

Is Socialism Against Religion

By Roscoe A. Fillmore.

We hear a lot of preachers and others nowadays declaring to all and sundry that Socialism will smash religion. This argument is considered a clincher by our religious friends. Now I would like to have a little talk with some of these people. And I will try hard not to use any swear words.

My religious friends, let us reason together. You say you believe in a Supreme Power. So do I. I call that Power Cosmic Evolution, you call it God. I believe this Power is responsible for the great changes for the better which have taken place even within the short space of time of which written history gives us a record. And right beneath our feet we have history of the past, dating back millions of years, which proves that this Power has led us from the lowest possible form of life to the high place which we humans at the present occupy. The Power which has done these things is known by various names. Some call it God, others Evolution, others Nature and the American savage called it the Great Manitou. But at any rate whatever it may be, dwells within you and I, in fact within everything. The phenomena of Nature are the clothing of it. It is everywhere visible. Surely you can go thus far with me.

Like most religious people, you, perhaps, believe that this God, by a single act or a succession of creative acts, formed the earth and all that is upon it. Well let's suppose that He did. Now do you suppose that a Power grand enough to do all this would be mean enough to say after the job was done, to the Baers, "Here are seams of coal. They are yours to do with as you please, and here are slaves for you. Work them hard. Make them go into the bowels of the earth and dig out the coal that you and your ladies may warm yourselves. When your slaves are plentiful, crush them, bury them in your mines; for they are cheaper than timber. They are yours to do with as you please."

Or would he say to the Rockefellers, "Here are lakes of oil created for your benefit. Take these slaves whom I have created and compel them to toil long hours at the most arduous work. When they have become too old and infirm to work throw them on the scrap-heap; for there are many more being born every hour of the day to take their places. Make them create mountains of profit for you. They are yours to use as you think fit."

Or do you suppose this God, grand and great enough to hold millions of earths in their places, would stoop to such meanness as to say to Carnegie and Morgan, "Here are vast seams of iron ore. Yours to exploit to their full limit. Force the hordes of slaves who are all around you into the ground. Crush them and maim them for they are of less value than shore timbers. Bury them by thousands in your mines for they are so plentiful that they cumber the earth. Make them dig out the ore and transport it to the great furnaces. Make them smelt it, staining every pound of it with their blood and sweat. Make them refine it and make steel with which to build great warships, railway systems, etc. Don't be particular about safety appliances for lo! the slaves multiply like rats and will over run the earth if you don't kill off a few occasionally."

Or do you suppose this Power would say to all the lords of the earth—"Here is the earth. It is yours forever and ever. Make war one upon the other. Compel the slaves to do all the fighting and bear all the burdens. Build vast navies, create huge armies, waste the labor of millions in building great forts. Then man your ships with the bravest and best of the slaves. Recruit more slaves for your armies and hurl them against each other even as wild beasts. Devastate cities, maim and murder millions, ravish the women of the slaves of your opponents. Conquer those nations which are still in savagery. Introduce civilization and its attendant—Prostitution, drunkenness, famine, pestilence, crimes unspeakable, in the lands of peoples who were once happy and prosperous. If the slaves revolt, kill them, hang them, turn out the standing army of slaves and compel them to slaughter their brothers."

Honestly now, do you suppose this God would do the like? Or would he, after creating these good things, say to all the creatures he had made—"Here is a garden full of good things for you. It is only necessary that you apply your labor power to the common store of natural resources in order to make a good living. Let all labor. Let not any man eat bread produced by the sweat of another man. Dig out the coal and let all be warmed. Pump out the oil and let all enjoy the heat and light which it contains. Bury your weapons and live together as human beings. Friends, which course would a just God take? Surely the latter.

But today we find the Morgans, Rockefellers, Baers, Rothchilds, and a few more in full possession of all the good things which our labor has taken from nature's store house, the earth. And they enforce their possession of these things by the use of huge armies and navies, powerful courts and police forces. We are slaughtered in millions at the word of these pirates, and they claim Divine authority for all their acts. They drive out mothers, sisters and daughters into mills, factories and brothels. They drive millions of tender children into mines and mills, and for even this, claim Divine sanction. Friend, the church upholds these things. It stands back and you know it, da—(almost a break there), well you know it. And the Socialist Party is the only organization that protests.

