



PRESS REPORT

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SPECIAL PRESS REPORT No. 35.

At the grave of C.T. Cramp.

He was a great socialist and a great man.

One of those whom the working class brings forth, sound of mind and sound of heart, with the mission of serving their class in its fight for salvation, of leading it with unswerving devotion.

One of those whom the working class carry in their hearts, they are born to lead. /because

Suddenly and too early he has been snatched away in the prime of life, the life which he passionately loved because he knew how much joy and happiness it might bring to the enslaved of the earth.

A premature end has come to an industrious life, and to the great promises which the future still hid in its lap, for C.T. Cramp was one of the great among the great. Although naturally modest, his gifts could not escape notice. The gardener's boy and railway worker who came to be the leader of one of the biggest and most powerful trade unions in the world, would have climbed to the highest offices had he not been called to place all his great gifts at the service of the working class. Capable as any other labour leader, none could excel him as a great and noble man, who had the whole of humanity at heart. Hence he was also an internationalist above all others, for whom no frontiers existed, whose ideal was the liberation of the working class all over the world, of the whole of humanity. But with all his goodness, he was an example of dutifulness and never hesitated to intervene with firmness if neglect of duty or harm to the interests of the working class called for requital.

He died in harness, as every great leader would desire. None but could be seized with emotion entering his room in Unity House, where his hat hung from a peg, his inseparable case beside his desk, where lay his gloves, as though he had just come in or was about to leave.

When we, his friends of the mainland, set foot ashore at Harwich all knew for what sad event we had crossed. Our wreaths, the last greetings to the deceased comrade, were not inspected by the precise British custom officials, nor had any duties to be paid, for they had known Cramp, and at the passport barrier we were let through without questions, for it was known for what we had come. The guards of the train as a sign of mourning wore a flower and laurel-branch in their lapel, for that day the great leader of their great organization was to be laid to rest.

One of the guards seized our wreath and placed it in a cool place in the luggage-van, and there was no question of payment. And the porters and the taxi-drivers at Liverpool Street Station and the porters of the luggage department at Charing Cross Station, they

all knew it and all spoke in lowered voices of the sudden loss, of the terrible loss, of the unexpected loss, which we all together had suffered. We knew and felt ourselves part of a sorrowing community.

A service in memory of Concemore Thomas Cramp was held in Whitefield's Central Mission, Tottenham Court Road, near Unity House. There spoke, in addition to the Rev. A.D. Belden, George Lansbury, of the Labour Party, and John Marchbank, Assistant General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen. They all testified to the good man, friend and leader who had departed. Among the present were all the principal leaders of the British Labour Movement, representatives of the Secretariat and Staff of the I.T.F., but also managers of British railway companies. Lansbury said that great expectations had been cherished of Cramp, that he had not wished to serve kings and possessors, but that his life had been devoted to the fight for the outcasts of the earth.

Then all present sang the beautiful song "England, arise!"

Cramp was buried in the little village of Staplehurst, where he was born. For the occasion the railway authorities had ordered that the express train from London should stop at Staplehurst. After a church service he was borne by old faithful comrades of the N.U.R. to his last place of rest.

The way to the grave was on both sides lined with flowers and wreaths and the grave itself was amidst a garden of flowers. The ribbons of the wreath of the I.T.F. bore the inscription "The International Transportworkers' Federation - To its President, to the ever-living memory of a great leader, beloved friend and true comrade", and there was a wreath from the staff of the I.T.F. and one // the Austrian railwaymen's and transport workers' unions, and many telegrams from unions affiliated to the I.T.F., who owing to the suddenness of Cramp's death had not been able to send representatives. /from

The Executive Committee of the I.T.F. was almost fully present, and the two members of the Dutch Management Committee had also come. After the earthly remains had been confided to the earth the flag of the I.T.F. was unfurled as a last salute to the deceased, and Walkden spoke for the British T.U.C., Dobbie for the N.U.R., and Fimmen for the I.T.F. This was the end of a sad simple solemnity, at which but few could restrain their tears.

He was a great socialist and he was a great man, and we can honour his memory most by trying to be like him.