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## Reading Squirms Under Meco Dictatorship

### REFLECTIONS

By the Editor

DR. DEXTER S. KIMBALL, dean of the college of engineering at Cornell, is reported as "talking down" the claims of the technocrats. To prove that the technocrats do not know what they are talking about when they declare that the new industrial order will be operated by engineers, Dr. Kimball declares: "I know many engineers, and few of them are smart at economics."

I DO NOT question the findings of the good dean. On the contrary, I am decidedly suspicious that he, himself, is more valuable to society as an engineer than as an economist. I would trust him to build or improve a machine and would even give him a job pushing the buttons and manipulating the levers. But I would not like to trust him with the business of distributing the wealth which his machine would produce.

Engineers are good for some things, not good for others. The mechanical engineer is doubtless the right man to say HOW things shall be done. But it requires a social engineer to say WHY things shall be done.

SOCIALISTS HAVE NEVER found serious fault with the HOW of the matter, despite the fact that Dean Kimball speaks of the "blame" for the poverty which now exists in the world. To our way of thinking there can not be too much machinery to lighten the load for humans. Nobody is to "blame" when intelligent men give us mechanical slaves. But we are all to blame for permitting those slaves to become the competitors, instead of the servants, of human beings.

Let us have more, more and ever more machines. And let us use them in such a manner that the work they do and the time they save will bring prosperity and leisure instead of poverty and unemployment to millions of people.

IN THE LIGHT of world conditions, deans of engineering schools and others who profess to be our great minds ought to speak positively instead of negatively. They should not be saying this and that will NOT help humanity. Any corner loafer can talk like that. If college professors can't say what should be done to make use of the machines which engineers have produced and the discoveries which specialized science has gained, the least they should do is to hold their peace and stick to their business of building more machines.

SOCIALISTS ARE WILLING to go to mechanical science for the mechanical information. Unfortunately, however, mechanical and other scientists are not willing to listen to social scientists who propose that the world's resources shall be planfully operated for use instead of for profit. Socialists supply the answer to the question which machines have raised. Others may say how the machines shall be operated. We say WHY they shall be operated. And our answer is: For human welfare instead of for private profit.

### Attention Socialists!

A short county convention will be held at the next regular meeting of

**LOCAL BERKS**  
**Thurs. Eve., Jan. 5th**

For the purpose of amending the Local Constitution to conform with the State Constitution.

Members in good standing are entitled to vote on these changes.

### PROFITEERS SHOWN AS RULERS OF CITY, STATE AND NATION BY CONTROL OF WAGES AND PRICES

Public Officials Condemn Electric Magnates But Lack the Power to Break the Chains Which Capitalism Has Bound Upon the People—Rate Adjustment Will Still Leave the American People Subjects of Private Owners—Only Socialism Will Win Economic Freedom

That the "Land of the Free" is not a fact but only a line of a national song is again being demonstrated by the proposed "rate war" which the city administration of Reading proposes to wage against the Metropolitan Edison Company. The apparent helplessness of our city officials to halt the profiteering of the big power corporation was never more apparent than at the present time. A public discussion on the electric rate question, held in the municipal auditorium last Tuesday night, emphasizes the fact that, in all matters affecting the welfare of the great mass of people, large bankers and corporations rule with dictatorial power.

Not only are the big money groups able to tell the public what it must pay for the needs of life, but at the other end of the scale their authority is equally supreme. In the matter of wages, as in the case of prices, those who own are in a position to dictate. Thus, under the capitalist arrangement for which the old political parties stand, the people are held in a double slavery by the owners, the slavery of low wages and high prices.

Hard Times Inevitable With the few who hold this vast economic power curtailing the purchasing power of millions of Americans at the very time that production has reached the greatest heights in all history, the collapse of business was inevitable. In fact, it has been predicted for many years by the Socialists of Reading and elsewhere, who saw that a limited ability to buy would clog the channels of trade and hasten the time when industry would cease for lack of customers.

In the case of the power trust, long ago the factor of free competition, which functioned for the protection of consumers in the early period of the capitalist system, disappeared. With the field left to themselves, the big electric companies and other so-called "public service" corporations were given a free hand—free to work their men for as little wages as they wished and free to tax the public sufficient to pay large executive salaries and steady unearned rake-offs to investors.

Who Rules Reading The present attempt to secure lower rates shows who has been ruling Reading and every other city in the nation. It is not the people or the people's representatives who control the needs of the people. That power is in the hands of the corporations.

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### COMMISSIONERS GIVE JOB TO HIGHEST BIDDER

"Economy" may mean many things to the commissioners of Berks County, but it certainly doesn't mean awarding contracts to the lowest responsible bidder. That, at least, is the opinion of the manager of the Reading Window Cleaning Co.

The Reading Window Cleaners lost out this week on a bid of \$60 for the job of cleaning the glasswork at the new courthouse. The commissioners awarded the contract to the National Window Cleaning Co. on a bid of \$130.