When the Socialists see the crimes

perpetrated upon our class, and hear black-frocked priests and preachers, who never performed an hour's useful labor in their lives, say that our conditions are alright we are mad. Some of us swear good and hard. We denounce the church as the accomplices of these cut-throat financiers and labor skimmers. And are they not? Do they not attack Socialism the only movement which protects, and which in fact is the only movement that backs every move for better conditions for the toilers? We hit back at every opportunity.

We intend to destroy capitalism because we hate it; because it has degraded and brutalized us; because of its cruelty to our class. We will inaugurate a system under which every productive worker will receive the full value of his toil, under which no child will be driven to the workshop but will have an opportunity to become educated, healthy and happy. All this we will do by taking from the financial pirates their power to rob us through their ownership of the natural resources and machinery of the earth. That's Socialism. If to feed the hungry; clothe the naked; minister unto those who are physically unfit to toil; lift the downtrodden and oppressed and take from the oppressors their power to crush humanity; if to do this is injurious to the religion of any man, then the sooner mankind says goodbye to such a religion the better. If to do this will smash religion, then religion is doomed and justly. But will it?

In conclusion allow me to quote from Comrade McKenzie—"We care not what God ye worship, so long as ye do not worship Mammon."

HISTORIC UTTERANCES OF GREAT (?) MEN

The following are some of the utterances of politicians, soldiers and financiers of the United States. Liberty is guaranteed by the Constitution of the States as it is in Mexico. But that liberty is a lie when the men appointed to uphold liberty break their oath of office and become tyrants. At the present time you have in the States, "Freedom free to slay herself and dying while they shout her name." No wonder the socialists fight the government when under the government such sayings as the following can be put forth and the men who utter them still retain their office or their position of dominance in the business life of the country.

"The public be damned! I'm not running this road for the benefit of the public. I'm running it for my own benefit."—Cornelius Vanderbilt, of the New York Central Railway.

"The damned fools don't know what is good for them."—J. Pierpont Morgan, speaking of the striking steel workers in September, 1901.

"The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for, not by labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God in His infinite wisdom has given control of the property interests of the country."—Geo. M. Baer, mine owner, during the coal strike of 1902.

"I see no solution for the problem until hunger compels capitulation."—Charles L. Eidlitz, President of New York Building Trades Employers' Association, during the lock out in July, 1903.

"To hell with the Constitution."—Major McClelland commanding the state militia (paid by the Mine Owners' Association) during the Colorado miners' strike and lock-out of 1904.

"Habeas Corpus be damned! We'll give them post mortems instead."—Adjutant General Sherman Bell of the Colorado militia, defying the orders of the civil courts.

"What's the Constitution between friends?"—Timothy Campbell, of Tammany Hall.

"I'm working for my own pocket all the time."—Richard Croker, of Tammany Hall, under whose regime Schmittberger became a power in the police.

"Men who object to what they call 'government by injunction' are in hearty sympathy with their remote skin clad ancestors who lived in caves, fought one another with stone-headed axes and ate the mammoth and woolly rhinoceros. * * * They are not in sympathy with men of good minds and good civic morality."—Theodore Roosevelt.

"God knows; I don't."—William H. Taft, at Cooper Union, February, 1908, when asked, "What can be done to give men work in hard times?"

"Strike! They (the American workmen) have no jobs now. We do not want to take up work again now. So what can they do? They will have to submit or they will starve."—J. Pierpont Morgan, February, 1908.

"The Club is mightier than the Constitution."—Inspector Schmittberger, of the New York police, during the riot in Union Square on March 28, 1908.

The Battle for Bread

All self-respecting workpeople want the best of food, the best of clothing, the best of housing.

They want security of employment, short hours of labor, healthy conditions in the mines and shops and factories.

They want education for their children, freedom from the fear of want and a voice in the management of industry.

They want the means and the leisure with which to enjoy life. In short, they want the good things of life, and they want them in abundance.

Are they getting them under the present industrial system? No. Notwithstanding the fact that all wealth is produced by labor, the workers must be content to eat cheap food, wear shoddy clothing and live in tenements of miserable-looking houses.—W. R. S.

HOMES AND JOBS

You will have to own your job or your job will own your home and you. With the consolidation of industry the large corporations are becoming the owners not only of mines and mills but of the homes of their employees as well. In many places in the United States employing companies own the mines in which the men must work, the homes in which they must live and the stores from which they must buy. The wage worker is plucked by the one giant corporation. In the days of the petty bourgeoisie, the wage worker was plucked by three separate parasites. He was plucked by his employer in the mine; he was plucked by the landlord in rent and he was plucked by the store-keeper in profits. If he lost his job the landlord might still allow him to live in the house, and the store-keeper might still give him credit.

