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CAPITALIST FARMING

I attended the 'Farmers' Convention in the Town Hall at Cowansville the other day. I listened to the talks given the farmers by the instructors from the experimental farm at Ottawa and by the teachers in the Agricultural College established by Sir Wm. C. MacDohald at Ste Anne de Bellevue, P. Q. The talks were exceedingly interesting and the farmers could learn much of advantage to them from the discourses.

But there was one defect. The defect was as to how the farmers were to get hold of the money or capital with which to put the things they had heard into operation. One farmer asked information with regard to a certain lot of twenty acres of poor soil on his farm. The lecturer advised the farmer to plant the twenty acres with clover seed. Sow the clover seed thick, twenty pounds to the acre. That was the advice given. I went to a local seed seller to get the price of clover seed. The price quoted was twenty cents a pound. That means that the farmer would have to have eighty dollars with which to buy the clover seed for his poor land. Now the lecturer did not give one hint as to how the farmer was to get that eighty dollars. The speaker insisted that the investment would pay big returns.

The speaker insisted that the farmers did not work their lands to advantage. They gave good advice upon what the farmers should do. They should use seed drills. Where the money was to come from to buy the seed drills the lecturers did not state. But they insisted that seed drills were a good investment. Then they spoke about improving the herds of cattle, advising that the farmers should get good male animals. Male animals come high but the speakers neglected to state where the money was to come from with which to purchase male animals. The speakers insisted upon the benefit of silos. Every dairy farmer should have two silos. Where the money was to come from with which to build the silos the lecturers did not state. But they insisted upon the fact that silos would pay well as an investment. They spoke upon the benefit of intensive cultivation. Some of them asserted that each acre of land should support a cow. In the Eastern Townships the average is ten acres to a cow. The speakers dwelt upon the fact that it would pay the farmers to hire men to keep their corn lands and wheat lands thoroughly broken up and rebroken up until the crops come up. Where the farmers were to get the money with which to hire wage slaves, the speakers did not declare. But they insisted that wage labor as an investment on farm lands was a good investment.

I was much interested in the comments of the farmers as they left the hall. Many of them laugh at Socialist doctrines, but they see the point in practice. The trend of the comments of the farmers was that it was all very well for the experimental farm fellows with the government funds at their back or those of the Agricultural College with a million-
aire back of it to come to the Eastern Townships farmers and tell them what they did. But if the lecturers would tell the farmers how to get the money in the first place to carry on farming as laid down by the lecturers, the farmers would be better pleased.

Farming, like all other industries under capitalism, is being drawn in to the capitalist mode of production. If you have the money to build good barns and buy good cattle and clover seed and build silos and buy corn cutters and drills and harrows and hire wage slaves, then you will get big returns. But if you have not the money or the credit with the controllers of the centralized accumulations of capital, then your goose is cooked.

The government lecturers simply show to the farmers what benefit will arise from capitalized farming. Any Socialist almost could do the same thing. Those government lecturers are begging the farmers to revolutionize their methods. They declare that it is an economic necessity. They are right.

But the farmers are wiser than the lecturers for the farmers know that it is lack of capital that is shoving them to the wall. They are all struggling to get hold of the necessary control over accumulated capital in order to become capitalist farmers. Many of them who are losing in the fight are ripe for the Socialist doctrines of working class control of the coming machines, for the farmers are finding that the race

is hard and that many of them are doomed to failure in the battle for control under an individualist system.

The working farmers keep their wives and children busy producing agricultural wealth. In the government returns the work of the farmer and the help he actually pays alone is taken into account. For that reason the income of the farmer is put down as being far larger than what he himself earns by his own labor. When a factory hand works with his children in a factory, each person is reckoned as receiving a separate income. Government statistics are frequently used to bamboozle the farmer into thinking he is better off than he really is.

EQUALIZATION OF TAXATION

A few years ago the cry "equalization of taxation" was the cry of the farmers. They felt the burden of protection. Canada's industrial establishments were of hothouse growth. The farmers found they paid high for goods and they felt the heavy burden of indirect taxation. Their cry therefore was for equal taxation.

Today there is an Independent Labor Party in the Maritime Provinces. The members of this party feel that they get poor wages. They have the foolish idea that their low wages are due to the fact that taxes are put on industry and not on the land. They do not realize that wages tend to the barest means of subsistence and that the reserve army of the unemployed, always clamoring for work, keep the employed workers at work for poor wages. The capitalists and labor thieves benefit. These workers of the I. L. P. are in economic darkness as to the true remedy for their ills. They think that the large profits of the manufacturers and coal barons are a necessary condition for the workers getting their jobs. They think that these profits are stationary and if taxation was placed upon land then the amount they would get in wages would rise. So the I. L. P. is out with a plank that will hit the farmers. This is the plank, "Tax reform by lessening taxation on industry and increasing it upon land values."

