

VANCOUVER ISLAND ACTIVITY IN THE CAMPAIGN

Meetings Held at Various Points to Discuss Labor Problems

Encouraging Indications of a Political Awakening Among Workers

SOUTH WELLINGTON, V. I., B. C., Dec. 2.—Labor's standard-bearer for the Nanaimo constituency held his opening meeting here on Nov. 21 and in view of the fact that a shift of men were working, and judging from past meetings of a similar character, the attendance and the attentive hearing given Bro. Joe Taylor, was extremely gratifying. Bro. Taylor opened his address in his usual style, with an epigram, "Wherever I am there shall the truth be." Continuing, he stated that he would always try to sift out the truth. He then proceeded to ladle out the truth in a straight-forward manner, without soaring into the air with flowery language, that wondrous weapon that the professional politician uses with hypnotic effect. Your humble slave will try to give the substance of Bro. Taylor's address, hoping that he will forgive me for any sins of omission or commission. He said, in part: "The question has been asked in many quarters, 'Why is Labor in the field?' That question, to my mind, is a foolish one, when we review the past and realize how Labor has been treated by the old political parties. The political movement is a necessary adjunct of the industrial movement. The leading plank of Labor's platform is the repeal of the Military Service act, and the election will be fought upon that issue. Conscription is the negation of democracy, and once military conscription is fastened upon the people of Canada, industrial conscription will surely follow. As an illustration of the workings of industrial conscription, not so very long ago, the railway workers of France went on strike and they were informed by the government that they would go to work as conscripts of France. Who do we find most insistent in demanding the enforcement of the Military Service act? Those who are exempted or otherwise ineligible; and how quiet they are on the conscription of wealth. This is supposed to be a war to make the world safe for democracy, but if the defeat of the central powers is going to bring about the establishment of an autocracy, then the war is lost. The Labor candidates are pledged to fight for better treatment for soldiers and their dependents. The Patriotic Fund is wrong in principle, the caring for the soldier and his dependents is the duty of the state; charity is not good enough. The Patriotic Fund, Red Cross and tag days may help a little now, when the patriotic feeling is high, but after the glamor is worn down, what of the problem then. The problem can only be solved by the workers, and the returned soldier will eventually look to Labor for the solution of his perplexing problems. The record of the Borden government is one long story of graft, mismanagement and corruption. No matter under what name the Borden candidate masquerades, whether Liberal-Unionist or Conservative-Unionist, he is a supporter of the rotten Borden government. What has Borden done to win the war? Sent soldiers overseas with paper boots, with a useless rifle, and salt-soaked hams, etc. He has placed fops in officers' uniforms, and hired a high-priced food controller, who cannot control the price of food. Has he consulted Labor on conscription, as he promised? Some time ago the Victoria Trades and Labor Council protested against the War-Times Election act, by wire, and Borden wired back: "You do not understand the conditions with which the government is confronted. Letter follows." Strange to say the letter has not yet arrived. Labor does understand; Borden is doing his best to steal the election. The country is full, nowadays, with people who are very generous with the lives of others. Canada has given more than her proportion of men, and men are needed more in production. We are fully aware that the goal the powers that be are aiming at is industrial conscription, and the miners will have to be exceeding prolific in the digging of coal, or else they may be forced to dig trenches. An attempt is being made by various interests to bring in Chinese slave-labor, the ladies of Cowichan being amongst the latest to advocate this form of labor. We may ask the question: "Who is back of these ladies?" They are not extensive farmers, by any means; pink teas and knitting parties are more in their line. The principle is white-men out and Chinamen in. The influx of Asiatics into South Africa after the Boer war fully illustrates this point. We have ladies' organizations embarking on a food conservation campaign. They are poking their noses in the workingman's pantry, when every one should know that the workingman always buys what he needs most, not what he wants. These ladies should stick their noses into the cold-storage pantries. We hear much talk of British liberty, but if a man is not to be consulted before surrendering his only asset, his life, then British liberty is sham. To gain their salvation, the workers must take it themselves; it will never be handed to them by either of the old parties. Borden has failed and he knows it, hence his attempt to form a union (!) government. There are pending changes in the Labor movement, as evidenced by the fact that politics is no longer debarred from the unions. This is a healthy sign, for whenever we line up as workers in the political field, we will progress, but never while we are divided, for so long as we are divided, so long will we be used as tools in the hands of the masters. We all know that, owing to the vast numbers lined up on the side of the allies, they will eventually come out on top, but if in the winning we are to lose all our hard-won liberties, then God help us, and you all know what it means when the parson looks at you and says, "God help you, it's all over. By the evidence we have, Borden is certainly taking no chances. The enumerators appointed under the War-Times Elections act have plenary powers. They may, upon information received, strike any name off the list, in spite of the fact that said voter has made a statutory declaration that he is entitled to