Just why the county officials thought it would be good "economy" to pay more than twice as much as necessary will probably remain another dark mystery, along with the Lillian Hain-Russ Symontowne check case. However, it can not be that the Reading Window Cleaners are not considered responsible bidders. The firm has been in business for almost 30 years and is the oldest concern in Reading in that business.

### TAX CUT AND DEBT INCREASE LEAD TO RUIN

Nine-Mill Rate, Opposed by Socialists, Hastens Day When City's Credit Will Be Exhausted

### COUNTY EXPENSE GROWS

Public Bodies Are Now Paying Penalty For Permitting Few Owners to Grab Monster Profits

That the city and county governments of Reading and Berks are keeping pace with other communities in the steady drift to financial ruin was made more evident by events of the past week.

At the very time that Council voted to reduce tax rates from 10 to 9 mills, it received a communication from the city controller with the warning that January payrolls are in danger. The same issue of the daily papers which carried the news of the city's tax reduction, with George and Hoyerter, Socialist members of Council, voting "No," also published the ominous news that the bonded indebtedness of the city will soon be increased by \$200,000 to pay bills which shrinking tax receipts will not cover.

County Expenses Mount While the city officials are facing a condition which is placing Reading at the mercy of money lenders, the county is also drifting toward a condition of insolvency.

County tax payments are also lagging, but the expenses which the various county boards must incur are increasing. Seven hundred thousand dollars is the lowest estimate of the Poor Board of the needs for unemployment relief. That is the bill which the public must pay as a penalty for permitting the accumulated wealth of industry to flow into the coffers of a few wealthy owners. It is those owners that the Fusion city officials are now favoring by cutting the tax rate and borrowing money from the surpluses which the owners have taken in former days.

No Escape Under Capitalism While the old party officials loudly complain about the state of the public finances, none of them have suggested a way of escaping the ruin into which they see themselves heading. Nor is there any escape possible as long as the present economic system exists. Machines have taken the jobs of men, markets have been destroyed by the falling purchasing power of great masses of people, taxes are not being paid and demands for relief are mounting. All

Day Of Rejoicing Nevertheless, workers danced in the streets of Moscow on Nov. 7, as they did in the other industrial centers of the country. That was while

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### COAL ON PAVEMENT SEEN AS SNUB TO UNEMPLOYED

If you are one of the unemployed of Reading and are expecting a load of that stripping coal which Russ Symontowne is providing for jobless people, don't bother about cleaning your pavement. Let that job wait until after the coal arrives and save yourself a needless task. Chances are that your pavement will be dirty afterwards.

Citizens of Reading who are forced by poverty to accept the fuel which is doled out to the unemployed are being embarrassed by the practice of dumping the coal on the pavement instead of shooting it into the cellars, as is done by dealers for cash customers.

Whether or not this is a policy which has been established to distinguish the sheep who still serve a master from the goats who are being served by the local relief organization is a matter of guess. However, it is very annoying to self-respecting people who are not particularly eager to advertise to the world that they are objects of charity.

### GERMAN WAGES SINKING LOWER

Desperate Workers Resort to Theft and Violence as Conditions Grow Steadily Worse Throughout Nation

BERLIN (FP).—While unemployment continues to grow, wages in Germany skid rapidly. Wages paid German workers in 1930 totaled 43 billion marks. In 1932 they dropped to 28 billion, official statistics show.

Conditions in the cities are worse than throughout the country. In the cities 73 of every 1,000 inhabitants were unemployed from 1929 to 1931. This means approximately 73 of every 250 wage earners, estimating three dependents to a wage earner. Throughout the nation the proportion is 50 out of 1,000 inhabitants.

Twenty-eight per cent of the total population of the city of Cologne, 209,236 persons, are on charity. Unemployed hordes of men and women in Berlin have no places to sleep. Municipal flophouses cannot hold them, and emergency stations in barracks have been opened.

At the same time thousands of unemployed who had been refused relief, because officials claimed funds were depleted, were started to learn that the von Papen treasury borrowed 160 million marks from the Reich Office for Unemployment Relief.

Jobless workers of Thale, a small central German town, remembered that God helps those that help themselves. After their demand for fuel had been turned down by authorities, about a hundred of them invaded the municipal forest and felled 25 trees before police arrested their leader and 30 volunteer lumberjacks. In Berlin, shortly after, a group of about 150 unemployed forcibly secured occupancy of a vacant flat for a woman who had been living with her sick baby in a shack.

### SOCIAL PLANNING URGED BY FEDERAL CHURCH COUNCIL

NEW YORK (FP).—"Subordination of the profit motive to the co-operative spirit" is the keynote of the restatement of the Social Creed of the Churches made public by the Federal Council of Churches.

The new creed calls for social planning and control for the common good, the right of all to jobs, a fair distribution of wealth, a living wage, social insurance, reduction of hours of labor, the right to organize, abolition of child labor, extension of educational opportunities to the farm family, repudiation of war, free speech, free assembly and a free press.

