





# Wage-Labor and Capital

By KATH MARY

The increase of capital is attended by an increase in the amount of wage-labor and, in other words, the domination of capital is spread over a large number of wage-laborers. And to give the most fortunate and possible, with the increase of productive capital there is an increase in the demand for labor—thus wages—the price of labor will rise.

A house may be large or small, but as long as the surrounding houses are equally small, it satisfies the usual expectations of a dwelling place. But let a palace arise at the side of this small house, and it shrinks from a house into a hut. The smallest of the house now given it to be understood that its occupant has either very small pretensions or none at all and however he may be shut up with the progress of civilization, if the neighboring palaces are greater proportion, the same or the comparatively small house will always find himself more uncomfortable than ever did one of the same confined within his four walls.

A notable advance in the amount of wage-labor has been the rapid increase of productive capital. The rapid increase of productive capital forth with as rapid an increase in wealth, luxury and social comforts. Therefore, although the comforts of the laborer have risen to the level of the capitalist, they have fallen in comparison with these augmented comforts of the capitalist which the occupant of the laborer, and in comparison with the general development of comforts. Our wants and their satisfaction have their origin in the nature of the things themselves, therefore measure them in their relation to society, and not in relation to the objects of their consumption. Since their nature is social, it is therefore relative.

It is not the wages are not determined merely by the amount of commodities for which they may be exchanged. They depend upon various other relations.

What the laborer immediately receives for his labor is a certain amount of money, but he does not receive merely by this money price? In the sixteenth century the gold and silver in circulation in Europe was augmented in consequence of the discovery of America. The value of gold and silver fell, therefore, in proportion to the amount of the metal. The laborers received for their labor the same amount of silver coin as before. The money price of their labor remained the same, yet their wages had fallen for in exchange for the same amount of money they obtained a smaller quantity of other commodities. This was one of the circumstances which retarded the increase of the real wages of the rise of the bourgeoisie in the sixteenth century.

Let us take another case. In the winter of 1847 there was an important increase in the price of the indispensable articles of food, such as corn, meat, butter, cheese, etc. We will suppose that the laborers still received the same amount of money for their labor as before, and that their wages had fallen, not because the value of silver had diminished, but because the value of the means of subsistence had increased.

Let us finally suppose that the money price of labor remains the same while in consequence of the employment of new machinery, or on account of a great increase of a similar reason, there is a fall in the price of all agricultural and manufactured goods. The real wages of the laborers can now buy more commodities of all kinds. Their wages have therefore risen, just because their money wage has not changed.

The money price of labor, the nominal amount of wage-labor, does not therefore fall together with the real wages, that is, with the amount of commodities that the laborer obtains in exchange for the wages. Therefore, if we speak of the rise and fall of wages, the money price of labor or the nominal wage is not the only thing which we must keep in view.

But neither the nominal wages, that is, the amount of money for which the laborer sells himself to the employer, nor yet the real wages, that is, the amount of commodities which he can buy for this money, exhaust the relations which are comprehended in the term wages.

For the meaning of the word is largely determined by the real gain or profit of the employer—it is a proportionate and relative expression.

The real wage expresses the price of labor in relation to the price of other commodities; the relative wage, on the contrary, expresses the price of the direct labor in relation to that of stored-up labor, the relative value of wage-labor and that of the proportionate value of capitalist and laborer.

Real wages may remain the same or they may rise, and yet the relative wages may move the less value. Let us assume, for example, that the price of all the means of subsistence has fallen by two-thirds, while a day's wages have only fallen one-third, as for instance, from three shillings to two. Although the laborer has a larger amount of commodities at his disposal, his real wages have not had before for three years, his wages are nevertheless diminished in proportion to the real value of his gain. The capitalist's profit, the manufacturer's, for instance, has been augmented by a shilling, since

for the smaller sum of exchange value he has to give to the laborer, the value of capital is raised in proportion to the value of labor. The capitalist and laborer has become more disproportionate. The capitalist with the same amount of labor has the power of the capitalist class, the social power of the laborer has deteriorated, and is depressed to another degree below that of the capitalist.

What then is the general law which determines the rise and fall of wages? It is the relation of their reciprocal relation?

They stand in inverse proportion to one another. Capitalist exchange value profits, rises in the same proportion in which the exchange value of labor, wages, sinks, and conversely. The rise in profit is exactly the fall in profit by the rise in wages.

The objection may perhaps be made that the capitalist may have gained a profit by advantageous exchange value profits, or by the rise in the price of his goods, whether in consequence of a greater demand on new markets, or that the profit of the capitalist rises in proportion to the rise and fall of wages and the exchange value of labor; or that the rise in the capitalist may also rise through the improvement in the implements of labor, and so on.

But it must nevertheless be admitted that the result remains the same, although the result is brought about in different ways. The capitalist has acquired a larger amount of exchange value profits, but he has paid a higher price for the labor on that account. The money price of labor has been paid in proportion to the net profit which it yields to the capitalist.

Besides, we must remember that in spite of the fluctuations in the price of commodities, the average price of commodities is not the same, in which it exchanges for other commodities is determined by its cost of production, and the exchange value of labor, and the improvements in machinery and new inventions of natural forces to the service of production enable them to turn out in a shorter time a larger amount of labor and capital a larger amount of products, but by no means a larger amount of labor. If to the application of the spinning jenny I can turn out twice as much thread in an hour as before, and if the same amount of labor and capital is required, the amount of products, but by no means a larger amount of labor. If to the application of the spinning jenny I can turn out twice as much thread in an hour as before, and if the same amount of labor and capital is required, the amount of products, but by no means a larger amount of labor. If to the application of the spinning jenny I can turn out twice as much thread in an hour as before, and if the same amount of labor and capital is required, the amount of products, but by no means a larger amount of labor.

