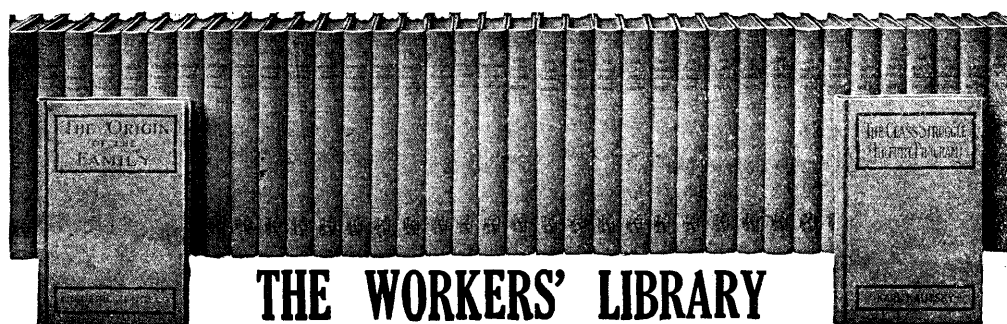


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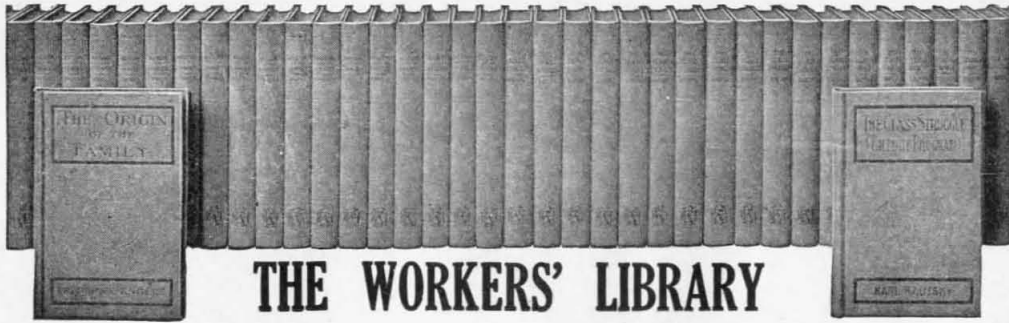
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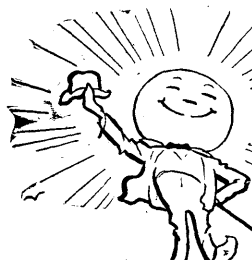
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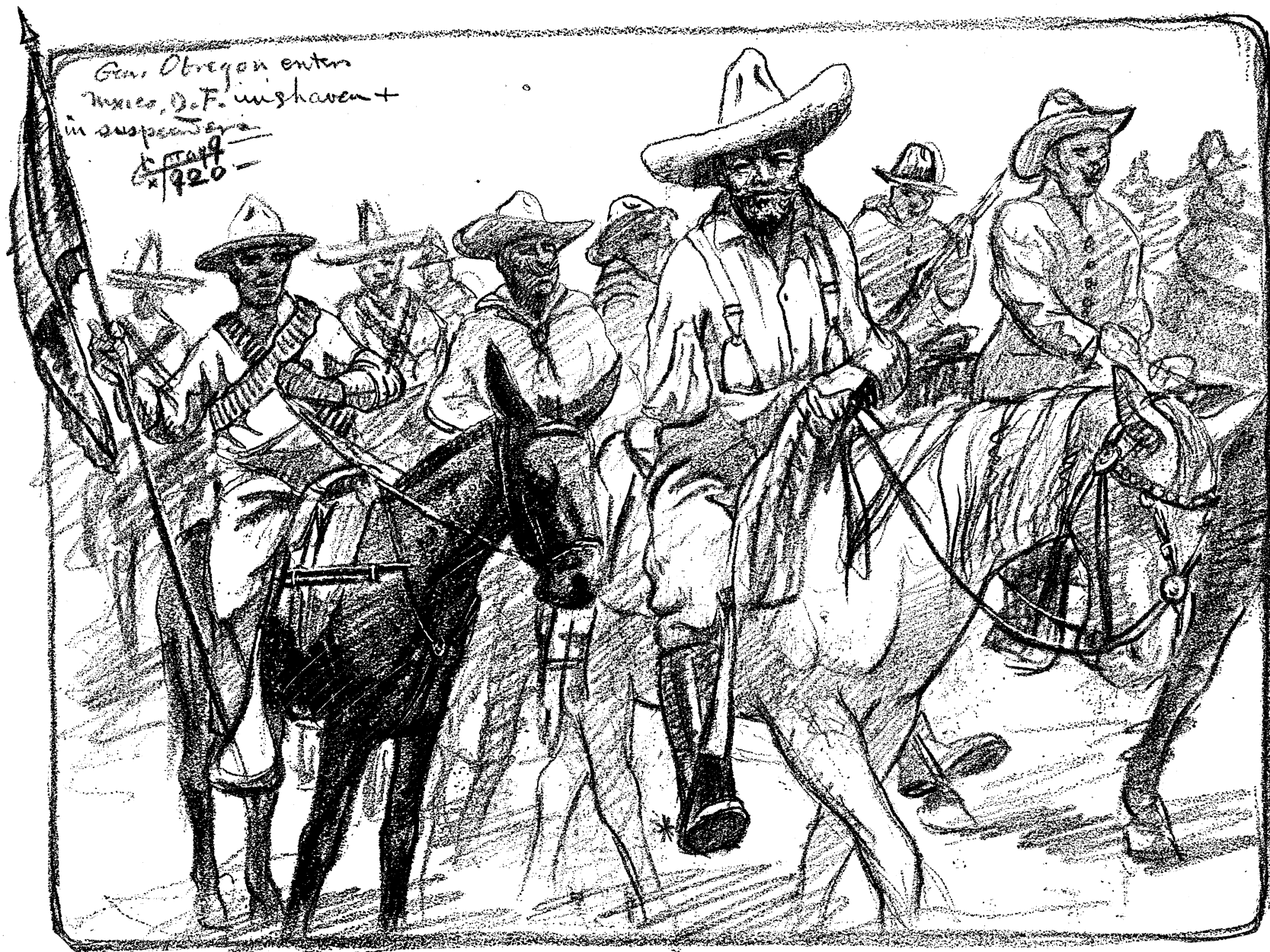
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General Obregon Enters Mexico City

