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ONTARIO CONVENTION

The convention of the Ontario Socialists held at the Finnish Hall, Toronto, on April 15th and 16th will be a historic one in the annals of the revolution. There was a new spirit over the convention, a spirit of hope, of enthusiasm, of practical work. From the date of this Toronto convention will be reckoned the building of a solid and stable movement.

All Socialist movements go through the stage of nebulous thought and agitation. Each Socialist has the right of advocating everything and anything as an immediate demand. There is the cry for revolutionary activity, for the tearing down of capitalism, but plans of how this will be done are not given. There is just the agitation and the pointing out that wage slavery is here and must be made to go.

The Canadian movement has suffered from lack of clearness on many points. Many Socialists become hypnotized with an idea and they consider that this idea is the only idea possible for a Socialist to follow. Consequently we have enthusiastic Socialists who strive to make the Socialist movement follow their ideas. If the Socialists do not follow the ideas laid down then the Socialists are reckoned to be no Socialists and are read out of the party or the would-be leaders retire from the party and adopt disruptive tactics.

The Ontario Socialist movement has suffered from these symptoms of youth. The convention of 1910 was gloomy. There was a spirit of antagonism abroad. Factions were rife and these factions resolved to triumph or split the party. The 1910 convention was not a failure although apparently so. It gave opportunity to the Socialists to perceive what factions strife would do. It prepared the way for the spirit of 1911 that pervaded the assembly at Finnish Hall.

The delegates came prepared to fight on the floor of the convention for what they considered to be the best tactics and the best line of political activity. But they came resolved that a united movement was worth a good deal and prepared to submit to the will of the majority on questions of constitution, platform and tactics, even although they considered such constitution, platform and tactics to be partially erroneous. This was apparent and consequently the delegates felt a comradeship, the one towards the other, even although their ideas on many minor questions were antagonistic. The delegates remembered that they were fighting capitalism not Socialists.

This mood of mind common to all produced a marvellous effect upon the spirit of the assembly. There was hope. There was the bond of union produced by the knowledge of a common enemy. There was the desire to get into active work. It was the same human trait upon which Bismarck worked when he unified the warring states of Germany by rousing the various states to enthusiasm against the common enemy of Austria and the common enemy, France.

There were thirty-two delegates present with seventy-one votes and representing a membership of eleven hundred and ninety-six paid up Socialists. The various locals were allowed one delegate for the first sixteen members and an additional delegate for every additional membership of twenty. If only one delegate attended he could vote the whole membership of his local. The following were the locals represented with the number of delegates and voting strength. Toronto had twelve delegates in attendance. Comrades Miss Nesbitt, Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Bellemare, and Comrades Bellemare, Franklyn, Zalkind, McCall, Buckley, Allquist, Syrjain, Lindala and Shepard. Port Arthur Finnish local sent one delegate, Comrade Geo. Mekela with fifteen votes. Negipon, 1 delegate. Comrade N. Niemi with two votes. This is a Finnish local. Port William, Finnish, sent Comrade C. Kukkel with seven votes. Kakabeka Falls, Comrade Bryan, one vote. Cobalt, English, Comrade J. Gorman, 2 votes. Cobalt, Finnish, Comrade E. Liana, 7 votes. Porcupine, Comrade McGuire, 2 votes. Brockville, Comrade Koenig, 1 vote. Guelph, Comrade Cunningham, 1 vote. Galt, Comrade Glaspell, 1 vote. Hespeler, Comrade Horn, 2 votes. Woodstock, Comrade Simmonds, 1 vote. Berlin, Comrades Prager, Luft, Morrish, 3 votes. Sellwood, Finnish, Comrade Pennanen, 4 votes. Lindsay, Comrade Goodwin, 1 vote. Sault Ste. Marie, Finnish, Comrade O. Latvenen, 6

votes. Carson Mine, Comrade S. Carpen, 3 votes. The Executive Committee sent Comrade H. Martin of Berlin as a delegate with a voice but without a vote.

