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Box 3 (i)

NEW SOUTH WALES STATE ELECTIONS

MAY 1935

MANIFESTO OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

OBJECT:

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE WORKING CLASS:

Unlike the usual election appeal, the object of this Manifesto is to gain, not only your vote, but your intelligent support for SOCIALISM. You think, perhaps, that the choice now before you is only between the various candidates clamouring for your support. But, there is, as we shall show, another alternative that follows logically and inevitably from the position of the Working Class. Since a knowledge of this position is essential to intelligent political action, we shall deal briefly with it, and ask you in consequence to give it your attention.

WHAT IS YOUR POSITION?

It is your lot to toil for a master when you can and to suffer the effects of unemployment when you cannot find a buyer for your labor power.

When you are in work to-day you toil harder and produce enormously more than ever before—yet your wage barely suffices for your maintenance. Unemployment, with all the misery it entails on you and those dependant upon you, dogs your footsteps. Of the total produce of your labour an increasing portion goes to an idle class, while, though you produce all the good things, you are forced to consume all the cheapest rubbish. Why is this?

Are you poor because there is not abundance of the necessaries of life? Is it because the means of producing them are insufficient, or because there are not willing hands to labor? No! There are hosts of willing laborers. And the instruments of labor become every day more perfect and productive. Surely then, with marvellous labor-saving machines and other productive devices, there should be increased wealth and leisure for all. Why, then, is it that wealth and leisure are only for a class, while poverty and arduous toil are the lot of the producers?

You will have noticed that when a labor-saving machine is introduced into a factory to-day, men are thrown out of work to starve. The toil and insecurity of those who remain in employment are increased, while only the owner of that machine reaps the benefit. Clearly, however, if those who produce owned the machine, the result would be entirely different; there would be shorter hours of labor and greater security for them. Thus the propertyless are compelled to cede to the Capitalist Class the whole product of their labour over and above and what is represented as their wages. That is why, so long as class ownership continues, greater poverty for the working class will accompany the increasing wealth and productivity of Society.

The end of unemployment and the gaining of economic security for the Workers is possible only through the abolition of the wages system by the dispossession of the Capitalist Class, and, the substitution thereof by the common ownership and democratic control of the means for producing and distributing wealth. In others words the abolition of Capitalism and the establishing of Socialism.

While there is no other remedy for unemployment and poverty, there is also no way to Socialism except by means of the conquest of political power by a Socialist Working Class. Your rulers expend huge sums to retain their control of Government in order to maintain and extend their exploitation. In advancing to the conquest of the political machinery, we find the Capitalist Class our implacable enemy. As in the past, each side will struggle for its interests as it understands them, and the interests of the Working Class being diametrically opposed to those of all the Capitalists, no quarter can be expected or given. Any alliance or compromise with Capitalists in the political struggle can only be a Working Class surrender. Hence the supreme importance of adhering consistently to the fundamental Socialist principle of the Class Struggle. For it is only when the wealth producers organise on a Class basis and capture political power—only when the Workers are victorious—that the work of transforming the means of production from ruthless instruments of profit for a few into the means of healthy life for all can begin.

Space will not allow us to examine in detail the various political parties soliciting your support during the present elections. We can only touch upon them briefly. But if you examine their proposals for yourselves in the light of the facts set out above, you will realise that a vote for any of them is a vote for the cause of your misery—CAPITALISM.

THE U.A.P. PARTY.

The United Australia Party represents the great importing and exporting interests and the financial interests allied thereto. The Nationalists (U.A.P.) avowedly stand for the present system of robbery, in all its ugliness. Their antagonism to Working Class aims has been proclaimed from the house-tops. In supporting them the workers stultify themselves and set a seal upon their slavery. Briefly stated—

The United Australia Party wants
AUSTRALIA FOR THE FINANCIERS.

THE COUNTRY PARTY.

This is another, avowedly Capitalist Party which represents the sectional interests of the capitalist farmers but joins with the U.A.P. in opposition to the Workers.

