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VANCOUVER, B. C., DECEMBER 1, 1920

EDITORIAL

B. C. ELECTIONS.

BY the time this reaches the hands of the readers at outside points in B. C., the election date will be past and gone, and the bare dry bones of party politics will have been laid to rest, for a time.

As Socialists we regularly bow our heads to the charge as regularly laid against us that we are not in "practical politics." Practical politics is the scurvy game engaged in by office holders and office seekers, wherein the candidate's lien upon title to personal virtue is based solely upon the claim that his opponent has less conscience than himself, and has been or hopes to be more successful than he in driving a good bargain while in the harness of office, to the detriment of "the people" and the aggrandisement of himself or his party. At election times this song is always sung, and always sung to the tune of "honesty." Honesty! Humbug! This is politics in its surface appearances; and it is how it is generally understood by the mass of the people to apply.

What is this that produces honest men who are so devoted to the furtherance of our welfare? The class that controls the power of state are, by virtue of that control, secure in their control over the means of life. Each political party is an expression of class interests. With contending parties (such as Liberal and Conservative), their mutual claims to honesty and charges of dishonesty would encourage the belief that in "honest" government (by them), lies the key to the solution of our troubles today.

What is our trouble today? It is poverty!

We are all poor,—those of us who have to work to live. We see the evidences of poverty every day — men, women and children, ill-clad, half-starved, badly housed.

Is it unemployment? Thousands of workers are now unable to find employment. Is the expenditure of \$200,000 in Vancouver, just commenced, a measure that goes to the root of the trouble, for instance?

The trouble is not here. Confronting the evidences of poverty are everywhere evidences of wealth; the stores and warehouses are full of it in the shape of commodities, which, in a general sense, accounts for the many unemployed.

What does productive employment mean? Productive employment means the production of commodities for sale. For sale by their owners, not by their producers, and for use by the purchasers. We have a class of owners and a class of non-owners. The owners do not work and the workers do not own. Here is the root of the trouble.

The process of wealth production in present day society is social. That is to say, the individual processes of handiwork workmanship are no longer generally in operation. Labor is sub-divided, so that in the productive process not one man produces the commodity, but the labor of many men is necessary to the process. The complexity of the machinery operated in the productive process obviously stamps it as the result of a social development. The workers collectively operate this machinery, in the production of food, clothing and shelter, and these things belong thereupon to the owners of that property, who hold that food, clothing and shelter for

sale. The return to the worker, in the shape of wages, amounts on the average to a sufficiency to enable him to continue to expend his energy in the productive process. All else accruing from the sale of the commodities he has produced goes to his master.

Our "trouble" lies, then, in this exploitation, which is made possible through the private ownership of the means of wealth production, to which we must have access in order to live. Schemes there are aplenty to relieve us. In the expediency of these election times, contending factions among our masters for control of the powers of State rival one another in the application of the soothing balm.

But the sore will not heal; the trouble is deep rooted. It goes to the foundations of society itself. Its cure cannot be effected by doctoring its surface eruptions. The Socialist Party of Canada will continue to harp upon the "trouble" continuously when the election is over, to the end that the workers may understand why it is that their miseries must continue while they operate the machinery of wealth production in a system of production for profit, wherein they produce everything, and own nothing but the energy required in the productive process.

SECRETARIAL NOTES.

Our news of Comrade Charlie O'Brien is meagre, but we are informed that he has been dismissed on the deportation charges, which have now been dropped. He is still charged with "Criminal Anarchy," as far as we know. "Criminal Anarchy is the doctrine that organized government should be overthrown by force or violence, or by assassination of the executive head or of any of the executive officials of government, or by any unlawful means. The advocacy of such doctrine either by word of mouth or writing is a felony." (Penal Law, State of New York, sec. 160). The charge against O'Brien under this law is that he sold to an informer "attached to the police force of the city of Rochester," a copy of the Manifesto and Program of the Communist Party of America. There are humorous passages in the law, even this one. Sec. 161 of this Penal Law says (sub. sec. 3), anyone is guilty who "openly, wilfully and deliberately justifies by word of mouth or writing the assassination or unlawful killing or assaulting of any executive or other officer of the United States or of any state or of any civilized nation having an organized government because of his official character, or any other crime, etc." The substance of sub. sec. 4 is ten years or \$5,000 fine, or both. The name of the informer referred to is Ezra L. Kauffman. We hope O'Brien will fare well, and that these silly charges will be dropped.

