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MONEY STRINGENCY

At Brandon, Man., a meeting of the city council was held to discuss the question of wages to be paid to the city workmen this summer. The city fathers decided that, considering the money stringency, two dollars a day was a good wage.

Behind the words "money stringency" lies concealed a phase of the capitalist system which proves that wages are governed by the cost of living.

Owing to the workers competing amongst themselves for jobs, wages hover round the cost of living. When the cost of living goes up, wages must rise, or the workers will starve and will be poor workmen, and the master class will suffer reduced revenues.

When the cost of living falls, wages will fall. It will not cost the workmen so much to live, and therefore the bosses will cut wages.

But the capitalist class will not do this in such a blunt manner. Oh, dear, no. If they spoke the truth, the working class could see the raw deal they were getting. Hence the capitalist class conceal their real operations behind language which the working class understand but little. They do not say, "The cost of living is falling, therefore you workers can live on less and we will pay you less." No. They say, "There is a money stringency. Times are hard. Therefore, until times brighten, you will have to share our lot and get less in your pay envelope." If you object, the mills will close down; and hunger will force you to go back to work. Then competition for jobs will keep your wages down until the cost of living goes up again.

When money is cheap, or when credit has been inflated and industry is booming along on inflated paper money, commodities will be high. You will find beef, pork, wheat, clothes, rent, wages high when interpreted in terms of dollars and cents. But although wages go up, the workers are no better off because they have to pay so much more for what they buy.

When money becomes dear, or when the inflated credit is curtailed, and the paper money has to get nearer its parent, gold, commodities become cheaper. Pork, wheat, beef, rails, motor cars, clothing, shoes will go down in price. If wages remained high, then indeed would the workers' condition be improved.

But the masters know the game if the working class do not. They talk about tight money and how very low they must sell their commodities, and they cut the wage bill. This means that the master class are solved at keeping the workers upon a wage that will only give them a bare living.

The workers produce all the wealth of the world. The masters take it all away from them and return them only fodder, blanket and a stall.

And when the Socialists propose to the workers that the workers unite upon the political field to overthrow such a system and replace it with one in which the workers will get the full social value of the wealth they create, the capitalists howl against us.

Mr. Worker, which side do you think it is to your interest to stand on? The side of your masters or the side of the working class?

A NICE BLUFF

The Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company recently wanted to increase its capitalist stock to fifteen million dollars.

This company carries on a transportation business upon the St. Lawrence river and the Great Lakes. Its charter is an old one with many limitations.

When the bill to increase its capitalist stock came before parliament, there was a great hubbub. All the radical bunco-steerers got busy with their mouths. Such an increase of stock could be allowed. It was the beginning of a shipping trust. Parliament must protect the public, etc., etc.

The bill was withdrawn, the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company applied to the Secretary of State for a charter under the Joint Stock Companies Act with an authorized capital of fifteen millions, the charter will be issued in the ordinary course of the State Secretary's activities, and the R. & O. Company will get what it wants as a matter of ordinary routine.

The parliamentary flubdub was meant merely for display and to fool the gullible voters.

Perhaps you often wonder how canaries can afford to put up a can of beans, with a little pork and sauce, to which must be added the price of can, solder and the label, and then sell it to a wholesaler for six or seven cents. A visit to the average large canning factory will soon open your eyes as to how the trick is done. Little boys, little girls, and women are herded together toiling in a stifling atmosphere of steam and heat, at the lowest of starvation wages and the longest hours. Farm produce is brought in by the wagon load and weighed on the slightest of hand scales of the company. Cans are filled about three-quarters full, and every other cheap trick at which the capitalist robbers have no equal is employed to gouge the consumer. Rotten tomatoes, rotten apples, and rotten everything else are cooked and shot into their respective cans with a pretty label attached. For aroma a cannery is a first cousin to a soap factory. And remember, we are not expected to eat soap.

C. P. R. stands for Canadian Plutocratic Robbers.

"To prevent a slum district a Los Angeles society will build cheap houses for workmen," says the American Employer. Get that, Steve? CHEAP houses for workmen! What is really meant is that the workmen will build cheap houses for themselves and palaces for the never-sweats and will own neither. Gee, but it's great to be crazy!—The Industrial Worker.

The Granby Consolidated Mining, Smelting and Power Company will have profits this year of about a million dollars. The miners of Phoenix, B.C., and the slaves of the smelter at Grand Forks, B.C., along with the slaves of the power plant produce this wealth. They get only a bare living wage. Millionaire automobile owners and their satellites get the rest. How do you like it, slaves? If you do not like it, help change the system.

MAY DAY

By August Bebel.

