have shaken off the fetters of religion.

HARMO

Vancouver Readers —

Ateend S. P. C. lectures every Sunday night. Also classes every Thursday night, 8:00 P.M. at 1236 Granville St., Vancouver, B. C.

DEATH AND TAXES

Q. Is the withholding tax that the employer deducts from the slave's check, and turns over to the Internal Revenue Bureau, a tax that the workers pay?

A. To dogmatically assert that workers don't pay any taxes, one would either have to be an addict of euphemism, or deeply immersed in the mire of semantics. Of course, we could simulate the antics of Mrs. Eddy's disciples and declare that they only "think" they pay them. Just a mental aberration that we proceed to straighten out until the victim gleefully retorts — "Gee, it's all so clear to me no, why didn't I think of that before?"

But the workers seem to get the idea from their experience in every day life that they are face to face with something called taxes that they must pay. As language serves as the medium for recording the happenings in the world around us, and taxes is one of such, there would be no advantage in trying to make it mean the opposite of what it says.

The questioner, in amplifying his question, well and truly states that "It appears the slave will not listen to anyone who tells him that the workers don't pay taxes when he sees a big slice taken off his check on payday". Precisely. Can you blame him? That is just how it happens in the language he was taught. And while we adhere to a philosophy that differs greatly from that of the non-class conscious workers, so long as we are living, and working, and talking with people, and trying to get them to see things our way, it is surely advisable that we speak the same language.

The isolated social beach comber, and ivory tower hibernator, remotely concerned with the class struggle, are not directly faced with what transpires over the brain waves of the working class and can safely hold and hug their dogma. But an active Socialist propagandist who would preface his lecture with the assertion that "workers don't pay any kind of taxes, never did, and never shall," would be considered as either the biggest liar since Baron Munchausen, or the greatest humorist since Mark Twain. No matter how scientific the remainder of his talk it would have little effect from then on.

However, be it noted, and fully understood, that the question of taxation is not a working class question. As a problem it is one for the owning and ruling class to grapple with. If the taxes paid by the workers were drastically increased or reduced it would have no material effect upon them as a class. It could make its mark for a short period of time and, for certain sections within the class for a longer period but, for the class as a whole, they would remain just as they were. This is made clear when we examine the wage system itself. Wages or salaries are the workers' means of subsistence. They are what the workers get for something they sell. The only thing they have to sell is the manual and mental energy they possess. This is disposed of on a time basis generally and, like everything else that's bought and sold, the value of the energy or power to labor is determined by how much social labor is necessary to keep it functioning. This resolves itself into the cost of the things that working class families must contact such as things to eat, wear, live in, ride in, entertain in, train in, and otherwise move around in.

In case the prices of those things essential to the production of labor power rise because of higher taxes, then, the workers through their organizations in the job arena must

struggle with their bosses to keep wages as close as possible to evening matters with the rise in prices.

Should a reduction in taxes take place and price of life's necessities have a corresponding slump, then, it is the employers turn at bat to endeavor to force wages down. But the social situation is not changed in either case. Looking over periods of low prices, low taxes, low wages we find the same general condition as when all these items were classified as being high.

So far as we can see there is only one real and permanent cure for the disease and this entails removing labor power from the category of commodities, abolishing the system of capitalism, and establishing Socialism in its place.

Q: You talk of winning others to your point of view, but doesn't it occur to you that they don't want to be won over? You must face the fact that most people haven't got the same outlook as you W.S.P.'ers.

A: We try to win others over to our point of view because that is the only way of achieving our object. If they don't accept the case for socialism then we must continue to discuss it with them on the basis that what we understand, others can also. When you refer to our different outlook you probably mean our opposition to all other parties, but there's nothing remarkable in taking up that position once you realize they are all opposed to what you want. Of course, it's tempting to believe that all you have to do is to vote for the right party, and our opponents play on this desire to take what appears to be the easy way out. Although capitalist propagandists don't often specifically attack the W.S.P. they certainly do go to great lengths to prevent workers from developing a socialist outlook. There is a sort of "honor among thieves" that does not allow any of our opponents to question the continuation of the present economic system.

The Same Only Different

Q. Why is it that capitalism has two religions—Catholic and Protestant—when one would do?

A. Capitalism has hundreds of religions of varying degrees of likes, unlikes, and dislikes. Basically they are all much the same. They believe in one omniscient deity, immortality, and pie in the sky and horse meat here.

In the Western World the two main religions are Protestant and Catholic. Both of them find it pays to change as conditions change. The Catholic Church is a different institution today from what it was in the Middle Ages. At that time it functioned by upholding the ruling class — the landed aristocracy. The Church dominated and controlled the intellectual life of the period and determined what was to be taught and what ostracized.

When a new manufacturing and trading class made its appearance it soon found itself up against the dictates of the Church. The new class must know something of natural science in order to produce and exchange commodities. The dogmas of Isaiah and Jeremiah were all right for the three-field system in agriculture but of little account in an age of commerce.

Gold and silver in possession of the Church, in the form of ornaments, altar vessels, chandeliers etc. were needed to circulate accumulating wealth. The Church also had too many holidays to satisfy business requirements. There were too many potential wage slaves expending their energies in the useless labors of the monasteries. Too much money was being spent on masses, requiems, and indulgences so, in order to live and grow, the new class had to foster a religion more amenable to their brand of reason.

With the decline of feudalism and the growth of capitalism the Protestant religion made a place for itself in the developed centers of the West. But the Catholic Church, while strong on funerals, had no intention,