Comrade Moriarty has introduced the "Clarion" to the news-agents in Toronto as noted under "Clarion Sales Agencies" in another column. A selection of pamphlets can also be seen at the same addresses.

Comrade Goudie, St. John, N. B., attended a gathering recently of friends, most of whom are "Clarion" readers. Among themselves they collected \$32 for the C. M. F. Comrade Goudie has already sent in moneys collected in this way.

The "Province" (Vancouver) had a news item on the 23rd November, saying that some trouble had arisen over Jack Kavanagh refusing to sing the National Anthem at a meeting at Terrace (near Prince Rupert). Comrade Kavanagh reports that the anthem was sung sure enough, but the singing was accomplished by two members of the audience, disturbers. He reports good meetings held in and around Prince Rupert, and he expects to visit Ocean Falls, which is in the Prince Rupert District.

Last heard of, Comrade Frank Cassidy was at Edmonton. We expect soon to hear from him as being en route through Alberta.

Word received from Comrade Pritchard shows a change of address. He is in the Provincial Jail, Winnipeg, having been removed from "The Farm" on account of rheumatism. He is attending to store supplies in the jail, and teaching school to the inmates.

Here we have been outlining the need for a labor college time and again, and the government takes the initiative and starts one in jail with W. A. P. as dominie.

(It won't do you any harm to get into jail nowadays. That one anyway. The Manitoba Labor College!)

Keep the subs. up. This issue and last show better returns than during the previous month.

THE CLASS THAT IS ALWAYS BEING LOOKED AFTER.

(Reflections of a Simple Voter)

Motto—An apple a day (palliative measure) keeps the doctor (revolution) away.

DURING an election campaign, no matter in what country it is being held, there is one class in society that is always being well looked after—according to all the claims made by politicians—and that class is the working class. It is well they have such public spirited men outside their own ranks who realize the importance of the toiling, and consequently happy, mass of mankind. The doctrines of the various countries depend upon their voting intelligently, and therefore no efforts are spared to develop their appreciation of the things that have been done for them. Being not only intelligent but grateful, it is not likely that their benefactors will be overlooked on election day. It can be safely stated that the hand that feeds them will not be bitten very severely in B. C.; their chief difficulty is only to distinguish which hands holds the grub.

Now, it is apparent that the concentration of all efforts to improve the conditions of the working class by the Liberal and Conservative parties eclipses all their efforts on behalf of the Capitalists. Of course, their affairs receive "a little" attention in Victoria after the elections, but they are of so trivial a nature during election time that the mention of them would only distract the minds of the Working Class from all that has and will be done for them. They are the important people just now. They have votes, and as our demagogues say, "they are the most important class in society today." They have a public duty to perform and as they have "Saved the world for democracy," they will now see they get the fruits of their victory. Now all these efforts are made for and on behalf of this working class, not by and through their own efforts. Their desires and needs are felt by a certain group of individuals who are to take their prayers into the sacred halls of legislation, and by diligent and conscientious intercession with some power endeavor to have these wishes transmuted into the living and concrete expression of social welfare. The positive proof of this act having been accomplished, can always be verified by seeing in black and white the writings of the necessary legislation in the Statute Books. After such is accomplished the saviors can safely stand in the public tribune and exclaim with Christ—"It is finished." The old political parties have done so much for the workers that they might just as well let it go at that, as it must look extremely doubtful to them that there is anything left for the working class to do now but just simply keep on working.

There is one unpleasant feature that presents itself in this consuming desire to look after the workers. There is the insinuation of an almost child-like need for care,—a desire to keep them from straying out of the paths of virtue that the feet of the working class are used to treading in the interests of society. It is sometimes necessary to ask them not to keep on working so feverishly,—(it dulls the brain) and then a fund is sometimes necessary to assist them until such times as it is expedient that their natural desire for work can find a healthy outlet in the mill, mine or factory they may select as the field for seizing the great opportunities of life. Then again their women folk sometimes find they cannot afford to expend the necessary funds for the proper nourishment of their children, but they are not overlooked. It is sometimes found possible to give them a greater freedom than the home affords, by encouraging them into the shady avenues of commerce. Everything is so carefully covered by a forethought that would be the admiration of a society less intelligent than our own.

Where do the poor capitalists come in on all these schemes? So forsaken and so neglected are they by our humanitarian friends that we are inclined to believe they must be grown up and quite able to look after themselves. Maybe they are free from all these pleasing ailments that the social quacks are sworn to cure, maybe they have no need for the medicines they prescribe for the halt, the maimed and the blind—Working Class.

H. W.