

Socialism Now--Or Else

One reason why we insist upon the necessity of speedily abandoning the private-profit system and the setting up of a democratically-managed socialized economy is our utter conviction that the form, if not the spirit, of Socialism is one of the things that mankind will have to accept.

We believe we are not alone in that conviction. Many people who never thought seriously about Socialism in the past are now admitting—with varying degrees of enthusiasm or disapproval—that this nation is heading that way.

They're right—in so far as the form is concerned. The spirit, however, is a different matter.

We are going to have a controlled economy. But we may have the kind of control that will stabilize the relationship between owner and worker—a class control that will protect the privilege of one class to exploit another class. Such a set-up, as we have seen elsewhere in the world, is not democratic Socialism, but fascism.

The essence of Socialism is that the institution of private profit for owners is abolished. The essence of fascism is that private profit for owners is stabilized and protected by government. The essence of both is that they are government controlled.

There are abundant signs to indicate the imminence of government control. Price stabilization, regulation of production, limitation of gas sales and other measures copied from fascist nations foretell the structure of the world to be.

But there are all too few signs that the controlled economy of the future will be of the democratic variety. Unfortunately, too few workers understand that a decision must soon be made. Too many are indifferent to the difference between fascism and Socialism. Blinded by the bright light of immediate personal interest, there is a danger that our generation of Americans, like their brothers in foreign lands, will invite an era of state capitalism by their failure to organize in time for workingclass control of the society that is now taking form.

What few people seem not to understand is that "Socialism in Our Time" is more than a campaign slogan. Conditions indicate Socialism now or a new slave economy throughout the capitalist world.

—Reading Labor Advocate.

NO "BOOM" FOR FOREST CITY

By JOSEPH DRASLER

DAVENPORT, Iowa. — My recent visit home took me through the coal country of the State of Penna., giving me another close view of what transpires and expires in once-booming mining towns. Although many sections of the country are experiencing prosperity again by virtue of the billions appropriated for the national defense program, there are other sections that are smitten anew, as for instance, the silk-mill workers. Scranton, Penna., and a whole string of small towns up the Anthracite Valley north, have received what amounts to almost a knock-out blow by the closing down of the silk-mill industry. While other towns of the category of Forest City, have not begun to feel the new "boom", and have given up hopes of ever knowing it again, for their coal mines are worked out, abandoned, and forgotten. Even though King Coal comes into popular demand again, Forest City can furnish no more of it.

Depression wrought its appalling mark in this home-town of mine. In the neighboring town of Browndale \$200 cash will buy any home in its boundary, and the same applies to most of Forest City. Some of the homes are really well-built and attractively designed for comfortable living, but the young generation that grew up in them has left for cluttered rooming houses in the big cities. If it would be reasonable possible to transport the homes to the suburbs of thriving cities, our people would indeed be fortunate and happy. The large sprawling O & W Railway station has been sold for the price of a good suit of clothes. The purchaser tore it down and resold the lumber to get his money back. Many of the new homes, built just before the depression set in, have been torn down by the contractors, rather than allowed to stand idle and accumulate tax-s. A new school built at that time also stands idle; its doors locked and shades drawn, for want of children to fill its classes. Browndale has a "blackout" every night, but not because of enemy planes overhead. The taxes are due and overdue, and the company heretofore furnishing the town with electricity has no sympathy for its former good customers. So, the street lights remain forever dark, their cheerful yellow light no longer entertaining myriads of moths and flies, nor lighting up the children's games.

The old folks who have spent their lives in the town, at least from the time they left their home in the "old country"—Yugoslavia, Poland, Ireland, Italy, and many another, have resigned themselves to their fate. They accept the government relief, hoe their potatoes, beans, and lettuce in their gardens; some of the more industrious cultivating larger gardens on coal company ground outside the town, which can be had for the asking. In this way they raise most of the garden truck to supply the

meager demands of their tables, which are devoid of the younger folks, who now crowd the restaurant counters in cities where jobs were to be found. The majority of the approximate 300 young people, found work in New Jersey and New York. Both these cities can be reached in a three-hour drive from our town, and as many of them have cars, the old home town takes on some of its old life on Saturday nights and Sundays when this group flocks in for the week-end visit.

Most of the fellows work for General Motors and for Crucible Steel, earning an average of forty dollars per week with the present time-and-a-half for overtime. The girls find employment in various factories, offices, stores and homes.

