

ECHOES OF VITRE STREET

Notes taken in the course of conversation with unemployed men during the past month by an Alarm Clock reporter.

".....If things don't pick up by spring, I'm beaten; I'll go out West, I guess, if things don't look any better".

".....I got a dirty deal from the X... Company; they promised me steady work before I left the other side — nothing written, you know, just a gentlemen's agreement. Then after I'd brought my family out, they left me flat. I've been out for two years now. The business men here don't deal straightforward with you — they've got no feeling of responsibility".

(This man is to be deported in a month's time for becoming a public charge). "..... Maybe my father can get me a job at home. If not, I'll try some other country — maybe Australia — I've got the roving spirit now and I guess I'll keep on roving."

".....I'm down on capitalism — if you haven't got pull, you haven't a chance. What we need is the dole and a nationalist dictatorship; I'd like to see a bloodless revolution of some kind — sure, we could get it through Parliament". (This man had very confused but very interesting political views which he explained to me in some detail).

".....I wanted to get married this winter, but there's no work, so I can't do it — I don't want to live on the city".

".....You can't get a job in this city unless you have political pull; it's hard, too, not having anyone behind you when you're down and out".

".....I can't see why, when Canada has so many natural resources, no one is pushing ahead to exploit them — there shouldn't be a man idle in this country. . . . I think we ought to take all the foreigners out and dump them in the ocean and then fill up their places with people of British stock that will fight for their rights".

".....It grates on me, this hanging around the relief places — I never thought I'd have to come to this".

".....It's depressing to walk in from the East End every day to look for work and get nothing. It takes an hour and a half to come in; then I walk all around to look for work but there never is any. Then I walk all the way home again — you get tired after a while".

"...If you were at home (England) you'd have your dole; here, it's just relief, and it's like cutting a man's throat before you get anything at all. I hate coming down here, but I have to do it."

".....I loathe this relief. I walk all the way in from Rosemount every day to — look at them. They say I'm too old, so

Pensees Politiques

By Genosse

The Liberal party, obviously frightened by the growth of the C. C. F., is at its old game of appealing for a "united front of all forward-looking elements" under Liberal leadership. The appeal might be more successful if the eight years of Liberal rule from 1922 to 1930 had not furnished such ample proof that the chief thing to which the Liberal party looks forward is getting into office and staying there, and enjoying the fruits thereof, and if the memory of Beauharnois were not quite so fragrant.

The Liberal apologists' answer to this is presumably, let the dead past bury its dead. The party has been "in the valley of humiliation." It has come out "changed". Mr. Massey and his National Liberal Association start with a clean record and an advanced social policy. Why can't "radicals" rally to the new Liberalism?

For answer let the new Liberalism look into its own conscience. Has it broken with its past? Has it shed the old leaders? Are Mr. King and M. Taschereau pining in exile? Does it renounce the use of campaign funds contributed by special interests? Has it repudiated the actions of those leading Liberals who dragged the party into the valley of humiliation? The first work of the new Association was to pass resolutions eulogizing the late Senator Haydon and Belcourt.

As for the advanced social policy, what does that amount to? A return to the Dunning tariff of 1930, the establishment of a central bank, a national commission to administer unemployment relief, perhaps an advisory economic council, and a few pious wishes on the subject of unemployment insurance hardly distinguishable from the views of Mr. Bennett. This is the much touted "swing to the left" these the revolutionary proposals which according to the Prime Minister have reduced the Liberal party to "a jumble led by a co-operative commonwealth" and fit only for "the iron heel of ruthlessness".

"There is room for radicals in the ranks of the Liberal party", says the Ottawa Citizen. In the ranks, yes, if they are mugs enough to let themselves be taken in. In the ranks, supporting "forward-looking"

I dye my hair every morning before I start out, so as to look younger. . . . Some days I think I'll just jump off over the bridge and finish it — it wouldn't make any difference. . . . I'm a bit of a Socialist myself, you know — I believe that they that don't work shouldn't eat".

look for work; my shoes are all worn out

statesmen like M. Taschereau, pioneer in advanced social legislation, dauntless defender of the masses against, e. g. the Quebec Power Co. In the ranks, behind the "beauharnoisie".

But says the Citizen, "the Liberal party can be made just as radical as the people of Canada are prepared to support it." The cynicism of this is probably unconscious, but nothing could be more characteristic of the new Liberalism. In plain terms, the Liberal party is ready to be just as radical as may be necessary to collect enough votes to get back to office. Blind to the moral hideousness inherent in our capitalist system, deaf to the rumblings of approaching collapse; wholly unable to understand that in the view of any "radical" worthy of the name nothing short of reconstruction from the roots up will save us; the intellectuals of the new Liberalism prattle their amiable nineteenth century futilities while its less reputable hangers-on prepare to gorge themselves afresh on the proceeds of the public domain.

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Stung by charges of inconsistency on the subject of trade with Russia, the government press is now busy explaining that the famous embargo of 1931 applied not to all imports from the U.S.S.R. but only to the particular commodities named in the order-in-council. True, but the apologists conveniently forget the official statement which accompanied the order and explained its purpose. "This," said the government after a diatribe on "forced labour", "this is Communism, its creed and its fruits, which we cannot support by inter-change of trade."

Soviet-Canadian relations ever since have been a series of satirical footnotes on that declaration. The embargo explicitly included Russian furs, but when Canadian furriers said they had to have these for their business the government apparently discovered that this kind of "interchange of trade" would not "support Communism", and the furs were allowed to come in. Subsequent transactions have revealed that you may sell the Russians aluminium and wheat and take in exchange Russian gold or crude oil, and still be a "loyal" and "right-thinking" Canadian. But you may not imperil your soul by exchanging Canadian agricultural machinery for Russian coal or lumber or refined oil products.

Evidently Mr. Bennett having given us new definitions of "dumping" and the gold standard is now trying his hand at a new ethics. Or is it merely that "A marvellous Providence fashioned us holler 'O' purpose that we might our principles swaller"?