The Country Party wants
AUSTRALIA FOR THE FARMERS.

THE LABOR PARTY.

This is supposed to be a Working Class party, but actually is not and never has been anything else but the representative of the National Industrial Capitalists of Australia by its one consistent policy of protection which has built up "our" Secondary Industries. The Labor Party does not attempt to educate the Workers to their true position in Society. It claims that per medium of its reform policies, Capitalism can be made to function in the interests of the Workers as well as in the interests of the Capitalists. That this is a fallacy is proved by our previous remarks, and, by advocating such a policy the Labor Party proves itself an enemy of the Working Class. In practice,

The Labor Party wants
AUSTRALIA FOR THE MANUFACTURER.

The political history of Australia in the past has been mainly a record of alternating between the U.A.P.-Country Party on the one hand, and, the Labor Party governments on the other. None of these governments have done anything to materially alter the position of the Working Class—they cannot do so.

The Communist Party, the Douglas Social Credit Party, the Henry George League and other reform parties cannot serve the interests of the Workers by reforming Capitalism.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

It is evident that from your standpoint as wage-workers, none of the foregoing parties is worthy of your support. By voting for any of them you cannot strike a blow for your Class. Indeed, from the position laid down it is obvious that the only Party you should support must be in direct contrast to these Parties before mentioned. Your Party should be democratic. It should have SOCIALISM as its object and the Class Struggle as its guiding principle. Its candidates should be controlled by the rank and file. It should devote its energies to converting the Workers to Socialists, and thus organising them for the conquest of political power for the realisation of Socialism. It cannot compromise with Capitalist parties, and must refuse to barter away the Workers' salvation for reforms that appease temporarily, but have no lasting benefit. That is the Party you should

support and for its candidates alone, can you logically vote. Only one Party answers to that description in this country—The SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA. But since the ground must be well tilled before the good harvest can be reaped, that Party is putting no candidates forward during the present elections.

Twenty-five pounds deposits are not easily obtained by a Working Class party and the poverty which impedes the activity of such a Party is in itself only a reflex of the present unreadiness of the mass of the Working Class. The principles of Socialism must be more widely propagated and the Workers must be more fully organised before candidates of the Socialist Party of Australia can usefully enter the Parliamentary arena. If you agree that your position is as we have outlined it; if you realise that your policy must be distinct from, and, hostile to all Capitalist policies—and that SOCIALISM alone can help your class, then it is your duty to join the Socialist Party of Australia and take a democratic share in its work; thus advancing the day—not far distant—when it will place its own candidates—your candidates—in the Parliamentary field to wage uncompromisingly the fight for Socialism. But until we put up Socialist candidates you can vote for yourselves and strike a blow against exploitation by voting for SOCIALISM. To vote for any other Party you stultify yourselves and support the system which crushes you. Go to the ballot box by all means, but only to write Socialism across your voting-paper; for if you cannot vote now for what you want, it is folly to vote for what you do not want. The vote, like the razor, is an instrument for a purpose. If you cannot for the moment use it to your advantage it is madness to cut your throat. By voting for your enemies, for traitors, confusionists and charlatans you are surely cutting your political throat.

Above all, realise how much depends upon you and how much remains to be done. A vote even for a candidate of the Socialist Party of Australia, is of no value unless it expresses a Socialist consciousness. Understanding must precede action, for Socialism is impossible until the Workers become class-conscious Socialists. Therefore, there is work for you to do more profitable to your class than supporting the defenders of exploitation. The Army of Socialism must be recruited and your place is within its ranks, taking your part in the battle for the emancipation of your fellows from wage-slavery.

JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA.

In conclusion, we stated above the "wants" of our opponents, it remains to state our own. It is embodied in the motto of The SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA and its companion parties abroad:—

"THE WORLD FOR THE WORKERS."

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA,

Sydney Branch.

Those desirous of information regarding the Socialist Party of Australia, its literature and activities, communicate with the Secretary, 11 Wangee Rd., Lakemba.

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