
The Red Flag and the Stars & Stripes.

by Morris Hillquit

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On the first day of each May the militant hosts of Socialism and labor, as usual, turn out to celebrate the international holiday of brotherhood. In New York and San Francisco, in Paris and Warsaw, in Tokyo and Johannesburg, in all parts of the glob where the masses toil and suffer, and the idlers rule and enjoy, the workers will march in proud procession to the inspiring tune of the "Marseillaise" or the "Internationale," carrying the defiant emblem of their hopes and aspirations, their creed and their ideal, their revolt and their challenge — the Red Flag of Socialism.

As usual also a savage howl of mingled rage and fear will go up from the capitalist press, the capitalist pulpit, and the capitalist government. The parasites of all nations have a morbid aversion to the red color. Their guilty conscience interprets it as a symbol of carnage and bloodshed.

And our American capitalists are even more sensitive to the irritating effects of the red flag than their brethren across the seas. Perhaps their nerves are more sadly unstrung. In the recent municipal campaigns in Los Angeles and Milwaukee, philanthropists and parasites, reformers and boodlers, preachers and dive-keepers, in a word, all "respectable" society, rallied to the slogan: "The Stars and Stripes as Against the Red Flag," and the "Red Flag" was beaten in both cases. The average unthinking American voter has a holy horror of the red flag, and our astute politician can be relied on to take advantage of that idiosyncrasy in ever greater measure as the growing forces of Social-

ism continue to menace their power and influence. They will find the Socialists of this country ready and eager to accept the challenge, and ere long they will regret that they ever had the hardihood of raising the issue.

We Socialists glory in the Red Flag as the symbol of kinship of all that bears human countenance; we revere it as an augury of worldwide peace, harmony, and brotherhood, we cling to it as the inspiring standard in the great international fight against corruption, exploitation, and oppression. We are proud of the Red Flag. Our allegiance to it is open and honest.

But how about you, apologists of the existing system? You, who taunt us with our flag and flaunt into our faces the Stars and Stripes? What claim do you have to the emblem of American independence, democracy, and justice? You have ruthlessly destroyed the ideal of social equality, which was fondly woven into the texture of the American flag by the revolutionary founders of the republic, and have delivered the country and its people to a gang of financial freebooters. You have reared a purse-proud aristocracy more unbearable than ever was the rule of George III. You have driven millions of American men, women, and children into industrial slavery, misery, and destitution. You have banished the American ideals of civic righteousness, and have poisoned the public life of the nation by wholesale fraud, bribery, and corruption. You have polluted and pros-ecuted our press, our schools, our churches and

courts. You have traduced and betrayed the American people and soiled and degraded its national emblem. The Stars and Stripes are not your emblem! You have long pawned the stars to the trusts and monopolies and your stripes are the stripes of the prison garb. Your true emblem is the black flag of the pirate.

Since the fight of Socialism is a fight to reestablish equality, democracy, and social justice in this country, the Socialists alone uphold the true purity and honor of the Stars and Stripes. Since the fight of Socialism is at the same time a fight for the entire human race, the Red Flag supplements the Stars and Stripes. When Socialism will win its battles, both emblems will flutter together from all huts and palaces, gaily proclaiming in their multiform colors that mankind is free.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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