

Department for Agitation and Education

Edited by
Sam Darcy

Facts for Speakers

(Clip for your notebook)

A number of comrades have written in asking for facts regarding election limitations which deprive workers of their vote.

The following illustrate the falsity of the pretenses of "democratic" elections and show how limited the worker's right is:

NO DOUGH, NO VOTE.

Twenty-one states disbar voters for economic reasons, thereby refusing the vote to paupers, delinquent taxpayers, non-taxpayers, inmates of charitable institutions; or require voters to hold property, pay poll tax, etc. These states are:

Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

PAUPERS DISCRIMINATED AGAINST.

Of the above listed states, 13 specifically disbar paupers and inmates of charitable institutions (excepting soldiers' homes):

Delaware, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

VOTES TO TAXPAYERS ONLY.

Two states disbar delinquent taxpayers (Georgia and Mississippi); New Hampshire refuses the vote to non-taxpayers. In Pennsylvania one must pay a State or County tax within two years of the election period. South Carolina demands payment of taxes on \$300 worth of property before voters can drop the ballot into the box. Alabama and Oregon place property as a top requirement for the privilege of voting. Thus seven states grant voting rights to taxpayers only.

CHINESE EXCLUDED.

California, Oregon and Nevada make special laws to deprive Chinese workers from citizenship and as an example of the arrogant chauvinism displayed, we quote from the Political Code of California, pp. 1684: "No native of China, no idiot, insane person, or person convicted of any infamous crime, and no person hereafter convicted of the embezzlement or misappropriation of public money, shall ever exercise the privileges of an elector."

Questions and Answers

QUESTION—W. H. A., San Bernardino, Calif.—Somewhere, sometime, you gave a lecture in which you mentioned a quotation of Karl Marx about Benjamin Franklin's pamphlet on "a day's labor as a basis of money."

Could you tell me in which work of Marx this is to be found?

ANSWER: You undoubtedly have reference to a remark in my pamphlet called "The Fallacy of Technocracy," but your impression of what was said there is slightly confused. The quotation from Marx is contained in his "Critique of Political Economy" in the chapter called "Notes on the History of the Theory of Value" which in the Kerr edition is on Page 62, where Marx says

as follows:

"The first sensible analysis of exchange value as labor-time made so clear as to seem almost commonplace, is to be found in the work of a man of the new world where the bourgeois relations of production, imported together with their representatives sprouted rapidly in a soil which made up its lack of historic traditions with a surplus of humor. That man was Benjamin Franklin who formulated the fundamental law of modern political economy in his first work which he wrote when a mere youth, and published in 1721."

Ben. Franklin, The Works of — Edited by I. Sparks, Volume 2, Boston 1836. "A modest Inquiry into the nature and necessity of a paper currency."

Menace of Fascism Told in Story Form

PAMPHLET SELLS FOR ONLY 2 CENTS; GOOD FOR MASS DISTRIBUTION

Bruce Minton's new pamphlet "The Fascist Menace in the U. S." is a powerful weapon for mobilizing mass support for the fight against American Fascism. Selling at 2 cents each retail, this pamphlet is written in a clear and popular style in the form of a short story.

Minton shows very clearly and simply how Fascism throughout the world has sprung up whenever the workers have prepared to resist the wage cuts, the cutting down of employment, the speed-up on the job, the increase of taxation, and all the other measures which the capitalist class uses to solve the crisis at

the expense of the workers. Because of the simple way in which this pamphlet is written, it is very useful in approaching backward workers and petty-bourgeoisie who have had no previous contact with the anti-Fascist fight. It shows clearly not only what Fascism is, but also how it must be fought against, who fights against it, and who, under cover of pretending to oppose it, plays the role of ally by clearing the way for it.

In order to make possible the broadest mass distribution, this pamphlet, in orders of over 100, will be sold at 2 cents apiece less a 40 per cent discount. All orders of over 100, from 37 Grove St., will be sent out postage prepaid.

