
Socialism as a Mental Disease

by Bertram D. Wolfe

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Socialism is a disease of the political forgettory, a faculty very necessary to the absolute mental tranquility and mental quiescence of the political creature, man.

The Socialist suffers much from his curse of a political memory. He cannot forget the campaign slogan of 1916, "He kept us out of war." Consequently, the Socialists are still stupidly standing behind the President in his long-forgotten efforts for "Peace without victory."

The Socialist's ever-present disease did not let him forget that our model mayor had permitted the police to practice various club drills in City Hall Park and food products to make aviation trials; and thus this mentally diseased sect was deprived of the privilege of proving itself patriotic and of endorsing "the best administration, by its own confession, that the city has ever had."

These sufferers from the mysterious malady called the memory are unable to forget the disappearance through fusion of so many minority parties, such as the Populist, Municipal Ownership, and Progressive Parties, and because of this misfortune they are deprived of the fat jobs and the increase of worldly goods that comes of trading endorsements.

The newly elected Socialist Assemblymen are victims of the same disease. They will find it impossible to forget the platforms that they have

memorized by so many stump speeches. They will be haunted by the memory of the fact that they were elected from the working class by workingmen and so will come back from Albany no richer than when they went up. It will compel them to introduce measures on subjects that everybody desires to forget, such as prostitution, child labor, starvation wages, police clubbing, and even soaring food prices that are far out of sight and should be long out of mind.

It is said that this fearful disease is incurable except by an operation to remove the seat of any trouble, the brain, an organ that authorities have recently discovered to resemble the appendix in that each of them apparently serves no useful purpose and may at times become troublesome. The diseased condition referred to seems to be extremely contagious, judging from recent statistics of the increase of the affliction. The germ that is thought to be the cause of the infection, the germ of thought, seems to thrive on poverty, disease, and suffering. It is especially prevalent in warring nations. It is feared that the disease may become universal and there are many authorities who propose the removal of all brains, or at least the destruction of anything that may make the seat of the malady active. Certain officials are apparently immune to the disease as are idiots, defectives, and the insane.

†- The Socialist Party's *New York Call* changed its name to *The Evening Call* on Dec. 3, 1917, in an effort to do an end run around post office censorship when the "Morning Call" lost its mailing privileges. Volume numbers were retained under the new name and the paper's format was unchanged. The revised publication seems to have been geared towards newsstands for delivery.

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