



IMPOSSIBILITY OF SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

EVERYBODY is a Socialist. Every kind of government or form of association is a kind of socialism. Socialism properly means the science of association, and includes all varieties. That theory of society which we now call Socialism ought to be called Collectivism. It stands for collective ownership of all means of production and exchange.

Some time ago The Oregonian said there was no use to write about Socialism unless some one could show how it could be made practicable. No one can ever prove that the collectivist's programme is practicable. I am attempting to show that it is impossible. There are many insuperable difficulties. I will enumerate four for a sample.

1. Even if the collectivist theory were correct it would be impossible to convert a majority of the present humanity to it. The common people of Lincoln's time have disappeared and there has arisen a race of degenerates who have forgotten the virtues of their forefathers. Lost all conception of the meaning of human brotherhood and the definitions of honesty and honor.
2. If a majority were converted to vote the Socialist ticket, their votes would not be counted. If an unquestionable majority were secured, then the ruling class would not stand for the change any more than the South would submit to negro domination. We would immediately have a condition of social war and anarchy similar to that which existed in Russia. If all the people agreed to adopt the collectivist

programme, they could not put it in operation. It is as impossible as Darwin's flying machine. The Socialist colonies proved this.

Suppose an army were organized on the Socialist plan, so that the private should elect all the officers, and suppose they were divided into hostile factions, and that there was the same strife about electing officers for the army that there is about electing state officials, as undoubtedly there would be, how could such an army be expected to fight an enemy? It would be all the time fighting itself. Generals and other officers would doubtless be elected by narrow majorities. The defeated candidates and their followers would be more deeply interested in blocking the plans of their superiors than in obeying their orders.

Socialist colonies have invariably broken up on account of internal dissensions about the management or mismanagement of the colony. As opposed to the officials in power would not cooperate to carry out their plans. There was no liberty nor opportunity to work for themselves. So nothing remained for them but to mutiny and make trouble or withdraw and lose their interest.

Our present system of government is based on the checks and balances principle, as it goes, but it has not yet gone as far as to deprive all the people of the opportunity to work for themselves. That is the reason it has not broken down. It has so far managed to give free land and ample opportunity for expansion. People could work for themselves and make some sort of living apart from the government or in spite of it.

But the Government has legislated continually in the interest of capital and against labor, and has fostered the growth of the trusts, till now the opportunity for individual effort is greatly limited. More than half the population is already reduced to a condition of servitude mainly involuntary.

Suppose Johnnie Jones has a farm left him by his father, but during his minority a relative, Bill Jones, with the assistance of a clever lawyer, steals the original will, substitutes a forged one, and gets possession of the farm. Then with unscrupulous generalship he proposes to take care of Johnnie and furnish him employment as a hired man on the farm. Will that settle the right of inheritance?

Titles to the greatest part of the world's wealth have been acquired by robbery, murder and fraud. More than half the people are disinherited, and the number continually increasing. The alleged owners desire to settle the matter by giving employment, that is, by making of the disinherited ones servants, flunkies, slaves, bondmen and bondwomen, hired men and hired girls. Will that settle the matter? It does not seem to be approaching a settlement, but rather getting further from it all the time as the disinherited ones are being made more and more dependent on the employer.

The question of wages is only superficial. The fundamental problem is one of the rights of the individual. The constant quarrel about wages only serves to obscure the real issue, which is that people should not be forced to work for wages at all. There should be an alternative as a refuge from the taskmaster. The relation of servant and master must indeed continue in a modified and voluntary sense. But when the slave usurps the place of master and the

true King is robbed of his kingdom, then there is going to be a time of trouble.

The collectivist plan is not to restore to Johnnie Jones his inheritance, but to turn it over to the Government. Then Johnnie instead of being Bill's hired man, will be hired—no, I mean employed, by the Government. He cannot work for himself or attend to his own business. He must still work under the orders of a superior. He has no guarantee of any individual rights or liberties—only the right to labor and obey.

At the present rate of concentration of the whole United States will be owned in a few years by a small number of capitalists. We have the alternative then of becoming servants and hirelings for them or voting for Government ownership and binding ourselves to be servants forever under officials elected by majority vote to govern us, manage our property and direct all our doings. Of two evils, I prefer to choose neither.

Is it not evidently impossible for a man to be free and at the same time dependent on some one else for employment, the only means of living? Can a person be dependent and independent at the same time? It does not matter whether we call it wages or salary, the man who has to work for existence is not free. The man who sells his time and labor sells the use of his body. A free man is one who is not for sale or hire, who owns himself, body and soul, and controls his own actions. Every man hiring is properly a term of contempt.

