

for example, that there has been "everlasting growth of output, unaffected by depressions" over this long period in Japan, even the annual growth rate not being, in his view "seriously affected" by the depression of the 1930's. He also finds "neither increasing nor decreasing trend in the annual growth rate," but erratic variations. The annual growth rate of income per gainfully occupied person, on the other hand, has been subject to wavelike fluctuations: first upward, then downward, then upward again, and finally again downward in the period up to World War II. In Colin Clark's calculations, the rate of saving, though always high, had shown a continuous downward trend 1913 to 1939. In this study, on the other hand, the highest rate was achieved in the decade 1920-30.

ARUN BOSE

*Kirori Mal College
Delhi University*

The Spartacus Uprising and the Crisis of the German Socialist Movement: A Study of the Relation of Political Theory and Party Practice, by Eric Waldman. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1959. \$6.00. Pp. 248.

Forty years have passed since the Spartacus days in Berlin. Four decades of political and imperialistic struggles embroiling the entire world have reduced the Spartacus week to an apparently insignificant incident. Yet, the Spartacus movement retains historical importance, for its defeat signalled the early exhaustion of the feeble world-revolutionary wave in the wake of the First World War. Waldman's book does not go into these wider implications of the Spartacus movement. He sees it only in its context of German socialism and regards it with "the objectivity of the political scientist"—whatever that may designate. This makes for great economy. It may be said at once that, with regard to "facts," the book is certainly authentic.

Waldman follows the ideological and organizational development of the German socialist movement from its unification in 1875 down to the First World War. Around the turn of the century the socialists were divided into a "revisionist" group associated with the name of Eduard Bernstein, a "centrist" group under the tutelage of Karl Kautsky, and a left-wing group led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The "centrists" supported the "left" ideologically and the "right" actually. The Russian Revolution of 1905, with its spon-

taneous mass-strikes and, particularly, its "workers' councils" (soviets) gave an impetus to the struggle against social-democratic reformism. World War I, which the Social-Democratic Party supported, caused first dissensions within the parliamentary faction and then a split within the party itself. Prior to the split, which led to the formation of the Independent Socialist Party, the Liebknecht-Luxemburg group worked independently against the war, publishing *The International* and, beginning in 1916, the *Spartacus Letters*. Organized as the *Spartakusbund* they were represented in international conferences in Zimmerwald and Kienthal during the war and formed part of the Independent Socialists until the formation of the Communist Party (Spartakusbund) in 1918.

Waldman's treatment of the November Revolution and the Spartacists is generally both comprehensive and admirable. But, like others before him, he pays too much attention to an imaginary "lunatic fringe" within the Spartakusbund, to "putschists" and "syndicalists" who interfered with the more sober political designs of Liebknecht and Luxemburg. He also stresses the numerical weakness of the Spartacists. However, though an organized body with a definite (yet unknown) membership, the influence of the Spartakusbund could not be measured in numbers. Spartacus was itself a spontaneous movement with countless workers who, organized somewhere else or not organized at all, identified themselves with the revolutionary movement. The mass demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people, even though temporary, were no less the Spartacus movement than the relatively small groups meeting regularly in an organized fashion. In fact, at that time, Spartacus meant anybody taking part in the attempt to wrest power from the social-democrats and their reactionary allies.

"All power to the workers' councils" implied the dictatorship of the proletariat, for it would leave the non-working layers of society without political representation. The National Assembly would only maneuver the temporarily-lost power back into the hands of the bourgeois and social-democratic parties. The Spartacists saw this clearly and though they rejected a party dictatorship, they wanted the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the mass of the workers did not see this so clearly; they wanted both the workers' councils *and* the National Assembly. And they got them both, the councils in emasculated form as part of the Weimar Constitution and the National Assembly which led, finally, to dictatorship over the proletariat.