The Finnish Comrades had 44 votes out of the 71. They could have swung the convention to anything they desired. But they did not do so. They were prepared to let the English Comrades frame the constitution and platform to a great extent. On many points they did not act unitedly but voted partially with the impossibilists and partially with the immediate demanders.

There were two points upon which the opinion was most divided. These two questions were those of inserting a set of immediate demands in the platform and of recognizing the necessity of economic as well as political action.

The first question dealt with these two was the question of the need of economic activity. It was a question of inserting the words "and economic" in the last line of the clause of the platform which reads, "The struggle of the working-class against capitalist exploitation necessitates a struggle between master and slave for control of the political and economic power."

The necessity for economic action was recognized by the majority and the two words were inserted. The reasons for recognizing the economic struggle may be set forth as follows. There are two classes in the capitalist state, the exploited and the exploiters. The state is the instrument controlled by the master class to keep the slaves in bondage producing surplus values for the master class. The masters do this by using the state to maintain their private ownership of the means of wealth production. The Socialists aim at capturing the state which is the instrument of the master class in order to abolish the master class, to vest the ownership of the means of wealth production in the collective working class, and then, the necessity of the state having vanished, the state will either be abolished, or as Engels says, will die of itself. The Socialists aim, through political action, to capture the political state and to turn it against the class in whose interest it is maintained. Now Socialists recognize that men are guided by their economic interests and that it is only when a sufficient number of persons become expropriated slaves and awakened to the knowledge of their slave condition, that the capture of the political state will be possible. But, then, its capture may not be necessary for the explosive force of an organized slave class on the economic field may blow the capitalist class and their chosen instrument the capitalist state into smithereens. The feudal state was not captured by the bourgeoisie. The rising bourgeois class did not become feudal lords, nor bishops, nor kings. They did not capture the offices of feudalism in order to abolish them. The revolution took place and the feudal state fell with the feudal class. In the same manner the Socialist economic organization is preparing within the shell of capitalism and when the time is ripe the economic slave class may burst asunder the bonds of the capitalist state at the same time as they abolish the capitalist class.

It was the recognition of this possible outcome that made the majority of the convention recognize the necessity of struggling on the economic field for more power in the shop, wider organizations of the slaves, and the raising of the spirit of rebellion on the economic as well as on the political field.

The question of the insertion of immediate demands was a different proposition. These were a compromise. There were many immediate demanders. There were many who did not want immediate demands. The immediate demanders won and the minority will bow to the will of the majority. But the majority have gone home to their locals and there will be a campaign of education and a campaign for the extension of the membership of the minority locals to fill them with class conscious workers who look to no palliatives from the capitalist politicians, in order that at the next convention the immediate demands may be removed.

There may be said to be three reasons why the immediate demands were inserted. The first and most important is that the capitalist class is becoming decadent and the working class is rising to power. Any reforms that may be wrested from capitalist politicians will only have the effect of weakening the capitalists and of strengthening the workers. A rising class is not content with little. It wants much. Give it a little and it will become conscious of its power and will demand more. Its appetite grows with the food it feeds on.

The second reason may be said to be one of tactics. The Independent Labor Party is coming into the field with a string of a few immediate demands as their ultimate aim. The I. L. P. organizers say that the Socialists are wild dreamers who will grant nothing to relieve the workers here and now. With a string of immediate demands the Socialists can go to the workers and say, "Here is what we are striving to get for you now. But these are not all. These are just a beginning. We are out to help you get not only these, but something vaster, the whole value of what you produce."

The third reason may be said to be one of unity. The Socialist Party of Canada makes its immediate demand to be anything that will help the working-class. The Socialist Party does not specify what this anything may be. There is no collective wisdom of the united Socialist movement to direct the individual, elected Socialist in what direction he is to bend his efforts. Thus we see the S. P. of C. refusing to declare in what manner the Socialist elected members shall act, sneering at all sorts of palliative measures, and we see the M. P. P.'s elected by this party bringing in measures for the fortnightly payment of wage slaves, for the inspection of mines, etc. It was partially to obviate this inconsistent policy of the S. P. of C. that the new Canadian Socialist Federation adopted a small string of immediate demands.