It is a common saying among politicians that every man has his price; that he can be bought. The main object of education seems to be to fit the recipient for a "position" which means a job as clerk or typewriter, which is supposed to be more honorable than some other job. In slave days the "cultured" house serv-

ants were so puffed up with a sense of their rank superiority over the nigger field-slaves that they forgot that they also were slaves.

Only the person who is not hired at all—not under service at all—is free. This is an obvious truth that it requires no argument to prove it. Therefore, it follows that the more people are deprived of homes and the right to self-employment and reduced to the rank of servants or employees, the more the foundations of liberty, of true republicanism and true democracy are undermined. And the employment of a government is no more free than the hiring of a private master. He may be even less free, for to quit the employment of the government may be cause for detention and made punishable with death. Inmates of the penitentiary and members of the chain gang are government employees. When we are all reduced to the rank of servants for the purpose of settling the matter of the government, where will be our liberties?

The only way to establish freedom on a sure foundation is to get back to natural principles. Our so-called civilization is wholly artificial and unnatural. It is not really civilization at all. Free society must be based on free land, the right to the property of the land, and without any tribute to any shark, Shiloh or landlord, and without any liability to be disinherited or defrauded out of it by any law for creation or collection of debt or any other insidious device. In fact, this ought to be the first principle in the foundation of all jurisprudence.

With this right to fall back on would still be free to work for wages if they wished. This would secure freedom of contract. If a farmer or an Indian goes out to pick hew a few days he sacrifices his interests at home. He is not com-

Insuperable Difficulties in the Way—Entire Change of Social Structure Is Necessary.

pelled to go and if things don't suit him he can quit and go home. This is not true. It comes that happen have to treat their pickers with some degree of consideration or they could not get them at all.

But the multitudes who are robbed of their homes are forced into wage slavery without an alternative. There is no freedom of contract. They must work for some master. There is only a choice of masters—a choice of a free man or a slave. There is only one, and that is God and his own conscience. To such a one any kind of enforced labor is involuntary servitude, which is properly forbidden by the Constitution of the United States. The lawyers who drafted that amendment probably did not know what it meant.

It will be urged in objection that people who now own land are not free. That is because they are in danger of losing it. Those who have too much are always anxious to get away from the other, the little that remains to them. We would put an end to legalized robbery. Then there would be peace and security and freedom. The robbery that is carried on contrary to law is infinitesimal compared with the robberies of the law itself. More than three-fourths of the entire products of legitimate labor are confiscated by legalized processes.

It may be alleged that I have not fairly stated the position of Socialism as to private property. The fact is that no private property is sacred to this authority. The party platform is really the only authority on the subject, and it leaves us quite in the dark. The old party platform was a purely collectivist one, and I am through for this. The ownership of all the means of production and exchange by the entire people. The present platform, written probably by Professor Herron, an individualist, de-

clares for private property, but does not state what property ought to be private and what public, and gives no definition of individual rights.

What is needed is a definite statement as to what property ought to be private and what public, and what rights belong to each of the four departments of society, the individual, the commune or municipality, the state and the Nation. Socialism does not define this, neither does capitalism. The new dispensation calls for these definitions, because on this foundation must the polity and jurisprudence of the new order be laid. The correctness of any permanent organization of society must be a definition of individual rights. Without this there can be no social righteousness.

The present system is founded on several fundamental fallacies, including that of the righteousness of majority rule and an erroneous idea of equality. The collectivist theory is not the remedy, but the last stage of the disease. It is impossible to stop the growth of Socialism because it is the logical conclusion of democracy. Any government, whether it be a republic or a monarchy, is bound to enunciate and interpret the natural laws of order and harmony in human relationships. The ignorance of these laws and principles, and I wish to repeat the statement that Socialism as ordinarily promulgated is not the remedy, but the last stage of the disease. Any attempt to inaugurate Socialism as now promulgated will inevitably end in anarchy. In fact, the probability at present is that capitalism and government will appeal to anarchy to head off Socialism, for capitalism is only a kind of anarchy anyhow. Corvallis, March 4.

NOT THE GOVERNMENT BUT THE PEOPLE WHO ROBBER

BY C. B. GARRISON.

