

Socialism and Canada's future . . .

casserole

a supplement section
of the gateway

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This week's cover indicates a rather more serious approach to the problems of today. The rest of the Casserole is no exception to the tone set by the cover.

A rather brief summation of the direction of the Left in Canada is offered on C-2. While the rhetoric of the Left is familiar to most of us, perhaps a cohesive statement is of more value.

A wittily constructed satire on some of the pomp and ceremony of our Ivory Tower is offered on C-3. Doesn't the menu make your mouth water? Doesn't the satire following make you lose your appetite?

We offer the centre spread with no apologies for its rather heavy style. The thoughts within are worth the effort in distilling them.

The arts pages, as cleverly concocted by Ron Dutton and Cathy Morris, feature the ever-popular film, record, and performing arts reviews, plus the usual irreverent Leftovers.

So we leave you again, hopefully to your own thoughts.

The following article consists of excerpts from a statement of the Left Caucus of the New Democratic Party. It is not intended as free publicity for a political party.

Rather, it is published because we feel that it offers an alternative philosophy to that which is currently espoused, presumably, by the majority. While it is by no means a complete blueprint for suggested change, it is indication that considerable thought is being given to the problems of Canada as an entity, rather than to those of the world in general.

It is also an apt accompaniment to Dr. Lochman's article on C-4 and C-5, and a striking contrast to the subject matter of 'Culinary Obscenity' on C-3.

The most urgent issue for Canadians is the very survival of Canada. Anxiety is pervasive and the goal of greater economic independence receives widespread support. But economic independence without socialism is a sham, and neither are meaningful without true participa-

tory democracy.

The major threat to Canadian survival today is American control of the Canadian economy. The major issue of our times is not national unity but national survival, and the fundamental threat is external, not internal.

American corporate capitalism is the dominant factor shaping Canadian society.

In Canada, American economic control operates through the formidable medium of the multi-national corporation. The Canadian corporate elite has opted for a junior partnership with these American enterprises. Canada has been reduced to a resource base and consumer market within the American empire.

The American empire is held together through worldwide military alliances and by giant monopoly corporations. Canada's membership in the American alliance system and the ownership of the Canadian economy by American corporations precludes Canada's playing an independent role in the world.

These bonds must be cut if corporate capitalism and the social priorities it creates, is to be effectively challenged.

Profit causes social problems

The criterion that the most profitable pursuits are the most important ones causes the neglect of activities whose value cannot be measured by the standard of profitability. It is not accidental that housing, education, medical care and public transportation are inadequately provided for by

the present social system.

The problem of regional disparities is rooted in the profit orientation of capitalism. The social costs of stagnant areas are irrelevant to the corporations.

For Canada the problem is compounded by the reduction of Canada to the position of an economic colony of the United States. The foreign capitalist has even less concern for balanced development of the country than the Canadian capitalist with roots in a particular region.

United Canada needed

An independence movement based on substituting Canadian capitalists for American capitalists, or on public policy to make foreign corporations behave as if they were Canadian corporations, cannot be our final objective. There is not now an independent Canadian capitalism and any lingering pretensions on the part of Canadian business men to independence lack credibility.

Without a strong national capitalist class behind them, Canadian governments, Liberal and Conservative, have functioned in the interests of inter-national and particularly American capitalism, and have lacked the will to pursue even a modest strategy of economic independence.

Those who desire socialism and independence for Canada have often been baffled and mystified by the problem of internal divisions within Canada. While the essential fact of Canadian history in the past century is the reduction of Canada to a colony of the United States, with a consequent increase in regional inequalities, there is no denying the existence of two nations within Canada, each with its own language, culture and aspirations. This reality must be incorporated into the strategy of the New Democratic Party.

A united Canada is of critical importance in pursuing a successful strategy against the reality of American imperialism. Quebec's history and aspirations must be allowed full expression and implementation in the conviction that new ties will emerge from the common perception of "two nations, one struggle".

Socialists in English Canada must ally themselves with socialists in Quebec in this common cause.

Corporate capitalism is characterized by the predominant power of the corporate elite aided and abetted by the political elite. A central objective of Canadian socialists must be to further the democratization process in industry.

The Canadian trade union movement throughout its history has waged a democratic battle against the so-called rights or prerogatives of ownership and management. It has achieved the important moral and legal victory of providing for working men an effective say in what their wages will be. At present management's "right" to control technological change is being challenged.

The New Democratic Party must provide leadership in the struggle to extend working men's influence into every area of industrial decision-making. Those who work must have effective control in determination of working conditions, and substantial power in determining the nature of the product, prices and so on. Democracy and socialism require nothing less.

New Democrats must begin now to insist on the redistribution of power, and not simply welfare, in a socialist direction. The struggle for worker participation in industrial decision-making and against management "rights" is such a move toward economic and social democracy.

Capitalism alienates

By bringing men together primarily as buyers and sellers of each other, by enshrining profitability and material gain in place of humanity and spiritual growth, capitalism has always been inherently alienating. Today, sheer size combined with modern technology further exaggerates man's sense of insignificance and impotence.

A socialist transformation of society will return to man his sense of humanity, to replace his sense of being a commodity.

But a socialist democracy implies man's control of his immediate environment as well, and in any strategy for building socialism, community democracy is as vital as the struggle for electoral success.

To that end, socialists must strive for democracy at those levels which most directly affect us all—in our neighbourhoods, our schools, our places of work. Tenants' unions, consumers' and producers' cooperatives are examples of areas in which socialists must lead in efforts to involve people directly in the struggle to control their own destinies.

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Glenayr

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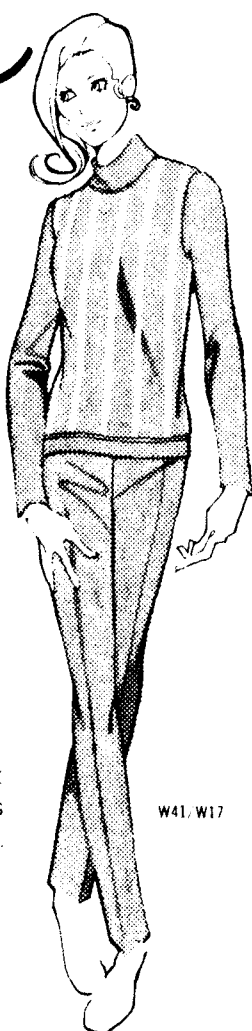
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