

A PARTY FOR WORKERS

By

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As explained before, both Republicans and Democrats use the political powers of the state in the interest of the wealthy men who want to buy labor power cheaply and who pay the campaign expenses of both parties. The laws passed by Republicans and Democrats are in the interest of this class.

Consequently, the workers--the sellers of labor power--who want to get higher wages, steadier work, shorter hours, old age pensions, lower rents, etc., have had to organize a party of their own, one which they finance and can therefore control, in order that the political powers of the state shall be used in the interest of all the people for social, economic and political justice. That party is the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party strives to apply to our economic and industrial life the true principle of genuine democracy by securing for the workers their rightful privilege of control over the means upon which their existence depends. The existence of workers depends upon having a place to work, a job or salaried position.

The People as Owners

The Socialist Party therefore demands that the big plants and factories where the people work and produce the necessities of life, as well as the railroads, the coal mines, the trusts, the oil wells and all the natural resources of the nation should be owned by all the people and operated cooperatively and in a democratic way in the interest of all the people instead of for the private profits of a few.

We already have public ownership of the streets, the schools, the post office, the fire departments, etc., and what we Socialists demand is ownership of the big industries and the natural resources of the country in the same way, a way that has proved advantageous to the public in matters like the schools, the roads and the fire department.

Because they stand for labor, Socialists favor any immediate proposals that will increase the pay, the power and the security of livelihood of all workers. For instance, Socialists favor a higher school age, old age pensions and unemployment insurance, as well as measures to lower rents and raise wages, and measures to guarantee the civil rights both of workers on strike and the Negro.

Socialism and the Negro

About 98% of Negroes are industrial or agricultural workers. Therefore, any measures that will help workers will also help the Negro race in a special degree. This is particularly true because Negro professional men are directly dependent on the prosperity of the Negro workers, who are their clients, patients or pupils.

An old age pension law will benefit all workers, but especially Negroes, because Negroes usually get lower pay than others and are therefore less able to save for their old age. Unemployment insurance will enable a worker who is laid off to get a part of his pay just as a worker who is hurt on the job today gets part of his pay through workmen's compensation.

This measure will especially benefit Negroes for, owing to prejudice existing in many places, Negroes are the first to be fired and the last to be hired. And the same thing applies to the various other measures that Socialists favor for the immediate benefit of labor. The Negro will be benefited to a greater degree than other workers.

Proofs of Socialist Good Faith

Socialists are particularly interested in securing for Negroes all the rights now enjoyed by white workers and a higher standard of living as well. When the Dyer anti-lynching bill was defeated by the combined efforts of Republicans and Democrats, and Dyer failed to reintroduce it, the late Victor Berger, a Socialist Congressman, promptly did so.

Socialists both white and colored have helped substantially every effort of Negro workers to organize, as in the case of the Pullman porters union, the Negro motion picture operators, etc. Also Socialists have--in some cases successfully--tried to break down the color bar which exists in some trade unions. The Socialist Party is the only party that has in its national platform a proposal to cut down the representation in Congress of those states which deny to any of their citizens the right to vote, by making representation dependent upon the number of votes cast instead of on population.

Socialists take this stand because they realize that the task of getting control of government and industry for the benefit of the workers is a tremendous one, and that to accomplish this task they need the support of all workers regardless of race, creed or nationality. In other words--though by no means all workers realize it--Socialists white as well as colored realize fully that all workers are in the same boat together and must cooperate, must learn to live together without prejudice and strive together for a higher standard of living and a higher cultural level for all.

The Call to Action

White workers who are intelligent, together with all Socialists, realize that they cannot keep on getting eight or ten dollars for a day's wage while their Negro fellow workers get half as much. Therefore, from the point of view of sound self-interest as well as from a deep sense of justice, Socialists want to help raise the standard of living of their fellow Negro workers. In the long run the workers can only progress if they are united.

But the Socialists to accomplish their aims need the support of all the workers; we are therefore resolutely opposed to race and religious prejudice, to lynching, segregation and everything which divides and weakens the working class. Socialists stand for guaranteeing the civil rights of all men.

We therefore call upon all workers and all other citizens who believe in social justice to come together on the basis of their common interest and work shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand, for the day when poverty, lynching, unemployment, exploitation, discrimination, prejudice and war will be abolished from the face of the earth and man at last will be free. *****