ANTI-FASCIST PAMPHLETS

Several months ago we promised a pamphlet cheaply priced to be used against the agitation of the Silver Shirts. A sympathizer to the movement has written and printed such a pamphlet at his own expense and donated the entire lot to the Western Worker Publishing Company. The pamphlet is written in dialogue form, and is very popular and easy to understand. It should also be a very effective answer to the Fascists. Because of the circumstances under which the pamphlet was obtained, it is possible to sell it very cheaply. It retails at two cents, and can be bought in lots of one hundred or more from the Western Worker Publishers at 40% discount, cartage prepaid. If the Silver Shirts are active in your section, don't fail to get it. The title of the pamphlet is "The Fascist Menace in the U. S. A."

FOURTH EDITION OF "WHY COMMUNISM?"

Most of the third edition of "Why Communism?" is now sold.

EDITORIAL

and we are considering publishing a fourth edition, especially in connection with the Fall elections, which will include the Party's demands in the election, the complete ticket, and other similar information. It will be sold for the same price. In order that we may better know how large an edition we need, we would like to hear from all sections of the movement as to the number you think you can sell in the course of the election campaign. Please let us hear from you immediately.

ELECTION ISSUES.

In the coming months, there will be much agitation in connection with the election campaign. If you come across interesting facts that can be used by speakers which throw light on the situation and the issues involved in the elections, let us have them. We will publish them in the "Facts for Speakers" column, thereby making them available to everyone.

Fundamentals of a Communist Political Education

Lesson 10

How Capitalist Democracy Works; Can the Workers Take Over the Capitalist Form of Government?

How does the capitalist class insure that it will always retain control of congress, of the parliamentary institutions?

They do this chiefly by disqualifying large sections of the population from the right to vote, and from taking advantage of other alleged democratic rights. They particularly aim to disqualify the most oppressed and most militant sections of the population. The very structure and form of the capitalist state is designed to serve the needs of capitalist society. These forms cannot be taken over by a workers government after the overthrow of capitalism. On the contrary, the entire capitalist state must be destroyed and a new form of state, a workers state, a government of workers, farmers, soldiers and sailors councils (Soviets) established.

The capitalist electoral system is based on the geographic divisions. Under that system states which are dominated largely by reactionary landlords and include but a small population, such as Arizona and Nevada, have the same representation as large states which include millions of laborers such as Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, California, Illinois, etc.

Within the large industrial, and in fact in all states, in the Congressional district, and in the State Assemblies, the congested workingclass districts, which include hundreds of thousands of voters, are given equal representation to a bourgeois area, which includes but a small fraction of that number.

DISTRICTS SHIFTED.

Electoral districts are "gerrymandered". In other words, they are shifted about so that militant workers neighborhoods are broken up and attached to various overwhelmingly majority bourgeois neighborhoods, and thus are prevented from uniting their forces to elect a representative.

The outstanding manner by which the capitalist class may insure their control of the state power, even in the so-called "democratic" governments, is to deprive outright, large sections of workers and poor farmers from voting. For example, the Negro

masses, especially in the South are largely deprived from voting, either by various rules which discriminate against them, or by open use of terror. As a result, especially in the South, only a very small part of the eligible voting population, frequently less than 15%, can vote in the elections. We give below a list of typical states:

	Pop. over 21 years	Voted last Presidential election
	in 1933	(1932)
Mississippi	1,023,140	146,129
Alabama	1,332,978	243,967
Georgia	1,484,981	255,590
Tennessee	1,405,465	385,963
Virginia	1,277,427	297,943
Texas	2,805,192	858,307
Louisiana	1,097,632	268,271
Florida	810,069	275,477

These figures give one a conception of how small a part of the eligible voting population (over 21 years) succeeds in voting. When one considers in addition, that the capitalist class needs only a majority of those allowed to vote, one can easily see that 10% or less of the eligible voting population controls elections in these states.

MANY DISFRANCHISED.

The rest of the states use other methods of achieving the same purpose. For example, in California, there are 250,000 agricultural workers, undoubtedly the most militant section of the workingclass, yet these are prevented from voting by residence qualifications. In other words, they are migratory workers, and do not live in one county 3 months or more as required by law. The workers who are evicted in the last months prior to an election lose their right to vote.

