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READING LABOR ADVOCATE

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Socialization Plan Urged in Wilson Bill

REFLECTIONS

By the Editor

COMMENTING UPON THE smallness of the national Socialist vote in the last election, the Saturday Evening Post makes the sage statement that "aside from a few idealistic dreamers and a much larger, but relatively small, group of incurably alien stock in some of the larger cities, the American people are in no sense socialistically minded."

NOW, I HAVE no desire to question the major portion of the Post's statement. I am quite willing to admit that the American people are not "socialistically minded." I am equally able to agree with the Post's observation that "hope has not yet died in the United States" and that people hope that when it (the depression) passes they will be the lucky ones who make an invention, find a gold mine or oil well, or establish themselves in a profitable little business."

The American people are that way. But since they are, why on earth does the editor of the Post have the nerve to call Socialists the "dreamers." It is not the Socialist, but the worker who hopes for the impossible from Capitalism who is dreaming a dream which is likely to end in a nightmare of red riot and Fascist dictatorship.

THE MAN WHO hopes that he will be the one to rise to the top is about as likely to have his hopes justified as the man who buys a ticket for the Irish sweepstakes. What is more, he is thinking along the same unsocial, individualistic lines as the lottery gambler. He is hoping for something for himself, without regard for the welfare of his fellowmen. He is not a Socialist because he lacks a social viewpoint.

And while he is not idealistic in his selfish desires, he is none the less a dreamer of the deepest dye when he presumes that this Capitalist system is ever again going to be revived.

THE DAY OF private and personal enterprise is over. Today the man who makes an invention does it as an employee of some giant corporation; the man who finds an oil well—unless he be already wealthy (Continued on Page Seven)

T. P. L. DEMANDS DEFINITE ACTION OF POOR BOARD AN OPEN LETTER

Poor Board, County Home, Berks County. Members of the Poor Board:

On Monday morning the Taxpayers' Protective League visited you to take up their demands for aid to the unemployed.

Four days have elapsed since that time, members of the Poor Board, and no answer has been received in either the negative or the affirmative.

What are you going to do about it, members of the Poor Board? These unemployed want an answer.

Does your silence mean that you refuse to consider them? Or does it mean that you just don't care.

Are you more interested in wages and salaries than in feeding the unemployed?

Are you more interested in holding your jobs than in feeding weak and undernourished children? (Continued on Page Six)

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

Jan. 22—Lilith M. Wilson
Jan. 29—Raymond S. Hofess
TELL YOUR FRIENDS

SOCIALISTS RENEW FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC DISTRICTS TO FILL PUBLIC'S NEEDS

Powers of Taxation Would be Used to Provide Workers With Food, Clothing, Shelter and Services—Bill Aims to Deprive Private Interests of Power to Control Lives of the Masses

HARRISBURG, Pa.—Socialist Representative Lilith Wilson has again introduced the Public Service Districts bill providing for the creation of a new type of municipality to carry out a program of socialization of the production of necessities. The bill is part of the attempt of the two Socialist members of the Pennsylvania state legislature to work out plans in the form of actual legislation such as would be needed with the organizations of the workers in power and therefore actually faced with the problem of socialization.

Under the bill 20% of the qualified voters within the proposed district's boundaries could by petition secure a hearing before the court of common pleas most nearly having jurisdiction over the district, within thirty days of the presentation of their petition. Persons or other municipal corporations might enter objections but the petition once finally granted would be binding. Upon the setting up of the district by the court, letters patent would be issued to the new organization and the qualified voters at the next election would choose a board of five directors to administer the powers of the district, for four-year terms.

Production For Use
Armed with powers of taxation running up to \$100,000 on each dollar of the various county assessments and the right to issue bonds to cover cost of purchase or construction of particular works, the boards would be empowered to undertake to build plants and supply almost any kind of goods or service necessary to mankind. Boards could exercise powers of condemnation of property or works without the boundaries of the district as well as within in order to protect themselves against immense utility plants serving the district but operating without the district. Powers specifically open to all such districts would be the production, and supplying of water, heat, light, power. (Continued on Page Six)

CIVIC GROUPS SNUB UNIONISTS

Rhodes Declares Economic Pressure by Big Business Interests Dictate Action of Civic Bodies

In a statement to the press, George M. Rhodes, president of Federated Trades Council, has voiced organized labor's resentment of what members of a labor committee term a snub to the trades unionists of Reading by the Council of Civic Clubs.