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at the still further enslavement of the wealth-producing class.

A collection was then taken up which realized the sum of \$11.10, which was gratifying, coming as it did from such a small community. A dance was held at the termination of the meeting, the proceeds of which were placed in the campaign fund. We do not realize a very large sum from our dances, owing to the smallness of the community and large expenses entailed.

The third meeting of the campaign in the north end of the constituency was held in Nanaimo on Sunday, Nov. 25. Mr. William Newton, one of Nanaimo's campaign committee and a tried-and-true worker in the interests of Labor, was chairman. Bro. Taylor was the first speaker, and he remarked upon the smallness of the meeting, which was due, no doubt, to the coercive measures that are being used by the autocrats of Nanaimo. He dealt with the threat made by Nanaimo police chief, who threatened to arrest men who contemplated attending the meeting of the newly-organized Liberty Leaguers, a committee of which was prevented from embarking for Vancouver the following morning. He dwelt upon the fact of the workers alternating between two rotten sets of politicians in the past, and of the necessity of trying a party of their own. He gave some useful information upon the provisions of the War-Times Elections act, and disclosed the fact that some enumerators were attempting to disfranchise men who were born in allied countries, because they looked as if they would vote against Borden. The question of the need of organization was then dealt with and Bro. Taylor made the assertion that thorough organization would have prevented the inauguration of conscription. He was of the opinion that the powers that be would not stop at 100,000 men, unless their activities were nipped in the bud. The refusal of the local bought-press to publish advertisements of the meeting came in for scathing criticism, the gist of the speaker's remarks being that Messrs. Hindmarch and Marchall, the respective editors, would make fine soldiers, but preferred to stay at home and conscript others. He mentioned the victory loan ball in Victoria and dwelt upon the absence of workers and their wives at that function. He made a brief review of the state and its functions, and spoke on Borden's broken promise to Labor in the conscription policy, and stated that Canada can perform a more useful function by increasing production and keeping her men employed in useful pursuits. He concluded by dealing with the far-reaching effects of conscription and its corraling of industrial slavery.

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ually come out on top, but if in the winning we are to lose all our hard-won liberties, then God help us, and you all know what it means when the parson looks at you and says, 'God help you.' It's all over. By the evidence we have, Borden is certainly taking no chances. The enumerators appointed under the War-Times Elections act have plenary powers. They may, upon information received, strike any name off the list, in spite of the fact that said voter has made a statutory declaration that he is entitled to vote. I may say that you are fortunate in having an enumerator in South Wellington who is trying to be honest. He is treating the election as a sporting proposition. With reference to the women who are entitled to vote, has not the woman who has sons at home, not got the right to say whether they shall be fed into the many of the cannon in Europe? In conclusion, I would say that Labor has a great opportunity, for if Borden is returned to power, conditions will be awful—no classes under the draft act will be safe; those who are not taken for military service will be enslaved by industrial conscription, so it is up to the workers to forget their petty differences and unite to ditch Borden, so that civilization may evolve out of the overthrow of an autocracy. There is a campaign in full swing for the building of a victory loan. Now, if this is a war for democracy, why should it be necessary to pay a high rate of interest? This victory loan will be made an excuse later on to tell the people that since they have subscribed they must fight or lose their money. Labor in its platform stands for the abolition of profit. Borden says: 'Tax excess profit.' Borden stands for the exploiters, and can you imagine the exploiters conscripting their own wealth. The Labor candidates are pledged to fight for the interests of the returned soldiers, crippled and otherwise. Past experience has shown us that neither of the old parties have been able to solve that problem. They could not look after the veterans of South Africa, the Crimean war, etc., so how can they help the veterans of this war, when their numbers will be magnified a hundred fold? Veterans of other wars have died by the hundreds in workhouses and other charitable institutions. The Labor organizations will eventually be called upon to solve many of the returned soldiers problems, so why not put Labor members in the Dominion house where they will be able to force the government to do something that will look like a real solution of the problem."

