

PERMANENT PROSPERITY

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American observers to think that the reaction will come much sooner than has generally been supposed by British observers. Gary, of the Steel Trust, speaking in New York, May 25th, declares that he does not anticipate a substantial diminution of the demand for finished steel for at least six months. Permanent prosperity for at least six months! The occupation of the Rhur valley by the French has benefited the American steel and coal industries temporarily. Germany, normally an exporter of steel, is now endeavouring to buy it in Sweden, and Sweden, who formally obtained it from the Rhur is seeking for it in the U. S. A. Thus the extreme need of Europe is beneficial to the American manufacturers. Here we have an explanation of the large measure of support accorded by the American press, including the Washington Post, an administration organ, to the French occupancy of the Ruhr. Here are some of the paradoxical incidents in international trade between the U. S. and Great Britain and other countries. Coal is being shipped both ways. Orders placed in Britain at the time of the American coal strike are still being delivered to Atlantic ports, and crossing steamers carry U. S. coal to Europe under the pressure of the new emergency. At the same time while large consignments of English and continental pig iron have in the last few months been sold along the Atlantic seaboard, Great Britain is now importing iron and coke from the U. S. and so are Sweden and Holland. The editorial optimism of the Washington Post regarding American independence of the European market does not fit in with the above trade reports.

Carrying coals to Newcastle, at one time considered wasted effort, now seems quite a necessity to the smooth operation of the profit system. Of course, it is not exactly a new departure in business. Fish caught off Nova Scotia appear for sale in B. C. and vice versa. Strawberry jam made in Quebec is being sold next door to the jam factory in Mission, B. C. Reverse the places of manufacture and sale and there is an example of part of what Engels termed the anarchy of the capitalist mode of production.

Failing the outbreak of war, and the consequent "market" for the surplus values produced by the industrial and agricultural workers, a contingency not likely to occur in the immediate future, the inevitable glut of those commodities which re-appear in the process of production as constant capital, i. e., machinery, steel products, etc., will automatically throw millions of slaves out of employment. Gary's estimate of six months is as good a guess as any other. The American farmers have not recovered from the agricultural slump of three years ago. Their purchasing power has not increased in ratio to the expansion of business and consequent rise of prices in other lines. The "Spokesman's Review" of May 30th, quotes Senator Copeland as follows:

"We are living in a fool's paradise," Senator Copeland declared. "In certain lines in America we have prosperity, but the idleness of the rest of the world should warn us that our prosperity is likely to be transient."

Discussing the lack of prosperity among farmers and its causes, the senator said he was surprised recently by a letter sent to a New York newspaper by a Virginia farmer in which was given a comparison of food values on the farm and labor engaged in the building trades.

"This statement," he said, "shows that it takes 63½ dozen or 762 eggs to pay a plasterer for one day of eight hours; it takes 17½ bushels of corn or a year's receipts from half an acre to pay a bricklayer one day; it takes 23 chickens weighing three pounds each to pay a painter for one day's work in New York; it takes 42 pounds of butter, or the output of 14 cows, fed and milked for 24 hours, to pay a plumber \$14 a day, and it takes a hog weighing 175 pounds, representing eight months of feeding and care, to pay a carpenter for one day's work."

The farmers, not having the wherewithal to buy with, are nevertheless referred to as being on a "Buyer's Strike." To remedy this sad condition, the U. S. Government have instituted Farmers Loan Banks, which loan money to farmers at 7%, through the intermediary of Trust and Mortgage companies.

As an indication of some local conditions confronting American farmers, the following petition is illuminating.

"We the undersigned farmers of Whitman county, the best and richest wheat growing section of the United States and the world, owning the best improved farms in the United States, find it impossible to longer continue in the production of wheat. Our horses will soon be too old for service, our harness and equipment is badly worn, and we are now and will be unable to replace them.

"Therefore we ask the government of the United States to take over these farms, pay off our obligations, that have been incurred in the raising of wheat, and allow us to remain on the farms and pay us wages, so that we may have some of the comforts of life and all of the necessities. We are in no condition financially to harvest the growing crop and ask that congress be convened at once and take over these farms before harvest."

Socialists do not doubt the existence of prosperity, but they modestly enquire, Who are the prosperous ones? How come?

TACTICS

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party activities; and party activity is, in turn, governed by its social perspective—its insight into social phenomena; its interpretation of current events, its concepts of the nature of social relationships and its understanding of social organizations not merely theoretical, but in practical and actual operation. The scope of activity will be determined by the historic cumulus of the day, and instinct with purpose and direction in sympathy with the vision of its objective.

Consequently, if the aim is the removal of particular grievances, the practical amelioration of effects, then active energy will be devoted to the end of their present alleviation and the tactics adopted must of necessity conform with the legitimist practice of political association. It must work through the legality of political organizations, in the body of political power,—a body dedicated to the sanctity of property right. It must work through the formality of government, steeped in the precedents of possession, and overcome the stalwart prejudices of generations, through organization devoted to law and order, impatient of "extremist" demands, "sobered with the responsibilities of power," and supported by masses struggling for the wages of necessity and divided on the main issues of its life. What that struggle has achieved we know; what its continuance may produce we may guess. Maybe, e. g., labor government, more or less capitalist minded, fervent on the issues of trade (for the welfare of the masses and the immediate relief of unemployment), conciliation to possession, ideally just to subject races (who must await the expiry of "contract" for their freedom), and finally being overwhelmed in their inevitable inability to fulfil the obligation of the immediate.

But if the aim is revolution; its offensive will be the utter abolition of wage slavery, as immediately as it can possibly be achieved. And being revolutionary, and therefore more or less cognisant of the social complexus of relations, its tactics can be no illusive struggle of crucial excitements; no challenge of unmaturing conditions; no sinister threats of social upheaval; no barren appeal to fugitive enthusiasms, forlorn because divided with its vain imaginings; and no phantasies of economic necessity, red with the terror of unexploded fallacies. Its tactics must be the awakening of class conscious perception. Grown from and changing with the necessities of developing capital tactics must consistently seek the explanations of capitalist reality, paying but scant heed to the proletarian temporizations for immediate relief, and concentrate on the struggle for political power. In the deepening miseries of a society becoming more and more a proletarian unity,

tactics will point the failure of capital to fulfil its social obligations—and the reason why; will be alert for every opportunity of enlightenment, critical of practical politics and its reasons, driving home its lessons from the rude shocks of daily experience, keeping steadfastly to its own living issue—proletarian unity through the percepts of social understanding. It will hold the mirror of truth to the groping mind of discontent, thereby consciously arousing its rising hosts with the weapons which, unconsciously, historic development has prepared for use, working hand in hand with the forces of progress, knowing that in the harsh disillusionments of disintegrating society, in the fevered struggle, fruitless toil and wasted effort of proletarian existence, in its great throbbing heart of hope, and courage, and indomitability, there will be born the sure conviction that no political contrivance whatsoever can either mitigate or vanquish its frothing miseries. That is the real pathway of revolution, the tactics that draws strength from pregnant condition, and encouragement from unfolding reality, armed at once for attack and defense, and impregnable with the passion of its truth. R.

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