

The Northwest Worker

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DOESN'T LIKE IT

Our friend Reynolds does not like our idea of "jollying the workers" in order to gain their confidence and batter down the prejudice against Socialism, thus opening the way to a clear understanding of socialism. In nine cases out of ten prejudice is the bulwark that we run up against in our endeavors to teach Socialism, and we claim that if that prejudice can be removed by working for the legislation...

Now what are "some of the things" that our neighbors talk about? They are the pieces of legislation that we often talk about and write about when delivering our message. That legislation is connected with such things as child labor, eight hour days, minimum wage scales, initiative and referendum, universal suffrage, abolishing the supreme court, factory legislation and so on.

We have monkeyed with these things since the inauguration of the Socialist party but we have failed to line up on demands that seem to more directly interest certain groups of society. We are of the opinion that we have pursued the right course so far and now that we have a fairly good organization and plenty of well posted members we think it an opportune time to take the bull by the horns and go the limit. If we can control our organization—and we are of the opinion that we can—then we have nothing to lose by getting Socialists into office on the promise to put through the legislation that is of more immediate concern to the masses. There is one thing sure, and that is, that we would not legislate in the interest of the exploiters, and that is where we would gain a great many adherents and open the way for a more complete understanding of the principals of the league to which our friend Reynolds belongs.

Our friend Reynolds may be just as prejudiced against the unionists and grangers as some of them are against Socialism, and that is just where he falls down for he does not realize the strenuous efforts these people are making to get certain pieces of legislation enacted and which the powers that be refuse to enact. We will ask our friend Reynolds if the legislation wanted by these bodies would be detrimental to the Socialist movement if put through by Socialists, and in what way?

He says he cannot accept our statement that "one single term in office will offset that prejudice and ignorance" and then he tries to introduce facts to prove that it is not so. But the very facts that he introduces are in our favor. You will notice, however, that he cites places where factional fights have occurred, or where some disrupting force has been at work. Butte was disrupted by the scrap between the I. W. W. and the Western Federation of Miners. Lumm of Schenectady, disrupted the ranks, but the Socialists are today as strong as ever with Steinmetz at the helm. Milwaukee has knocked the capitalist parties out for keeps. At the primary school election held a week ago all the five candidates of the Socialist party got on the final ballot with two of the candidates topping the poll. The Socialists expect to elect their men and, with the three already on the school board, will have control of the school board of that city. So appar-

THE MISLEADING PRESS

The most dangerous form of censorship is not government censorship after all, but the fear of failure of profits to the newspapers themselves. For instance, the statement of the American Federation of Labor in regard to the stand of the organized workers in the event of war was perhaps the most important piece of news of the week in which it was issued, yet only the merest outlines, and those wholly misleading, have ever been available to the public until the slow mail and weekly labor press could supply the deficiency—and that for only a small part of the people.

The statement is a clean, clear cut and distinctly revolutionary outline of the terms upon which the government of the United States may expect the whole-hearted support of the trades union movement, and through that movement of the vast working class otherwise voiceless, in any enterprise entailing force of arms. It is labor declaring its right to be heard in the preliminaries to making war, in the conduct of the war and in the formulation of terms of peace and their negotiation. It is labor standing erect, realizing its might and demanding its place at the board as an important if not the most important party to the contract. It is the forerunner to the realization of the democracy in government and in industry which has been vaguely dreamed of for a thousand years, but has never yet taken more concrete form than the more or less fantastic tales of a Morris, a Bellamy or a Zola.

A close reading of the text of this great declaration shows the reason it was not more generally printed by the capitalist, militarist daily press.

When space permits it will be printed by the Worker, but just now we can only assure our readers that the declaration was just the opposite to the statement made by the capitalist press.

A NEW ENTERPRISE

The co-operative movement has taken a hold on Everett. A Co-operative Society is being organized and the promoters expect to start business about the 20th of next month. It was expected that the opening could have been made earlier but the taking over of an eight thousand dollar business means raising quite a sum of money. An idea of the kind of co-operation and the business methods of the new society is published in this paper and we see no reason why our readers should not help finance this society and gain the advantages that only co-operative effort can give. The sooner you get behind this thing with your coin the sooner will it open.

EMPLOYEE GETS MAIZE CAFE IN BAD

An article appeared in last week's Worker to the effect that the manager of the Maize Cafe had fired an employee on the request of Brodeck & Field, for purchasing a suit of clothes in Seattle. The writer of the article heard later that the man had been fired for other reasons and investigated and found out that the man had quit of his own accord because he did not want to work on another shift that had been vacated by another employee. The Morning Tribune published the article in the first instance, but it was not the straight goods, so we feel that an apology is due the Maize Cafe.

ently the term in office has not hurt the Socialists any.

We appreciate the fact that many of our comrades are honestly afraid of our suggested move because it may mean the beclouding of the Socialist issue, but we are perfectly satisfied that Washington has enough well educated Socialists to keep Socialism to the front and we think that the Socialist Party of this state is far better prepared to go after political power than any other in the Union. No matter what our tactics may be we will not be able to dodge teaching scientific socialism, and nobody can deny that if we can get the support of other groups in our political campaign we will be able to get their confidence and their ears later. Practical politics will bring the results we all desire, namely, the education of the working class to their true position in human society.