THE LIBERATOR

Vol. 3, No. 7 [Serial No. 28]

July, 1920

The Mexican Revolution

By Carleton Beals and Robert Haberman

AFTER ten years of practice any people should understand quite thoroughly the technique of conducting a respectable, eat-out-of-your-hand revolution. The Mexican revolution which brought a new régime into power some few days ago was orderly, efficient, easily successful. Less than a month from the day the sovereign state of Sonora raised the banner of revolt, the revolutionary army—el ejército liberal revolucionario—galloped into the capital without the firing of a single shot.

They looked strange—those men from the hills, on their lean, tired ponies, as they pounded down Avenida Francisco Madero, Mexico's fashionable Fifth Avenue, dusty and ragged—colorful with great red and blue bandana handkerchiefs and vivid shirts, with flowers hung on their carbines, but eyes grim with purpose. Yet Mexico paid little attention to them. The stores were open; the honking automobiles crowded the flanks of their ponies; fashionable women went unconcernedly about their shopping. Only occasionally did they stop with a rustle of their silk gowns to gaze at the queer outlaw crew of sandalled Indians and Mestizos sweeping by beneath their great, bobbing sombreros.

During those first days I roamed the streets disconsolately—box seats at a Mexican revolutionary melodrama and no thrills. I tried to imagine the turnover as being a cross-your-heart-to-die proletarian revolution, but merely spoiled the afternoon wishing I were in Russia.

