

## THE SHARE OF CAPITAL

(From "Socialist," Glasgow.)

Active Director Required, Birmingham manufacturing concern, employing 90 workpeople. Can draw £1000 yearly on investment of £5000. Applicant with £3000 would be considered. Valuation about £10,000.

The above advertisement appeared in the "Birmingham Post" of Sept. 25, and it is our earnest desire to rescue this sidelight of modern finance from provincial oblivion. It is only natural that when fresh capital is required the brighter side of the capitalist system of production should be revealed, and in an age when capitalists and labor fakirs are denouncing Marxian economics and calling for greater productivity in the factories, the bait held out by capital is worth studying.

The first point to notice is that an "active" director is required—one hears so much of "sleeping partners" that it is encouraging to learn that this one must work for his living. No mention is made of a forty-seven hour week, but those of us who know the engineering world realize full well that this only applies to the ninety workmen. The activities of the new director will be devoted solely to seeing that those poor souls sweat still more assiduously towards producing still another "active" director's £19 odd per week. It will be noticed that the present valuation is £10,000, and that the addition of a further £5000 will enable the lucky lender of the latter to draw £1000 per year. Taking this as a basis, the investors will withdraw at least £3000 from the concern annually. After all charges, i.e., maintenance, depreciation of plant, wages, rent, profit and interest, etc., have been met, and supposing the money to be invested by three persons, they will be in receipt of the "district rate" of £19 per week, compared with a high average of £3 per week to the actual workers. Perhaps some of the Birmingham Trade Union leaders in the local branch of the Employers' and Employed Industrial League will show us how we can perpetuate the system based upon such a wholesale swindle as this, and maybe "Hell-dread" Hallas, of Conservative fame, will explain how reconciliation may be effected when he sits on the platform with the Bishop of Birmingham, Neville Chamberlain and J. H. Whiteley on October 2.

It is obvious that as no total sales are given it is impossible to apply the relative wage to these figures, other than to point out that the selling price of the commodity marketed by this firm will yield sufficient money to:—

- (1) Yield £3000 per annum to investors.
- (2) Put by sufficient to remedy depreciation of plant.
- (3) Pay all expenses of running the plant: (a) purchase of raw materials; (b) rates, lighting and power; (c) rent.
- (4) Pay ninety workmen for the pleasure (?) of selling their labor-power.

The contrast is more striking when it is found that a workman gets about £3 per week, and an "active" director £19.

One wonders how much the latter would receive had he only his labor-

## An Open Letter to a Novelist

[Extract from a letter in the "New Age," (London,) by Will Dyson, the cartoonist, to writers for the capitalist press in general.]

Dear Ernest,—

I know that you are not writing against your convictions. You are not bought or even consciously influenced by the money that is in the exploitation of the querulous fears of the English middle classes. That you believe what you write is your greatest crime, for sincerity coupled with the indoctrinated wrongness you display in every line you write on industrial matters is more potent for ill than a ruffianly but open and honest malice. . . . You lend to wrong, through sheer muddleheadedness, a quality that is the attribute of right. This is a finer crime than the other, but it is also one more offensive to the nostrils of God. You link the moral fervor of a saint to the mentality of a Boy Scout. The burden of your article was the need for propaganda to counter the Labor malcontents. This irritates by its three accompanying false assumptions:

(1) That there is no Capitalist propaganda—when the wells of information are foul with it—there is only one newspaper among hundreds that is not tainted with it;

(2) That the authorities innocently leave the field to Labor propaganda—when Labor propaganda and propagandists are being suppressed with an access of blue funk comparable only to the national ebullitions of the Black War periods;

(3) That the sort of propaganda you suggest is based on higher motives than that of the working people's propaganda.

You hint at conspiracies—do you also see this industrial situation as a vast scenario for the cinema? Do you look beneath your bed for Bolsheviks? You have the timorous alarm of your own aunt. Did you, when you took over her opinions, also adopt her megrims? For five years you and your kind have talked of German gold. You finished the war too soon. It ended before you had discovered in the pocket of any English agitator one authenticated kronen of their elusive hoard. But you are still hinting at mysterious subsidies to Labor propaganda. In fact, ninety per cent. of the cost of English Labor propaganda is paid by English laborers, the rest by English friends. The large proportion of its production is sold to English laborers; it is the propaganda organization to sell and not capital to invest. It is only too obvious that his position depends not upon ability but upon the money he is prepared to put into the concern. Alas, poor Mallock!