At the conclusion of the meeting, questions were invited, there being only two asked, one of them being, "Was the government within its legal rights in enacting the Military Service act, in view of the fact that they had elected themselves to power for two years after their time had expired?" The other was: "Does the candidate recognize the existence of the class struggle?" The first question was ably answered by Bro. Taylor, who said that while the government had usurped their powers, the people were powerless unless they showed their disapproval by throwing the Borden regime overboard. To the second question he replied that the Labor candidates did recognize the existence of the struggle between the classes, as evidenced by their stand for the abolition of profit, but the question of conscription was of paramount importance as it aimed

function. He made a brief review of the state and its functions, and spoke on Borden's broken promise to Labor in the conscription policy, and stated that Canada can perform a more useful function by increasing production and keeping her men employed in useful pursuits. He concluded by dealing with the far-reaching effects of conscription and its corraling of industrial slavery.

The old war-horse, E. T. Kingsley, was the next speaker, and in one of his characteristic speeches, he gave a brief history of human slavery in its various forms, and proved conclusively that human slavery is responsible for all evils. He then dwelt on the great changes that are taking place in human thought, and gave as the reason that the people are getting over their patriotic drunk. Wars will never cease while human slavery exists, he said, and then went on to describe the two kinds of slaves—those who are producing wealth, and the others who are used as forces of repression to compel the other slaves to work. He then spoke of the wholesome respect the workers have for the law, a law "that is invented for the purpose of keeping them in slavery." The very fact of there being a government precludes the possibility of the existence of such a thing as democracy. His speech was illustrated throughout with a wealth of illustration and story that could not but help to take the message to the heathen and I would that I could portray conditions as he showed them, but methinks it must be left to more capable men. I cannot do justice to our old comrade's speech, so will leave it to the old war-horse himself to pump the life-giving fluid into the brains of the heathen through the columns of The Federationist, and hope for the day when a working-class paper will find its way into the home of every wage-worker.

During the meeting we succeeded in getting fifteen yearly subscriptions to The Federationist, so that will help some.

A series of meetings were held in Ladysmith, South Wellington and Nanaimo on Dec. 1 and 2, of which more anon, as time and space will not permit of further details at this stage, but in passing it is well to bring out a corroboration of a statement made by our candidate in Nanaimo on Nov. 25, when he said that the victory loan would be used as a club to force men to fight. Last week, one of the victory loan canvassers, in addressing the audience at a theatre in Nanaimo, in boosting for the loan, said: "There is only one contingency that could arise that would cause you to lose your money and that would be if the Kaiser won." So once again Labor's spokesman is right.

WALTER HEAD.

"Come Again Smith"

Next week the Empress stock company will present the latest comedy entitled "Come Again Smith." This play, which is creating such a furor, was written by a Los Angeles newspaper man, John Blackwood, and the great disappearing wall scene in the first act is one of the few real novelties that have originated in the last few years. Mr. Collins will play the part of Smith, and Miss Marrott will play the leading feminine role, while all the players will have good parts. The same prices, 15c, 30c and 40c (which includes war tax), will be charged.