The first of May, the feast day of the international working class movement, is here. Throughout the civilized world the workers are uniting to propagate their ideals and to press forward their practical demands on present society. So close your ranks.

This universal feast has made enormous strides in the course of the twenty-four years which have elapsed since the International Congress of Paris in 1889 decided to celebrate the first of May as the day of the workers. The number of countries that are celebrating the first of May is increasing. May Day is becoming more and more a world-wide event; the day of international demonstration on which the solidarity and unity of the demand for the social betterment of the workers expresses itself in the strongest possible terms.

Be on the alert! Fateful things are unfolding themselves. The capitalist classes are persistently endeavoring to conquer new markets for their goods and to crush out their competitors in the world's markets, and they are using their dominion in all civilized lands to increase armaments both by land and sea. They thus lay terrible financial burdens upon the people, as a result of which the progress and the raising of the social conditions of the workers are sadly neglected.

Against this disastrous policy the workers must vehemently protest. May Day gives the desired opportunity of expressing to the full this protest. The working classes do not want a murderous war; they are fighting for peace, because they desire human progress. They are fighting for freedom and justice, even for the most lowly, because in this manner only can the proletariat fulfill its mission of bringing liberty to humanity.

The field of action will extend just so far as you identify yourselves more and more with the organized working class of all lands, united in the International, and carry on in common with them the struggle for the liberation of the workers from want, misery, oppression and exploitation, towards the highest aim of humanity.

May your watchword be liberty and equality and everything which makes for the realization of every human aspiration.

Cheers for the International!

Sam Hughes is quiet these days. He is waiting with palpitating heart for reports from the officers of Canada telling how poor a showing they will be able to make at the summer "training" camps. Sam's soldiers are a joke. They have to be recruited from the idle loafers of the large cities, and the young lad on the farm who longs for a holiday. The city regiments do not go into training because the capitalists will not allow their profit-makers to be taken away for two weeks every summer, so they have to perform their foolish manoeuvres after working hours. Besides, military authorities have long since discovered that a city regiment cannot be depended upon to do any killing in time of labor troubles, as about ninety per cent of the rank and file are union men, enlisted for the purpose of having a little pastime and a free trip occasionally. Nix on the slaughter business for these men. As the militia is for the sole intent and purpose of bulldozing the slaves of the industrial centres of Canada, Sam has to depend on the country lad to maintain the dignity and honor of the empire and chase striking slaves back on their jobs.

The high power Ross rifle rang the curtain down on hundreds of rifle clubs throughout Canada. Ranges in the country could not be used owing to the uncertainty as to where a bullet would stop once it was fired. So the country clubs disbanded, and only in places where a large lake is situated can these clubs do any practicing. The devotee of the old Snider with the 1000 yard range has hung it up on the wall, and taken to hoeing weeds in the turnip patch. This is just one of the many things happening today which tend to cause the military spirit to wither away and die. This pleases Socialists.

The capitalist system has thrived immeasurably during its existence. Socialism is the only thing ever devised which can rid us of the evils of capitalism, and it is doing its work fast and sure.

Capital is rapidly concentrating, getting ready for the final stand. A few more years will determine what power capital has when the workers of the world unite and demand back what has been stolen from them.

The International Labor Day

F. J. Flatman, Hamilton, Ont.

The date at the head of this issue is the first of May. How many understand its full import and its economic significance?

In these days of splits and revivals, with the disappearance of old parties and the coming of new, with Industrialism and Syndicalism in the air, one can at least rejoice in no half-measures that we have at least in May Day one catholic rallying point to which the entire working class, irrespective of creed, race or color, are beginning to congregate.

A few years ago, by way of celebrating King Edward's coronation day, it was stated that it was impossible to stand on any point in the British Isles without being able to see clearly a bonfire. By means of these beacons (vide press) a whole network or chain was created which flashed (what the press terms) a message of glad tidings (ff) to every citizen (slave) in the land from John O' Groat to Land's End. I forget now, although I marvelled at the time, the thousands of loads of coal, wood, and other fuel, not to mention oil and tar, that went to make up this great national pyrotechnic display. I well remember, however, that during this display there were hundreds of families on those islands in a condition of semi-starvation, and that there were thousands of hovels (with which we abuse the English language by calling them homes) in the grates of which fire, and fuel had been conspicuous by their absence. For all that, it struck me as being an achievement worthy of a better cause, and I fervently hope for the day—and that day will come—when a message will be sent throughout the land with equal despatch, to tell the workers that poverty and wretchedness had been dispelled from our midst forever, and that the Socialist republic, the reign of truth, the dominion of love, the age of reason, the age of peaceful and co-operative commonwealth, had been inaugurated. But that is by the way.