T. D. SMITH.

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zations of your friends that flood us with gratuitous propaganda. You speak for a class that was loudest in its protestations of the new England that was to be the reward of the heroisms of the common people of England. That class is now moving hell and earth to prove that any attempt to make it fulfil its promises is a criminal conspiracy backed by Bolshevik gold. Any man who talks of "English Bolshevism" as you do is inciting the middle classes to violence. He is instigating a middle class and governing class terror. And the thing to be terrorized is an unarmed and non-responsible class which is demanding no more than that upon its shoulders shall be put the burden of a greater public responsibility than it at present bears. It is demanding, in effect, the right to help to run industry better, more efficiently, more humanly than it is run today. All its other demands spring from that parent stock, and form an awakening consciousness of the fact that as a class they are, if not the intellectual equals of their superiors, wanting only a chance to become it.

This class, or that part of it that does not accept the panacea of more work for the individual as the solution of the individual's demand for less of it, you call by inference or direct mention Bolshevik. You or your friends have previously carefully given the word a connotation more sinister than any other word in the language. To have called them murderers would have been weaker, for Bolshevik is that and other things. To have called them perverts would have been weaker—the Bolshevik is that and other things. Also raper of women, thief, liar—a Bolshevik is all of these in one—and other things. This is the meaning you attach to the word Bolshevik and you attach the word to a vague and undefined section of an English movement that historically has been constitutional and docile and patient in its methods beyond the bounds of human credibility. Is this decent?

The man who so writes today must inevitably be regarded by posterity as we regard the men who wrote in this strain prior to, and produced thereby, Peterloo. In kindness to yourself I will not particularize the amount of loathing proper for those men. Forbear before the Peterloo has been produced. Do not imagine it can produce anything for your side more heroic than a Peterloo, and one on a scale in keeping with the superiority in engines of destruction that would be at the command of the modern Mr. Hulton and the modern Derby. There can be no stern-eyed soldiers of the truth deploying in grim heroism against any of those odds that lift killing from the status of murder. All the machine-guns and all the miserable panic will be on one side; on the other side will be Bill Jones of the Putty-workers' Union, with no weapon but a determination to do no work.

No, Ernest, you are on a side that is lying with the meanness of area sneaks and the phraseology of empire-builders. Surely there never has been such an orgy of exalted mendacity. It begins with Cabinet

Ministers who live in a realm where falsehood carries no penalty, material or immaterial; where the problem of being honorable men without ceasing to be liars has been happily solved. Any propaganda that comes from that quarter and in that interest must take the color of its origin. And the propaganda in favor of the big business interests—in favor of vast production as outlined by the Mad Mullahs of super-production—must take on that color. It is based on a big lie, and little lies must be propagated in shoals for its support. They are being so propagated with a fecundity that is less shaking the moral of the English revolutionaries—gentle people—than paralyzing them with a cynical bitterness. You know that I have never had respect for the myth of English public honor; but I, who normally would have been rather gratified at the exposure of this as of any other fetish, am overwhelmed with shame at the reckless prodigality with which the ruling rich of England are proving themselves or allowing themselves to be proved to be a class, a class that knows nothing of civilization but its comforts.

Is it not appalling to you that the engines of propaganda that were used against the Germans are now turned upon the British—workers! The same machinery and the same method—one could almost swear to produce the same result. And spies—this vile and poisonous growth that seems so to the taste of our governors—is the creation of people who hate England and loathe the English—no one else would give a bonus for the development in England of that comparatively rare beast, the professional spy, when there is not even the justification of "conspiracy" for his existence. There is nothing in the English labor movement to spy upon. Its decisions and intentions are shouted from the house-tops. The one avenue of activity open for the spy is in the date and hour of a lightning strike. If the Government is subsidizing spies for the gathering of this information for employers, common justice demands a similar activity on its part in the interest of the employed; a branch of Scotland Yard for the keeping of a sleuth eye upon the secret intentions of the capitalists needs only to be suggested to be adopted.

When you cry that the workers must be told the truth you forget the earlier necessity that you should tell the truth about the workers. That you do not prejudices all else you say in the name of truth. With a common sense that is, after all, elementary, they believe all that comes from the sources indicated by you is tainted, especially when it is matter of advantage to those sources. What lies about them lies to them—that is rock-bottom.

Also, Ernest, to tell the truth, it is necessary to know it—Do you? Nonsense, Ernest, you neither know nor want to know the Industrial Truth, and if you did I doubt whether you would write about it. You are a professional writing man and interested primarily in subjects capable of attractive statement. The industrial truth is not one of them.—Yours,

WILL DYSON.