The Spartacists failed because of the lack of will and experience on the part of the laboring class as a whole. Leaving aside such ex-

ternal considerations as the probability that the Allied armies would have crushed a German proletarian revolution, the German workers, though rebellious, were so only in a social-democratic sense. They were anti-war, they were Republican, they wanted to realize to the full the old social-democratic reform program which supposedly would lead to socialism. When the Spartacists pointed to the social-patriotism of the socialist leaders and their "betrayal" in 1914, and again in 1918, it was not very effective, for the majority of the workers did not recognize as a "betrayal" a position they themselves had taken together with their leaders. Their confidence was not seriously shaken. But while they were not revolutionary, neither were they counter-revolutionary. Their apathy, largely based on war-weariness and hunger, longed for an easy solution, not for the difficult road chosen by the Spartacists. Yet the latter would not have been revolutionaries had they not tried to alter this situation.

The members of workers' and soldiers' councils of 1918 were not communists; the majority were socialists, trade-unionists and even adherents of bourgeois parties. *All power to the workers' councils* was thus a self-defeating slogan as far as Spartacus was concerned, unless, of course, the character of the councils changed. And that was bound to happen the more it became evident that political change altered nothing in capitalistic economic relationships. Therefore, the councils had to make way for the National Assembly in order to secure the capitalist system. The crushing of Spartacus was only the prelude to the ending of the council movement with its dangerous potentialities. The January uprising, as Waldman relates, was not actually the work of the Spartakusbund. But it is not, as he writes, a "strange twist of history" that the rising became associated with the name of Spartacus. Partly by provocation and partly by their own initiative, the revolutionary shop stewards (some of them Spartacists) called for action against the encroaching social-democratic counter-revolution with the—at that particular time—not unreasonable hope of gaining the workers' mass support. There was no question at all as to what policy the Spartakusbund should adopt in response of this situation, for the policy of the Spartakusbund, which had become the symbol of anything revolutionary in Germany, was to support all movements against the counter-revolution.

While there is little to object to in Waldman's study which, in the main, only brings together a mass of source material and intelligently selects from it what is of relevance for the understanding of the Spartacus movement, his own conclusions are strangely unrelated to the

facts. In his conclusions he attempts a justification of German social-democracy and interprets Spartacus and the split in the socialist camp as an unfortunate family quarrel based on misunderstandings of each other's deepest convictions. The Majority Socialists, he writes, "were no less sincere in the pursuit of their evolutionary policies toward the ultimate goal of socialism, than the leftist groups with their revolutionary approach." Yet even a cursory acquaintance with the history of German socialism since 1890, not to speak of actual policies since 1914, excludes such an apology and shows that social-democracy acted the part of a liberal reform party, and opposed socialism.

PAUL MATTICK

Boston, Massachusetts

The Foundations of Capitalism, by Oliver C. Cox. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1959. \$7.50. Pp. 500.

"The debate about capitalism was never more lively than at the present time," writes Harry Elmer Barnes in a stimulating foreword to Professor Cox's book. There can be no doubt that Cox's work will be regarded as an important contribution to this debate.

The book under review is the first part of a projected three-volume work on the history and theoretical analysis of capitalism as a social system. In it the author gives a broad account of the historical and social growth of capitalist society from its earliest infancy up to its culmination in nineteenth century Britain.

About the cradle of capitalism Cox has a very definite thesis which dominates the entire argument of his book. For him there is no doubt that it belongs to the essence of capitalist production to be geared to foreign-market commitments. When commercial expansion began to pervade the economic order, government, and the religious structure, capitalism had appeared on the world stage. The early Venetian social order is, therefore, in Cox's view the prototype of capitalist society. Almost a quarter of the book is devoted to its early and glorious history. Cox then moves on to a shorter analysis of other trading centers—Florence, Genoa, the Hansa towns, Amsterdam, London—which later inherited Venice's leading position. The second part of the book deals with various aspects of later capitalist stages—nationalism, mercantilism, and industrialization—as they arose in the leading capitalist nation, Britain.