Today, the first of May, a fire of a different character has been kindled, made up of a heated enthusiasm and fiery oratory; and while it is not yet possible to say that they themselves constitute an unbroken chain through out the world, we can say that strong links are being forged in every important industrial centre of the capitalist universe, and that as the years go by, other and still other links are being and will be forged, until the chain is finally complete, when it will encircle the entire globe, welding together into one huge family the different races of mankind.

This is an ideal worth fighting for the establishment of peace and concord among the peoples of the earth. However small a part an individual may play in this great fight, whether it be that of literature seller, local secretary, committeeman, or as a humble marcher beneath the banner, there is an untold pleasure in the knowledge that in other lands other people of other languages have the same noble aspirations pulsating through their being, and are all stirred with a common emotion.

There is that which is so grand in the concept of an international labor day which immediately raises one out of the petty meanness of modern every-day life, which makes reward for sacrifice and which makes the persecutions perpetrated by oppressors on the people appear puny in the extreme. There is no such thing as drawing the "color line" in making arrangement for labor day, for wherever there are toilers exploited, be they black, red, yellow or white, racial prejudices are overcome. A common grievance is recognized, and a common cause established. I earnestly hope and trust that here in Canada the workers will begin speedily to recognize the importance of this festival occasion to the working class and resolve that they do not intend in any way to be behind their fellow workers in other lands.

Hitherto our labor day demonstrations have seemed to be regarded by the organized workers taking part as being merely of parochial significance and not as part of a world wide movement. As a matter of fact such both in substance and fact is the Canadian Labor Day.

But on the first of May the historical nature of the demonstration is beginning to be recognized. At one of the two "International Socialist and Workers' Congresses" held in Paris in the year 1889, the following resolution was adopted: "A great international demonstration shall be organized on a fixed date in order that all countries, and in every town on the same day, the workers shall demand the legal reduction of the working day to eight hours, and the application of other resolutions passed by the international congress. Further, seeing that a similar demonstration has already been decided on for the first of May by the American Federation of Labor at its congress of 1888 at St. Louis, this date shall be adopted for the international demonstration under whatever conditions may be imposed by the special situation of their respective countries."

Later at the International Socialist and Workers' Congress held in Brussels in 1891, the following resolution was adopted: "That in order to conserve to the first of May its true economic character by the demand for the eight hour day and the recognition of the class struggle, there shall be held a simultaneous demonstration of the workers of all countries; that this demonstration shall take place on the first of May, and that a cessation of work be recommended wherever possible."

Following upon the adoption of this resolution, reports were received of first of May labor demonstrations being held in the large towns of France, Germany, Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Rumania, Spain, Switzerland, United States, and, in fact, every "civilized" nation where capitalism held sway. It is remarkable to note, too, that in almost all cases with the exception of Great Britain, the demonstrations were attended with police and military interference, and disturbances.

To my mind there is no spectacle more approaching tragic than when these demonstrations take place in Canada and the procession is filing through the main streets, to see large numbers of slaves standing listlessly on the sidewalks indifferent of a cause which is of the utmost importance as far as their own material being is concerned.

This becomes the more appalling when one thinks of the perilous professions of the workers in "holy" Russia, where in the endeavor to demonstrate the rights of labor, men and women, and even children no older than many attending our public schools, are subjected to the hideous cruelties of case-hardened and brutal Cossacks.

In Germany the demonstrations are held under the hostile supervision of the military authorities, and any day one may read of blood being shed in consequence of the provocations of these capitalist thugs.

Even in the large cities of France, a country world-renowned for its historic struggles for freedom, large reserve forces of troops are kept in readiness, if the need arises, to keep the labor demonstrations within the narrow confines proscribed by capitalist law and order.

But still, despite the Cossack rule of Russia, the militarism of Germany, the gendarmes of France, the great and grand international labor procession is growing in strength and numbers, with phenomenal rapidity, and continues to inspire hope and courage in the hearts and the minds of those valiant comrades who have toiled hard and waited long for the realization of their most cherished ideals.

One frequently hears of the Nobel prize being presented to eminent capitalist functionaries for services rendered in the promotion of international peace. During this Dreadnought discussion at Ottawa, one is tediously reminded of the dictum, "that to be well prepared for war is the surest guarantee of peace." I venture to say that if all the efforts of the Nobel prize winners, and all the Dreadnoughts that a poverty-stricken nation could provide, and all the deliberations of well-intentioned people at the Hague Peace Conferences, were bundled together, they would pale into insignificance as peace missionaries in comparison with this world wide labor festival. The German war scare would have no terrors for the English or French worker, did he understand and appreciate the full import of International Labor Day. It would no longer be easy or possible for mercenary capitalist back writers to breed malice and hatred between nations. Rather than looking upon the workers of another land with suspicion and mistrust, May Day is establishing what turgid diplomacy has ignominiously failed in doing, viz., a means whereby the peoples of all lands will be bound together in amity and trustfulness.