The platform and constitution satisfied none of the delegates. No platform and no constitution ever does. But the delegates felt they were a movement and they felt that the movement was bound to grow. They felt that they each could sacrifice a little bit of their pet theories in order that a great movement could develop and that by the individuals arriving at some common plan of action a social bond could be originated with the least amount of individual friction.

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The Executive Committee of the Canadian Socialist movement will supervise the propaganda. But the locals will have a say as to what propaganda will suit their local conditions. Here is the experience of one local. This local had built up a fine movement. It had the right to the streets and the police were friendly. A travelling Socialist agitator landed in that town, got on the stump against the will of the local Socialists, used vile language and called the police all sorts of names just escaping being arrested for obscene language. The police protected him from being mauled by an indignant crowd of workers. The police afterwards told the local Socialists that it was hard to be forced to protect such a person from the indignation of his hearers. Under the Canadian Socialist Federation the locals will be allowed to have the oversight over the local propaganda, subject to its being in harmony with the constitution and platform of the party.

Have you noticed how laws are being passed to deprive citizens of the right of carrying weapons? The slaves are to be made defenceless. They are to be made to appeal to capitalist courts of law when they get into trouble and we all know that the courts of Canada from the bewigged judges on the bench down through the talking lawyers to the doorkeepers at the outer gates are nothing but the instruments of triumph and legalized labor thieves. The capitalists are in control but not for long. For the slaves are thinking and thoughts among a slave class are the dynamite bombs that will hurl enthroned injustice and triumphant robbery into oblivion.

There is cosmic determinism as well as economic determinism. At present economic determinism binds men down. But when Socialism comes and the necessities of life shall be the common right of all, economic determinism will disappear and cosmic determinism will be allowed to have free play.

The Socialist movement is the only live, enthusiastic political movement of today.

The British flag waves its folds over millions of slaves.

The big thief goes to Parliament. The little thief goes to jail.

The Christian churches have made a firm and fast alliance with mammon and the slave driving capitalists occupy the chief pews thereof.

The capitalist says that capitalism is all right because some workers have become capitalists. A slave system is not made just because a few slaves can escape slavery and become slave owners.

"Do not draw it milder, Comrade Cotton." This was the smiling comment of several delegates at the Toronto Convention. A wage slave had told me to make the paper milder, but the Comrades evidently think it tame enough.

The New Canadian Socialist Federation was so organized as to give the rank and file of the Socialist membership as much power as possible and to give the Executive Committee as little power as possible. It was also framed to give the individual locals as much local autonomy as possible. The Ontario Socialists desire to make the movement as democratic as it can be made.

A large number of wage slaves have been set to work at Prince Rupert to build a bigger jail to accommodate the strikers who were arrested for rioting. In olden slave days slaves were used to whip slaves who revolted against the orders of the slave owners. In Canada they use 'em to build jails for recalcitrant slaves. Yet we are a free people. Laurier says so. Glory be.

At Toronto on April 22nd, the idea that the Boy Scout movement should be a recruiting agency for the rank and file of the Canadian militia was strongly criticized at the first annual meeting of the Ontario Scoutmasters Association by some of those present. What else is the Boy Scout movement for but to create the military spirit among boys and to teach them to be fit instruments in the hands of the capitalist class to do bloody execution on revolting Canadian wage slaves? The few sentimentalists in the Boy Scout movement had better get out of the organization if they want to be held in respect by decent Canadians.