Finally, in whatever proportion the capitalist class—the bourgeoisie—whether of one country or of the world, increases in number, it shares among themselves the net products of production, the total amount of money that profits always consists merely of the surplus value, which is all in all, direct labor has been increased by means of stored-up labor. The surplus value, which rises in the proportion in which profit rises as compared with wages.

Thus we see how we define ourselves to the relation between capital and wage-labor, the interests of capital and the antagonism to the interests of wage-labor.

A rapid increase in capital is equal to a rapid increase of profits. Profits can only be rapidly increased if the exchange value of labor—the relative wage—makes an equally rapid decline.

The relative wage may decline, although the actual wage rises along with the nominal wage, or money price of labor; if only it does not rise in the same proportion as profit. For instance, if when trade is going, wages rise five per cent., and profits on the other hand thirty per cent., then the proportional or relative wage has not risen.

Thus if the receipts of the laborer increase with the rapid advance of capital, and if the receipts of the capitalist is a widening of the social gulf which separates the laborer from the capitalist, and if the power of the capitalist class, the power of capital over labor and in the dependence of labor upon capital.

The meaning of the statement that the "laborer" has not advanced, is that the rapid increase of capital is merely this: the faster the laborer increases the number of laborers that he employs, and the greater will be the number of slaves.

When capital is increasing fast, the actual wages may not be improved, but it is at the expense of the laborer's position. The social position of the laborer is that which separates him from the capitalist class is widened.

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conditions for wage-labor, and of the quickest possible increase of productive capital, is merely this: The faster the working classes enlarge and extend the hostile power that dominates over them, the better will be the conditions under which they will be allowed to labor.

# SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

## PLATFORM.

We, the Socialist Party of Canada, in convention assembled, affirm our allegiance to and support of the principles and program of the international revolutionary working class.

Labor produces all wealth and it labor should rightfully belong. To the owners of the means of wealth production belongs the product of labor. The present economic system is based upon capitalist ownership of the means of wealth production; therefore all the products of labor belong to the capitalist class. The capitalist is master; the worker is slave.

## DOG FIGHT ON THE GREEN.

To the Editor of Western Clarion: As I am just trying to organize my labor power and there are few buyers, I have plenty of time on my hands to spend it on anything I please. I spend it to at least some advantage I occasionally go over to the principal bear garden or wind factory, which ever you please, to see what is going on and how the Socialist members fare within its precincts. Permitting some of our readers would like to know whether the growling of the bears would be any more serious if they could only be so strong as to cross them in their "beam ends." I will endeavor to chronicle some of the happenings there as well as my memory will permit.

On Tuesday, February 21, Hawthornthwaite's amendment to the Co-operative Act providing penalties for its infringement was on the boards. The way it excited the dogs was set the wind blowing was great. It was as interesting as a dog fight on the village green for while, and I came to the conclusion that I had not for the first time members the garden or factory would be as devoid of life as a dog fight. The two months have been telegrams from "boards of trade" and other parts and parcels of the laboring fraternity protesting over the country, objecting to the amendment. Dunsmuir telegraphed that he would close his mines if it passed, and Manasse Stockert of the Western Fuel Co., and others were on the ground to defend the amendment. The amendment said that while the Nanaimo mines under the old management had been operated on an eight-hour day, changes had been introduced by the present management to the detriment of the men, squeezing more profits out of them. The Northumberland miners would not have done that, but to bank, and those of Devonshire but which the industry had not been ruined. The workmen's Compensation Act was introduced in the same way that all great works would shut down, which had not resulted. The Factory Act of Great Britain was not interfered with production to any appreciable extent. That was a leading reason for profit for the amendment. It was a measure of the industry that the workers represented the Socialist demands. It was a measure of the industry that the workers represented the Socialist demands.

Mr. McLean expressed great sympathy for the "workingman." It was his intention to say "workingman" but he was interrupted by the speaker, who then turned the table, looked wide and fierce, talked loud and long, and then said nothing at all. The speaker was not interfered with production to any appreciable extent. That was a leading reason for profit for the amendment. It was a measure of the industry that the workers represented the Socialist demands. It was a measure of the industry that the workers represented the Socialist demands.

The Socialist Party, which in office has always and everywhere until the present moment is abolished, make the answer to this question its guiding rule of conduct. Will this legislation advance the interests of the working class and aid the workers in their class struggle against capitalism? If it will, the Socialist Party is for it; if it will not, the Socialist Party is absolutely opposed to it.

In accordance with this principle the Socialist Party pledges itself to conduct all the public affairs placed in its hands in such a manner as to promote the interests of the working class alike.

Job Oliver somehow or other got hold of a platform of the Socialist Party of British Columbia and he seems to learn that the workers actually proposed to us as soon as possible lay claim to the wealth they produce. Hawthornthwaite raised a point of order, claiming that Oliver was not only talking of something that was not before the House, but of something of which he possessed no knowledge, as well. He did not so strongly object to Oliver knowing nothing of Socialism, as he did to his using the time of the House to prove it.

Williams contended that the Socialists at this stage of the game could not afford to introduce any legislation into the House, but must content themselves with a campaign of education. When the people of the province became converted to Socialism, the work of the Government would be altered to that. Until that time the Socialists had to adapt themselves to present conditions.

When reference was made to the introduction of the Co-operative Act, the speaker said that if it were necessary to form an old party of Socialists, he would be glad to join it, but he would not join it now unless in which Oliver, honest John Oliver, member for Delta, came to the rescue. He said that he had Hawthornthwaite's hands. I have quite a admiration for the Conservatives.

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As long as the capitalists remain in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the state will be used to protect and defend their property rights in the means of wealth production and their control of the product of labor.

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