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"Canada's Welfare"

SAYS the "Colonist" (Jan. 21, 1925) "Canada's future welfare lies in more work, and less talk; in less government; in constant and unremitting application of our own efforts." The "Colonist" either means what it says; or it doesn't. But if it does, the remedy rules out the majority of the Canadian population. For we presume the "Colonist" presupposes the observance of "law and order." But "law and order" is—unremitting government, implacably relentless against the "application of our own efforts." for why?

Take the unemployed of Victoria for instance. The "Colonist" dares not say publicly "they are too lazy to work," or "they are not willing to work." And if it did it would be a belated lie. Yet although willing to work they are idle and poverty stricken. Why? How are they to apply "their individual efforts?" Cultivate the land? But the land carries notice to keep off, on pain of prosecution. Go logging in the forest? But injunctions advise respect of private interests. Go into the lumber mills? But prosperity enforces "no admittance." What opportunities offer in the lesser local 2x4 outfits? Then get out. Sure—if possible. But where? Everywhere throughout the length and breadth of "our country" the whole resources of Canada, i.e., the social means of modern life, wherein the people are wholly dependent, is Capitalist property; property owned and operated entirely for the advantage and profit of the capitalist class. So that in the terms of "law and order" "individual effort" is not possible for the Canadian majority. Therefore the Canadian majority are the slaves of "law and order." That is, subject to the will of Capitalist Government. For why?

Obviously, when the "Colonist" advocates "less government" it does not mean any relaxation of government as applied to the clamorous needs of the slaves of Canada. Instead, it means a lessening of the onus of government for the benefit of the governors (the capitalist class), who alone bear its incidence. Consequently, in the terms of capital, the "intensive" application of our own businessmen "to our own affairs" means the struggle of the capitalist owners of Canada's resource, to produce commodities as cheaply, and to find markets to dispose of them as advantageously as the capitalist owners of other countries. To do this means fundamentally, cheap labor (regardless of the price of wages). Therefore, "individual effort" is the effort of capitalist interests to cheapen competition. "Less government" means the lessening of taxes and restrictions on capitalist industry,—which bears all taxes. The prosperity of Canada is identical with the prosperity of the capitalist owners of Canadian industry. And the tradition of "personal enterprise" is but camouflage to hide the exploitation of slavery from its victims. So without fear of contradiction we say that "the hard, consistent and perennial work that will put Canada on its feet "financially and economically," will also depress the people of Canada into a more intensive misery and rigor of slavery.

There is an interesting quotation from the Montreal "Gazette": "Given a reasonable tariff, protection for property and personal rights, 8 million people in a country able to support 25 million in wealth should be able to manage." Beautifully, sooner—given economic freedom—than not under the slavery of capital. That is the proposition of capitalist prop-

erty in the social means of life, for private profit. Capitalist wealth is formulated in Capital commodities. Those commodities are exchanged, and the profit embodied in them in production is then realised in exchange. But those commodities, thus exchanged, represent products for which the labor that produced them received no equivalent. That is why capitalist wealth consists essentially in bonds and title deeds. Because those deeds constitute the right to appropriate the products of labor. That is why capitalist countries measure their wealth in exports. Because it is only in exchange that the profit in the product can be obtained. Not by any "smart Alex" dealing on the open market. That is why increasing exports are increasingly necessary to capitalist prosperity. If labor received the equivalent value of its production there would be no commodities to export, because there could be no profit in the business. If labor received that equivalent there could only be production for use, unstinted in its bounty of abundance. Fundamentally, therefore, business is nothing more than traffic in stolen goods. That is why the interest of master and slave is diametrically opposed. That is why master and slave cannot prosper together. and that is why, under the terms of capitalist production, the 8 million people of Canada can not, and will not, be able to manage.