For best meals, waffles and coffee with cream, go to Everett Coffee House, 1113 Hewitt.

THE MOST DEGRADED THING ON EARTH

By Frans Bostrom

This old earth of ours has never held a more utterly degraded animal than the slave. The dog is a close second. Both will fight to death for the master who feeds, houses, drives and kicks them. Both have lost all trace of the natural desire, instinctive in every other animated being, for an independent existence, the right to choose companions and the locality where to live and to own a nest entirely their own. Their lives are merged absolutely into the lives of their masters. Upon them they have thrown the responsibility and worry of looking out ahead, the thot for tomorrow, and so they live for today, for the hour, jolly when the master smiles, trembling with fear when he frowns. It is something peculiarly paradoxical in the fact that thus the most intelligent of all animals can be trained into the lowest stage of degeneracy. How was this accomplished?

If we want to tame a wild animal we do not take a full grown one. We choose a young one. One so young that he has not yet acquired the taste for freedom. And so slaves were reared. The parents were murdered and the children were raised like cattle, ignorant of the fate of their parents, without tribal or racial traditions of hatred of their conquerors, ignorant of the possibility of living any other way, and therefore without ambition, hope or desire for liberty. And therefore the chattel slave could never free himself.

When all the land in the inhabited world had been staked and claimed, the master discovered that he might enjoy the services of his slaves without being under obligation to constantly look after their sustenance. He gave the slave a cabin and an acre of ground in exchange for several days' work in each week. The slave became a serf and had all the duties of a slave, but few of the slave's emoluments. He had to shoulder the responsibility of feeding himself and his family but did not have the liberty to leave the estate for this or any other purpose. That he was often hungry and then grew rebellious is natural. That he gained nothing by his rebellion is equally natural, since his inherited slavish traits and his ignorance could hardly be expected to leave him while he was chained to the soil and received no other mental training than just enough religious dogma to teach him that hell and brimstone would be his lot after death if he didn't in all things obey his master. The self therefore never accomplished anything for his own good. Again a change in the economic conditions of his master's society changed his status.

Industrial advancement had gradually transferred a great deal of the work of the world from the farm to the shop. With the invention of the steam engine this transfer was greatly accelerated, until today the part played by the farm in the world's production is comparatively very insignificant. The time of the worker employed in the industry being taken up exclusively in the shop or factory, it became necessary and convenient to give him his keep in the shape of money, so-called wages. Thus he became a FREE worker.

That is, his freedom consisted in his privilege to change his master. As a slave he had been bought and sold like any other commodity. As a serf he was part and parcel of the farm and was sold with the farm. As a wage worker he sells his ability to work. Since he is unable to separate his ego from his labor power it follows that he during working hours is about as much a slave as ever. Once done with his day's work he is however, enjoying as much liberty as his poverty will permit him. And he has become a citizen. He can read and write. He can travel when he has the money to pay his way. But like the other domestic animals he is helplessly at sea when permitted to be at large. The slave psychology has been carried over from generation to generation, not in the blood, not in a defective mentality, but by tradition. Slave parents were unfit to raise

children into free men and women, and men and women so raised were unfit in their turn to raise free citizens. And so the free citizen, instead of utilizing his power as a man and woman, equal with that of any man or woman in society, for the overthrow of a system that compels him to sell himself into slavery, is still fighting a slave's rebellion with a slave's weapon for the little trifles that constitute a slave's goal. Like a balky horse he stubbornly rebels for a softer pad for his yoke, unconscious of the yoke.

There has probably since the inauguration of slavery never been a man or woman who would not have been better off if he or she had never lived. The curse of slavery has made life on this beautiful earth a continuous tragedy. Not the slaves alone have been the sufferers. Every generation has produced men and women from all classes of society who started out buoyant with hope and ambition, radiant with enthusiasm and fervor for their ideal conception of human happiness, strong in purpose and energy. And every last one failed utterly and ignominiously. The great bulk of them gave up immediately they realized the immensity of the problem and settled down into the littleness and sordidness of everyday existence.

Others, disappointed in their reception by the inert, festering mass of ignorance of which humanity is mainly composed, made trace with despotism in a spirit of revenge and betrayed the people they had set out to emancipate. Again others modified their hopes and ambitions and lowered their aims to correspond with their courage and ability. A few stuck out and were murdered at the stake, on the block, the gibbet or the cross. Sad was their ending, sadder still must have been the realization that their endeavors appeared utterly useless, that they might as well have tried to accelerate the motion of the sun as to hasten social evolution in its disheartening slow movements from the twilight of Communism through the night of Human Slavery to the dawn of Socialism.

The world had moved, not because of them, or in spite of them, but unaware of them. They were sentimentalists and tried to make humanity move in a direction it could not go. They had a faulty conception of human nature, did not understand natural laws, nor the laws governing the changes in society. But Economic Determinism, the instinct of self-preservation, selfishness, or whatever name we give the main spring of human action, in spite of artificial standards of ethics and morality, of heavenly reward and hell's punishment, kept moving people in the only direction possible, i. e., in the line of least resistance.