Now, however, his job, his home and his base of supplies are all owned and controlled by the same company. When he strikes or is black-listed, he can buy no more goods at the store and he is evicted from his home. He is at the complete mercy of the men who are exploiting him for profit and the tender mercies of those men are cruel.

These same conditions exist in Canada. The Nova Scotia coal company evicted their striking workmen from their homes. Canadian workmen are facing the same problems that are being faced by their American comrades. They will have to come to the socialist conclusion that they must own their jobs or their jobs will own them.

THOUGHTS ON JUDGES

H. REOME

Christ said we should not judge. Wherefore judges?

A judge who gives a man a sentence and will not do the hanging himself cannot believe that hanging will do much good to the man hung.

I was talking to an intelligent sarcastic tongue about judges. The man said that judges were justified in hanging one man for killing another. I asked him how he would like to find his head in the hangman's noose. He replied that he would not do anything which would disgrace him so much as to cause him to be hung. But after a little talk he agreed that if he got mad enough he would kill if he got a chance. So I have come to the conclusion that any of us are liable to do something desperate under this system.

The British suffragettes have been breaking up political meetings. British rowdies are now beginning to break up suffragette meetings. The Canadian press seems to take it that this is a just retribution. The Canadian press does not seem to reason right. The British women are deprived of the vote. They suffer an injustice. Being powerless to get men to listen to reason, they break up their meetings. They meet an injustice with rowdism. When rowdism answers back it but makes the original injustice from which the women suffer all the more glaring.

Percy F. Morse is put up as Socialist candidate for Mayor of Portland, Me. The municipal program laid down by the Socialists of Portland contain the following: Municipal fuel yards with sale of fuel at cost. Municipal gas works, with sale of gas at cost. Eight hour day on city work. Municipal hospital for tubercular patients. Medical inspection of school children. The shifting of the burdens of taxation from the shoulders of the poor to the shoulders of the large property owners. This municipal platform is probably the best that the Socialists of Portland could lay down for city work. Until the centre of government is captured and society revolutionized and rent, interest and profit abolished, municipal campaigns can only be educational and palliative. As long as the central power which protects labor thieving remains in the control of the labor thieves, municipal socialist bodies can only act along the line of reform, and socialists must mark time till the coming of the revolution.

There are in the United States two classes of public service corporations which have enslaved the middle class of the U. S. The one class is the railroad and the other the insurance. In Canada the middle class is yet strong and our legislation reflects this strength. The Railway Act of Canada curbs the railroad with respect to charges for goods that will interfere with the profits of the middle class. The new insurance act introduced on November 17th, by Cartwright will put the screws upon the profits of insurance companies. The middle class in Canada are being as well protected as they can be by the Laurier government.

But the middle class is doomed to extinction, and Laurier cannot save them. In trying to be fair to the plutocrats as well as to the middle class he but assists the plutocracy to crush the middle class out of existence. While railroads and insurance companies are partially curbed yet such is the force of capital-ist accumulation that the steel magnates and railroad magnates and manufacturing magnates are bound to dominate until the working class, from whose labor the master industrialists suck their profits, rise and throw off the incubus of the men who bulk so large in present day Canadian history.

THE B. C. ELECTIONS

The British Columbia elections have been fought and lost. In the last Legislature there were three Socialists. In the present Legislature there are but two.

A Socialist now in Canada when fighting for the Boers in South Africa, captured a Canadian. In talking over politics, the Canadian prisoner informed him that in Canada there were but two parties and both were under the control of the railroads. The Socialist did not understand the situation and thought the Canadian was spinning yarns, until he came to Canada.

Canada has been handed over to the railroads. The C. P. R. has been given millions. Immense cash grants or land grants or credit grants are given to railways, unfortunately always just before elections. The Province of Quebec gave millions of acres of land to the railways just before the last elections. Now the McBride government grants an enormous line of credit to the C. N. R.

When the railways get a huge gift from the Dominion or a Province just before an election, people naturally conclude that the gift has a string attached to it, that the railway companies must grant a part of the gift to the party managers for election purposes. The Toronto Globe declares, "The Conservative machine resorted to scandalous methods in herding the purchasable voters to the polls." An enormous bonus to a railway and a bribed electorate to let the deal go through appear to be closely connected.

