

# Western Clarion

A Journal of History, Economics, Philosophy, and Current Events.

Published twice a month by the Socialist Party of Canada, P. O. Box 710, Vancouver, B. C. Entered at G. P. O. as a newspaper.

Editor.....Ewen MacLeod

### SUBSCRIPTION:

Canada, 20 issues ..... \$1.00  
Foreign, 16 issues ..... \$1.00

**910** If this number is on your address label your subscription expires with next issue. Renew promptly.

VANCOUVER, B. C., FEBRUARY 16, 1924.

### LABOR IN OFFICE.

**B**Y the support of Liberal votes in the British House of Commons the Labor Party has been able to step from opposition to government and, already in government, by the support of mixed votes it has been sustained on the first division. From this it is fair to assume that its stewardship is not altogether unwelcome to the parties who have bequeathed to its care a considerable area of trouble and distress at home and abroad. There is a comforting appearance of paternalism about these other parties, for despite their mutual recriminations they sing in chorus the gospel of capitalism and their Rights of Man concepts are the enduring subjects of electioneering promulgations and the general hollow harangue of their political philosophy.

The Labor Party, then, is in office but not in power, and we see in operation something of the high sounding Wilsonism about "government with the consent of the governed," a process in this case whereby a capitalist world somewhat preoccupied with trouble may be subjected to the ministrations of labor, giving the latter scope in the matter of energetic recommendations but withholding, if necessary, the power to carry them out. In the matter of France in the Ruhr, for instance, everybody knows that British opposition to the French Ruhr policy was surrendered to the French in return for British freedom from French interference in the operations towards Mosul. The Labor Party is now charged with making early recommendations concerning relations with France as to the Ruhr and reparations, and the Lausanne treaty ratification process is part of its inheritance from the previous administration. At the same time the labor government has already effected legal recognition of Russia, an act whereby the other parties are able to save their face and at the same time to supervise whatever arrangements may eventuate. "It would be impossible for the few to retain power over the many if the many genuinely desired to emancipate themselves," says Mr. Bertrand Russell, and although when he wrote that he had other people in mind than the Conservative and Liberal combined representation in the British House of Commons, the case might very well apply.

In 1900 the Labor Party had nine representatives in the House of Commons; in 1906, 54; in 1910 (January), 40; in 1910 (December), 42; in 1918, 73; in 1922, 142, and at present 191. As a minority party it has dropped into the cradle of government, yet whatever may be its hopes it appears to be aware of its limitations. Even if it were a majority it is quite likely that as a government its practice would come well within the bounds of even its moderate party pronouncements, and so disappoint many. But practice, in the same way, determines modifications in revolutionary programmes when they appear to reach the field of possibility.

In the home field the labor government is likely to find its hardest problems of administration in finance. The hostile press professes to think labor has immediate intention of confiscating the contents and oiling the integuments of the Bank of England

and all that goes with it, thereby heroically committing organized suicide, complete and immediate. It is not likely. It is more likely that the Labor Party looks upon its position now as of propaganda value towards its acceptance as a responsible and able body, a body willing and anxious to make excursion into the places of privilege and making its declarations accordingly, but at the same time conscious of the limitations of its mandatory and actual powers. Its character is essentially reformistic, a fact which, it is to be observed, is its chief attraction to the mass of its supporters. It is criticised on that account at home and abroad, yet from time to time recruits come to its ranks from the unlearned and from hopelessly well educated people alike. We gather that the mass of the people are interested mainly in finding out whether the iron law of wages can be amended to the end that wages may rise above the level of subsistence by some means or other, but largely through the co-operation of the Labor Party, and to attain possible ameliorative living conditions through State aid. It is their process of learning and it would appear to be a necessary course with them. The contrast has been made time and again between the numerical success of the Labor Party there and their failure here, the supposition being that people like ourselves have in our superior way managed to argue them out of existence by a process of scientific application of fact and philosophical browbeating, but the fact is simply that so far, in a country such as this, particularly in the west where there are no industrial centres in the European sense, there have not existed conditions favourable to the growth of reform parties and the course has been left comparatively clear for the theorists who, in the main, brought their theories through the Immigration Department and who, in turn, by virtue of the comparative absence of the glaring social sores which are the breeding ground of immediate reform parties were able to focus attention on theories of social revolution rather than on theories of social reform. The S. P. of C. for instance, has many a time received abuse and admiration, insult and brave praise, both arising from lack of understanding that the M. C. H. may be applied to Socialist and labor parties in explanation of their attitudes assumed, and wherever they may be.