The action which has drawn the fire of local unionists was committed last Friday when a Labor committee called upon a meeting of the Civic groups in the American House, in accordance with arrangements previously made through John P. Lozo, principal of the Senior High School and president of the Council of Civic Clubs. In the Labor group with Rhodes were Edward Callaghan, of the Hosiery Workers; Jacob H. Hiestand, American Federation of Railroad Workers; Francis Klemmer, Plumbers; and Andrew P. Bower, vice-president of the State Federation of Labor.

Appointment Not Honored

Although arrangements had been made to have the Labor group state the object of its request for a conference with the Civic group at 12:15 p. m., the group was denied an audience when they presented themselves at the appointed time. They were told to return at 1:30 p. m. and when the latter time arrived were informed by Lozo that (Continued on Page Six)

HOOPES ASSAILS TERRORIZATION BY EMPLOYERS

Reading Socialist Again Offers Bill to Repeal Infamous Flynn Anti-Sedition Law

LAW KILLS CIVIL LIBERTY

Drastic Law Came as a Result Of After-War Hysteria. Urged by Manufacturers' Association

HARRISBURG, Pa.—Representative Darlington Hoopes, Berks Socialist, has again introduced a bill to repeal the Pennsylvania Sedition Act, written on the state's law books in 1919 under war hysteria of public opinion, cleverly used by the employing class to sharpen their weapons for rooting out workingclass revolt against their arbitrary rule.

John M. Flynn, of Elk county, elected for thirty successive years on both democratic and republican tickets is the author of the infamous sedition measure, and is today a more important member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives than ever before due to his position as a ranking democrat in the House where the number of democratic members has been tripled for tematically use the instant a work- (Continued on Page Seven)

PENNA. LAWMAKERS FEAR 6-CENT COMMISSARY PLAN

(Special Correspondence)

HARRISBURG, Pa.—A statewide revolt against the proposal of the Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Board to establish state commissaries throughout the State to feed unemployed has a short-lived echo in the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The proposal came as a result of Governor Pinchot's announcement that the "relief dollar must be stretched to its absolute limit" and met the immediate condemnation of welfare workers and retail merchants, the unemployed having no statewide organization to give them a voice.

The protests of the small business class found response in the Democratic minority in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives who, in caucus just before the Monday night opening of the General Assembly, decided to back a resolution denouncing the system and asking its abandonment. The Democratic members introduced resolutions on the official caucus proposal, heatedly damning the commissary system as "a grat- (Continued on Page Three)

DELAYED WAGES AND CUTS FOR QUALITY BAKERS

Schofer Bakery Employees Find That Earning Money Doesn't Always Mean Getting It

TOLD TO LIKE IT OR QUIT

Workers, Faced With Job Shortage, Reluctantly Accepted Distasteful Conditions Offered Them

Employees of the Schofer Quality Bakery on South Fifth street are not exactly happy. Reason: Pay cuts and overdue wages.

Back in June the Schofer management announced a uniform reduction in wages of 10 per cent. The same notice which conveyed this sad news announced the intention of the "Quality" bakers to retain a half week's wages during the weeks of July 2 and July 16.

The reason for their action was given as a drop in business. And the cause of the drop in business, according to the story which the bosses told their employees, was the closing down of the Reading Railroad shops.

"However, the firm made it plain that it would be entirely up to the employees whether or not the cuts and wage-holding would be carried out. In the manner which has come to be the custom since the world has been made a decent place in which to live, the notice stated that "anyone who is dissatisfied with the wage plan may give one week's notice of intention to quit and we will fill the vacancies so made."

The same notice urged the employees to help the firm to get along. (Continued on Page Four)

GEORGE DENIES MAYOR'S FIGURES

Socialist Councilman Declares Ermentrout Erred — Scores Economics at Expense of Wage Earners

Taking issue with statements published this week in which Mayor Ermentrout declared that the per capita cost of operating the city government during 1932 was \$16.60, Councilman Jesse George, Socialist, quoted from the 1932 budget to show that the per capita, based upon a population of 112,000 was actually \$16.23 per person.