Another fact that accounts for this enormous Conservative majority is that traditional hostility of railways was not manifested in the B. C. elections. The C. P. R. worked in with the C. N. R. and as a result the Liberals were annihilated. When the Liberals, backed by the G. T. P., fight the Conservatives, backed by the C. P. R., the fight is pretty even, and it looks as though the people were really governing themselves. But when the G. T. P. takes no hand in the game and the C. P. R. and the C. N. R. united for the Conservatives, then there is a landslide.

Undoubtedly the Railway grants have had an enormous effect on corrupting the electorate. Campaigns funds do not come from air but from some unknown but well suspected source. The C. P. R. could have afforded to pay each voter of Canada five dollars for his vote and the sum total would have scarcely been missed by the corporation, so great have been the sums it has got from Canadian governments.

As to corruption it is useless to wait about voters selling their votes. Men will take the money for their votes as long as they do not realize that their vote is worth more than they are getting for it. The purchasable votes no doubt went for McBride. By the result they scarcely could have gone for the Liberals. The only remedy for political corruption and for railway bonuses is to waken the workers to the value of their votes when used in their own interests. Let the workers get it into their heads that they can use their votes in such a manner that they can get for themselves five times the wages they now enjoy, and the price of votes will rise from five dollars to one thousand dollars each. Such a value placed on votes by their possessors would prevent corrupt elections.

Chips From a Blockhead

The way to win Socialist votes is to make Socialists.

An understanding of economics is as essential to the social reformer as a knowledge of physiology is to a medical doctor.

Socialists are not made by denouncing other people. They are made only by hearing the Socialist philosophy explained.

People who can be bulldozed into anything can be bulldozed out of it again. Throwing bricks at people does not educate them.

If a cess-pool under your house is making anyone sick, call in a drain-digger, not a doctor. If society is suffering from mal-distribution of wealth, consult an economist, not a theologian.

W. R. S.

SUB PRICE OF COTTON'S

One Year, 52 copies 50c
Six Months, 26 copies 25c
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The Socialist Faith.—Justice to all mankind; the same chance for every creature born. No tyranny, no oppression. The watchword—labor; no laziness a crime. The motto—the noble one supplied many years ago by Tom Paine: "The world is my country, to do good my religion."

Capitalists must not be confounded with capital. Capital is necessary but the capitalist is a useless drone.

The workers want the right to work while the capitalists fight for the right to shirk.

The socialist say, "If a thing is a sham let us expose it." The plutocrats say, "If a thing is a sham let us keep mum about it as we gain our riches by a systematized sham."

Under capitalism the cruel and unfit are protected and preserved. Under socialism the cruel and unfit will be provided for but not at the expense of the merciful and fit.

Under capitalism the bosses can legally lock out the workers. Under socialism it will be the workers who will be given the right to lock out their bosses.

Out of fourteen hundred convicts last year eight hundred were under thirty years of age. Capitalism is turning the young into criminals. This year the proportion of young criminals has increased enormously.

We should not blame the judges of Canada too hard for their decisions. In the first place they get their living by judging men and they are slaves of the dollar like other men. In the second place many of them really do not know any better.

Paid in Advance

Every copy of Cotton's Weekly is paid for before it leaves this office. If you get Cotton's through the mail with a colored address label on it, numbered, your subscription has been paid by some friend who wishes you to look into the truths of Socialism. You need not hesitate to take Cotton's from the post office as no bill will be rendered, and the paper will be promptly discontinued when the subscription expires.

During the past ten years sixteen million dollars have been paid by the government to the labor thieves as bounties to them for just doing business. How would you workingmen like to have that amount with which to fight your bosses in times of strike? You can have that and more if you will only vote socialist workmen into the lawmaking bodies.

The Ross rifle is the official murder weapon. The Liberals and Conservatives are quarrelling about it. The Conservatives say it does not kill as it should. The Liberals declare that it is a perfect murder instrument. And there is not one Socialist in the House to raise his voice against official butchery and say, "Away with the official murder instrument altogether."

F. D. Monk, Conservative member for Jacques Cartier, made a long speech in the House of Commons about the benefit that would ensue if the youthful convicts were kept separate from the older convicts in our penitentiaries. Capitalism is all the time trying to get bright minds to solve the problems raised by its inherent contradictions. Capitalism makes criminals of various degrees. Under socialism there will be so few criminals that the problem of criminality will solve itself. From a socialist point of view Monk is wasting his breath. Let him get to work and try to remove the causes that make criminals.