The farmers want equalization of taxation. The workers want taxation placed on land values. There are the two antagonistic planks of the laboring farmer and the wage worker. The two great classes of workers are thus divided and fighting one another, instead of uniting to fight against the common foe, the appropriator of unpaid labor.

The farmer who tills his farm, who has the farming machinery necessary to farm well all paid for, and who has a group of husky sons to help him carry on his farm, is in a far better position than is the wage worker. He is in a better position because he has control over the land and tools with which he must work to produce wealth. The farmer is robbed it is true but this robbery is due to the waste of doing business under the capitalist system and the competition among farmers in the sale of their goods to middlemen who reap a profit without doing useful work.

Still the farm owning farmer is better off than the wage worker in certain instances. The wage worker has no control over the machines at which he must work and is in the position of the tenant farmer who has to pay the owner of the land all he produces apart from a bare living in order to be allowed to farm at all.

The workers, seeing the better position of the farm owning farmer, concludes that the farmer is getting out of paying his fair share of taxes and want to have him taxed. The I. L. P. chaps see but dimly.

Let not the cry go up, "tax the land." Let the cry go up from the wage workers, "We want full control and management of the machines with which we have to work." The remedy of the ills of the wage worker is not to tax the farmer. That would benefit the industrial robbers without benefiting the wage worker.

The true remedy for the working farmer and the working laborer is to demand full control over and appropriation of the social wealth produced by them, to abolish the labor thieving parasites that batten on both of them and then both classes of wealth producers will get all they can ask for in justice—the wealth they themselves produce.

WHAT WE GAIN

There are many things which Canada has and which the reformers of the U. S. have to fight for. The reformers of the U. S. want a pure food act. The Dominion government has enacted a pure food act and has appointed officials to test samples and to prosecute offenders. In the U. S. adulteration is rampant. In the U. S. the government is run by the railroads. In Canada the railroads are frequently pulled up short by the Railway Commission. In the U. S. the fight for conservation is on. In Canada the conservation of natural resources is to the front and the government is backing it. In the U. S. the judges are corrupt. In Canada the judges fulfil the law without thought of personal gain beyond their salaries.

These are the things we gain over the U. S. But capitalism is so constructed that misery walks abroad even under honest capitalist judges. The subduing of a nation to the fetish of rent, interest and profit must necessarily cause false ideals to be held up for admiration, and throws the energy of the best and brightest brains into the struggle for gathering up the results of the unpaid toil of others. We have our multimillionaires and prostitutes. We have our hunger stricken and our champagne drinkers. We have our army of unemployed and our overdriven workers. We have our stock exchanges and commercial crisis. We have our little business men being shoved to the wall and the giant trusts fattening on the ruined lives of competitors. The capitalist system produces rottenness.

Canada is vast. Three million square miles with a population of but seven millions. Europe with the same area contains over two hundred million people. Yet our poor starve in Montreal while our wheat is exported to Europe.

What do we gain by our reforms? We gain a plutocracy which is a loss. We gain a slumbering people who should be awake. We gain an admiration for false standards of success which is a detriment.

Capitalism cannot work without corruption. When that corruption is produced it is bound to waken the people. An awakened people is bound to result in Socialism.

Did you ever hear of the right of eminent domain? This right is largely discussed in the text-books of law. The right of eminent domain belongs to all governments. This means that the right of the government of all the people is stronger than the right of any private citizen or any group of private citizens. It is under the law of eminent domain that railways expropriate land and troops commandeer food from private citizens in time of riot. This right of eminent domain is exercised by the government in power on behalf and in the interest of the class to which the government belongs. That class now is the capitalist class. But the day is coming when it will be the government of the working class. When that time comes the workingclass government will expropriate the property of the parasites by the "right of eminent domain" and the revolution will be accomplished.

The Toronto Mail and Empire in an editorial takes the Liberal government to task for granting farm lands without demanding that the settlers cultivate the land in such a manner as to conserve the soil. The demand for social control over the farmers' actions is growing. Canadians are looking into the future and want the food supplies of the future to be protected. More and more there will be social interference with the farmers' methods of production. Conditions are shaping themselves so that individual control yields place to social control. The farmers will either have to get into the way of social production with social ownership and social appropriation, or they will have to put up with individual proprietorship and watch the big fellows get the cream.

The T. Eaton Co. is enlarging its factory at Winnipeg. A. E. Rea & Co. is enlarging its store at Montreal, and the mail order business is growing all over Canada. Watch the little store keepers become worried.