Nevertheless, I made the most of it; hired an automobile and dashed around town taking snapshots of generals—who were easier to find than soldiers—scoured the countryside looking for the victoriously approaching Obregon who was expected in the capital within forty-

eight hours with an immense force, of which the bands of cavalry we had seen were the paltry forerunners. Early in the afternoon we burnt up the road to Guadalupe Hidalgo—that venerated religious mecca of Mexico five miles outside of the capital, whishing past red-cross machines speeding back from the wreck of one of the Carranza military trains that had evacuated the capital some twenty minutes before the rebels arrived.

Four of the eleven Carranza military trains had been stopped in the Valley of Mexico; one by the treachery of its commander who voluntarily surrendered it; a second by a few well-placed shots; a third by a smash-up made by a crazy locomotive let loose in pursuit like the grand finale of an impossible ten-cent movie thriller; and the last by the sabotage of the workers.

The last was the most significant. Although this revolution has been a cuartelaza, or military revolt, although the people have been so disillusioned during the past ten years as to be full of skepticism towards any government, the universal and bitter hatred of the peon and the worker towards the cruel Carranza military régime has been so strong that their sympathies have inevitably been thrown with Sonora, with Obregon, with the revolutionaries. Perhaps had the debacle of the Carranza rule not been so swift and so easily accomplished, this might have been a new revolution by the people.

Yet even so there is no assurance that this revolution will be any more successful than those, that during the last ten years have passed like great suffocating and devastating tidal waves over the heads of the very ones who have made them, or at least been the cause of them—the bewildered, helpless, idealistic Mexican people—except for one thing: this revolution brings for the first time since the downfall of Diaz a real welding of the rebel movement and counts upon its side every man of decency and vision—such as it is—that has appeared in Mexican life during recent years—de la Huerta, governor of Sonora; Calles, leader of the Sonora revolt, and

* Robert Haberman, formerly of New York and a member of the Socialist Party, has spent the last few years in Mexico, organizing co-operatives in Yucatan. Carleton Beals is another New York Socialist whose name will be familiar to many of our readers. We hope to print other interpretations of the Mexican situation in the near future.

but a month previous a recalcitrant member of Carranza's cabinet in the portfolio of Commerce and Labor; Alvarado, the State Socialist of Yucatan; Felipe Carrillo, president of the Yucatan Liga de Resistencia. Any social progress in Mexico depends, for the present, absolutely upon the calibre of the leaders. "Democracy" and "The People" are meaningless terms so far as politics go.

But already, a week and a half after the capital was taken, before a provisional president was elected, the new leaders began to see that the people got lands. I attended an enthusiastic ceremony in Xochomilco, a suburb of the capital, but yesterday, where 3,000 acres of the finest land in the valley of Mexico, the ancient *ejidos* or commons of the village, were returned to the Indians.

The French Revolution failed, from a constructive standpoint, because for over one hundred and seventy-five years the people had had absolutely no experience in local or national self-government, no training in co-operative and voluntary association; the Russian Revolution succeeded, not alone because it moved upon the afflatus of a great and consuming ideal, not alone because of the driving impetus of economic and historic forces, but because the peasants of Russia had already tasted the flavor of local self-government, because they had already learned to work together in co-operatives and soviets. The Mexican is in the same situation as the French peasant of the eighteenth century, just as helpless in the clutch of ambitious and selfish personalities. The one good thing that the years of revolution have thus far brought the Mexican, is not land, not a better standard of living, for in both respects he is worse off than in the days of Diaz, but an abiding sense of freedom and conviction of his inalienable right to enjoy freedom. Part of this determination to attain true freedom has fortunately been expended in creating labor organizations, weak it is true, but promising. But as yet the people of Mexico, however frequently they make a revolution, or permit themselves to be used to make one must depend upon their leaders for the fruits.