"Anyone interested enough to examine the city's records will find that the mayor evidently failed to take some of the receipts into consideration," George pointed out. "The revenue from all sources, including \$80,000 from the water department and \$300,000 secured by short term loan totalled \$1,958,242.66. Deduct \$140,000 from that for unencumbered balances which was placed in the budget and a balance of \$1,818,242.66 remains. It's only a matter of division to learn that the city's costs exceeded the figures which the mayor is quoted as giving."

Economy at Workers' Expense
George scored Mayor Ermentrout's statement that the Fusionists are practicing economy.

"City workers homes have been made sad by the kind of economy which has been introduced since January 1932," George declared. "The present administration has (Continued on Page Four)

50 JOBS VANISH AS INDUSTRY "GOES FUSION"

The Fusion cry of "Keep the Industries in Reading" is recalled by a news item in the Pottstown "Mercury" this week.

According to the "Mercury," the Keystone Machine Co. at 926 Bingham street, has been sold by A. B. Leshner, a Shoemakersville man, to Stephen A. Wetti, and is being removed to Pottstown.

The story states that the Keystone Machine Co. employed 50 persons. Whether the new owner does not like the Fusion administration or has decided that Pottstown wage-slaves can be induced to work cheaper than Reading's workers is not stated.

S. P. ANNOUNCES 4-YEAR PLAN OF PARTY ACTIVITY

National Officials Call Upon Socialists For "Iron-Jawed" Determination to Strengthen Movement

LAUNCH 5-POINT PROGRAM

Literature, Membership, Meetings, Study Classes and Fraternal Groups Urged as Basis Of Activity

CHICAGO.—Announcing a "Four-Year Plan" to increase Socialist membership, strengthen the party press and educate present and future members, the organization committee of the party last week wrote to all locals and branches:

"The Socialist movement is in danger unless every member of the party and every local organization enters 1933 with an iron-jawed determination to build this year on a sound basis and to work for Socialism with energy, enthusiasm, and devotion.

"The fact that 56 persons voted our ticket to every member of the party is both a danger and a challenge. They are not well-grounded Socialists, or they would belong to the party! They are liable to shift with the wind. At the same time, it shows every member that he or she has a wide field to work in.

Seek Numbers and Strength
"There are 43 persons reading (Continued on Page Seven)

MEINIG PLANT CLOSES WHILE HERB. STILL RULES

Folks who recall how E. Richard Meinig's name appeared on an advertisement in the daily papers, urging voters to restore prosperity by keeping Hoover in the White House, are now wondering whether Meinig doesn't know that the "Great Engineer" is still President.

For prosperity has folded its tent and departed from the Meinig plant while Herbert the First is still the chief executive of these wealthy United States.

A week before Christmas the plant closed for two weeks. And last Wednesday another shutdown was announced—this time for an indefinite period.

Meinig employees who voted for Hoover and prosperity, as well as those who cast their votes for Roosevelt and beer are wondering how either prosperity or beer can be gotten when the pay envelope stops. And some of them have come to the conclusion that the Socialists must have been right when they predicted that a Democratic collapse would be just as unpleasant as a Republican panic.

RELIEF BOARD WORKERS TAKE SHOPMEN'S JOBS

County's 5-Cent-Per-Hour Victims Forced to Dismantle Cars in Exchange For Rot-Ten Lumber

SAVES R. R. \$47.36 DAILY

Unemployed Shop Workers Vainly Wait Call For Duty As Symontowne Plan Aids Company "Economy"

Unemployed workers who submit to the Symontowne program of working for 5 cents per hour are going to be used to save the Reading Railroad Company a lot of money. Incidentally, they are going to take the jobs away from the so-called "free" workers who once earned wages by stripping the woodwork from old box cars.

As the 5 cents which the unemployed receive at the relief wood-yard is paid from county funds, the taxpayers of Berks will be placed in the position of paying the railroad company's expenses.