The week I spent at home, General Motors was closed down in preparation for new models, and most of the fellows employed there were at home. When the checks came into town, half of the mail-boxes located along the street had a human companion awaiting the mailman. The next day, Friday, the mail was almost two hours late on account of—believe it or not—the large bundle of weekly Prosveda which has to be sorted for delivery. That is another day the mailman is eagerly awaited. It was gratifying to see how intensely most of our folks read the newspapers written in our language. Proletarec, though not so well circulated, enjoys the favor of its readers as a leading labor paper.

Once an active center that which swarms of our people came after leaving Ellis Island, Forest City, which resembles in natural beauty so very much the "old country", is now being gradually deserted. Cleveland and other parts of the vast American continent has of necessity claimed them. Its population decreases with each year, as families find more prosperous cities to yield them a livelihood.

The busy life within fraternal societies, to which our people once devoted all of their social life, is gone but not forgotten. Engage any of the old-timers in conversation and soon they begin to reminisce of the "good old days", of lodge picnics, dances, and interesting meetings. Most of this has been wholly abandoned, while the small group which still keeps these movements on their feet has descended into a state of apathy and disinterestedness.

Forest City's JSF Branch, once a thriving group in which were enrolled progressive liberals and most of the leaders of the local fraternal societies, had been reduced to but a few members, only one of them, Joe Cebular, still in town. Joe is a gas-station owner on a busy thoroughfare, and the only person left to do what he can for Proletarec, "American Family Almanac" and our "May Herald".

Recently a ray of hope has pierced

GREETING TO THE DELEGATES OF THE SNPJ AND SSPZ

The Twelfth Regular Convention of the Slovene National Benefit Society will convene this Saturday, September 13th, 1941, at the Fort Pitt Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On the same day and in the same city in the Slovene Dom, the Slovene Progressive Benefit Society will hold a special convention.

The purpose of the latter is to consolidate and merge with the Slovene National Benefit Society and for the same purpose, the SNPJ delegates will gather on the same day, that is, to decide on the merger with the SSPZ.

We wish both of these organizations a complete success in their task.

We have a special reason to greet the convention of the SNPJ. PROLETAREC was not established to serve only the struggle for labors' rights in general, but especially to promote the struggle for a workers' ideology in the SNPJ. The force which organized PROLETAREC was successful in that endeavor.

We wish the SNPJ or whatever the new name of the united organization shall be, that it remain loyal to its traditions and principles for which PROLETAREC has labored from the very beginning.

The SNPJ has become what it is, not only because it was a good insurance organization but especially because of its idealism, its forward looking rules and regulations and the consciousness that its duty was to serve everyone and everything which will benefit the working masses.

Let its good work, its past history and traditions inspire the new generation and continue to benefit the Society and its members, also in the future.

In that spirit, we greet its delegates and the delegates of the S. S. P. Z.

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The world is in the midst of a revolution for goods, Murray D. Lincoln, president of the Cooperative League of the U. S. A. and general manager of the Ohio Farm Bureau co-ops, told the Cooperative Union of Canada at their annual meeting recently in Regina, Saskatchewan.

"What is going on in the world today is a revolution for goods. And if we don't get goods to people they will organize to take them. Feed democracy at home and abroad—get goods to people and you will do more to build and maintain democracy than all the guns, ammunition, airplanes and warships will ever do.

"That is why I believe so much in the cooperative system. It gets more goods and services to people for less money. It is working together to help each other, not to make profit off of each other," Lincoln declared.

The co-op leader added that he had "not been able to think of any other agency that can do more to make our system of free enterprise really work for the common people—to get goods to the people—than cooperatives. If anyone has a better scheme, let him trot it out!"

Co-ops Grow More Serious

There is a growing seriousness in the speeches of co-op leaders, whose central theme emphasizes the part cooperatives can play in the present

the dark clouds of despondence hanging over this deserted coal-town. In a flood control bill signed by President Roosevelt only a few weeks ago, Stillwater dam, located a few miles above Forest City, is scheduled for expansion. Relocation of a highway and railroad skirting the dam and rebuilding of the dam itself will entail an expenditure of some two million dollars, and furnish employment for a few years to all the town's employable. The dam will be so constructed that, although it will be only partially filled in normal seasons, during periods of heavy rains it will hold up flood waters until it spreads out many times its normal state, thereby preventing the Lackawaxen River from going on a rampage and flooding the coal mines located down the valley from Forest City.