The latent sympathy of the workers and the peasants is with the new movement because of the personnel of its leaders. The sabotage on the part of the railway workers is one proof of this latent sympathy. The Carranza train was stopped because some of the workers in the round house saw to it that one of the engine trucks would drop off within a few miles. It was the railway workers who helped Obregon to escape from the clutches of Carranza, and during the past month scarcely a military train has left the capital that has not been so sabotaged by the workers as to guarantee a break-down and a temporary blocking of the way.

Also perhaps it is more than a coincidence that the workers of the textile mills of the Federal District went on strike during the revolution, and that a general strike was imminent in the capital just before the fall of Car-

ranza. For even the poorly organized, uneducated workers of Mexico are beginning to discover that there are more effective ways of making a revolution than by bullets and self-slaughter.

It was to be expected that the workers would hate Carranza. There has never been an important strike in Mexico, but that Berlanga, Carranza's sublimated office boy, has not sent federal soldiers to shoot down the workers or invoked or threatened to invoke the treason act.

In Yucatan the government troops have broken up with torture, murder, fire, and hanging, the great Liga de Resistencia, an organization having 67,000 men and 25,000 women members, paying a monthly dues equivalent to seventy-five cents. Its co-operative stores were looted, and machine-guns turned upon whole villages.

To the Yucatecan the red card of the Liga meant land and liberty. He had stripped his churches of their images, and had used the buildings for headquarters and meeting places for the League. He carried the card in the crown of his mammoth sombrero with the same religious veneration that he formerly carried his image of his patron saint about his neck.

When, therefore, the federal Colonel Zamarripa rode into a village, as he did into Mixupip, and announced to the villagers that they were to call themselves Liberales, or members of the government party, they demurred. In Mixupip he strung five of them up to the nearest trees as an example to the rest.

"Now, what are you?" he then bellowed.

The Indians, unshaken, naïvely pointed to the red cards in their hats.

Colonel Zamarripa shot twenty—for a lesson!

In this way whole villages were wiped out, until 1,200 members of the Liga had been murdered.

Even the reactionary Mexican Senate protested to Carranza. Carranza retorted by making Zamarripa governor of the federal territory of Quintana Roo.

Aside from cutting off the heads of election inspectors and putting them on top of the ballot boxes; aside from threatening with death every one who did not vote, and forcing every one that did vote, to choose the government candidates, the Carranza government was quite honest, humane and enlightened in Yucatan.

Read what the daily paper *La Revolucion* said last February about the governor of Oaxaca, one of the richest states of Mexico.

The governor Juan Jiménez Méndez is the protector of lives and haciendas (in Orizaba). That governor assassinates, orders assassinations, burns towns, hangs pacific townspeople, steals the municipal funds to maintain his automobile and fine living. As a result many employees die of hunger because he does not pay the salaries honestly earned. He—Jiménez Méndez, like a ridiculous dude, changes his suits daily, organizes gambling, and, with his gang of followers, becomes obsequious to anyone who brings gold. He takes trips when and where he pleases, and fails to come to his

office for two, three, or as many as five days. . . .

The fields are stripped of their fruits, private persons are attacked during the early hours of the night within three or four streets of the state capital building. . . .

This "misgovernment" is surrounded by pimps, vulgar, elegant women, ignorant idlers. . . .

There have been a great many myths regarding the benefits of the Carranza régime, such as the opening of schools, giving lands to the Indians, nationalizing the sub-soil, etc., etc. One by one the pitifully few schools of the Diaz administration have been closed until Tacubaya and Mixcoac, two of the largest residence suburbs of Mexico City cannot boast a single public school. Land, given to the Indians, has in many cases, as in Yucatan, Tabasco and Morelos, been wrested away by military might, while a single grant to a General has

often amounted to more in area than all the lands given away to the people during the whole of the Carranza rule. Under the cloak of the slogan of Mexico for the Mexicans, which has so attracted the imaginations of American radicals, he has stabbed every liberty in the back, and has built up a grasping, grafting, unprincipled military clique, the members of which have ridden across the land looting, murdering and stirring up revolt, until the federal soldier is more feared and hated than the bandit.