Here are some other outstanding limitations put upon the right to vote. For example, in eight states, one must pay a poll tax in order to vote, and if one cannot afford the tax, one is not allowed to vote. In three states, one must own property to be al-

lowed to vote. In one state, one must have paid taxes within two years prior to the elections in order to vote. In one state, only employed can vote. Thus, in 13 states, one is disqualified by these reasons of being victims of the capitalist crisis. In two states, delinquent tax payers are disqualified. In 11 states, paupers, namely, people whose economic resources are completely exhausted, who have no work or income, and are thrown on the charity of the state, lose their right to vote. In three states, all born Chinese, Japanese and other oriental people can under no circumstances have the right to vote.

In addition to these qualifications, which automatically disqualify millions of people from voting, there are residence qualifications. For example, in 37 states, one must be a resident for one year or more before qualifying to become a voter. In fifteen states, one must reside in a certain county six months or more before having the right to vote. In eight states, one must live in a particular town for six months or more before having the right to vote. In four states, one must live in a particular election precinct before having the right to vote. From this, it can easily be seen how unemployed workers who must go about seeking work, or evicted workers, migratory workers, seasonal workers of all sorts are eliminated, and only people who are comparatively better off, and more inclined to be satisfied with existing conditions are given the right to vote, despite the fact that they may be, and frequently are, only a small minority of the population.

REFUSE CITIZENSHIP.

In addition to these qualifications, there is the wholesale disfranchisement of millions of foreign born workers, many of whom have been in this country for several decades, and have

contributed to the riches of the country, and still cannot win the right to vote, either because of the strict regulations of one sort or another, or the so-called "cultural" qualifications. The most outrageous excuses are used to disqualify foreign born citizens from citizenship under these "cultural" qualifications. Thus a judge suspecting a foreign-born worker of militant workingclass sympathies, asks him "civics" questions, which no one can remember, such as "Who was the 14th president of the United States?" or "What is the name of the first Assistant in the Attorney-General's office?" or "What is the 5th Amendment to the Constitution?"

WHEN "DEMOCRACY" FAILS.

Sometimes all of these methods fail, and the workers succeed in electing workingclass representatives to office. Then, capitalism throws away its democratic mask, and frankly refuses the workers the right to representation and uses open terror to enforce its rule. One can see how that happened in Italy, Germany, Poland, Jugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, Roumania, etc., etc. For this purpose, the capitalist state has, all types of police, officers in the army, and fascist organizations especially created.

But this also happened in the United States. For example, during the last war, in New York, despite all the maneuvering of the reactionary capitalist machine, dominated especially by the New York City Tammany Hall crowd, the workers succeeded in electing ten then militant Socialist assemblymen to the State Assembly who had taken an anti-war stand. There was no question concerning the legality of their election. Yet they were refused their seats in the Assembly because they were members of a Party whose platform was "Inimical to the best interests of the U. S. A. and to the State of New York." Thus, the mass of voters overwhelmingly decided that they wanted these for representatives, but the reactionary capitalists refused to seat them because in their opinion the voters had made a mistake. Isn't that a fine "democracy"?

In other words, the entire structure of capitalist "demo-

Literature and Book Reviews

RECENT POLITICAL THOUGHT, by Francis W. Coker, published by D. Appleton-Century Co., San Francisco.

Dr. Coker is professor of government in Yale University. It is therefore to be expected that his book should be written in the form of a text for students.

He divides his volume into three parts. In Part I, he deals with what he calls "Socialistic Doctrines." Here he includes not only Marxian thought but even theories so far distant from Marxism as syndicalism, anarchism, and the land-taxers. In Part II, he defines capitalist democracy, and in Part III he makes an exposition of the ideas of the fascist agitators.

In his preface the author says that he "has persistently sought to maintain some sort of impartial attitude in the exposition of the doctrines"; but his "own theoretical pre-conceptions have possibly colored his critical interpretation at many points." In fact, the entire structure of the book, as well as content, is a defense of capitalism and an attack upon Marxism-Leninism.

