

# Wage-Earner AND Farmer

Leaflet Number Eleven.

We are living under a form of society termed capitalism. All of the agencies of wealth production are owned or controlled by a small minority of the total population—termed capitalists—who take no part in the matter of producing wealth. Their sole function is that of appropriating the wealth produced by the labor, of the workers, both of city and country.

In order to obtain access to the means of production—the resources of the earth and the tools of industry—the workers must make terms with the owners—the capitalists. In case of the workers in the mills shops, mines, and upon the railways, etc., the terms of access take shape in the form of what is termed wages. The workers are given employment upon condition that they accept in return for their labor a sum of money mutually agreed upon. Upon careful inquiry it has been ascertained that this wage—or money payment—bears, upon the average, a certain definite relation to the cost of the requisite necessities of life to sustain the worker and his immediate dependents—his family.

The result of close search into the mysteries of capitalist production lays bare the fact that the circumstances which compel the worker to apply to the owners of property for permission to convert his energy into the things necessary to sustain his existence, reduce him to the level of a slave and his labor-power to that of a commodity that must be sold in order that he may live. His labor-power exchanges in the market, upon the average, for enough of the necessities of life to reproduce that labor-power. In case of a plentifully stocked labor market the wage will be forced down to the actual life line. At all times subject to the inexorable laws of the market the wage-slave leads, even at the best, an uncertain, and often uncomfortable, existence.

The farmer owning his farm and implements of labor, whether free of mortgage and other incumbrance or otherwise, is more than apt to consider his case as different to that of the worker of the industrial centres. Reference is here made to the working farmer, he who by his labor operates, or assists in operating, his own farm property. He fancies himself not as a wage-earner, but as an independent property owner and oftentimes as a master, inasmuch as he frequently employs wage-workers to assist in his operations. A careful scrutiny of his case will, however, disclose the fact that in essence his status in capitalist society differs from that of the outright wage-slave in appearance only. Because of his apparent ownership of land and tools the exploitation practiced upon him by the capitalist combinations that control the industrial field as a whole remains hidden from him. Though he feels the exploita-

tion he has extreme difficulty in locating its source. As he sees the proceeds of his year's crop disappear in his attempt to satisfy the demands of the various commercial concerns and agencies from which he is compelled to purchase his machinery and other supplies he fancies the cause of his ills lies in the extortionate prices charged for the articles furnished him and the financial accommodations rendered. With this fancied extortion staring him in the face he loses sight of the fact that he is compelled to surrender the product of his toil into the hands of capital, at a price over which he has no control. If he examines closely the circumstances that compel him so to do he will speedily uncover the cause of his troubles and disclose the seat of that exploitation under which he suffers.

Commodities exchange in the world's market according to the relative amount of labor time necessarily embodied in their production. If the labor time necessarily expended in the production of, say, a ton of steel, is equal to that necessarily expended in the production of a dozen pair of shoes of a given quality and style, the ton of steel and the dozen pair of shoes will exchange equally in the market or their respective price would be expressed in the same money term, say \$25.00. This in turn implies that the amount of human labor measured by time that is necessary to produce either the ton of steel or the dozen pair of shoes is equivalent to the amount necessary to produce the gold embodied in \$25.00.

This is briefly, and perhaps none too clearly stated, the Marxian theory and analysis of exchange. The amount of labor necessary to the production of any given commodity is determined by the carrying on of such production along the most economical lines by the use of modern methods and up-to-date equipment.

Now for the farmer. He carries on his little part of the wealth producing process, as a rule, in a small way and by means of rather puny and ineffective tools as compared with industry along other lines. The things he brings forth are poured into the market chiefly as raw materials to be passed through the hands of highly developed capitalist industry on their way to be eventually consumed principally in the shape of food and clothing. The process of production is not completed until the finished commodities have been removed from the market by consumers. Even then the food, etc., consumed by the working class, both rural and urban, is consumed solely for the purpose of again generating a further supply of labor-power to be used in the continuation of the industrial process during another round of the never-ending exploitation of labor by capital.

After having disposed of his year's products and squared himself, as far as possible, with his creditors, the farmer finds himself fortunate indeed, if he completes the season with as satisfactory results as the wage-slave of the industrial districts. If he comes out even he is fortunate indeed. Should he come out a few cents or dollars to the good he becomes an object of envy to his less lucky brethren should they be made aware of his good fortune.