Although no definite work has begun, except surveying, it is hoped no inforseen impediment checks the plan for this proposed flood-control dam.

We have been anxiously on the outlook for any fragment of news or sign of our brother John, who suddenly and unexplainably disappeared about two months ago. He had gone on a woodchuck hunt and never returned. His disappearance is entirely without a clue, although every foot of the woods for miles around the town has been thoroughly searched by state and local authorities and a hundred or more volunteers. Nearby farmlands were searched by parties of scouts and farmers, as it was feared he may have accidentally shot himself. So far no vestige of him has been uncovered. A grief-stricken family awaits any word or trace of his whereabouts.

Babson Sees Co-ops Helping Consumers Meet HCL

NEW YORK.—Consumer co-operatives offer a first line of defense against the high cost of living, Roger W. Babson, economist and business forecaster, said in a special article written for the Co-operator, published by the Eastern Co-operative League, here recently.

"Every turnup in living costs should stimulate interest and boost membership in co-operatives," Babson declared. "They offer defense against inflation in HCL."

"The movement has been presented with a remarkable opportunity for development as people become desperate for protection against soaring prices."

As evidence of the strength of American co-operatives today, Babson said: "In 1940, the Co-operative League of the U. S. A. reported 2,000 member societies with individual membership of more than a million. Outside the League, activity is also increasing. It is estimated there are more than 17,000 consumer societies. In addition to retailing and wholesaling, the movement is reaching back into manufacture and production with flour mills, paint factories and oil refineries. Some \$100,000,000 in petroleum products alone flowed thru co-operative channels in a single year.

"Consumer Co-operation, however, is not a rabbit-from-the-hat panacea," Babson continued. "It brings its benefits on the basis of hard, personal work in applying sound economic principles. The societies were pioneers in cash-and-carry merchandising. Each member has but one vote and the returns he gets are proportionate to the patronage he gives. The co-operatives put great emphasis on education. They are practitioners of democracy."

EMPLOYERS REFUND \$111,000 TO WORKERS

NEW YORK, N. Y.—During the last year more than \$111,000 was collected by the State Labor Department from employers who paid less than the legal minimum (20 to 30 cents) for women and minors in the restaurant industry. The sum was refunded to 8154 persons. Nearly 71 per cent of the employers met the minimum wage for the industry.

LONGER LIFE

Another "interesting change in American life has been unearthed by the U. S. Bureau of the Census. Nearly 13 years have been added to the average life of white persons in the United States since 1900, reports the Bureau. The average span of an American's life is now 62.5 years.

FAMOUS FABLES

(Compiled by E. E. Edgar)

During one of the Indian Campaigns a report was published in the newspapers that Sitting Bull had been killed. This created sensation and Gen. William T. Sherman was deluged by correspondents for a statement.

"I see they've been killing Indians out West again, general," one man remarked, showing him the paper.

"Oh, yes," said Sherman, "the newspapers kill a good many Indians. A darn sight more than the troops do. Why, if we killed half as many Indians as the newspapers did, we'd be short of Indians."

'Things That Go Bump in the Night'

The War After Dark in Europe

By FRANCIS X. HILL

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On the German Frontier. The sun sinks over Europe. Night after night, as dusk falls curfew bells toll. Dark heavy curtains are drawn across windows. Streets are filled with the sound of hurrying feet homeward bound. Families proceed to shelters, the early birds carrying blankets and pillows, hopeful snatching a few hours of unbroken sleep. Fire spotters take up posts on roof-tops; air-raid wardens begin the nightly patrol. From far away comes the faint drone of approaching bombers. Sirens pierce the gathering night.

As dusk deepens into black unlit darkness, Gestapo agents hunt for fresh victims of the secret terror in towns and villages. Prison cells are crowded with newcomers; the cries of the tormented rise. Men drop dead in barrack squares with a bullet thru the brain. But as Europe blacks out, the unconquered spirit of conquered peoples stalks the land.

Night is Europe's ally and Hitler's foe. Out of the night the hope for Britain's victory gleams brightest.

Everywhere, from the banks of the Vistula to the Atlantic, the standard of a vast secret army is raised. It is painted on walls, on sidewalks, on roads and on Nazi trucks and trains. It is the blood red "V."

