

The WESTERN SOCIALIST

JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

OFFICIAL NOTICE

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BUNDLE RATES ON APPLICATION

What We Do, and Can Do

The only advantage to be found in modern culture is that you can learn to write nonsense with distinction. This is apparent in a glance at the average cultural medium.

The main point is to prevent you from getting a clear perspective of what is being related. The story is thrown at you in a number of isolated episodes and you are expected to assemble these into a mosaic of your own creation. We have read half a dozen learned interpretations of Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea." The author never divulged what he meant, and the reviewers mustered the allegory according to their lights.

If you write about a pig it would never do to refer to him as a hog, or even vice versa. That would be too trite and the reader might get it. How much better, and more involved, to say that a pig is an omnivorous ungulate, and let it go at that. It is

more abstruse, arty, and opportune. Anyone suggesting simplicity is looked upon with customary contumely.

The culture magazines aim to be pedantic and pretentious. They are comprised of half truths, elegant variations, chlorophyll phrases, genteel ornament, and vague decision. Don't expose the material so that the reader can see through it. Keep it as opaque as possible and the ends of culture have been obtained.

In the Socialist movement we follow the opposite procedure. We introduce the subject to the reader in terms that the average person can comprehend. We have no desire to make reading as irksome as breaking in a new pair of shoes.

We have two official journals to carry the message. These are The Socialist Standard, and The Western Socialist. Both are written in plain everyday language that can be grasped by any fugitive from a grade school.

Our objective is to present the matter rather than the adornment, the meat rather than the gravy, the wine rather than the bottle. We want others to see the social problems as we see them, and to enlist their services so that we may end it the same way.

There are many interesting and disturbing developments in our domestic economy, as well as in our international relations. Our two journals not only expose these with clarity and precision, but in many cases actually anticipate social and economic events. They provide the news behind the news.

This they can do because they understand the forces that are making history. They are able to analyze the hidden pressures, that presage events.

We read in the conventional press that the Near East is boiling. The Far East is frying. Europe is fricasseeing in fear. Latin America is roasting in an oven of economic urges and political drives.

But they never supply the real basic reasons for what is going on. They claim to be as impartial as a parking

meter. The explanations they leave to us.

This they do, not because they trust that we can handle the situation, but because they realize that they can't. They invariably fail to see the part they play. In their own estimation they are as pure, white, and innocent as a bowl of cottage cheese. In ours they reveal themselves in a darker and dumber aspect.

There are millions of workers in the United States and Canada who never read The Socialist Standard or Western Socialist. Millions who never even heard of them. We try to contact as many as we can but our resources are limited, our propagandists few.

Billy Graham and the Working Class

The Editor "Western People":

Sir—Dr. Billy Graham's recent hot-gospel campaign in Melbourne and Sydney aroused widespread interest throughout the land. It had the approval of the capitalist press, the sanction of the capitalist state, the firm support of the ruling class and if not the unqualified blessing no active opposition from any section of the Church. All the props of capitalism went to his aid. The evangelist and his henchmen were given plenty of publicity by leading newspapers, radio and TV. In consequence hundreds of thousands of working class people, victims of mass propaganda and balleyhoo, converged on focal points to hear the gopeller's message.

And what did he tell them? The same old story related by pulpiteers in every church on Sunday. Christians must practice the virtues of prayer, sacrifice, repentance, humility, charity, and submission to their lot, God's will, in this vale of tears. Their salvation would come when they died, for the faithful were assured of everlasting life and happiness in a heavenly paradise. And what did that PROMISE cost Billy Graham and the

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Then you can help to introduce the papers to others. Get lists of prospects and acquaintances and send them in accompanied, where possible, with a "small service charge" to cover cost of sending sample copies. Contact your local library and see to it that a copy of both papers are kept on display in the reading room.

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wealthy capitalists behind his religious crusade? As much as a bishop's blessing or the handshake of a king — nothing. But his listeners apparently did not mind that at all; a rosy picture of luxurious living in cloudland, on terms of equality with their kind, was good enough for them; it would be a delightful change from the horrors of capitalist hell in real life below.

Crowds pressed forward in their thousands, converts to Graham's particular creed, presumably to declare themselves prepared to suffer without complaint the trials and tribulations of life for the dazzling prospect of eternal joy after death. And while their minds were preoccupied with the idea, avaricious Federal politicians of three anti-socialist parties went ahead with the Richardson plan to enrich themselves by means of substantial increases in their salaries, allowances and pensions. They at least were concerned with the substance of good living here and now, not with the shadowy abstractions of an imaginary hereafter, and the electors who voted those enterprising gentlemen into office gnashed their teeth with rage.

Billy Graham is not a champion of

working class interests. His object is continued belief in God, the resurrection and immortality, which he and the rest of the clergy present as realities. On the other hand socialists hold (1) that God, heaven, hell, the devil, purgatory, eternal life, ghosts, celestial paradise, the spiritual hierarchy of angels, cherubs and seraphs, etc., are merely related ideas belonging to the faculty of imagination; (2) that ideas or beliefs have no existence outside the mind, no reality, no substance, no material form. And socialists ask why worship an Idea? Why sacrifice to an Idea? Why pray to an Idea? Why believe that a supreme Idea created the universe and all living things in it, including man? Why indulge in speculation about the mystifications? Why indeed for all that seems to involve a colossal waste of human activity?