International capital has bred distrust, disorder and distress. International labor will ensure peace, prosperity and happiness.

Hats off, then, comrades all, to the First of May, and the potentialities therein contained. Fight on. Each and every one of you are doing your part. The Socialist state is in the future you are fashioning. You are preparing the materials if not building the fabric. The builders are not yet ready to hand, but they will materialize when the materials are ready. The builders may be already at work, though we know them not, and the work may be partly advanced, though we perceive it not. Work on. Fight on.

Comrades, behind you lies the black vortex of capitalism, with all its suffering, with all its misery, exploitation, prostitution and degradation. The Socialist republic, the reign of truth, the dominion of love, the age of reason, the age of a peaceful and co-operative commonwealth lies in front of you. Fight on.

Borden is not your friend, Laurier is not your friend. Neither they nor their followers in Parliament hold any brief for labor. Experience has taught them that they can easily sidestep any labor question, and that uneasiness among the working class is all forgotten at election time. Therefore they devote their whole attention to their masters' interests, and the worker can rest assured they are not the interests of the toiler.

All the objectionable epithets in their vocabulary are hurled at a worker who commits a crime by the capitalist sheets, but when a capitalist gets away with a big steal they are mighty guarded in their language if they refer to him at all. Justice in this land is highly tempered with money.

Socialists believe in the survival of the worker. To their mind he is the "fittest."

The workers cannot spend the winter in Bermuda, but have the pleasure of seeing the plumes enjoying themselves there in moving pictures. Let us hail the great awakening of an educated working class. When the workers see things as they really are then they will soon have the system changed that robs them of the fruits of their labor. Then they will be able to take a little enjoyment out of life, which is almost impossible under the present system.

The Montreal Star of April 21st said that broad smiles were visible on the faces of the street car conductors and motormen. The Montreal Tramways company had voluntarily agreed to raise wages a cent an hour, the increase to take effect the first of next July. As the net profits of the Tramways Company are around three millions a year, the thinking slaves of this capitalist profit machine will do no smiling over the beggarly increase. But then, the Star is the organ of big business, and can see smiles on the faces of the wage slaves when the smiles are not there.

THE FIRST OF MAY

By Camille Huysmans, Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau.

We are passing through a splendid period of working-class unrest. More and more the workers' army is solidifying and consolidating its organization in a way that makes for its well-being, prepares the way for its emancipation, and imposes its policy of peace between the nations of the world.

Every year, on the first of May, we review our army, which has now reached the goodly number of just over ten million well-disciplined soldiers, representing families which may be counted as 50,000,000 people.

The history of the world has never seen since the birth of Christianity such an intense movement, nor one which has made its influence felt so rapidly.

Toronto is establishing a free dental clinic. Germany has had free dental clinics for twenty-eight years, and there are about a score of them in London, Eng. It is good to have free dental work done, but we must not forget that the capitalist rulers do nothing which will not benefit themselves. The teeth are an important asset to the exploiters. If wage workers have not good teeth they cannot properly eat their food. If food is not properly eaten, it will not digest properly, and the slaves will not get the full benefit of the food they buy with their wages and the masters will not get good work done and large profits. Hence the executive of the Toronto labor skinners is furnishing free care of the teeth to such as cannot afford to pay a regular dentist.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

By Jean Jaures.

For the twenty-fifth time May Day this year reunites in one international demonstration the organized working class of the two worlds in their affirmation of solidarity without distinction of frontiers, and in a mighty declaration of their determination to overthrow the forces which plunder and murder their class, and endanger the peace of the world.

At this moment when the struggle between capitalism and labor is at its height—

At this moment when governments place more and more at the disposal of privilege and capitalism all their forces, both military and police, in order to suppress the workers who are claiming a little more of their due—

At this crisis it is imperative that the organized workers everywhere should signify to the capitalist classes that they have tolerated long enough a regime founded on the bondage and subjection of the producers.

Let us be stirring, so that on May Day we may demonstrate in one body that the workers of all countries are ready to recover their rights; ready also to oppose the plots of capitalism, and of governments which endanger international peace.

Let us affirm with vigor our demand for the limitation of working hours to eight a day.

