

## Western Clarion

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and Current Events.

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VANCOUVER, B. C., MARCH 16, 1922.

### SECRETARIAL NOTES

The Winnipeg comrades report that they have commenced classes on economics and are making headway with public meetings. Their speakers are in demand in addressing other meetings and the point of view of the S. P. of C. is well advertised and well taken.

Local Vancouver No. 1, have had better Sunday meetings since they moved into the Star Theatre. The Star is smaller than the Royal, but its heating plant is in better order. Each Sunday since moving to the Star has seen crowds turned away. Comrade W. A. Pritchard speaks on the 19th on the Paris Commune of 1871. Comrade Earp speaks on the same date on the same subject at North Vancouver.

Comrade Cassidy's article (in this issue) on his tour through the Eastern provinces has been looked for by comrades all over the country for some time. His references to the 'new conscience'—he uses his own graphic language—will be understood by all who have come in contact with it. The lying campaign has had its innings but it has left its mark. The boastful ones who have announced their intention of lying when occasion favors them have succeeded so well in impressing their credentials in this respect on the movement at large that when they chance to tell the truth it is hard to believe them. You can never tell when they are telling the truth. This involves an argument on tactics, of course, and as we fall down in these intricacies the reasons remain a mystery to us.

Frank is a little out of date concerning "The Workers' Guard." "The Workers' Guard" is no more! R. I. P. It followed "The Communist." "The Communist" followed "The Communist Bulletin." Now "The Worker" (Vol. No. 1. sure enough, again) follows "The Workers' Guard." Comrade Kavanaugh is "Editor in chief." There are two associate editors. They'll be able to start an editors' union all on their own.

Comment on the Convention of the W. P. of C. is needless. We refer readers to our remarks in the Clarion made previous to the convention. They are well borne out by the convention itself. They do what has been done in the U. S. A. Their programme is given to them to follow. The W. P. of C. is supposed to "lead" the workers, the bosses in the W. P. of C. "lead" the membership. They act on instructions, changing even their name when required. Dual unionism is abandoned for "boring from within." The O. B. U. is to go back—on instructions.

Repetition is wearisome. We are reminded of the days of our theatre going youth: "Programmes—a penny each!"

The W. P. of C. is off to a "fresh" start. There's nothing new about its program or paper—not even Vol. 1, No. 1.

### RUSSIAN FAMINE RELIEF

Already acknowledged, \$183.35; Geo. Silk (collected), \$29; W. Ellis, \$7; Max Parker, \$2—\$215.35.

### A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN.

(Continued from page 2)

denounce and damn them if they refused to do so—having failed in this they brand these comrades as reactionaries, etc. This kind of tactics may suit the "inner circle" of political adventurers who make up the executive committee of the "Workers' Party," but will be steadily opposed by the Socialist Party of Canada. We have no "jobs" for anybody, but we will continue to propagate the principles of the class struggle, as we have done right along and will warn the workers with whom we come in contact against the liars and bulldozing cowards who make up the directing committee of the newly formed "Workers' Party." There is not much to fear from this new party, which is, after all, a political mulligan, modeled after the same fashion as the first International. Different freak organizations have arisen, from time to time, with the object of reading the burial service over the S. P. of C., but they have all passed away, and the S. P. of C. lives on.

There is no "easy way" to proletarian emancipation; we must convince the working class; and, in proportion as we are assisted in spreading propaganda, so will the time be long or short. The revolution will come in spite of the "actionists," but we must work hard; so, comrades, get on the job, spread the information, but beware of the liars.

## Concerning the State

### QUESTION

Editor, "Western Clarion":

In the review of "Creative Revolution," by Comrade Harrington, in the issue of February 15th, occurs the following paragraph:—

"Aside from the very revolutionary and entirely impossible determination to smash a social institution like the modern State, it seems a pity to proceed to such extreme measures when the State still has many functions to perform. At best all we can hope to do, however revolutionary be our 'urge,' is to change its name."

To let in some more light on this subject, I would like the author of the review to answer the following questions in your columns:—

1. Does the term "State" connote that organization for the administration of society (and consequently coercion where needed), at whose basis we find the police, militia, etc., and upon which basis we find a pyramid of officials tapering to a comparatively small executive at the top of the dominant section of society?

2. In order to introduce a Socialist order must not the present State be disrupted, disorganized, i.e., must not the higher strata of officials be separated from the lower strata, through whom they exercise their power?

3.—Is the present form of government and are the various existing institutions for social administration suitable for working class control, and for a social order in which there is neither private property in the means of wealth production, nor profit?

F. W. THOMPSON.

### ANSWER.

1.—The definition does not completely reveal the meaning of the term, and the figurative pyramid tends to still further cloud the meaning.

### NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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The State is an institution which must develop in every society where a numerically weak group enjoy the entire fruits of that society's toil and is not required to produce or to defend its wealth.

The State has the right to make laws and enforce them; has the right to impose taxes and collect them. Should this right be questioned, those who control the State, must maintain it or give way to those who can, but so long as society endures on the above basis the State must function.

Whether it has a large army or navy, or any at all, depends entirely upon circumstances, which may be social.—the degree to which a society acquiesces in the rights of the State; or geographical,—a flat, densely populated country is more easily controlled than a mountainous, sparsely peopled country. These examples by no means exhaust the circumstances. A State may be autocratic or democratic. The latter form is peculiar to long established societies.

The form of the State, the machinery, the numbers of the officials, their character or power are of minor importance: the sole factor to regard is the State being an institution, of historical growth and manifold character, without which no society having class with conflicting interests could long endure. We know that societies of masters and slaves might exist without the State, such as in feudal society. Under feudalism the master was armed, the worker was not. The State was unnecessary. These, however, never attain to a high state of development.

2.—No. The State must be captured and controlled by the workers, and must be used by them until the property relations which called it into being are dissolved; it will then die out. If we regard past or present history (Russia, for example, Lenin to the contrary notwithstanding) as evidence, this is likely to be a long drawn out process. Man does not readily discard usages to which he is long accustomed. Note the institution of nobility. Of the many factors involved here we offer two: Habits of thought, and the degree to which the abolition of an institution works adversely to the immediate material interests of large sections of society.

3.—To the second part—a change in the economic base results in a change in the social forms and institutions. To the first part of the question, yes. The present form of government and its existing institutions for administration are entirely suitable for working class control. At least as much so as they are for master class control, though, as a matter of fact, the present form of government, or any other form for that matter, is a distinct hindrance to social development, and the business of a country is largely carried on apart from governmental forms. Buckle and Spencer have enumerated many stupid interferences on the part of governments which have been disastrous to the master class as a class, and have instanced many years of legislation, which were consumed in abolishing laws, painfully and conscientiously drawn up. We need not, however, go to history to prove this. We need but take the fearful and wonderful exhibition of wisdom displayed in the Peace Treaty, or the League of Nations, or, to come nearer home, prohibition, or the sales tax in this country.

Any form would do. The Methodist Conference would do if it expressed the wishes of the majority. The magic formula does not lie in Parliaments, Soviets, shop stewards or any other form, but in the expressed wishes and desires of a people who are determined at all hazards to realize those wishes and desires. If the Tuilleries is denied them than a tennis court will do; if the Duma is composed of pre-revolutionary timber, then recourse must be made to the post-revolutionary Soviets; but—such is the character of man—little is changed but the name, the form remains. We may name it Commissar or Minister, Soviet or Parliament, but the great issue, the abiding issue, the sole issue is—what do the workers want, wagedom or freedom. The rest is leather and prunella.

J. HARRINGTON.