If the scribe of the "Gazette" found himself in the merciless clutches of the mineral companies of Canada he would probably reconsider his individualist self complacency. If he were chained—by the most compelling necessity of slavery to the whirring wheels of industry, he would probably long for something more than the laissez faire of bourgeois prosperity. If he were farming the baldheaded prairie under the necessary bonds of finance and machine companies, he would probably find a new use for his vote. If he were logging with the broadshouldered giants of the woods, in the competitive terms of necessity he would probably worry but little on tariff and taxes. If he were compelled to toe the line with the hefty sons alongshore, grimy in the dust of its clamorous fury and demeaned with its desultory idleness, he would probably agree with the "Colonist" in a quite other sense, that the "less government" there was, the better. And if he were—as the flotsam of slavery must ever be—flung hither and yon on the changeful tides of profiteering property, he would find that dire want and eagerness to work; willing hands and necessitous inopportunity were the commonest of associations, even in Canada, and that whoever or whatever his "anachronistic premier" might consider, it would most certainly not be him.

Nor need the scribes dream they escape those conditions because of their superior ability. We do not question their ability. It may even be superior—though it does not manifest itself. But it is no question of ability. Or of thrift or personal industry. Instead it is primarily and mostly a question of social conditioning. A conditioning wholly beyond the arbitrary provisioning of the individual. The people who man the mills, the mines, the factories, the fields, the forests, the floods, have been gathered from a class crushed world, where Capital has stripped labor of everything. Even its ancient health. The greater industry has continually made labor more superfluous. Labor has been enticed from the crimson tragedies of the exploited East to

the misinterpreted illusions of the unknown West. Finance and land companies; timber and minerals; railway and shipping companies; government and colony—the whole interwoven complex of modern production—have flooded Canada, as they have flooded all lands, undeveloped, with labor misinformed; uncultured; inexperienced in the mysteries of "business." A labor absolutely necessary for the exploitation of the natural resources which capital has, by priority appropriated to itself. Appropriated neither by thrift nor by industry, but by law and occasion. Not by single labor, or personal achievement, or foreseeing enterprise; but by power and by gift; by combination and by the growth of social increment. That is how the H. B. and the C.P.R. and the Canadian banks and industries flourished and succeeded. By appropriating the natural resources of the country to themselves, by the legalities of parliamentary procedure and exploiting their holdings through wage labor and social achievement. By the exploitation of natural resource, by means of exploited wage slaves—that is the one and only way that capitalist fortunes can be "made" and capitalist accumulations built up to become, in their turn, mighty engines of a yet more extensive exploitation.

But the expropriated immigrant today has no chance whatsoever to own, by the exercise of thrift and industry and application, mines or forests, or railroads or banks, and but little of the land and its abundance. They are only driven wage slaves, blind to their slavery. Driven because they are blind. They "prosper" only as Capital benefits by their toil. They are tax-payers only as labor is the fundament of all wealth. And they are "free" of the resource of the country, only as that resource is "free" to the operations of capitalist accumulation. The resources have all been staked off, long ago, as the private domain of powerful monopolies. And like the dead in Christ they await the resurrection of the world market, for their new glorification. We think—as vainly. And our scribe is by no means sanguine.

Says he: "If the businessmen . . . cannot run the country, they will soon . . . be replaced by others who can." Exactly. Hence to smooth the way of "businessmen" is the duty of government. That is perfectly correct. To clear away the obstacles for the success of the ruling class is the sole function of government. His remedies are significant—protection, economy, tax reduction. In the present way of things that trinity is the mene tekel on the feasting halls of capital. Capitalist progress means increasing exports. Exports mean Imperialist expansion. And Imperialism means a burden of wealth—as expressed to the capitalist, but of debt as expressed to society—which paralyses the underlying support of industry. Economy means the economy of capitalist property. That is, economy in capitalist production and distribution. Hence capitalist economy means ever growing masses of unemployment; an ever falling class standard of living; and consequently, an ever lessening effect of purchasing power. Hence protection means protection against competition abroad, and support against the proletarian revolution at home. Hence the financial clamor for lessened taxation. And its contradictory sequence—the appeal to individualist effort. That clamor shows that the taxation of capitalist economy is hard to col-

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