Let us prove by our action that the working class will not rest content until it has secured the complete control of the means of production and exchange, the possession of which is the condition of its emancipation.

Some workers yammer away about the fairness of the British laws we are laboring under, when they have not the slightest conception of what these laws stand for, or whom they favor. Not until this grand old British law gets the slave in its talons does he realize that it was made for the benefit of one class alone, and that he does not belong to that particular class.

The capitalist is awake. All over the land he sits with troubled brow studying how he and his ilk can stay the mighty forces of Socialism spreading from ocean to ocean. He sees his beloved system swept away out of his reach forever. He sees himself and his kind forced to perform some useful work in order to gain a livelihood. It is not a good vision to him. He is sad.

The average worker's son gets just enough education to enable him to perform the work of his future master.

THE NAVAL QUESTION

A debate has been raging in the Canadian House of Commons over the question of a navy.

R. L. Borden wishes to spend thirty-five million dollars for three battleships to be built and equipped in Great Britain, and to form, at least temporarily, an integral part of the British fleet.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier wishes to spend millions of dollars upon a fleet to be largely built and equipped in Canada, and to remain in Canadian waters.

With regard to this navy question there are four viewpoints. There are two points of view for the big capitalists, another point of view for the reformers and petty capitalists or persons with the bourgeois outlook, and the viewpoint of the Socialist.

At Ottawa so far, only the two viewpoints of the big capitalists are represented. Borden, who wishes to have the fleet built in Great Britain, is the spokesman for the international capitalists, men like Lord Strathcona, whose exploitation has grown worldwide in its scope.

Laurier represents the capitalists who still are tinged with the national outlook and whose interests are bound up in the exploitation of Canadians alone. Thirty-five millions spent in Canada means more unearned revenues for themselves personally. Their outlook and grab has not yet surmounted the national boundaries of Canada.

The fight between these two sections of the exploiters has filled Ottawa with noise. The warring politicians are fighting for their masters' interests. Stormy scenes have been enacted, and the capitalist daily papers have devoted scores of columns to the wordy war.

The limiting of the debate to the question of what form the navy will take shows how dominant the big capitalists are at Ottawa. Not a word has been said against the navy. This shows that big-business controls.

Besides the two viewpoints being torn to tatters now by the politicians, there is the viewpoint of the petty capitalists. These capitalists have not yet got into giant production. They employ but few hands. They toil themselves. They are largely workers themselves. They find the struggle to live a hard one.

These petty bourgeois people look longingly at that thirty-five million dollars. They think that if that money was used so as to advance their business they could live better and perhaps expand. If that money were only used for good roads, or for cheap power, or to establish co-operative banks for the petty business men, or in some such way, these little fellows feel they would get on so much better.

Hence they raise the cry of the navy waste. They like the capitalist form of government, and they remain either Tory or Grid. But not having arrived at the stage where their revenues flow in upon them without effort, they think the government should bend its efforts to help them. So they cry for the navy. They feel this expenditure to be a direct loss to them. They establish local peace associations. But their mouths water in vain for government pap. The big capitalists are at the hog trough and shoulder them aside.

The fourth viewpoint is that of the Socialists. The Socialists are formed from the robbed producers. They are either wage slaves of farm slaves who know their true position in society.

The producers create all the annual wealth. The master class takes the greater share of it, and render no services whatsoever. In Canada, as Cotton's Weekly showed last week, over six hundred million dollars go to the parasite capitalist class every year.

To the Socialist the question of how this enormous unearned revenue is to be spent by the capitalist class is a question of small importance. The great question is the question of unearned revenues. What does it matter to the working class whether the capitalists build warships with the thirty-five million dollars or whether they build pleasure yachts? While the big robbers are squabbling over what form the navy will take, and the bourgeois reformers are lamenting that thirty-five million is going to be spent in this manner, the class slaves are out campaigning day in and day out to arouse their fellow slaves to robbery they endure, and are exhorting them to awake, seize the reins of government in order to transfer the capitalist means of production and distribution into the collective power of the working class.

The wise slave is not stampeded by the paltry question of how the robbers shall spend a part of their swag. He is endeavoring to get the working class to put the robbers out of business.

402,432 immigrants came to Canada in the fiscal year ending March 31st last. The exploiters are pumping them in as fast as they can. The more immigrants, the more will be the competition for jobs, and the cheaper the wages. So successful has this policy been for the masters that down in New Waterford, N.S., the slaves are living on cooked dog.

Do you expect good laws to be made when you send politicians to Ottawa who are the sworn friends of the capitalists? They will do the will of their masters, and the workers are not their masters simply because they do not see it that way.