

DOCUMENT 4:

'The Tearing of the Pledges', article by W.H. Andrews, published in *The International*, September 10, 1915.

Five years ago, if Mr Creswell, the present dictator of the Labour Party, had been told that he would sit 'all silent,' not to say 'all damned,' whilst pledges were torn up and old members of the Party excommunicated because they declined to subscribe to a patriotic resolution passed by a war mad majority, he would probably have indignantly denied the possibility. At his entry to the Party he signed the pledge with a very wry face. For months he fenced with the question endeavouring to find a loophole through which he could squeeze; but as the only way to a seat in Parliament in opposition to his erstwhile friends, the mine magnates, was through the Labour Party, the dose had to be swallowed. How useful that instrument is in getting rid of inconvenient associates he is now probably completely convinced. Whether it has served the purpose intended by the founders of the Party is open to question. As Mr Creswell has often remarked, an honest man needs no pledge, an adventurer will sign anything to gain his ends. How many of the Labour candidates deserve this name experience will teach us. One thing is certain, that, although all are not so frank as Mr Dan Symon, who has openly repudiated the objective of the Party in the Administrative Council, some of them are no more believers in that objective, viz., Socialism, than Unionists or members of the other Capitalist parties.

The justice of imposing the extreme penalty of repudiation and possibly expulsion from the party on men who have wholeheartedly advanced and worked for the principles of socialism for years, and accepting with open arms men who are known to be anti-socialist but have consciences elastic enough to sign the pledge is somewhat difficult to understand.

There can be no shadow of doubt that the 'see it through' policy is anti-socialist. All writers are agreed that Socialism can only succeed if it is international in scope. National socialism is only different in degree from the attempts to found Socialist communities as oasis in the desert of Capitalist society. As they have failed so will National socialism.

Workers of the World unite was Marx's clarion call. He helped to form the International to achieve that end. It went down in blood. The newer and larger International built up since 1870 is being submerged by a more immense upheaval of National hate, prejudice, fear, jealousy and slaughter. It will rise again purged we hope of some of its errors. One of the most fatal of these is that socialism can be established in water-tight compartments. It will be seen then that the true spirit of the socialist and Labour movement has been kept alive not by the office seekers who watch the currents of public opinion in order to float to ease and security on them, nor by the honest but misguided dupes of the ruling class which controls all the means of education, but by those who are now called wreckers of the party cranks, faddists and enemies of the movement because they dare to point out to comrades the true path to human emancipation, namely – the International Unity of the Working Class.