Let workers accept the reasonable view that there is nothing beyond the grave, and they will ultimately support a movement to make the world they know a paradise for the living. The sooner the better for without that effort on their part there will be no change, no relief from their distress and exploitation for profit under ruthless capitalism. That system will not collapse of its own accord and the ruling class will not terminate it in a gesture of goodwill to their wage-slaves.

Billy Graham is no different from any other cleric. His job calls for discretion and the utmost care in every utterance, lest a slip of the tongue cuts short his evangelistic career for ever.

Accordingly, he did not declare that the poverty of the international working class is due to their economic exploitation throughout the world; he had nothing to say about the existing maldistribution of wealth — an abundance of it to the ruling class of capitalists, great landowners and their over-paid executives of State; but a pittance only to millions of producers of that wealth, the workers; he found no fault with the private or state ownership of the means of

living, with corresponding enslavement and robbery of the working class; he was silent on the dreadful plight of poor pensioners and the unemployed; he did not condemn the capitalist system of society and its rotten social effects; he never mentioned the facts that bitter rivalry between predatory powers and national groups of capitalists for world trade and ownership or control of rich oil-fields, etc., MUST lead to war, carnage and destruction; he had no common-sense remedy for the anarchy of our times, for the hydrogen bomb, guided missiles and the prospect of violent death to everyone.

How cowardly the attitude of such a powerful institution as the Church in doing little but preach, promise and moralize on religious topics at a time when "peace-loving" nations, armed to the teeth, toy with the idea of blowing the world to bits in defence of their respective brands of capitalism. Why isn't the Church conducting a crusade for the abolition of capitalism in favour of a new Social Order? Because religion is, and always was, on the side of the ruling class. The Church defends the status quo, the present order of things in which the workers are the slave class of modern society.

And who are the workers? All those people who have to work for a living, be it for wages, salaries or subsistence from their own petty businesses. It is to those workers who want a better world for themselves and their families, during lifetime, that socialists direct their appeal for support.

Christianity has this in common with all religions. It is absolutely hostile to the economic interests of the working class for it will be the historic mission of that class, when enlightened and politically-mature, to emancipate themselves from wage-slavery and the domination of almighty King Capital. That job will not be done for them by reformist political parties, all of whom represent ruling class interests.

Time is on our side, but workers

must speed the day of momentous change. They should not only ignore religious propaganda but join the Socialist Party of Australia for the conquest of political power and the establishment of Socialism — the COMMON ownership of the means of production, with democratic distribution of wealth by and in the interest of society as a whole.

Good-bye, Billy Graham.

*Yours for socialism,
TED POLLOCK*

N. B. The Socialist Party of Australia has no connection whatever with the Communist Party, here or elsewhere.

"Western People", Parkes, Australia
May 21, 1959

FELLOW WORKERS!

By marching to-day, you are paying tribute to a gallant fighter for the betterment of the working-class.

When James Connolly was executed in 1916, the lower classes of society were indeed in an appalling condition (as many of you can still recall). Connolly was a Socialist; and the Irish Labour Party still maintains that it is battling for the improvement of the workers' lot. We, as the S.P.I., deny emphatically the accuracy of the first statement; to the Irish Labour Party we give the answer that we give to all Irish Political Parties — that improvement or reform is not enough.

Socialists regard Capitalism as a consuming disease preying on Society. To Capitalism can be attributed all of the horrors and disaster of modern Society; poverty, brought about by an obviously unequal distribution of wealth; famine and scarcity through an unequal distribution of the world's goods. War and the H-Bomb are only the logical consequences of cliques within Society fighting to glut themselves with the good things of the earth.

You cannot cure an advanced cancer — you must cut it out. And this is where we, as Socialists; believe James

Connolly with all his predecessors and disciples erred.

Connolly thought (an easy mistake to make) that to improve the workers' lot by fighting for higher wages, shorter hours, etc., would be sufficient. Conditions have indeed improved enormously since 12-year-old boys swept chimneys. But are the workers really that much better off? A glance at the unemployment figures or in any newspaper to-day will tell that same sad story of age-old exploitations. Quite obviously a radical change is needed in a system which can at the same time burn 20 million tons of coffee in Brazil, keep 400 million Indians on the verge of starvation and sprinkle Siberia with slave-labour camps of living dead.

Like our fore-going examples, Socialism must be world-wide. Socialists believe that the means of production (factories, transport, etc.) must belong collectively to man-kind. We, the Socialist Party of Ireland adhere to this principle, first taught by Marx. In the view of Marx, the working class is the last class to be emancipated in the Progress of Mankind towards a class-less, money-less society.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself, is reason why we appeal to our fellow-workers, for it is by their action alone that Society can be changed to benefit all mankind and thus hasten the day for a Socialist Ireland.

S. P. IRELAND LEAFLET

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