This week the Relief Board's employees were put to work stripping the wood from a number of old box cars. It is reported that Symontowne expects to use the jobless to dismantle 2,000 cars. In return the company will reward the Relief Board with the old lumber which is salvaged.

Once a 74-Cent Job

In more prosperous days, before "economy" was the rage, workers used to be paid by the railroad company for that work and the wood was burned or sold. Most of it was burned, however, because the yellow pine sheeting used was mostly sold and had no sale value. Under the old policy of permitting the company (Continued on Page Two)

BAZAAR IS NEXT BIG S. P. EVENT

Berks Socialists Called to Action—Women's Groups Will Co-operate—Opening Night, February 11

With the Socialist Bazaar only three weeks off, every comrade should be talking and boosting the bazaar. The Socialist women have again consented to co-operate with the picnic committee to put it over with a bang.

Last year the success of the bazaar was largely due to the co-operation of the various women's organizations within the party. The same five women's groups will again take charge of the bazaar, as follows:

Northwest, cakes; Northeast, julep stand; Southern, candy; Central, lunch stand; Socialist Women's League, fancy work.

But the big job is to advertise the event and to sell tickets. The committee realizes that times are no better than last year, and for that reason the tickets will be sold at depression prices. Only ten cents for a ticket and a door prize every night, dancing and orchestra—all for ten cents.

The picnic committee, which has charge of the affair, has distributed tickets to all of the branches. If you have not yet received your tickets, get in touch with your branch. The most important factor in making the bazaar a success is the distribution of tickets.

Every ticket sold helps swell the (Continued on Page Seven)

What Reading Folks Are Talking About

THAT'S ERMENTROUT'S STORY

Mayor Ermentrout's denial of the Fusionist's intention to withhold the money which was sent by the state for the Volunteer Firemen's Relief Association was wrong in at least one spot. When he attributed the story to Councilman George he was only guessing.

The facts as stated in last week's Advocate were received by the writer from Walter Frees, the official of the Firemen's organization who made the formal demand for the money.

Frees declared that he was denied the check and that the city controller announced his intention of keeping the money in the city funds until a later date. It was not until after the firemen got their lawyer on the job that the Fusionists decided that the best thing to do was to obey the law by giving the money to the firemen "forthwith."

It sounds rather cheap of "Hiz-zoner" to point to the fact that the firemen have now received their money as proof of the administration's intentions. Even a common thief will make restitution if an officer catches him with the goods, but the intention of the offender is not justified when the stolen article is returned.

Why squirm? Why not admit that the city needed the cash and, as Controller Menges put it, "11,000 looks mighty good to the city right now?"

WATER PLANT MENACED

The water plant, Reading's precious municipal possession, is headed for danger. Constant transfers of water funds to the city general fund is not going to be helpful in keeping the plant at the high state of efficiency for which it has become noted.

Indication of the direction in which the water plant is headed is furnished by the Fusionists' plan to delay necessary improvements at Maiden Creek. Without doubt the present administration is looking toward future uses for water receipts by the general city government when it decides to postpone expenditures in improvements and extensions.

To delay needed work in water is not good economy. Neither is it good business to constantly make up by loans from the water department for the lack of funds in other departments of our city government. Nor, (Continued on Page Three)

CRAFT SHOP PAY IS A MYSTERY

Nobody Seems to Know Their Exact Earnings, So Craftsmen Take What They Get

What do the workers in the Relief Board's craft shop in old City Hall get for their work?

Ask that question of Relief Director Symontowne and he will probably inform you that the idea of the craft shop is to enable people to be self-supporting and that they will receive everything the shop earns.

The next question will probably be: "And what is the shop earning?" And that's the question which some of the craftsmen are trying to find out this week.

One craftsman reports that he has received \$11.84 for four weeks' steady work. Another says he got \$14.70 for seven weeks' service as a salesman and general handy man for the craft shop. Among the things which the latter says he did was to beg \$106 worth of material from various merchants for the shop. He also served as attendant at the Noah's Ark shop on Penn Square at which the craft shop's products were displayed during the Christmas season. For the latter service, he declares, he was to receive \$10, but (Continued on Page Six)