Directly the revolution resulted from two things: the attempt on the part of the government to railroad Bonillas, former ambassador at Washington, into the presidency; and the attempt to repeat the story of Yucatan and its murders in Sonora, the home state of Obregon.

To guarantee the election of Bonillas, government



Followers of Zapata Entering Mexico City

candidates were imposed by force in half a dozen states, Obregon meetings were broken up by the sabers of the man on horseback, Obregon himself was arrested on fake charges of inciting a rebellion. The knowing shook their heads, and predicted his murder within a week or two.

In the meantime Carranza was pouring soldiers into Sonora, against the repeated remonstrances of Governor de la Huerta, to crush the railroad strike and several mining strikes that were on, and probably in addition to break up the state government and impose his own officials as he had done in Yucatan, in Tabasco, in half a dozen other states.

Obregon saw that the time to act had come. To do so, he had to escape from the sleuths that hounded him day and night. This was difficult as he is well known and easily recognizable because of his having lost an arm in the battle of Celaya. One night he held a conference with General Gonzalez at the Chapultepec Café on the edge of Chapultepec park. About eleven o'clock his party left in their machine, but instead of returning to the city took a spin about the park. The sleuths in autos followed close behind. In the shadows of the park Obregon changed the big sombrero he always wears with the smaller felt hat of one of his friends, and, watching his opportunity, jumped from the slowly running machine behind a hedge. The auto proceeded on its way, and returned to Obregon's house. Apparently Obregon left the car, and his friends called "Good-bye, Alvaro," as the machine swept away from the curb. The sleuths did not become suspicious until the following day.

Meanwhile Obregon went to an appointed spot in the park where a railway worker met him with a big cloak. They went to the latter's house, where they waited until half-past four in the morning. Obregon slipped into overalls, tied a big, red bandana about his neck, picked up a lantern and with his friend sallied forth to the station. In spite of his missing arm, he passed two guards, with a cheery "adios," and a swing of his lantern in their faces to blind them, and jumped on the waiting train. An express agent concealed him in his car, and he was off to Michoacan.

In Michoacan the banner of revolt was easily raised. The governor of the state rushed to his side with troops. The Yaqui Federals, all his friends, deserted. Within a week he had thousands of armed men at his disposal.

Obregon fought his way down from Sonora, through the states of Sinaloa, Nayarit, Guadalajara, direct to Mexico City in the tragic Huerta days of 1914. He is an impulsive, determined, Rooseveltian type of man, but with a social consciousness. There are many stories afloat regarding his hasty actions when he governed the city of Mexico towards the end of 1914. An American told me with horror that he even made the owners of fashionable shops on Francisco I Madero Avenue, get

out and sweep the streets during the days when the city was without street-cleaners.

"Why, that is Bolshevikeeeeeee," she cried, and I agreed with her.

It is certainly true that he did not mince matters with the food speculators.

He called the owners of all stores and factories together one day, and told them,—General Hill acted as his spokesman—first, how they were to treat their employees; second, that any dealer caught speculating in the necessities of life would be taken out in the plaza and shot. The harshness of this is not so apparent when the truth is told that the food merchants were running the prices up to fabulous figures. Poor people were dropping dead on the streets from starvation, and every morning their bodies were run out of the city on a flat car and burned. The merchants answered his declaration by closing up their shops. Obregon then told his soldiers and the people to go help themselves. He might have made a more intelligent solution of the problem, but the incident shows the temper of the man, and in any event, food-stores have ever since been a bit careful about boosting their prices. When the rebels entered the city on May 1 under General Treviño his first edict was to the effect that all legitimate business and industry might continue operation without fear of molestation, but that all speculators in food stuffs would be drastically dealt with.

