

Despair Island Robinson Crusoe

By W. E. HARDENBURG

Hopelessly out of her course, the good ship floundered over the trackless waters, rolling clumsily from side to side as the wild waves dashed over her.

The situation was desperate. Hours passed. The storm increased. At last land was sighted, and hope once more began to pervade the hearts of the despairing sailors.

The derelict drifted steadily landward.

Finally, with a crash and a jar, the maddened vessel struck upon a reef. The end had come.

Ten minutes later the crew were being dashed helplessly about the swirling waters, clinging with all their strength to the pieces of wreckage they had been able to grasp.

Just as their strength appeared to be completely spent, their feet touched the sand of the shelving beach.

The men were saved!

As they emerged, dripping from water their eyes fell upon the figure of a man. He was seated on a rock, under the shade of a tree, and over his knees rested a double-barreled shotgun. As the shipwrecked officers approached, he pointed the gun at them and said:

"Say, you fellows, keep back there! What the devil do you think you're doing here on my land, anyway?"

The men stared in astonishment, confusion. They did not know what to say. Finally, one of them stammered out:

"Why, er—I'm sure I don't know. This storm blew us here. That's all I know about it."

The man with the gun paused and seemed to reflect. "Well," he said finally, "one thing is certain: You fellows have no right here on my island. Still, I don't want to be mean about it, but—"

"Oh, h—l, man, you can't be inhuman enough to kill us all off. Besides, we have no other place to go to. Here we are and here we've got to live," said one of the sailors impatiently.

"Well, as I said before," resumed the man with the gun, "I want to do the right thing by you fellows. But my vested interests here must not be injured, so if you'll all agree to do exactly as I tell you, why, I'll let you stay here. Do you all agree?"

"I guess we'll have to, seeing that you've got the drop on us," exclaimed the sailors collectively.

"Well, since you all agree, you can come along with me up to my house, and I'll give you something to eat," he remarked with a smile of satisfaction.

The propertyless ones followed him up to the house in silence. It was a little cave hollowed out under a rock. As soon as they entered the man with the gun whistled shrilly. A negro appeared directly.

"Here, Friday, give these fellows a line of talk and then something to eat." And with that the man who owned the island entered an inner room and rested from his labors.

The negro then delivered a long harangue to the hungry sailors, touching upon the great mercy of the lord in permitting the man with the gun to deliver them from their extremity; how thankful they ought to be to the said man with the gun for his loving-kindness toward them; their duty to carry out the agreement they had voluntarily made with him; how they must work hard to repay him for the trouble and inconvenience they were causing him; and a host of like phrases.

Then he went out and got a few crusts of dry bread which he gave them with an unctuous smile of charity.

The next morning, one of the sailors was detailed by the owner of the island to wait upon him and the negro; another to keep the house clean; and a third to supply him and the negro with fish, fowl, and other dainties every day. The rest were directed to build a rough shack for themselves.

This was soon accomplished and the workers started to make some clothing for themselves as they were in rags, but the owner, pointing out the need for more foodstuffs, directed them to prepare more land for cultivation. So the workers let the clothes question go, and, pitching in with a will, soon had an ample supply of rice, casava, and other staples under cultivation.

All this time they had been feeding on crusts, bits, scraps, etc., but as the negro had advised them to be contented and had pointed out that the supply was insufficient, they had been satisfied. The man detailed to furnish dainties for the owner of the island and the negro reported, however, that THEY had an abundance of food. This, the propertyless ones, agreed was quite fitting and proper, for a man must live in accordance with his station in life.

When they had finished the shack,

man with the gun appeared and without more ado, shot two of them. The rest clamored for mercy, and the strike was off.

As the bodies of the two strikers were being thrown into the pit, the negro again addressed the workers upon the sacredness of property rights and the duty of living up to agreements. He finished up by reading some more extracts from the book about the muck inheriting the earth.

So the workers built the form, even as their employer had directed them. But they also began to think.

About this time the original agitator was released and put to work again. And from this time forth he and his fellow agitators kept up a continual campaign of education. They pointed out to the other workers the sickening hypocrisy of the negro and the brutality of the owner of the island. They showed how they had not benefited in the slightest from all the work they had done. They revealed the folly of a system which kept the idlers in luxury at the expense of the workers. They denounced the ignorance that induced the workers to listen to the one-sided advice of the negro and his sanctimonious extracts from the awe-inspiring book. They indicated the waste that ensued when one class had more than it could use properly. In short, they pointed out to their fellows the injustice and unreasonableness of the whole system, even the claim of the man with the gun to the ownership of the island.

As time drew on, without bringing any cessation of their labors or any improvement in their condition, the workers began to see that the agitators' words rang true. But they desired to know how conditions could be bettered. They pointed to the result of the strike.

Then the agitators outlined their scheme. "The negro and his master are perfectly useless," they said, "their position of authority is based, not on any knowledge or superiority they may have, but upon their possession of the fire-arms. Now, union is strength, and if we once unite, we can easily capture these weapons. And then—we shall destroy them. Hereafter, let principles rule, not arms. Let us work in common and let us all receive the full value of our work. We need no masters, no bosses. We did the work before for those parasites; let us do it now for ourselves. If those men wish to earn their living, let them do so, let them receive all they earn; we have no right to deprive them of the right to live and to enjoy living."

