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COPY

Toronto, February 18, 1941.

The Editor,
"The Leader-Post",
Regina, Sask.

Dear Sir:

Someone has sent me a recent editorial in the "Leader-Post," entitled "Study in Solitude." Though this emanation gives little evidence either of the illumination of "study" or of the introspection of "solitude," its crafty misrepresentations call for a reply.

You quote the following short extract from a speech I made lately at a meeting of the Federated Charities in Toronto:

"If property, profit, the reward of toil, the fundamental instinct of the human race to gain, to acquire, to have, to reach somewhere, is taken away, then I for one do not feel that we have anything worth fighting for."

On this sentence, which seems to me to express a truth which no person who is both honest and intelligent would dispute, you base a diatribe of peculiar malignancy and bitterness. First of all, I would like to ask you:—Do you, yourself, dispute the truth of the sentence which you quote? If you do, be good enough to tell your readers what is wrong with it, and particularly in what respect it is false. I have challenged more than one editor already, who has given place in his paper to correspondents whose rantings were similar to your own, and have never received anything in return except an acknowledgment that what I said was right.

Indeed, in your editorial, you, yourself, say that to think of such a thing as I describe taking place is "wrestling with a nightmare." One would hardly think that to bring about something the very thought of which is a "nightmare" was worth the blood of our sons.

You say that a people who cherish freedom will never peacefully accept "what Stalin calls 'socialism'". What is the difference between saying this and what I said? When Mr. Bevin along with others of the Labour Party of Great Britain say that they are in favour of "socialism in our time," I fail to see why I should be made an object of editorial Billingsgate for taking them at their word. "Socialism in our time" has for years been on the mast-head of the Labour Party of Great Britain, and, judging from the speeches of its leaders even since they entered the Churchill Government, is there to this day. If you know of some other recognized form of socialism of a wholly different character and colour from the socialism of Stalin, it would be interesting if you would define that form and define it, not in the language of vague electioneering platitudes, but in definite, meaningful terms which can be translated into legislation.

You seek to make it appear that I spoke against "a fair deal and greater social security for the broad masses of the people," and that I was arguing that the future must be "simply a reincarnation of the past." In using such language, you were not speaking the truth. I made it very clear in the short speech I made that I was by no means satisfied with things as they stand, and went so far as to say that as soon as any specific legislation could be shown to lead to a wider and more equitable distribution of the world's goods among the people who work therefor, that moment the case for such legislation was established. I said that if socialism is to be substituted, it would have to be accompanied by force and had always been so accompanied. It would be difficult, I think, for an editor who regards the very thought of socialism as a "nightmare" logically to deny the truth of my words.

You are equally far from fact in your scornful references to what you describe as my "consistently destructive" attitude toward the war effort. I am enclosing three pamphlets containing five speeches which I have made in the Senate—the only ones on the war effort in general—and I would be glad if you would select any portion from these somewhat extended remarks which you can truthfully describe as "destructive."

(over)

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