Very early Obregon began to doubt the good faith of Carranza, who showed no inclination to enforce the Constitution of Querétaro, which contains the most enlightened labor code of any capitalist country; who manifested no desire to satisfy the agrarian claims of the states south of Mexico under the revolt of Felix Diaz, and Mixicuero. One day Obregon left his post as Secretary of War and accepted the job of mayor to the little village of Kuatabampo in Sonora. The act was typical of the impulsive man.

Last Sunday he rode into Mexico City at the head of twenty thousand rebels between the crowds that jammed the road from the suburb of Tacubaya to the capital. He passed up the fashionable Paseo de la Reforma with a six days' growth of beard, wearing an old shirt and—SUSPENDERS. He has taken a shave since his arrival, but he still wears the suspenders about the capital—and the same shirt. We are all hoping he has another and will take a change soon.

Obregon is the idol of the lower classes. Yet he has few of the ingratiating tricks of the professional politician. As he passed through the cheering multitudes, he rarely bowed or smiled, or gave the slightest sign of recognition.

At the caballito, which is a great iron statue of Charles the Fourth, at the big circle which marks the junction of the Paseo de la Reforma and the Avenida Juarez, in the amphitheatre made by the great Heraldo de Mex-

ico Building, the American Consulate, the St. Francis Hotel and the Foreign Relations Building, Obregon made a few brief remarks—he is not a speech-maker—changed his horse for an auto and hurried up to the National Palace. As he entered the Zocalo, the broad National Plaza, beside which stand the City Hall, the Capital Building and the great Cathedral, the peons who had crowded up into the balconies of the latter began ringing the great brazen bells. All afternoon and evening they flung the sonorous, heavy sounds across the flat-roofed city. But Obregon did not stay to receive homage, rushed past in the auto, with a salute to Gonzales, who had been talking for a wearisome length of time, shouted half a dozen sentences to the crowd, and was gone, a band of Zapatista cavalry pounding hard behind in attempt to keep up.

Obregon has learned much since he entered Mexico City in 1914. Six years added to a man's life when he is in his thirties, six years full of experience and action, mean everything. To-day Obregon is probably as determined to put his ideas into practice as he was when he took up arms against Huerta, but he has seen the folly of following certain courses. His manifesto, issued in Michoacan—and this will come as a shock to American radicals, although Carranza made the same statement in trying to get American recognition—declares that foreign capital will be given every protection and guarantee, and that its holdings will not in any way be molested. But whereas Carranza made this statement and did not keep his word, Obregon is determined to make good the declaration, and for the following reasons: Mexico cannot put across one measure of real social reconstruction if the government has the opposition of American capital. On the other hand, Mexico is the richest land on the face of the earth so far as resources are concerned. That is her worst crime. She would ere this have been peaceful and prosperous had her people had to struggle for their existence against the barrenness of the soil. But Mexico is so rich, and her resources so unexploited, and those in the hands of foreign capital so little in comparison to the total wealth, that Mexico can afford to say to foreign capital: "Keep what you have. With the remainder we shall build a modern social edifice, we shall give lands to the people, we shall establish schools, we shall teach our people to organize themselves into labor unions; we shall carry the real meaning of the revolution to every pueblo, until we leaders shall have such an enlightened backing as not to fear the instigated revolts of foreign capital. If we give land to the people, the surplus labor supply will be cut down, for the Mexican is instinctively, fundamentally agrarian. Foreign capital will have to pay decent wages to get workers."

This may be wrong reasoning. But the Mexican stands eternally in the fearful shadow of armed intervention. He knows that it would take very little to precipitate it.

Should he institute a real social revolution such as we have witnessed in Russia—and that is impossible because the people are not organized for it—intervention would come with the suddenness of their own tropic storms. Such a social revolution would perish in blood and iron, militarism would again be in the saddle in the United States, another India would be born, with a more tremendous race problem to solve than exists to-day in the south.

