PARTY NEWS

Hit the 87th milestone Nov. 15th. My B. C. socialists colleagues of the early 1900's are now reduced to J. D. Harrington, W. N. Lafeaux, D. Curry. The last two are C. C. Fers Charles Lestor* and H. Wilmer back in their native England. Charles with S.P.G.B. and Wilmer unattached. I still continue in fine fettle so far as the upper half is concerned but from waist line to the plates of meat, the conditions the direct reverse but what else con be expected from a carcass that has served me so well for so long. Don't imagine I'm downhearted but simply realize that I've had my good innings and when my number goes up I'll take the score with a grin kiplingesque.

However whilst my efforts towards helping to usher in a saner system have not come up to the expectation of my callow youth days the next few years should bear fruit.

So now with a cheerio and never say die until you're dead.

I'll popo down

BILL BENNETT,

Mazatlan Sin, Mexico.

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As you know the times are hard over here, capitalism does not happen to be prosperous at the moment (no war going on — near enough at least) etc., etc. and I have been out of work more or less. But enough of that.

I always wanted to write to you, specially about **The Western Socialist,** our very dear WS. I should say, even wanted to send you an article or two on Iceland's politics and economy — but you know how it is . . . .

Instead I am going to tell you, what we over here like best in the journal — what articles. What those people, that I have shown the paper admire most is undoubtedly your way of describing what went on at the debates your speakers had with those of the other parties. It is really amazing how surprised they can become, when they read here the news about the debates. First the speeches! Nothing else.

But it is not amazing after all, if you have seen what our papers over here — and over there, I suppose, say about our speakers. It is a rule — and a very strict one — that each party only prints the speeches of its own speakers. And if you saw what went along with them, you would be the one to be really surprised. All the words of praise, that they can find for the party's speakers, and how utterly ignorant and idiotic the opponents were. If it were only for the way you treat similar circumstances — if I had seen nothing else, or heard, I have no doubt, I would at once have subscribed to the WS. What I am arriving at —and I see now it has taken me quite a long time — is; publish as much as you can of these debates. Your speakers have, as a rule, so overwhelming superiority over your opponents that no one has any doubt who is right and who is wrong. But even more counts, I think, the frankness and sincerity in the way you tackle our Atlean problem.

And one thing more. I always have several samples of the WS on my desk and around me to show those who drop in. But I dare say there is only one, that always awaken interest at once, and makes the readers ask: Where do you get that journal? It is the issue with the cartoons and pictures. This is the very best way to arouse interest in any subject.

Always yours for socialism.

Greetings,

B. THORSEN,

Reykjavik, Iceland

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February 2, 1953

Mr. Fenton:

In behalf of the Young People's Society of the Community Church I should like to thank you for addressing our group last Sunday evening.

Your talk, "What is Socialism?", was most interesting and informative. Your definition of socialism in immediate and practical terms was more meaningful than all the abstractions could have been. I know that everyone present enjoyed the casual but straightforward attitude with which you spoke.

Many thanks for coming and giving us so generously of your time.

Mildred M. Listernick, Corr. Sec'y.

Boston, Mass.

*See Jan. 1953 issue of **Socialist Standard** for tribute to Comrade Lestor.

BOSTON: Attend Forum every Sunday night at 11 Faneuil Hall Sq.

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"LIFE'S" GOLDEN AGE

Capitalism, which in the last 35 years has been "abolished" for longer or shorter periods of time in most of the nations of the world is now declared to be superceded by a new system in America. Who says so? None other than Frederick L. Allen, social historian, aided and abetted by **Life Magazine** for Jan. 5, 1953. The editors of **Life** seem to have been completely cured of their miseries over the American economy, which they suffered from during the long Democratic Party tenure of office. And this, mind you, even **before** the incoming Republican administration has had an opportunity to take over and straighten out the "creeping socialism" which the Democratic officeholders have been accused of instituting in America over the past 20 years.

They, **Life's** editors, seem to be quite happy with Mr. Allen's description of America's "dynamic new economic system," an economy which Mr. Allen declares has bypassed socialism and evolved into something far superior, albeit something he can not as yet pin a label upon.

Not that we agree at all with Mr. Allen's analysis nor give any credit whatsoever to the Roosevelt and Truman administrations for instituting anything really new or revolutionary in American capitalism, but something here has an odor of rotten fish. This so-called dynamic new society has materialized under Democratic Party rule and we think that either **Life's** editors have only just found out about it at this time from Mr. Allen or else had their tongues in cheeks while berating the Democrats so violently during the recent elections campaign.

Be this as it may, it is rather interesting for socialists to contemplate a social system that has "whizzed by socialism," and now that it has ceased whizzing let us begin contemplating.

Across the top of the first two pages of Mr. Allen's article are two photographs. The first depicts in the "bad old days of 1938," police restraining a mob of 5,000 men who were "battling for 100 jobs as porters." Giving the position that this sort of thing is completely in the past, the second photo shows a few men who sit or stand unconcernedly in an employment agency, paying scant if any attention to a boardfull of job advertisements.

We are not going to argue at this time that **Life** is altogether wrong when it says that "prolonged mass unemployment . . . is extremely unlikely to recur here and hence is lost to the socialists as a practical issue." We know that times are different today and will be for some time to come. We can sort of agree with Imrie de Vegh, Manhattan economic consultant, who on page 89 of the same issue states:

> **"Unless we pull the rug once more, we can not have a depression AS LONG AS THE KREMLIN FORCES OUR KEY INDUSTRIES TO OPERATE CLOSE TO CAPACITY."** (emphasis ours)