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THE REB

THE GREAT APPEAR GREAT TO US ONLY BECAUSE WE ARE ON OUR KNEES - 1ST THS 1918

HALLETTSVILLE, TEXAS, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1914

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No. 166

THE REASON FOR WAR

Address Delivered at the Anti-War Demonstration in Houston, Sunday, September 6th, by T. A. Hickey, Editor of The Rebel.

(The editor of *The Rebel* delivered a lengthy address on the war in Highland Park, Houston, Texas, before an immense crowd on Sunday, September 6th. Lack of space prevents us from publishing the speech in full. However we print below the portion of the address that aroused the greatest interest, namely that which dealt with the method whereby the workers of the various nations are robbed of the major portion of their products. All Socialists should study the economic side of our movement as much as possible and in presenting this portion of the address we do so with the hope that it will stimulate further research along economic lines by our comrades.—Editor *The Rebel*.)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Houston Local, Ladies and Gentle-

When I received your invitation this week to speak at an anti-war demonstration in your city I did not hesitate for an instant in accepting the invitation because I realized that meetings of this character are the prime need of the hour. It is fitting that the Socialists of Houston should be the first to do this, and women in the southeast Texas to call such a meeting because it is the women of our party that, since the war dogs have been let loose on the world, it is the Socialists alone who, functioning as a political party, have been the first from ocean to ocean and from the lakes to the gulf to call meetings like this, and thus raise the banner of revolt against war. In doing so we merely live up to our past record that has been the history of the nations for the past two generations. (applause)

I did not close my desk and leave my work to come to you and resume your time with a description, however vivid it might be, of the horrors of war. I do not care to harass your minds and rack your nerves with the recital of the number of wounded that have been taken maiming and shrieking from the battlefields of Europe or paint a word picture of bodies piled in trenches until they numbered in the thousands whenever the men of Germany met in the shock of conflict with the allied armies. No, I came to you, my friends, to speak of the condition that has led to this war and to discuss ways and means whereby we can prevent similar catastrophes in the future.

Let us look at the cause of the war first of all because if we can find the one reason for this war we can be in a position to supply the remedy. To begin: All wars today are commercial wars. The days of religious crusades although they had an economic cause are gone forever. The wars today are purely and simply commercial in their nature and are a result of one great economic fact, which is, that the masses of the people, the working class, of each nation, are exploited by a plutocracy who own the land and tools of production, the ownership of which enables them to wrest from the producer the larger portion of the wealth that he creates. Now as to the method of this appropriation of the wealth produced by labor or more simply put, the method of this robbery should remember is that under this system whereby the plutocracy owns the means of life, labor is a commodity. This simple illustration taken from the vernacular of the day will explain:

There is no man present who ever heard of a bankers' market or a preachers' market, a doctors' market or a lawyers' market. Not every one of you have heard of a steel market, a coal market, a copper market, a wheat market, and a LABOR MARKET. To this day, the only market in the world go, at all hours of the day and night and proceed to sell the only commodity that is the life and power—such as all other commodities are sold via. According to the law of supply and demand. How does that law work out? If there is a great supply of pork chops in the pork chop market and the price of pork chops goes down; on the other hand, if there is a small supply of pork chops and the price of pork chops goes up. Similarly if there is a great supply of miners, machinists or laborers and a small demand then the price goes down and on the other hand if there is a great demand and a small supply the price of labor goes up. Accordingly, the only way to get a fair relation to society that the worker under this system is to have a fair supply of pork chops. (Laughter and applause.)

Now follow me closely: when the worker goes to the market he literally sells himself for a certain number of hours. He sells his labor power for a certain number of hours. He sells his strength and his brain power. He sells his mind. He finds a purchaser for his labor power. He receives the value of his labor power—wages. But his labor value has a two-fold value. It has a value just as all other commodities. To illustrate: My hat has a value in that it shelters my head from the sun or rain; my coat has a value in that it keeps me warm in the winter and protects my body from the heat in the summer. My labor power has a value because we sit upon it and rest ourselves when pro and anti Donk politicians meet the use value of it is evidenced by the manner in which these good brothers spring upon me and ask me to work for them. Now then, labor being a commodity, we ask ourselves what is its use value? It is the use of its brain and nerve tissue in the production or manufacture of material. In the first two hours of the day the worker produces

enough to pay for the exchange-value of his labor power and all the remaining hours that he works be they eight, ten, twelve or more—the use value of his labor is appropriated by the capitalist with the result that the difference between the exchange-value—wages—and the use value produces what is termed surplus value with the result that a vast mass of commodities are piled up on farms, factory, mill and shop to be sold by their legal owners—the plutocracy—(appendix 1)

Now let us look a little further and inquire of the disposition of these commodities, some of them go to pay the interest on the 1 per cent. some to go down in the purchase of \$100,000,000 of American \$100,000,000 talcos; dog dimpers, horse dimpers and diamond dimpers. Some go to a virtute who think their lives in cavabets. The remainder of the commodities are sold to the muzzled, the African, the Indian, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Mohammedans, the adherents of detectives and gunners, the purchase of Dunk and the purchase of the jugs, the owning of editors, the emancipating of the pulpit, and the building of giant armies and navies and to all this add the purchase of the building of ever larger machinery to displace labor and then you have the purchase of this surplus value, the value appropriated from the working class. But let this pass.