The farmer thinks he owns his land and has a clear title to it. Let him not pay his taxes and see how quick his alleged proprietorship will vanish and he will be grieved lose from his land.

JOE AINEY ELECTED

The results of the election in Montreal were received with great joy by the reformers. The heavy capitalists had interested themselves in the election and as a result the men they backed got in by an overwhelming majority. Ainey received thirty thousand votes, Dupuis twenty-two thousand, Wanklyn twenty-two thousand, and Lachapelle twenty thousand votes. These four men were the citizens' slate for Board of Control. The other fourteen candidates ran behind. The next highest vote for a member on the Board was eight thousand votes. Comrade Albert St. Martin received one thousand and seventy-one votes and Comrade Edmund Western received seven hundred and seventy-one.

The noticeable thing is that Joe Ainey, the representative of the workmen received half as many votes again as did the highest appropriator of unpaid labor. This shows that the workmen are beginning to work together. This shows that economic conditions are producing a feeling of solidarity among the workers for men of their own ranks. It is true that Ainey ran on the capitalist ticket. But the result shows that it was a labor man the workers to a great extent voted for.

If Ainey will wake up he can do much good. He is put in a place of power and is in a position to do good work for labor. There are many men who are watching with interest which way Ainey will jump when the test comes.

Just an example of what may happen. Peter Lyall is a millionaire contractor of Montreal. Peter is a labor union smasher. Peter does not like to see labor organized to get high wages. Peter has done his best to keep the workers humble and poor. Owing to Peter's efforts the wages of carpenters and joiners and other workers engaged in the building trades of Montreal are about twenty per cent below a fair living wage as known to union men. This Peter is proud of.

Joe Ainey is a carpenter and joiner. He has run up against Peter in the past. A few months ago Joe was calling Peter all the horrid words he could lay his tongue to. Joe then was a labor leader and was running up against capital as embodied in the person of disagreeable and labor smashing Peter.

When election time came round Peter was one of the Citizens' Committee to see to the election of a clean reform slate. Peter was one of the men who chose Joe to go on the slate. Since then, during the campaign Joe has been shaking hands with Peter and they have been acting like long lost political brothers.

But an election is only a truce in the warfare of capital against labor. The fight will be renewed. Many persons therefore are interested in watching what Ainey will do when his political friend Peter and the union men of whom he is an officer renew their fight. Will their be a strike? If there is will Ainey stand by his union against capitalist poisoning and capitalist guns? Or will he watch the fight from his Valhalla of five thousand dollars a year and a soft job and sick on the police upon his erstwhile fighting mates. The situation is interesting and no doubt Joe will be tried out and the stuff of which he is made revealed.

Throughout the ages the denunciations of the workers have been hurled against the exploiters. Now at last we have a Labor Minister in Canada who has solved the problem according to his own satisfaction. Let the laborer be content to be robbed by the capitalists and there will be harmony between the forces of robbery and the robbed.

In 1901 there were 544,000 farmers and seventy-four thousand farm laborers in Canada. In the same year there were about fifteen thousand manufacturers with 308,000 wage-plugs under them. Socialism will not hurt the farmer because the farmer as shown by statistics is a working plug himself.

Capitalism makes criminals, and the capitalist state finds its functionals in jailing and hanging the criminals—anything to get rid of the waste.

The capitalist is of interest to Socialism only in his capacity as the possessor of capital.

The trustification of the land will come with the giant farm machinery.

Under capitalism the products of a man's hands enslave him.

Because a man owns a farm he is not necessarily a farmer.

Every farmer who owns his own farm has to pay toll to banks and to the army and navy in the way of taxes.

The farmer thinks he has a clear title to his land. Let a railroad want a right-of-way through his garden-sass patch and see how quick he will lose his title to his land.

Capitalist development is in full swing in Canada, but as our politicians believe in the capitalist system, they are not to be blamed too much. It is the system that produces conscientious capitalist politicians.

The farmer thinks he has a clear title to his land. He has as long as he keeps hustling like sin to pay the bills coming due and no accidents strikes his cows or the draught does not hit him, and the government or a railway does not want to expropriate him.

In 1901 over ten per cent of the farms of Canada were rented. A larger proportion were mortgaged. This in Canada during the years when free land was given away. The farmer who does not own his own farm is as great a slave as is the wageworker.

The farmers produce half the wealth of Canada while there are only twenty-eight farmers in the Dominion House. The wage worker and the soil worker are both only working plugs and consequently do not get much representation in the political arena.

The Intercolonial Railway has a surplus. It usually has a deficit. The surplus is produced by "economy." Five hundred employees were sacked and their wages now become accumulated capital. Whether it is a private company or a government railway it is the wage workers who suffer.