GREAT city is being heard throughout the land that the Government is being defrauded of its valuable possessions in timber lands, through the enormous graft and crime being perpetrated against it by the rascally homesteader and the timber and stone thieves, and through their aid the timber is being gathered into the fold of the more rascally timber baron. This claim has been so persistently urged, that the people unfamiliar with the law and the real facts in the case, and even our Government officials, have evidently come to the conclusion, that no honest man would be guilty of attempting to take advantage of those laws so beneficently passed by a heretofore friendly Government, to aid the poor man to secure for himself, a moiety of those lands for the benefit of himself and his family, as the law originally intended he should do. Being so misled with this idea, instead of the law provides, of leaving the facts of the good or evil intention of the entryman to be decided by the regular Government officials of the land district in which the particular piece of land may lie, and to his neighbors who should, if any one can, know whether it was taken in good faith and for his own benefit, each witness under oath testifying to the facts as he knows them, the Government reversing all our preconceived ideas of law and procedure, practically assumes that the entryman is guilty of fraud, places him on the defensive, and

forces him to prove his innocence. Distrusting its own local officials and all others who would have anything to do with so vile a creature as he, the Government sends out its special agents, detectives and sleuths, and at the final proof, after he has sworn it is for his own use and benefit and with his own money he pays for the claim, takes the case out of the hands of the regular Government officials, and sends it to the sweat-box and proceeds to grill him.

Among the many inquisitorial questions asked, the following are nearly always asked: Where did you get the money with which you made this payment? What wages have you received during the past year? How much did you save? What bank did you deposit this money? What was the size of and when did you make the check for this entry? Do you know of any persons buying timber lands in this region? And in addition to these stock questions, many others the ingenuity of the inquisitor may conceive. I personally know of one favorite special agent of the Government to have kept entrymen in the sweat-box from one to four hours, where the said agent was stenographer, inquisitor, attorney and general court, asking and taking down questions and answers and winding up with charging the poor entryman so much per folio for the imposition.

The fact must not be lost sight of that these special agents must, in order to convey the department of their office and the necessity for their employment, hold some one up now and then or lose their job.

A certain homesteader in the Coeur d'Alene Land District, he had on his claim over the required five years, built himself a good substantial house and out-buildings, cultivated a portion of the land each year and at no time has been away from the place to exceed four months and that once only during the whole time, still his proof was rejected a year ago and he has no idea when the money he has received, he will get. Numerous similar cases might be cited, but this will answer.

Now, do not understand that I claim there have been no frauds committed, nor have I made any charge under these laws for there have been, but we must not apply the Brownsville principle of punishment to the whole American people. If the hands of the law may come when it will be tolerated.

I claim that the great majority of all the entries made under these laws were made in good faith, and that the entryman himself and those nearest to him, I further claim these laws are the only means whereby a poor man may secure for himself that share of the land which the Government has promised him. The attitude of the Government at present is directly opposite to its former position, in that it has taken the land simply held the public domain in trust for the people and every means was taken to further the securing of the lands in the hands of the individual. Now it looks upon what is left as an asset from which to draw revenue, as far as possible adding to the already enormous forest reserve the most desirable of the lands unappropriated, and the mature timber which means the timber of log size to the great lumber companies and using

a large portion of the proceeds for the support of the great army of forest rangers and rangers. Why, but not thereby depriving the common people of what has always been considered an inalienable right—an equitable share of the public domain. Every time an entryman is prevented from securing his little 40, 80 or 160 acres of land it is heralded as another case in which the Government has made a mistake, and the result of the changed attitude of the Government towards the entryman and the adoption of its iniquitous forest reserve policy is well illustrated by the fact that the Government has granted the Northern Pacific Railroad, for instance. They were first granted the alternate sections for a distance of 20 miles each side of the line. Was this enough? No. They claimed so much of the land had been alienated prior to the grant that they should be reimbursed for the loss. To make them wholly good they were given an indemnity grant of 20 miles more each side of the original grant, making 40 miles. Were they satisfied? No. Still they claimed a deficiency of 20 miles more, and were given a second indemnity belt of 30 miles more on each side of the other, making a great sweep of land from 80 to 120 miles each side of the line. Was this enough? No. They claimed so much of the land had been alienated prior to the grant that they should be reimbursed for the loss. To make them wholly good they were given an indemnity grant of 20 miles more each side of the original grant, making 40 miles. Were they satisfied? No. Still they claimed a deficiency of 20 miles more, and were given a second indemnity belt of 30 miles more on each side of the other, making a great sweep of land from 80 to 120 miles each side of the line. Was this enough? No. They claimed so much of the land had been alienated prior to the grant that they should be reimbursed for the loss. 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