R. L. Borden up at Ottawa has a bone to pick with the Liberals. It appears that a judgeship has been vacant in Prince Edward Island for six months. This is a good fat berth and the Liberals have been holding it open for some lame duck of a politician. Borden complains. Law is not being administered. Capitalist extortion is minus a tribunal where it can successfully plead its legal right. What does it matter whether the judge is appointed or not? When laws are unjust it matters little whether there is an officer to enforce them or not. But to Borden it makes a great difference. He is a politician partizan of capitalist robbery and he complains when the robbers are not given a robber tribunal against the exploited. This shows where Borden stands on the side of capitalism for the enforcement of slavery.

Frank Stanfield of Truro, N. S., has been nominated by the Conservatives as their candidate for Colchester county in the coming provincial elections. The Truro Citizen which claims to be a laboring man's paper has this to say of the candidate. "He is one of the most successful men in these provinces and his money is being invested right here in this town where he was born and to Frank Stanfield, more than any other man, must Truro look to in the next few years for an industrial boom." We know that men are governed by their economic interest. Stanfield is a capitalist. Capitalists get their revenues through the exploitation of wage slaves. Stanfield makes his money by the robbery of the workers. The Citizen calls upon the workers to vote for their economic enemy. Stanfield will not bring about the overthrow of wage slavery and the establishment of industrial democracy. No. The laws he will help pass will be to further enslave labor in order that the capitalists may have greater prosperity. The hope of the working class of Colchester county does not lie in the Stanfields. It lies in revolutionary Socialists who will break the industrial tyranny of the Stanfields and give to labor the running of industry and the full social value of the wealth they create.

Watch the Ontario Socialist movement boom.

The capitalist was made to make men mourn.

The working class is robbed by the capitalist class.

Socialism does not come to destroy morality. It comes to destroy capitalism which prevents people from being moral.

The Christian ministers of Canada are wage slaves whose tongues are wagged as the slavery paying capitalists direct.

There are many capitalists who give of their revenues to aid in the abolition of the saloons. It pays them in dollars and cents for whisky drinking slaves are unprofitable creatures.

A merger of the shoe factories of Quebec capitalized at twenty million dollars has been formed to regulate the output, eliminate duplicate efforts and to fight the labor unions. The capitalist class is feeling the revolt of the slaves.

There is discontent throughout Canada. The capitalists do not mind that in itself. But the Socialists are organizing that discontent and directing it so that it may abolish the capitalist class in an intelligent and effective manner. Wherefore the capitalist class do not like Socialism and would like to destroy it.

A western Comrade had called Cotton's baby food. This remark evidently pleased many of the Ontario Socialists and they want to have Cotton's still keep on handing out the baby food for those wage slaves who have fed on the rotten food of capitalist thought and need the baby food of Socialism to grow strong on.

Comrade Jules Lavigne has evidently captured the hearts of the Ontario Socialists. Many Comrades wanted to know how Comrade Jules was getting on and I heard many declare that Comrade Lavigne was putting up a good fight and wishing there were more of his kind in the fight. They are watching the Springhill struggle closely and a warrior like Jules Lavigne makes them glad.

Another story from Ontario is of an organizer who was unloaded from the railway carriage in a drunken stupor. When he came to he took the stump and thundered for the revolution. Now no Socialist blames that organizer for getting drunk. We are all creatures of heredity and environment. That organizer may be such a brilliant speaker that the people will overlook the fact of his drunkenness and flock to hear him. But the local Socialists who know the particular foibles of their audience should be allowed to say whether it were wise to let the speaker talk of the brotherhood of man and the glorious liberty that is to come under Socialism or whether he should be allowed to proceed quietly on his way where whisky flows more abundantly and where a toadie for a desire for an excess of whisky will make the audience have a brotherly and friendly feeling for the speaker.