Instead of presenting capitalist democracy and fascism as the two forms of capitalist dictatorship, he presents them as two different systems. In fact, following typical "Socialist" Party and liberal thought, he repeats the old nonsense that Communism and Fascism are of a similar nature. Students of this department by now thoroughly understand the fallacy of this point of view, and the malicious intent of bourgeois thinkers who spread such fallacies in order to create confusion. Dr. Coker's section on Socialism is practically valueless, and will only create more confusion. His defense of democracy and his exposition of the ideas of fascism have value in that one does get a good idea of the ideology expounded by capitalist thinkers.

IRELAND'S PATH TO FREEDOM (Manifesto of the Communist Party of Ireland) with an introduction by S. Murray, price three cents.

This manifesto is Irish history and modern Irish politics as interpreted by the CP of Ireland. The manifesto lays down two central propositions. The first is that the main barrier to a unified and independent Irish Nation is the Irish capitalist class, and its domination of the National movement. The second, is that the Irish workingclass, backed by the working farmers, can alone carry the national struggle to victory.

THE IRISH CASE FOR COMMUNISM, by S. Murray, price five cents.

This fine pamphlet shows changing conditions in Ireland due to world crisis and the upsurge of Irish workers and poor farmers. It shows England's new tactics, ruling Ireland thru Irish fascists and Irish capitalists and rich landowners. It shows only through leadership of the Communist Party can workers hope to attain freedom.

cracy" is nothing but a front, behind which is hidden the dictatorship of capital over labor, and when, by a super-human effort of the workers, they succeed in electing representatives to office, and even seem to threaten winning a majority despite all the restrictions put upon them, by the capitalist class, then the democratic front is thrown away and the open capitalist terror against the workers comes into full view.

ALL PREVIOUS REVOLUTIONS DID NOT ABOLISH THE CLASS-SYSTEMS, BUT ONLY TRANSFERRED POWER FROM ONE CLASS TO ANOTHER. Thus the bourgeois revolutions against the decaying feudal system, such as the French Revolution, only transferred power from the ruling class of feudal and semi-feudal masters, and gave ruling power to the rising bourgeoisie. The American Revolution transferred power from the British exploiting class to the native American exploiting class. And yet, despite the fact that the right of exploitation was not challenged in these revolutions, all of them were accomplished only with tremendous violence. The previous ruling class which had special privileges of exploitation refused to surrender these privileges without a determined armed struggle, although they were only a small number, and the vast majority of the population wanted the change. THIS LAW OF HISTORY, THAT NO RULING CLASS, INCLUDING OUR OWN CAPITALISTS, NO MATTER HOW SMALL A MINORITY IT MAY BECOME, WILL GIVE UP POWER WITHOUT RESORTING TO A DETERMINED STRUGGLE, was again confirmed in the Russian Revolu-

tion, and—the revolutions in Hungary, Finland, Germany, and other European countries immediately following the last world war. Therefore, the workingclass should have no illusions. It can fulfill its historic mission, not through the democratic machinery allowed it by the capitalist class. It can only succeed in its historic mission of overthrowing capitalism and establishing a classless society, by utilizing its organized power to enforce its will.

Still the Communist Party must utilize every democratic right or semblance of democratic right, such as the electoral system, now in use, in order to fight for the interests of the workers. Through utilizing these rights it is not possible to overthrow class society, but if the masses will back the Communist Platform, its ticket, and eventually its elected representatives, it is possible to gain immediate concessions towards improving conditions for the masses and in that struggle strengthen the movement for our ultimate aims. It is with this in view that the Communist Party participates in the election campaign, and calls upon the whole workingclass and poor farmers, pauperized middle-class, and advanced thinking professional and intellectual people to support its Party and ticket in the elections.

After the capitalist state has been overthrown, a new form of government must be created in order that the objectives of the revolution shall be achieved. This form is Soviet democracy, consisting of workers, poor farmers, soldiers and sailors Councils. Why is this form essential?

(END OF LECTURE 10)