In France, it is "V" for Victoire; in Holland, for Vrijheid; in Czechoslovakia for Vitezstvi and in Austria for Verschwindet, different ways of saying the same thing. Suddenly the opening bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony will sound in the darkness—ta-ta-ta-boom. Or the dot-dot-dot-dash of the Morse code, spelling "V", will be tapped out on the pavement, or marble-topped restaurant tables or on doorknockers of private homes.

Through the course of months, Europe has been filled with stealthy strategy of counter terror. The Nazis are fearful. As the R.A.F. pounds the Ruhr and the Rhineland, smashing away at Bremen, Hamburg, in a hundred other places the life blood of German conquest is being spilled.

Some weeks ago, not far from Ceske Budejovice, Slovakia, a German freight train ground to a standstill as a semaphore signal in the darkness showed red light. The train was carrying a consignment of trucks and tanks heading for the Russian frontier. When the German guards jumped down from the trucks to stretch their legs, a band of strangers set upon them. During the fracas, invisible hands went through the freight, snipping wires and fouling vital mechanisms of tanks and trucks. The wreckers vanished suddenly, leaving the bloody "V" painted on every wagon.

For weeks past the railroad traffic through Bohemia and Moravia has been disorganized by accidents and destruction of the permanent way. Near Opava in Silesia a troop train ran into an express. Two days later another troop train collided with a workman's train near Plaid in western Bohemia. At Suchdol a train full of soldiers left the rails. A similar accident happened near Tabors in Southern Bohemia.

Time and again the electric power that supplies the great armament works of Skoda fails. German authorities have had to install a regular system of night watchers and sentry

posts and machine-gun emplacements.

In Poland, the huge forests around Warsaw come alive at night. Soldiers who have been hidden there since the defeat of September 1939, emerge when darkness falls. They attack isolated bodies of German troops. Numbers of them join Polish workers in sabotaging factories serving the Nazi war industry.

One night four fires broke out in the chemical factory at Poznan. Another time thousands of tons of cereals on their way to Germany were destroyed by fire at the Handelsaufbau (trade development) headquarters in Warsaw. The flow of goods by rail transport to the Reich is snarled by means of faked shipping papers, routing agricultural products and machinery destined for Breslau and Gdynia, the Baltic port of Poland. Every night in Polish cellars printing presses grind out forbidden war news, keeping alive the people's faith in victory. These rudely printed sheets are spread through-out Poland.

In France, near the Channel, the German authorities gave a dance for officers and men of the occupying German armies. The leading French citizens were invited. At five minutes to twelve, the French guests all left and made speedily for home. At midnight, the R.A.F. flying low, dumped their bombs onto the dance hall.

At Subotica, in the province of Backa, which was once in Yugoslavia and now part of the Hungarian cession, the German held a parade. Swastika flags flew from every building; German songs were sung; there was dancing and drinking. At night the Nazi revellers tottered home, many were waylaid in back streets and beaten up.

Each new dawn reveals the mark of some new stroke for freedom: bodies floating in a Dutch canal, wrecked transport on a road in Poland, burning trucks in a freight yard in France. And everywhere the newly painted blood red "V" greets the morning sun. Many a Nazi perhaps joins in prayer with the Scottish poet who wrote:

"From ghoulies and ghosties,
From on-legity beasties
And things that go bump in the night
Good Lord, deliver us!"

People Show Strong Desire for Pensions

A recent Gallup poll revealed the deep desire for old age security on the part of the American people. When 70% indicated they would be willing to pay a 3% tax on their income in order to get a \$50 a month government pension after they were 60. Those not willing numbered 18% and 6% were undecided.

Hands

By MAX PRESS

Hands are beautiful which have toiled and healed,
Hands of the aged, folded and at peace,
Hands which have punished children while they loved,
The wasted and the worn hands of the old,
And the hands of children are beautiful—
Little hands that curl and uncurl and reach
For harder, stronger hands in love and trust.
Strong hands that drive the stake are beautiful,
The hands that dig and plant and sow and reap.
The hands which weave and sew are beautiful,
Women's hands, fragile, yet so firm and sure,
The hands that raise and build are beautiful,
Spanning rivers, probing earth, throwing high
Their towers toward the white and lonely stars.
The hands that heal and bind are beautiful,
Hands which are cool and firm and calm and kind.
And those rejected hands are beautiful
Which fashion delicate, yet enduring things,
In clay, in bronze, in verses and in paint.
All hands are beautiful which give to men
The fruit of spirit, strength and brain and skill,
All hands are beautiful that serve and give.

THE MARCH OF LABOR