There are what are known as gentlemen farmers, men who hire other farmers to do the actual work and who live on the unpaid labor of these tenant farmers or farm laborers. Such gentlemen farmers are parasites. In Great Britain they call them Dukes and Lords and bow down to them. Socialism will abolish the farm parasite as it will the industrial parasite.

When a railway magnet wants money, he goes to the political gang in control of the people's money and gets it handed out to him by the million dollars. When crops go bad on a farmer the political gang in control doles out a few dollars to the farmers with which to buy seed grain, and the gang take precious care to collect interest on the money advanced and see to it that the farmers pay back the loan. You working-plug farmers are easy fooled by the Peepul's representatives at Ottawa.

When a gang of financial pirates want to make money they undertake to build a bridge with the people's money. When the bridge falls down, the people's representatives pay up like little men the money that belong to the dear peepul and forgive the debt. When the farmers need money the people's representatives tell the dear farmers to go get it where they can at the banks at eight per cent. The farmers are only good to vote the henchmen of the capitalists into power.

The Quebec Workmen's Compensation Act now in force is a good example of capitalist reform. The Quebec politicians saw that there would soon be a great demand for a compensation act. So they took time by the forelock and passed an act allowing the worker injured compensation for injuries not to exceed two thousand dollars. An illustration will show how backward this legislation is. A railway worker was killed on a line running from Quebec into Vermont. He was killed on the Vermont side and his widow gets five thousand dollars. Had he been killed on the Quebec side the widow would have got only two thousand dollars. So the Quebec Compensation Act can be said to be an act passed by the henchmen of the labor thieves to give the workers as little as possible.

THE COMING OF REFORM

How often politicians appeal to the people asserting that if they are not elected certain measures will not be introduced. Many people are deceived by such bluffs. But history and common sense teaches us that when a nation wants a measure passed that measure will be passed even without an election. Thus the Liberals promised free trade and were elected and Canada got protection. It was the Tories in Great Britain who repealed the Corn Laws. A nation need not express itself at the ballot box to get what it wants. When Charles the First was arrested he asked by what warrant he was being arrested. He was taken to the window and shown the soldiers of the Cromwellian Commonwealth. Charles looked and said, "Your warrant is writ large." When the aldermen of Chicago were going to give away a franchise of the streets for fifty years the citizens gathered round the council room with noosed ropes in their hands and the franchise ordinance was not passed.

When a people really want a thing they can get it from their politicians. The politician is a cowardly animal who yields before a storm. The party in power dare not do what the people do not want. Even though they have pledged themselves to carry out a certain policy, yet if the people object that policy will be dropped.

Thus it is that when the people want old age pensions they get them. It matters not whether it is Liberal or Conservative that is in power. So the Socialist fight is not to win elections so much as to rouse the people. Winning elections is a good thing, but to sacrifice principle for the sake of an immediate demand which will be granted if the people want it is more or less foolishness.

The Socialist Party in the U. S. has had its forerunners in the Greenback and Populist Parties of the seventies and eighties of the past century. When James B. Weaver of Iowa ran for the presidency on the Greenback platform in 1880 he received 308,000 votes. The following were the planks in that platform. 1. Fiat money. 2. An eight hour day for labor. 3. Inspection and government supervision of factories, mines and workshops. 4. Against importation of cheap labor. 5. Against land grants to railroads and corporations. 6. For regulation of interstate commerce. 7. For a graduated income tax. 8. For more direct power of the people over their government. This middle west of Greenback and Populist Parties is now the stamping ground of the Insurgent Republicans. The old radical movements did not get to the centre of the question. They did not perceive that the remedy was public ownership and democratic management of the machinery of production. They saw that a gold standard was not necessary, consequently their first plank was "fiat money." That was the nearest they got to the modern Socialist movement, and that was the plank that overwhelmed them. The rising plutocracy saw that fiat money would break the power of the banks and the private system of centralized credit. The Greenback and Populist movements were born out of due time. They are coming to their own with clearer vision as to the central question and the method of remedy.

The Dominion government is radical compared with the government of the U. S. Many persons who are watching events consider that, just as the American colonies did not undergo the terrible suffering that France endured in the conquest of political institutions, so Canada will not undergo the terrible sufferings that the U. S. will undergo in the conquest of economic and social institutions.

The capitalist mode of production is becoming world-wide. It is seizing the free African and turning him into a wage-slave. It has expropriated the natives of Hawaii and turned them into an army of foodless misfits. It is seizing India, China, Japan. Its scope is universal. With the coming of world-wide capitalism comes world-wide socialism.

The electric plow and the steam plow is but the beginning of farming by machinery. When the giant farm machine comes then will the individualist farmer be turned into an industrial wage-slave.

Equality does not mean a dead level.