However, labor parties there or socialist parties here, our business in life is to inherit the earth! We'll have more to argue about when we get it.

### HERE AND NOW.

We register a point away below our prescribed financial zero this issue, lower than last and that was low. Following upon which we register grief, which we seek to communicate to our readers Here and Now. Our point being made, without further palaver we record the evidence:

Following \$1 each: H. C. Morgan, T. A. Hanson, C. Lestor, J. W. Dargie, H. Dosch, Tom Erwin, H. W. Speed, J. McMillan, J. Nyholt, A. Jankoff. R. Garden, \$2; Geo. Schott, \$5; W. Miller, \$2; J. Donaldson, \$3; J. A. Peterson, \$2.

Above, Clarion subscriptions received from January 27th to February 14th, inclusive—total, \$24!

### CLARION MAINTENANCE FUND

Al. Korlan, \$2; "D. G.," \$2; J. W. Jamieson, \$1; F. J. McNey, \$5; A. Shepherd, \$1; A. Kilgour, \$1; Geo. Schott, 20 cents; T. Erwin, \$4; St. John Comrades (per M. Goudie), \$8.

Above, Clarion Maintenance Fund receipts, from January 29th to February 14th, inclusive—total, \$24.20.

### LOCAL (VANCOUVER) NO. 1, S. P. OF C.

We are advised by "C," on behalf of the committee in charge of the arrangements for the annual celebration of the events of the Paris Commune of '71, that the arrangements for a social and dance are on the way, but are not definitely decided upon as to place and date. Tickets are to be (for men) \$1 and (for women) 50 cents. Full particulars will

be announced later and in definite shape. Meantime, following "C's" imperious orders, we are to make this preliminary, John-the-Baptist-like announcement as seductive and attractive as we can—and there you are. What is wanted, of course, is an overwhelming attendance of celebrants. If "C." has his way of it the annual event will prove more attractive than all our personal capacity can muster in literary allurements. Probably by next issue the committee will be able to announce full particulars. Curb your excited expectation until then.

### REJOINDER TO L. T. MORGAN

As it would be a mere waste of time and space for an ignoramus like myself to try to debate with such an intellectual giant as Mr. L. T. Morgan, of the University of British Columbia, I will not try to do so. I admit that I know "practically nothing of the marginal utility theory of value, and even less, if possible, concerning that which Marx has written on the same subject." But it is the privilege of a fool to ask questions, and I claim that privilege.

If Mr. Morgan wishes to use Marx to defend the marginal utility theory of value he is welcome to do so, of course. Or it may be that we need the marginal utility theory of value to bolster up Marx. Again, it may be that "there is a complete unanimity of opinion between the marginal utility theorists and Marx on value in exchange." Being an ignoramus I am not qualified to deal with such subjects, so I will leave them to those who are.

But I am still pining for information concerning marginal utility, and I must admit that even Mr. Morgan's learned and profound exposition of the subject has failed to penetrate my thick skull. So I am going to exercise my fool's privilege and ask a few questions. Come now, eliminate the camouflage and give it to us straight: When Professor Ely says, "To possess value, a thing must be able to satisfy wants, and it must exist in less than sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants." does he mean value, or value in exchange? Is it necessary that a commodity must be scarce to possess value? Is labor power a commodity? If so, does it "exist in less than sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants"? In other words, is there a scarcity of labor power? When these questions are answered I will ask some more, but these will do for the present.

F. J. McNEY.

## ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LECKIE.

NOW READY

Preface by the author.

132 PAGES.

Per Copy, 25 Cents.

Ten copies up, 20 cents each.

Post Paid.

### SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Obey that impulse and subscribe for the

**WESTERN CLARION**

Address P. O. Box 710, Vancouver, B. C.

Enclosed find \$.....  
Send the Western Clarion to:

Name .....

Address .....