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* MANIFESTO *

OF THE

Social Democratic Federation of Australasia.

ON account of the constant misrepresentations of the aims and objects of Socialism, and the many definitions that have been given of it by unscrupulous self-interested opponents, ignorant expounders of its principles, and politicians who have used it to obtain place and power, it was at length deemed advisable to formulate some method whereby a definite conception of COLLECTIVISM would be made plain to the ordinary mind, and the concerted action of Socialists assured. With this object in view a CONFERENCE of Socialists, representing New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, (including the Verein Vorwärts), met at Leigh House, Sydney, in November, 1892, and unanimously resolved to form themselves into one united body, under the title of "The Social Democratic Federation of Australasia." The Executive of the Federation appointed Mr. F. Scussa to represent Australia at the Zurich International Congress, which brought Australian Socialism into due prominence, and in touch with the international movement. The second Intercolonial Conference was held at Leigh House, Sydney, in November, 1893, when it was unanimously resolved: "To establish a distinct Social Democratic Political Party after the general election," also, "that the Provisional Committee appointed at the Conference should meet within one month after the election to carry this resolution into effect." For political reasons a number of the committee have failed to carry out their trust, and the work devolved on a number of earnest, determined men, whose efforts are being recognised by a rapid increase in membership, and we appeal to you to assist us in planting the flag of Social Democracy on the citadels of capitalism, and hasten international brotherhood and economical freedom for the struggling masses of mankind. This is our object in issuing this Manifesto.

The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few non-producers, and the alarming increase of poverty among the workers in every civilised country, is the problem of the age, and one that demands the immediate attention of all thinkers and reformers. In Europe, millions of desperate starving men are marching the streets demanding bread, whilst millions more are on the verge of destitution, amidst warehouses bursting with the necessaries and luxuries of life, monopolised by a privileged class who revel in licentious luxury and idleness. Myriads of half-starved, discontented toilers are valiantly fighting against the corrupt institutions of monarchy and capitalism for the right to live. The workers of bankrupt, tax-ridden countries are only held in check by the bayonet and artillery controlled by nation pillagers, who masquerade as financiers and statesmen, whilst the truest and bravest sons are condemned to the dungeon or to be executed. In the American Republic the "vulgar wealthy" flaunt their ill-gotten gains in the face of starving people, and mock them in their misery, whilst the legislature is but an "auction mart" where the people's (?) representatives are bought by the highest bidder. In Australia the worker is economically reduced to a condition of serfdom, working for a bare subsistence, whilst the landlord and capitalist rob him of the products of his labour, minus that portion which enables him to reproduce his species for further exploitation. The increase of labour-displacing machinery renders the obsolete methods of trades unionism powerless to cope with the power of organised capitalism, and the strike as a means of attack (unless universal) ends in the starvation of those who engage in it. Small business men are rapidly being swallowed up by mammoth syndicates, and sent to swell the crowd who daily clamour for bread. The farmer tilling the soil is merely the chattel slave of banking and commercial syndicates, who, by means of usury and imposition, fleece him of the results of his labour, and eventually drive him to insolvency and pauperism. The learned professions are fast realising the evil effects of competition, and yearly send their quota to swell the ever-increasing ranks of the unemployed. The Press—owned and controlled by the Plutocracy—is used to misrepresent the aspirations of the people, to stifle freedom, and to persecute and pillage the poor. Justice is corrupted at its very source, and the law is warped and twisted out of all recognition to gratify the insatiable desires of the wealthy. The constabulary with their revolvers, and the troops, if necessary, with their gatlings, are placed at the disposal of employers to dragoon the wage-earner into silence, and the expenses are met by increasing the burdens of the people. Thus all classes are sacrificed to the Moloch of competition.

Nothing short of the complete abolition of the private ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, can secure economic and social freedom, without which the people will remain destitute, degraded, and brutal. Production for profit must cease, and present commercial "anarchy" give place to a system of national and municipal co-operative production for use, under which opportunity will be given to develop the highest mental and moral faculties of mankind.

The Social Democratic Federation calls upon all workers to *unite!* Join the International Movement, and break down the barriers of racial and religious prejudice which render the worker an easy prey to the scheming political and the commercial marauder.

W. H. MELLOR,

TRADES HALL, SYDNEY.

Secretary

May Day, 1895.

N.B.—The minimum subscription to the Social Democratic Federation is sixpence per month. Full particulars re membership on application to the Secretary. Political and Municipal Platforms in preparation.