And what has our good farmer been doing all the year other than sweat for the aggrandizement of capital, just like the outright wage-slave? He has been compelled to coin the labor of himself and family into wheat, corn, cotton, wool, beef, mutton, pork and other farm products and pass such

coinage over to the huge combines of capital that control the entire process and avenues of production and exchange. All that he has gotten out of it has been, upon the average, merely that which his wage-slave brother has got by selling his labor-power direct in exchange for wages. The farmer and his family have been working for wages both as uncertain and narrow as the worker and family of the factory, mine and railway. His wage-slavery has been hidden from him by his fancied position of independent property owner. His property is no more a badge of independence to him than is the carpenter's box of tools, the insignia of freedom in his case. The fact remains that the workers of both city and country are compelled to surrender their labor-power to the masters of capital. If by virtue of circumstances any section of workers succeed in first incorporating that labor-power into other commodities it is a safe bet that those commodities must be surrendered to the rightful owners—the huge capitalist combines that dominate the field of production and exchange.

Property ownership in the means of production, by members of the working class in present, or capitalist, society is a fiction. It cannot exist as a fact. The test of ownership of property lies in the enjoyment or realization of all the benefits accruing from the use of such property. If anything short of such benefit is all that can be realized by the supposed owner there is a flaw in the title. The ownership is not absolute and complete. This is most strikingly the case with the farmer. In spite of his fancied ownership of land and tools the very fact of his inability to realize the full benefit arising from their operation proves conclusively that he does not own these things. The real owners—the capitalist combinations—take the products of his farm. They are the real owners of both his farm and himself.

The farmer, as he becomes wise to himself and his position, lines up with his fellow-slave the outright wage artist, in the class struggle between the master class and the slave class, the world-wide struggle for the mastery of industry—the former to retain it, the latter to seize it. There is but one possible outcome of this struggle and that is the victory of the working class. Its numerical strength, directed by its rapidly awakening intelligence and consciousness of itself and its mission, precludes any other result in the end. It will be a long and bitter struggle. Many will fall by the wayside, but the saying will be eventually justified that "Labor conquers all things." The "expropriators will be expropriated;" the masters be relegated to oblivion; the slaves of farm, factory, mine and transportation, shall become free men—free because masters of their means of life, masters of industry in their own behalf.

Let it come.

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# PLATFORM

## Socialist Party of Canada

We, the Socialist Party of Canada, in convention assembled, affirm our allegiance to and support of the principles and programme of the revolutionary working class.

Labor produces all wealth, and to the producers it should belong. The present economic system is based upon capitalist ownership of the means of production, consequently all the products of labor belong to the capitalist class. The capitalist is therefore master; the worker a slave.

So long as the capitalist class remains in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the State will be used to protect and defend their property rights in the means of wealth production and their control of the product of labor.

The capitalist system gives to the capitalist an ever-swelling stream of profits, and to the worker an ever-increasing measure of misery and degradation.

The interest of the working class lies in the direction of setting itself free from capitalist exploitation by the abolition of the wage system, under which is cloaked the robbery of the working class at the point of production. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production into collective or working-class property.

The irrepressible conflict of interests between the capitalist and the worker is rapidly culminating in a struggle for possession of the reins of government—the capitalist to hold, the worker to secure it by political action. This is the class struggle.


Therefore, we call upon all workers to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of Canada, with the object of conquering the public powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic programme of the working class, as follows:

1. The transformation, as rapidly as possible, of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railroads, etc.) into the collective property of the working class.

2. The democratic organization and management of industry by the workers.

3. The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use instead of production for profit.

The Socialist Party when in office shall always and everywhere until the present system is abolished, make the answer to this question its guiding rule of conduct: Will this legislation advance the interests of the working class and aid the workers in their class struggle against capitalism? If it will, the Socialist Party is for it; if it will not, the Socialist Party is absolutely opposed to it.

In accordance with this principle the Socialist Party pledges itself to conduct all the public affairs placed in its hands in such a manner as to promote the interests of the working class alone. 

N. B.—This leaflet is for free distribution. Your aid, either financial or otherwise, in carrying on this method of propaganda will be appreciated by

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