J. D. Taylor, Conservative for New Westminster, B. C., is poking his nose into all sorts of things for which the plutocrats won't like him. He ferreted out the anomaly of the union label being printed on the Labor Gazette and being omitted from the other government publications. The union label on the Blue Books of Canada would be offensive to the labor thieves. Therefore it is omitted. But as the Labor Gazette is circulated among workmen the union label is plunked on it to make the workers feel that a labor thieves' government is their friend. J. D. Taylor is also poking his nose into the question of the poor pay given to post office clerks. He is the first sign of a member taking an interest in labor questions yet seen at Ottawa. Verville from Maisonneuve, Montreal, of course mutters a few words in favor of labor, but he is securely fastened to Laurier's apron strings and his utterances can be shoved aside as mere inanities.

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OH YOU LAWYERS

Listen, you men of the world's useful work, listen to the regulations the jackals of the labor thieves have drawn up for their guidance. Do you know that the advocates of the Province of Quebec consider it more dishonorable to do useful work than they do to betray a client?

You have often heard advocates get up in public and talk about the dignity of their profession. You have no doubt read long accounts about the nobility of the men who deal with the law. It is all a sham. The lawyer is the jackal of the labor thieves. He deals in property rights and makes money by evictions of the men from their homes. The corporation attorney is the best paid of the profession. The young advocates look forward with watering jowls to receiving fat fees from the C. P. R. or the Bank of Montreal or the other organizations for the robbery of the useful workers. The lawyer is a parasite upon the workers. He frequently gets good pay from the biggest parasites. They find him necessary to devise cunning schemes by which the results of the toil of the useful workers may be filched from them.

The Advocates from the Province of Quebec have recently drawn up by-laws for their government. Being an advocate I received a copy of these by-laws. Of course what I am going to tell you may get me into trouble with my fellow lawyers. They do not like their little secrets exposed. However, I would rather stand in with the useful workers than with the parasites of the parasites.

Article six of the by-laws of Bar of the Province of Quebec, as passed by the General Council of the Advocates, declares that the carrying on of any handicraft, industry, trade or commerce is incompatible with the dignity of the legal profession. Just think of that you men who build the homes of the advocates, you who dig the coal that the advocate may be warmed, you who lay the tracks and drive the engines that the advocate may transport his carcass from one point to another. Remember that it is written in the book of the lawyers that to do such things is beneath a lawyer. If a parasite ever was proud of his parasitism that parasite must have been a lawyer. His dignity is so great that he must do no useful work.

But listen to what comes after. In the same book of by-laws, there is an article seven. This article declares that it is derogatory to the honor and dignity of the profession to do the following things, divulge confidential information received professionally, to forsake a client at the hearing of a case, to betray his client for personal gain, to keep money collected on behalf of a client.

The advocates of the Province of Quebec stand naked and ashamed before all men who toil. The advocate of the province of Quebec considers it a smaller offence to betray a client than he does to do something useful. It is incompatible to the dignity of a lawyer to do something useful. It is only derogatory to his dignity to betray his client.

Yet these are the men who fill our legislative halls. These are the men who become judges, men who consider it less harmful to betray than to work.

Yet, laboring men, the lawyer will strut and wax fat and be proud and insolent as long as capitalism lasts. He is but an effect of the present system of rich idlers and hunger smitten toilers. It is no use to attack the lawyers directly. You must attack the cause.

You workingmen must unite against the labor thieves. You must gather together and send your representatives to Ottawa, to Quebec and to other centres. Send your comrades who work beside you to represent you. Get over the pernicious habit of yours of voting to send your boss to rule over you on the political field. Get over the habit of sending lawyers. Go to parliament yourselves. And when you get there see to it that you legislate the labor thieves, your dividend-hunting bosses, and their jackals the advocates, into the ranks of the useful toilers.

It is not calumny nor treachery that does the most harm in the world. They are continually crushed, and are felt only in being conquered. But it is the glistening and softly spoken lie; the amiable fallacy; the patriotic lie of the historian; the provident lie of the politician; the jealous lie of the partisan; the merciful lie of each man to himself which darkens and degrades our life.—Ruskin.

Revolution does not mean armed uprisings, assassinations, street riots, blowing up of buildings, though these often accompany reforms and reactionary measures. Revolution means the attainment of political power by an hitherto subject class and their use of the governmental machinery to advance its own interests.

"Science," said Emile Zola, "Behold the only true revolutionist."