

C.C.F. BROADCAST BY T.C. DOUGLAS, M.P.

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THE C.C.F. AND CO-OPERATIVES

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Good Evening:

People sometimes ask me "what is the main difference between the CCF and the old line parties?" Well, that is a very easy question to answer. The old line parties support the present economic system while the CCF believes that the time has come for a new economic system to be built. From the CCF point of view there are only two classes of people in any society; there are the people who toil with hand or brain, and those who, because they OWN the machinery of production live off those who toil. A wise man said many years ago that "He who controls the means by which I live controls me." This is still true! Those who own our great factories, our railroads, banks and who exploit our natural resources are able to determine what wages the worker will get and what price the farmer will receive. These great combines determine the price at which the local merchant will dispose of his goods and what the consuming public will pay for any commodity which they buy. Therefore society may be roughly divided into these two classes, the exploiters and the exploited; the dispossessors and the great mass of the dispossessed; those who control our economic and industrial life, and the great masses of workers in factory, office and farm whose state is little better than one of economic slavery.

Perhaps you will say to me that you don't like being referred to as an "economic slave". "After all", you say, "I'm a free man, living in one of the great democracies!" True enough! You live in a political democracy; that is, you have the right to vote and to have some say about who will represent you on the School Board, or in the Legislature or Parliament. But how much have you to say about the economic conditions under which you must earn your daily bread? Very little?

As the capitalist system has developed the machinery of production has become more and more expensive. Increasingly the complicated machinery essential to our economy, such as mines, railroads and factories, has become concentrated in the hands of a few corporations which are generally called monopolies. These powerful monopolies control the economic life of our society, and like most ruling classes they are anxious to retain their power--a kept class always wants to be kept. In order to keep their control of our economy these powerful interests have funded and financed political parties to do their bidding; they control radio stations and newspapers so as to mould public opinion to their liking; they have even sought at times to influence our universities and our pulpits in order that they may perpetuate this system of economic slavery.

That is the reason why the old-line parties support the present economic system--they are the creatures of those who control that system. That is why we need never expect radical changes from these parties; they are not likely to turn against their masters.

The CCF arose out of the needs and aspirations of the exploited classes. We believe with Lincoln that "no nation can long endure half slave and half free". We believe that a people can not long remain politically free and economically enslaved; for if we do not use our political freedom to gain economic freedom we may lose even the political freedom we have.

We are not disparaging the political freedom which we have, because we know that it was bought by our forefathers for us at great cost. But liberty is valueless without security. It is of little use being free if you are only free to go hungry, or free to go without a job. The CCF is made up of common people who have banded themselves together for the purpose of using their political freedom, as is found in the ballot, to gain economic freedom for themselves and all the common people of Canada.

But you will ask me "How is it possible for the common people to become economically free?" We in the CCF believe that it can only be done by the people themselves owning and controlling our economic system. That is, instead of a few corporations and bankers controlling our economic life, the common people collectively should own the complicated machinery of production as well as the financial system by means of which a very few are enabled to control and exploit the many.

Someone will immediately ask me "What do you mean when you say that the people should own the implements of production? Do you mean the government ownership of everything?" The answer is "No!" It is true that there are certain enterprises which can best be operated by the federal government such as the railroads, telegraph lines, our banking institutions, and shipping facilities. In the same way there are elements in our economy which could best be managed by provincial governments, as for instance, the development of hydro-electric power, mineral resources and the lumbering industry. These are projects which lend themselves naturally to operation by municipal bodies as, for example, milk boards for the distribution of milk and other important consumer commodities. But social ownership does not necessarily mean government ownership. There are other forms of social ownership--the most successful to date has been the co-operative movement by which those whose lives are controlled by certain facilities associate themselves together for the purpose of owning and controlling those facilities collectively. These co-operatives may be either producers' or consumers' co-operatives depending upon the economic group concerned.

The CCF believe that the most effective form of social ownership is co-operative ownership wherever that is feasible. We believe that when those whose lives are vitally affected by any economic process band themselves together for the co-operative ownership of that process then economic slavery has ended and social democracy has begun. We believe that we are only worthy of our political democracy when we use the latter to establish social democracy and build a co-operative commonwealth in Canada.

You may well ask me, "What things in our economy should be socially owned? Is there no place for private enterprise?" The answer is that only those things which exploit the community should be owned by the community. The man who operates your corner store cannot exploit the community, because if he does he will soon have a competitor starting up across the street. But when a group of men own the great Beauharnois power development project they own something which the community must have and for which the power monopoly may extract a heavy toll from the community.

Already we have begun the process of social ownership by means of the co-operative movement. Nowhere has this adventure in social democracy met with greater success than in Nova Scotia where the Antigonish movement has been sponsored and directed by the Catholic University of St. Francis Xavier. For over a quarter of a century men like Rev. Father J.J. Tompkins, Dr. Coody and Mr. McDonald have given leadership to the fisherman, farmers and coal miners of Nova Scotia. Hundreds of credit unions have been organized; these credit unions have been used to finance co-operative ventures such as co-operative lobster canning factories, refrigerator plants and packing plants. Consequently a new day is beginning to dawn for the lobster fisherman; he is no longer at the mercy of Big Business. Because he has his own facilities by which he may dispose of his lobster he is getting four times as much for it as he was getting before the co-operative movement was organized.

Farmers' co-operatives have been organized for the purchase of fertilizers and other essential commodities. An entirely co-operative community has been built on Cape Breton Island and called Tompkinsville in honor of Father "Jerry" Tompkins the founder of the co-operative movement in the Maritimes. This community has its own co-operative stores, and a hospital, school and church. Co-operative houses have been built for the inhabitants who are mostly coal miners. The occupants have twenty-one years in which to pay for these houses; they pay a monthly installment of \$12.15 which covers interest, principle, taxes and insurance. Of this amount \$2.50 goes into a reserve fund to pay for repairs and to continue payments of any member who may temporarily be unable to meet his installments.

Here is a practical demonstration in social democracy. Here in the West we too have been feeling our way. The Wheat Pools and other producers' co-operatives are the first steps taken by the producers to own and control their marketing facilities. The Consumers' Refinery and the Canadian Co-operative Implements Ltd. are attempts by the producers to have some voice in determining the price of the products which they must buy in order to continue farming operations.

Nor do we need to stop there. The co-operative movement can be expanded to include such projects as the grain alcohol and synthetic rubber industries.

The lumber industry could be merged with a co-operative house-building program so as to enable more people to build their own homes in the post-war period and pay for them over a number of years.

The federal government has nearly 800 million dollars invested in new plants which it has built and equipped for the purpose of producing war material. These factories have been turned over to private industry to operate for the government. When the war is over these factories should either be operated by the government or sold to the co-operative movement. Factories which are now producing tanks could be easily converted to the production of tractors and other farm implements.

The co-operative ownership of the packing plants is long overdue, for there is perhaps no other industry which has the farmer and consumer so completely at its mercy and which has so successfully exploited both for its own gain.

These things cannot be done overnight, but a CCF government in Saskatchewan would set itself to the task of extending and encouraging the co-operative movement. We have never believed that it is the government's duty to help those who won't help themselves; but we do believe that it is the duty of a people's government to help the people to help themselves. This can never be done as long as we leave the making of our laws to those who are the tools of the vest interests. You cannot get a new order from those pledged to maintain the old order. The co-operative movement needs the CCF if it is to have the opportunity to grow and develop. On the other hand a CCF government would need the help of the co-operative movement in order that we may lay the foundations of a co-operative commonwealth here in Saskatchewan, confident as we are, that it would spread into the other provinces of Canada until it was established from seas to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth.

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