That in spite of all these expenditures there is left in each of these newly developed capitalist nations a great store of commodities that are not sold, that are not wanted. If they are not sold a glut occurs and the price of the commodities falls. If they are not wanted, the existence of the plutocracy, hence they must dispose of the surplus value in foreign markets with the result that a chase goes on to the uttermost end of the seven seas in which to place the commodities that have been produced. This chase has found England taking possession of the East Indies, France has found her way to Australia, her gun boats are in Chinese waters and Hong Kong and her principalities. Germany has entered Persia, the waters that wash the shores of South America; she has conquered Persia, portions of Africa, took possession of the East Indies, she has been in conflict with the French over Morocco and seeks even to control the East Indies. But that her proletariat produces. I could go on to spread the map of the world to you and there point out the foreign lands that Russia, Belgium, Italy, Austria, the dominant powers in the European world, have taken possession of. The domination of their mortally armed guns but I have said sufficient to indicate the way in which the world is grasping for markets and will close up this point by shortly pointing out that the troops of our country, stars and stripes in hand, are marching to the conquest of China side by side with the soldiers of other European nations.

Our country, our own country, with its almost unlimited resources, plunges into the world, with its might for markets and does so because the American working man is subject to the same law of exchange, use and surplus value as is the European. He is fighting on the battle-fields of Europe. (Prolonged applause.)

We now observe that wars are commercial and are only possible because the worker does not get the full product of his toil. Let us ask ourselves how shall we prevent wars in the future? It has been suggested by that brilliant writer, Dr. Frank Crane, that before a war is ordered that the people should be allowed to vote upon it. To my mind this is sheer idiocy. As well ask a man to vote on whether he shall have his house burned over his head or his life be taken.

[illegible]

Williams selected judge to pass judgment on the steal of the nominal value of the stolen cotton. Williams was being aired out for his earnings put the "props" under attack with an injunction. Great deal of money being taken out of the cotton industry of the crime, why did he not hesitate in letting Jennings bring out the facts. That is a question of dollars and cents. What do you voters think about it? Haven't you had about enough of capitalist class rule in this country?

The Rebel would like to know what effect the prohibition and anti-prohibition speeches in effect would have on the price of cotton. We want to hear from you with the pertinent testimony. Personally we believe that it has had a great deal to do with the 5 cent cotton and this is the reason why. "If the rebels were competent to deal with other matters, than the sale of cotton, they would in years ago might have learned a lesson about the sale of cotton. Sale

The war has not yet broken up the negro sho black union of Ft. Belvoir, Colo. It is a union of a railroad organization. It has not broken up any of the A. P. of I. organizations. It has not broken up the American Grange and it has not broken up the Farmers' Union in the Northern States and it has not broken up the Farmers' Union. He went forth to fight. He was not even clean into. And now his poor wife. Don't know what to do. I have no more to say. Without any delay. While her sons sign the declaration.

The Renters' Union men have been at work in this great crisis that is upon the cotton growers of the South. They are taking direct action on the most legal lines as a measure of self protection. The active farmers and renters of one of the largest black land counties of the state have organized secretly in every schoolhouse of one of the precincts, to the end that they hold their cotton in the field. One of the active workers has written us this week a letter published below that outlines the method of procedure which is showing splendid results. Read it carefully and act in a similar fashion in every county of the state in which the cotton grower is suffering. The Rebel will have the honor to say on the subject in the next issue IN THE KRANTZTUE WEG. ACT NOW. z

Dear Comrade Thos. A. Hickey

[illegible]

Farmers only are permitted to hold membership in this organization.

I think you would stir the south like it has never been aroused before, if you could supply on the front page of The Bell, information to the farmers of the entire south as to the plan of procedure and carry it out and circulate just issued by the largest cotton corporation in the nation testifies that the plan works. It was alleged that the cotton farmers organization that a mercantile cotton warehouse, that is being erected here, contemplated charging for each bale of cotton stored with their warehouse an entrance fee of \$1.00 to begin on and \$1.00 per month thereafter for storage and insurance. Since the farmers' cotton organization was formed this capitalistic warehouse corporation is publishing everywhere that it will store cotton for an initial charge of 40 cents per bale and 45 cents per month thereafter for storage and storage charges. But my information is that thus far the entrance fee of cotton has been stored with this warehouse corporation.

The retail merchants can, through the organization that they have always maintained, force the wholesalers and jobbers to whom they are indebted to take cotton off of the retailers' hands in payment of the retailers' debts AND AT THE RETAILERS' PRICE PLACED ON THE COTTON.

Wholesalers and manufacturers will get more money from retail merchants who are their debtors by taking cotton from retailers at the retailers' price, when applied wholly upon payment of the latter's debts, than they could ever hope to get by forcing retailers into involuntary liquidation.

The above was the gist of most all the cotton up in this country; and I understand that they have destroyed most of the cotton in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi and perhaps other states.

The member of the Christian Church got into a fight with his brother last night. He said he thought they should play organs in church or not. While they were fighting, he heard the voice that thundered in Sinai—"THOU SHALT NOT KILL." If similar church members were throughout the world fighting over non-essentials under the commandments then the world would be a better place. Do you get me, Steve?

There is one preacher in Houston that has some "intellect in him." He is a Baptist and he likes to burst up the orthodox church, destroy dogmas and creeds, and tell the people with nothing to believe in. He is a free thinker. The Rebel would like to shake hands with that preacher.

The Rebel is glad to be able to inform the renters and small farmers of the planting season that all is well for them. Their

Only one party in the world that
t against war was the So-
t party and it will be so until
nd. The first day we cease
t against war we die.

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Rebel is glad to be able to help the renters and small farmers who are facing starvation. It is well for them and their wives and children. The Thirty-third legislature at the cost of more than \$1,000.00 per day has listened to a beautiful address by a man on suffrage by Miss Finney. Hurrah for the Donk.

When six war-lords can put six great nations fighting, then we may ask ourselves what has been the fruit of nearly 2,000 years teaching of Christianity. Answer

—It was churchianity.

* * *

He went forth to fight,
And was cut clean into,
And now his poor wife
Don't know what to do.
She'll hit the wash tub
Without any delay
While her sons sing the dole-song.