Combines raise prices to the people. Therefore, say many people, let us fight the combines. The little bourgeoisie want the workers to go trust busting. The workers won't bite worth a cent. Wherefore the petty bourgeoisie wail about a decadent and spiritless working class. But it is because the workers are getting spunk and spirit that they won't fight the trusts. The working class has got tired of fighting other people's battles. They are out to fight for themselves. The workers are robbed of all they produce save a bare existence. They have got to have this in order to live and produce wealth for the master class. There are different sections of the master class and these sections fight among themselves for the enjoyment of the wealth robbed from labor. Some sections become more powerful than others and get a greater share than the other sections think they ought to have. So the more unsuccessful labor skimmers raise a great howl about combines, not because the combines are skinning labor, but because the combines are not letting the little fellows skin labor as successfully as the little fellows like. Twenty years ago labor might have fought the combines but now they do not. They are uniting to put a stop to all labor skinning whether by a trust or by a free lance operator who wants to skin labor all by his little lonesome.

ANOTHER OUTRAGE

Another outrage has been perpetrated in the United States in the name of law and order. J. J. McNamara, Secretary-Treasurer of the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers with his brother J. B. McNamara, were assaulted in the union headquarters of the Association, Indianapolis, Ind., put in irons, kidnapped by a bunch of private detectives, hustled out of the state in secrecy and hurried to the most notorious city of the Union, Los Angeles, Cal., there to be brought before a prejudiced tribunal and railroaded to the gallows on perjured testimony on the alleged charge of dynamiting the Times building of that city.

The Times building was blown up by gas, not by dynamite. There was a smell of gas throughout the building days before the explosion. The Times building blew upward, dynamite blows downward. The building became a mass of flames in an instant. Dynamite is not inflammable. The neighboring buildings were not injured. Dynamite causes heavy vibrations which shatters glass for miles around. There was not one of the effects of dynamite explosion about the Times disaster. Every indication pointed to gas. It was an identical disaster with that which demolished the Herald building of Montreal causing a loss of thirty-one lives.

There is absolutely nothing to connect McNamara with the explosion. But there is great reason why the capitalist vultures of America want to judiciously murder this man. He has been instrumental in building up a powerful labor organization. The Structural Workers are winning their strike in Los Angeles. Fair means could not beat the slaves. So just as the Colorado mine owners tried to hang Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, the venomous labor haters of Los Angeles are trying to hang McNamara and his associates. They use the repressive powers of the state and a venal judiciary to perform their dirty work.

Besides McNamara thirty union men have been arrested. Twenty more are to be arrested and the Pacific Coast capitalists, backed by every capitalist vulture from Atlantic to Pacific, will strive to send the brains of the labor movement to an ignominious death.

Will American labor stand for it? No. It is rousing to the fight. The slaves are ceasing to squabble over jurisdictional matters and are uniting to face their masters. Turned at bay they realize they must fight. The masters have been preparing this trap. It may be a Haman's gallows that will noose the necks of the American exploiters instead of the necks of the labor officials.

Canadians must be on their guard. The Appeal will take up the fight. Our Canadian politicians hate labor. Aylesworth who refused the Canadian mails to the Appeal for daring to fight for Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, is still a cabinet minister. Lemieux is still the foxy postmaster general who gives fair words and oppresses the Socialist press.

Lemieux and Aylesworth will strive to keep the news from the Canadian people. They will again try to keep the Appeal to Reason from circulating in Canada. Aylesworth is retiring from politics and this old reactionary will strive to help his class to the last. Lemieux will aid him.

We are approaching revolutionary times. The agitation of a century is bursting into the blossom of a revolution and a new social order.

Let Lemieux and Aylesworth, Laurier and Pugsley keep their hands off the revolutionary press. If Lemieux strives to prevent a full knowledge to Canadian slaves there will be such an outburst of wrath among the Canadian people as will make his little soul shiver and the blood coagulate in his labor-hating heart.

The first of May is gone again, and Canada is still disgraced by slave labor. From the coal mines of Nova Scotia, from the cotton mills of Quebec, from the mills and shops of Ontario, from the prairie farms of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, from the cannery factories of British Columbia, go up the heavy groans of slaves. The masters are in the saddle and labor is ridden hard and sore. How long, O wage slaves of Canada will you endure? How long will the red blood of your bodies be as water? How many May days must go by and find you still in slavery? A year of agitation is past. Let the following year be a year of revolt.