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BUNDLE RATES ON APPLICATION

British Columbia Ballot

The political buncombe mills are grinding once again into high gear in the province of British Columbia. Another provincial election has been called for June 9, one year subsequent to the previous elections. The minority Social Credit government, with one more seat but less first choice votes than the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, was defeated on March 24, in the ninth week of the first session of the legislature. When viewed against the preposterous Social Credit claims of having saved British Columbia from the "forces of Socialism," that session can be properly described as one of the most farcical in the history of the legislature. Here we had a situation where the alleged forces of Socialism were the strongest the C. C. F. ever mustered in the B. C. house. If the C. C. F. represented Socialism here at least was its best opportunity to declaim with a thunderous voice, the real issues that confront the working class.

To those workers who have some inkling of their class position, the disgusting spectacle of the shop-worn banalities, the political platitudes, fatuous flippancies and tub thumping indulged in by C. C. F. as well as Government supporters, should be a revelation of the falsity of any hopes they may have placed in the C. C. F. All of this vast torrent of words was irrelevant to any exposition of the real material interests of the workers.

An odd angle of the situation was the eagerness of Premier W. H. C. Bennet from the first to goad the opposition, especially the reluctant Liberals, into defeating the government. The Social Crediters, confident of being returned with stronger support were anxious to have this occur before the Federal elections expected in August or October. The theory is presumed to be that a B. C. victory would enhance their chances for their first all-out bid for Federal power.

Where Was Education By "Socred" and C. C. F. Into Their Theories?

It is ironical to note that the government was overthrown on a proposed act for a new basis of financing education, and that the greatest furore of the session, with noisy outside reverberations, was caused by a "Socred"* member's denunciation of a school course as immoral. Fantastic charges of Socialist indoctrination of school children were flung about. It is amusing to realize that the course criticized is called "Effective Living," contemptuously dubbed "Effective Loving" by the Minister of Health, Hon. Eric Martin. It is amusing because amid all the hubbub regarding education and effective living neither the Social Credit nor C. C. F. parties, in contention over school education troubled to avail themselves of the opportunity to do some educating of their own; i. e., to inform the electorate as to what Social Credit is and what Socialism really means! Could it be that neither one of these parties understand the theories they claim to represent?

One would think that the application of the theories these two schools of political thought are supposed to encompass would logically be advocated as a real basis for effective living. Or could this lack be interpreted as significant and silent testimony to the acute awareness of each that their appeal for votes and support received were not based on a program for Socialism or monetary reform?

Both parties solicited votes on promises to make Capitalism operate in the interests of the "people," glossing over the embarrassing fact that this convenient term, "the people," encompasses elements of two classes with conflicting economic interests.

The C. C. F. jibes at the failure of the Government to expound their professed monetary theories or to incorporate them in their financing, is another instance of the kettle calling the pot black, in view of their own failure, as usual, to utter one word indicating the need to abolish the wages system. But of course this is only what Socialists would expect from a party which identifies State Capitalism as Socialism.

The silence of the "Funny Money" party regarding the monetary theories they are supposed to hold has led to a local newspaper columnist challenging any member of the Government to accept his freely donated column space for a delineation of the party doctrines. The motive prompting this offer is the reported suspicion that most of the members of the party are as ignorant of the Douglas theory of Social Credit as the voters who supported them. The same criticism can be made with even greater validity in regard to the understanding of Socialism by the overwhelming majority of the C. C. F. and its supporters.

Fraudulent Contentions Create Contradictory Charges

In the desperate bid for working-class support the fraudulent and mutually contradictory claims of the rival candidates should make the nature of the political confidence game more evident to discerning voters. By gathering together some of these contentions we get the following examples:

1. The late Mr. A. R. MacDougall, Conservative candidate in the 1952 elections charged his ten-year Liberal Coalition partners with advocating Socialism.

2. Social Credit charges that the reformist C. C. F. has plans for a Socialist British Columbia.

3. Mr. A. Laing, new leader of the Liberals claims the Social Credit League will bring about a "Socialist State."

4. Mr. Elmore Philpott, although not a candidate, but a supporter of the Liberal Party correctly defines the C. C. F. as a Social Welfare party and insists it is not Socialist and contends that the Saskatchewan C.C.F. Government is the best Liberal government Canada ever had. He pleads for a fusion of the C. C. F. and Liberals.

So we arrive at the amazing paradox that while the "crooshal" issue is supposed to be Free Enterprise versus Socialism, yet all the parties engaged in it are denounced as Socialist, with the exception of the Conservatives. We are now awaiting word of charges of Socialism to be levelled at the Tories by the Social Creditors. And it does seem the new leader of the Tories, Mr. Findlayson is a bit put out at the exclusion since he has lately coyly begged for such a tag by hinting darkly that he was probably what could be called a Socialist in his youth. Furthermore, a surprise move by the Conservative Party will probably give added weight to any anticipated accusations of Tories being tainted with Socialism. While the C. C. F. was storming against the government freeing of controls on milk distribution, the

*"Socred" is a nickname current here for Social Credit.