And the rest of the workers finally agreed, not without enthusiasm and hope, but mainly because they saw they could do nothing to render their condition any worse. They tried it as a last resource.

So they selected discreet workers from among them to get possession of the arms upon which the authority of the man who owned the island rested.

These men watched their chance, and one day, when the owner of the guns and his negro were sleeping in the heat of the afternoon, dreaming of more "improvements," they quietly appropriated the death-dealing weapons and gently deposited them in the bosom of Mother Ocean.

Then they aroused the slumberers, explained to them the new position of affairs and together with the other workers set down and ate the first square meal they had had since landing on the island.

Some time later the man who had once been owner of the island was heard to say to the negro:

"Do you know, comrade, I feel a good deal better than I did before. A couple of hours work a day is just what one wants to enjoy the fruit of that work."

"Yes," replied the former lieutenant, "and I find that doing something useful myself is far better and nobler than forcing someone else to do it for you."

"And we," chimed in the former propertyless ones, "find it much pleasanter to get the full fruits of our decreased labors than to get crusts and scorn for doing it all."

Everyone was satisfied.

And all found life worth living.

The boy scout movement is being boosted by the Christian church. The churches of Christ, the Man of Peace, have taken hold of the job of teaching boys fresh from babyhood the horrors of war and the duty of cultivating the spirit of barbarous slavery. This does not prove that the Boy Scout Movement is good. It proves on the contrary that the Christian churches of Canada are hitherto organizations for the cherishing of hate, malice and murder. It proves that the Christian churches are recreant to the purpose for which they were originally established.

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SOCIALISM DEFINED

By CHARLES H. KERR

The word Socialism is a growing word. Most dictionary definitions tell only what the word used to mean. The latest dictionary definitions tell what Socialism looks like from the outside. But the word has come to stand for a very definite thing, that is to say, for a movement which started with the Communist Manifesto of 1848, and which now enrolls many millions of workers in all civilized lands. They know better than the dictionary-makers what Socialism means. These words of Liebknecht, a German Socialist, who until his death knew perhaps better than any other man the spirit of modern Socialism, explain briefly and clearly:

WHAT SOCIALISM IS NOT

Pity for poverty, enthusiasm for equality and freedom, recognition of social injustice and a desire to remove it, is not Socialism. Condemnation of wealth and respect for poverty, such as we find in Christianity and other religions, is not Socialism. The communism of early times, as it was before the existence of private property, and as it has at all times, and among all peoples been the elusive dream of some enthusiasts, is not Socialism.

In all these appearances, lacking the real foundation of capitalist society with its class antagonisms. Modern Socialism is the child of capitalist society and its class antagonisms. Without these it could not be Socialism and ethics are two separate things. This fact must be kept in mind.

WHAT SOCIALISM IS

Socialism is the international movement of the wage-workers of the world for the destruction of the profit system, under which the tools of production are owned by capitalists, and used for them by wage-workers, and the establishment of a system under which the workers shall own the land, the tools and the product. In other words, Socialism means the overthrow of the capitalist class and the abolition of the capitalist.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM

As Professor Veblen has well said, "The Socialism that inspires hopes and fears today is of the school of Marx. No one is seriously apprehensive of any other so-called Socialist movement." All the Socialist parties of the world are based on the principles first stated by Marx and Engels over sixty years ago. These are:

1. **ECONOMIC DETERMINISM.**—The thoughts and feelings of any great mass of people, the customs they follow, the laws they make, the praise and the blame they express for different kinds of acts—all these are the natural and inevitable result of the way they get their living, the way they supply themselves with food and other necessities.

Apply this law to present-day Canadians, and you will find them divided into two groups. The smaller, but up to now the stronger group, consists of capitalists, who live in comfort with little or no labor, because the people of the other group have to work for them.

The capitalists believe that to make profits from the labor of wage-workers is good, while for a wage-worker to steal from a capitalist or even to diminish his profits by taking part in a strike is bad. And the capitalists employ teachers, preachers and editors who hypnotize many wage-workers into thinking just as the capitalists do. But the more intelligent wage-workers have developed a new moral code of their own: they praise the worker who is loyal to the interests of this class, and they hate worst of all the SCAB—the traitor.

2. **SURPLUS VALUE.**—The wage-worker gets, on an average, what it costs him to live, no more, no less. The things he makes, which Socialists call commodities, exchange at just about their values, that is, according to the amount of labor required to make each commodity. Capitalists buy and sell these commodities. But the wage-worker has only one commodity to sell—his labor-power. He sells it for its value. But in two or three hours of the day he produces the equivalent of his wages; then he works from six to ten hours longer. In these hours he produces what Socialists call SURPLUS-VALUE for the capitalists.

3. **THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**—This surplus value now belongs to the capitalists, because they OWN the land, the machinery, the raw materials. They pay the laborers their wages and they take the rest. And as machinery improves, the capitalist's share of the product ever grows larger, the worker's smaller. The capitalists think this is right; so do the "good" workers, the ones who believe in the morals that the capi-

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Publishing Company, Inc., Cowanville,
P.O. W. U. Corron, General Manager and
Editor, H. A. Wren, Sec. Treas. and Busi-
ness Manager.