The inexorable law of the survival of the fittest kept weeding out the unfit. Mechanical ingenuity improved the system of industrial production and caused tremendous changes in economic conditions. And here we are in the twentieth century, proud of the wonderful achievements we have made in delving into nature's mysteries with the key of science, proud of our power in enslaving the tremendous forces of natural elements and making them do the greater part of our work, proud of our arts, inventions and literature and the thousand and one contrivances we have made for our convenience, comfort and luxury, all fruits of conscientious efforts, of a logical use of ways and means toward a desired end. But the social problem is to the great mass of mankind as much an unsolved riddle as ever.

Our statesmen are as ignorant as their cave-men ancestors of the laws of cause and effect as applied to society. And so we move socially only when we must, and then we stagger blindly toward an unknown goal, afraid lest the next step will throw us into a bottomless abyss. The great bulk of our citizenship is still nine-tenths slave, contaminated by their slave parents with slave characteristics, fears and traditions. The slave religion with its appendages of false fears and hopes, false ethics and morals, superstitions and prej-

udices, cruelties and cowardice, is still with us, poisoning the atmosphere from which the coming generation must draw its conceptions of social ideals.

The tendency of social evolution is to let the slave be superceded and eliminated by the machine. In the slave market the wages offered the lowest layer, the unskilled, and most of the time unemployed worker, does not include the cost of raising children. The next generation of workers must therefore largely come from the homes of the better paid workers of today and the small middle class. These, being reared in better homes, and therefore with greater expectations in life, will offer a greater resistance to their masters. They may discover that the cruel inequality in the division of the benefits of civilization is not so much to be credited to the malice of the masters as to their own imbecility in permitting the natural resources of the earth as well as the common inheritance of all mankind, the accumulated experience of the ages, the machinery of production, remain in the hands of a small minority, to the detriment of all the rest. They may discover that the original title deeds to all this wealth rest upon conquest and violence, murder and slavery, that religions, moral codes, legal formulas, ethics and conventionalities and all other rigmarole attached to this hellish system, are merely in existence to confuse the issue and keep the mass in mental bondage and therefore too stupid to utilize its only power, its physical strength. It may be that generation after generation will have to be exterminated as unfit for freedom, until a social stratum is reached that has sufficient intelligence to accomplish the revolution.

It is certain that the working class of today is too slavish to be fit for freedom. Giant Labor is flat on his back, and the cautious moves he makes now and then to shift into an easier position when the old bones become unbearable, does not strain the mental cobwebs that cover his sluggish mind, cobwebs that to his fantastic mind present themselves as unbreakable chains. He is afraid to hurt his precious skin. What an example he is of the depths of unfathomable degradation human intelligence can descend to. It is said that a worm will turn and fight. If so, then he ranks higher in the scale than the worker as a class. There is not I believe, an animal so timid that it will not fight to death for its freedom. The Spaniards had to murder more than a million Indians on Hayiti and on Cuba, who refused to become slaves. The rest of the West Indies have the same history to tell. They did not believe that a hell was yawning for those who refused to submit to Christian dogmas and physical degradation. Savages have souls, i. e. the spirit of resistance. The ancient slave owner brutally asserted that slaves had no souls. He felt too strong to descend to falsehood. He told the truth. The great bulk of the workers have no souls today. They are told that they have and they are awfully scared that they may lose them. Even a chicken has time to play during working hours and never works in the dark. But the worker can be made to work for hours before dawn and for more hours after sundown for a more miserable existence, to sustain a life utterly void of anything and everything that can serve as an excuse for living. He lives because he dare not die. His existence is a detriment to himself and to every other worker, who is compelled to compete with him in the slave market. If chattel slavery could have continued until now, it would have been necessary for the master class to have killed the superfluous number in order to save the expense of their keep. As things stand, they are permitted to slowly starve out of existence, serving the masters to the last, by menacing the security of their still employed fellows until their last breath.

The modern worker has not the same excuse for his stupidity as the slave. He can read, but he reads only to become more loyal to his master. He is a citizen and can therefore vote and even sometimes serve on the jury. But he conscientiously votes into the hands of the master the whip that is going to lash his own back and nothing gives him more satisfaction than to, as a jurymen, send a rebellious worker to the gallows. He thinks only for the purpose of improving the machinery that will throw him in the discard. Even those of the workers who have advanced so far as to organize, do so only in the place where they have no power, where it will hurt the masters the least, in the slave market. It is a sort of gentlemen's agreement not to cut each other's throats by competition. Being perishable commodities, they won't keep however, and so the conspiracy in restraint of trade does not restrain. It is the case over again of "The Mountain Labeled and Produced a Mouse."

In all seriousness, without sarcasm or cynicism, I ask the readers of your paper this: "Is there in all the world a more despicable and degraded being than the worker who is not a revolutionist?"

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By RYAN WALKER