### RELIEF VOUCHER HALTED UNTIL SICK MAN WORKS

Taxpayers' Protective League To Protest Arbitrary Action To Enforce Slave Labor Order to Jobless

### FAMILY OF TEN GETS \$7

Judge Schaeffer Asked to Consider Higher Amounts—Dismissal of Nonresident Investigator Urged

Charges of forced labor were again made this week at a meeting of the Taxpayers' League when investigators for the League presented a case in which the food voucher for a family of 10 persons was refused because the man of the house failed to report for work at the regular 5-cent hourly rate which is imposed upon the destitute of Berks.

Definite charges that their relief had been stopped in an effort to enforce a work order were made in a signed statement by Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Leone, residing at 122 Maple street. In the family, beside the husband and wife are 8 children ranging in age from 3 to 17 years.

The statement of the Leone's sets forth that their voucher has been reduced to \$7—although \$9.50 is the regulation amount for families of that number of people.

This week's voucher, due on Tuesday was withheld until Leone would report for work, according to Mrs. Leone, who quotes Mrs. Howk and Miss Godard, investigators and case workers for the relief organization as the person who made that statement.

Leone declares he has been under the doctor's care for some time and has been unable to work.

### Belies Public Statements

The Leone statement is contrary to public statements made by the Relief Board to the effect that no person is being forced to work for the 5 cents per hour which county funds

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### INJUNCTION JUDGE ADMITS HOOVER APPOINTMENT LOST

WASHINGTON (FP).—Federal Judge Wilkerson of Chicago, who issued for Harry Daugherty the injunction which smashed the railway shopmen's strike in 1922, has thrown up the sponge in his fight for confirmation to a place on the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, to which he was nominated by President Hoover.

In a letter given out at the White House, Wilkerson admits that he sees no chance that he can be confirmed. Progressives and Democrats in the Senate had already announced that they would not permit confirmation of his name nor that of Judge Kenneth Mackintosh of Seattle, who likewise was an anti-labor selection to the federal appellate bench.

The final kick in the fight made by anti-labor elements to promote Wilkerson and to besmirch the rail labor organizations who resisted his nomination, was delivered by the Washington Star, Dec. 8. A front-page cartoon represented Al Capone, reading the news of Wilkerson's withdrawal while luxuriously housed in a prison cell. It had Capone exclaiming, happily, past his big cigar, "That Senate of the U. S. A. is a great body!"

Wilkerson, sentenced Capone. If Capone is having an easy time in prison, Hoover is giving him special privileges. Chicago tax-dodger corporation forces denounced the opposition to Wilkerson as being influenced by the gangsters.

### What Reading Folks Are Talking About

FUSIONISTS NEGLECT STREETS

Councilman Jesse George voted "No" on the motion to approve the Fusion budget. However, he is still able to laugh when he speaks about how the Fusionists cut the appropriation for his department.

"I'm the 'forgotten man,'" is his comment.

However, George knows that the cut in his portion of the budget is more serious than a political slight or even a city of bad streets could be.

"It will mean that many men who worked for me in years gone by are going to be on the relief," the Socialist Councilman will tell you.

And that's the trouble with this "economy" business. Prosperity depends upon the purchasing power of the masses, and putting people out of work is going to make matters worse, not better.

The millions of people who are now unemployed in America are suffering partly as a result of too much economy on the part of private industry. The trouble is that most economy is for private gain and against public welfare. That trouble will continue to exist until Socialism makes the industries the servants of people.

### STORE CLERKS WORK LONGER

Only yesterday we learned that most Penn street merchants are planning to keep their stores open on Saturday night until 9 o'clock. Few, if any, of the store clerks are going to receive extra pay for the extra hours which they will be obliged to serve.

It seems just as silly as the Capitalist system itself to make salespeople work longer now—when almost everybody has less money than ever to spend and more time in which to spend it.

While few clerks are going to like to work on Saturday nights, that class of workers is just as helpless as all others. In the past they failed to organize for their mutual protection. They served the bosses' interests and forgot about their own, and on election days many of them voted to continue the system which makes workers the "goats" in good times as well as bad. Now they are feeling the evil effects of a system which operates on the principle of individual initiative and competition.

Speaking of "competition" leads to the observation that the merchants themselves are also helpless in the matter. Many of them do not care to resume the antiquated policy of Saturday night selling. But the most ruthless competitor sets the pace and those who do not follow suit fear they will lose out. Saturday night work, like the wage cuts and speed-ups which all workers have suffered, is all part of the Capitalist system. To abolish the evils of Capitalism it will be necessary to replace the system with a better one—as Socialists are trying to do.

### MORE WANNER "ECONOMY"?

Last Saturday's newspapers record

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### LAST CALL TO SPEAKERS

This is the final call to all those comrades that wish to speak at the branch meeting. Select your subject and send it to organizer Bigony or the Lecture Committee. Those not sending in subject and nights that they can speak will not be booked by Lecture Committee.

**SOCIALIST**  
**Radio Program**  
**EVERY SUNDAY**  
**at 12:15 P. M. over**  
**361.4M WEEU 830K**

Jan. 1—Raymond S. Hofess  
Jan. 8—James H. Maurer  
Jan. 15—Darlington Hoopes

TELL YOUR FRIENDS