefutable. The victory of the working class, now impending in all civilized countries, is certain not to be marred by cruelty, because the victory of the cause of labor is made secure by the course of history to an extent that no terror will be needed. Of course, the bourgeois reactionists will be well advised if they abstain from trying to trip up a victorious proletariat and are judicious enough not to imitate the royalist conspirators of the great revolution. "A la guerre comme a la guerre" (in war do as in war, i.e., as war makes necessary) is a true saying and in the heat of the fight it might go hard with the plotters. But, we repeat, the entire course of historic evolution guarantees the success of the proletariat.

On the occasion of the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the great revolution, the Frenchbour-
geoisie has almost purposely proceeded to demonstrate to the proletariat *ad oculos* (to the eyes) the economic possibility and necessity of a social transformation. The world exhibition gave it an excellent demonstration of the unprecedented development of the means of production in all civilized countries, which has outwinged the boldest fantasies of the Utopians of the preceding century. In keeping therewith, the emancipation of the proletariat, instead of the noble dream it was at the time of Babeuf, has become an historic necessity. The exhibition has shown, furthermore, that the modern development of the means of production, under the anarchic conditions governing production, must logically and necessarily lead to industrial crises ever more destructive to world economy. In order to escape the dangerous consequences of these crises, nothing is left for the European proletariat but to lay the foundation stone for the planful organization of social production which, for the sansculottes of the past century, was a thing impossible. Not only do the modern production
forces make possible such an organization, but they tend in that direction. Without such an organization the full utilization of these forces is not to be thought of. In the modern mechanical workshop production has already taken on a social character; all that is now needed is to bring into harmony the different productive functions in these workshops and, in keeping therewith, transform the ownership of the product, i.e., change it from private to social ownership. To attain this aim will be the task of the European proletariat. The International Socialist Congress, meeting in July, 1889, did not fail to remind the proletariat of this great task.

And now back to our philosopher, Paul Janet, of whom we have lost sight for a while. Just now he presents himself with the assertion that one "must remain true to the spirit of the revolution, but must reject the revolutionary spirit." In other words, mankind must be satisfied with the results of the great revolution attained by the bourgeoisie, but must not take another step forward. But we hold that the very opposite
is true. The aims of the bourgeoisie cannot possibly be those of the working class, and the results attained by the former cannot satisfy the latter. And, therefore, the workers go one step further when they reject the bourgeois spirit of the great revolution, but remain true to the revolutionary spirit. To remain true to that means to struggle ceaselessly and fearlessly for a better future, to struggle implacably against all that is old and obsolete.

The bourgeoisie would fain instil into the workers' minds the idea that modern society knows no class divisions, because the foundation of the modern state is the equality of all before the law. But this formal equality can console the workers as little as, under the old regime, the bourgeoisie was satisfied with the proclaimed equality of all before God; not content with this fantastic equality, the bourgeoisie did not rest until it had come into possession of all possible mundane goods. Small wonder then that the proletariat will not be content with juristic fictions, knowing full well that economic inequality must in real life render il-
lusory all other equality.

In much the same manner the bourgeoisie would make the workers believe that, today, there is nothing more to be done in the realm of economy and that, therefore, one must only indulge in the game of "pure" politics. But "pure politics" means for the workers nothing but kite-tail politics in the service of the bourgeoisie parties, and the bourgeoisie is ruinously aware of the significance of this brand of "pure politics," at least such was the case when it was engaged in the struggle with the nobility and clergy. In the brochure "Qu'est-ce que le Tiers Etat?" once before mentioned, which must be regarded as the program of the bourgeoisie of 1789, the sophistries of the "pure politicians," then to be found in the two upper estates, were refuted with much talent. Abbe Sieyes insisted that the nation, as a matter of fact, was divided into two camps: in the one, the privileged; in the other, the oppressed; and that this actual division must be reflected in politics. It was natural and understandable that the privileged would seek to preserve their inter-
ests by means of political measures; but neither must the oppressed neglect the safeguarding of their interests and should appear as a unified party in the newly opened political arena. To this very day this lesson has not suffered in either sense or importance. Conditions have changed only in so far as the bourgeoisie today occupies a privileged position. And what else is now left for the workers but to close their ranks in a separate party of the oppressed, standing in opposition to the privileged bourgeoisie?

At the end of the 18th century, at the time of "the great rebellion" of the French "mob," the class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat was present only in embryo. For that reason the classconsciousness of the proletarians had to be rather unclear. When, in the course of this treatise, we tried to explain the argumentation of Paul Janet relative to the Jacobin conceptions of "the people," we ascribed to them an attitude antagonistic to all classes living on the labor of others. That was really the only possible meaning of the argument of the author. How-
ever, this is correct only in so far as the Montagnards, in reality and instinctively, always strove to defend the interests of the poorest class of the population. This was so because in their conception there was present a feature which, in the course of further evolution, would have taken on a thoroughly bourgeois character. This feature shows up plainly in the speeches of Robespierre. And through it is to be explained the struggle of the Jacobins against the Hebertists, and generally their struggle against the so-called agrarian legislation. But these "agrarian laws," as their adherents pictured them to themselves, contained nothing that was of a Communist character. Private property, and the petty bourgeois purposes closely connected therewith, forced themselves into the programs of even the most extreme revolutionists of that time. Babeuf alone takes a different stand; he appeared in the last act of the great tragedy, when the strength of the proletariat had already been wholly exhausted in the preceding struggles. The party of the Mountain failed just
because of that innermost contradiction between its petty bourgeois conceptions and its endeavor to be a representative of proletarian interests.

To the present-day representatives of the working class, these contradictions are foreign, because modern, scientific Socialism is nothing but the theoretic expression of the unbridgable antagonism of interests between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The impending victory of the working class under the banner of Socialism, is going to be far more glorious than all the "glorious" revolutions of the bourgeoisie put together.

Force, naked force, based upon bayonets and cannon, becomes ever more the only support of bourgeois rule. And candid "theoreticians" make their appearance, who admit without further ado that the prevailing bourgeois order cannot be justified theoretically, and does not require such justification—because the bourgeoisie controls the public powers. Thus, for instance, speaks an Austrian professor, Gumplovicz, in his book "The Political State and Socialism."
When the representatives of the nobility and clergy, in one of the first sessions of the estates, fell back upon the foundation of their privileges—the historic right of conquest—the theoretician of the bourgeoisie, Abbe Sieyes, proudly replied: "Rien que cela, messieurs? Nous serons conquerants a notre tour!" — which means, "Nothing but that, gentlemen? Well, we too shall be conquerors in our turn!"

And just that the working class may say to the advocates of bourgeois force.
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