There are other interesting personalities behind the new revolution—Calles (pronounced Kah-yayz), for example, ex-military governor of Sonora, Secretary of Commerce and Labor and leader of the Sonora secession. He is without doubt the most forceful, the most radical, the most intelligent and widely informed among the present leaders of Mexico.

As governor of Sonora he proved himself a champion of labor, and he gave the Indians lands, and each a gun and five hundred rounds of ammunition with which to protect and hold them. Carranza immediately telegraphed him, when these acts became known, to take back the lands. Calles replied: "Send a stronger man than I am, for I can't do it." Calles has tried to enforce Article 123 of the Constitution, which is the most enlightened labor code of any capitalist country. As a result the Phelps-Dodge Company, which operates the great copper mines at Cananea, closed their works. Calles instructed the workers to take charge of them and run them. He told me how surprised he was to see how well they did it. The representatives of the Phelps-Dodge Company hurried back upon the scene with a great bill for damages. Calles admitted their claims, but then he turned to the Mexican constitution.

"I read here," he said, "that any company that ceases operations without giving two weeks' notice must pay three months' salary to its employees. Go bring your payrolls, and we will strike a balance to see how much YOU owe the workers, whom I represent." The mine representatives decided to return to Cananea and put in safety appliances, build club rooms, reading rooms, and, to crown all, a huge concrete swimming pool for the workers.

"Do you know of any other mine in the world that has a swimming pool for its workers?" Calles asked me as he told this story, and then he laughed.

At the same time the same company, just over the international line in Bisbee, was driving its workers across the heat-eaten sands of the desert, so Calles, not being able to enforce Article 123 in the civilized United States, did what he could by sending food to the unfortunate victims.

Some mine owners down in Sinaloa had not heard of these things. They sent to Calles asking him if he could supply them with some good docile workers. He picked out the most intelligent union men he could find in all Sonora and sent them down to work. Within a

week they had the Sinaloa workers organized and on strike to demand decent conditions.

Perhaps the most striking accomplishment while he was governor of Sonora was his ability to pacify the Yuaqui Indians, something that had not been done even in the days of strong-arm Diaz.

When Calles came to Mexico City to act as Secretary of Labor, I went to him, having heard of his work and his attitude, with a copy of Bullitt's report on Russia, hoping to have him translate and publish it. He laughed when I mentioned it, and, turning to his books, said:

"Here it is. I just finished having it translated. Great stuff, isn't it. I'm going to have it printed as one of the documents of the Labor Department."

But it was never issued. (Portions appeared in a Yucatan paper.) Blocked at every turn in his efforts to enforce the Constitution, he finally resigned his post and went back to Sonora as a private citizen to organize the workers. Carranza, perhaps having learned from peacock Wilson the possibilities of governing without a government, called no cabinet meetings while Calles held the portfolio. Calles could not enforce the eight-hour law, the minimum wage, workers' insurance—he could not even appoint a single factory inspector. By the most strenuous efforts, he prevented Carranza from sending machine guns during the great strike of textile workers in Orizaba. He boldly took the side of the workers and informed the factory owners that if they did not grant the strikers' demands the government would take the factories over and run them. That ended Calles with Carranza.

One of the most picturesque figures in the new movement is Felipe Carrillo, ex-president of the Liga de Resistencia of Yucatan, who has been fighting out in the hills of Zacatecas since the revolution started.

Felipe began his career as a radical in the days of Diaz. As some people have thought to their sorrow in the United States, he believed that the Constitution of the nation might be distributed to the people to be read. Accordingly, he translated the Constitution of the land, the enlightened Constitution of the great old Indian, Benmerito Benito Juarez, into the Maya dialect, and began reading it on the great haciendas. He went promptly to jail. The Constitution was a sacred and holy document, not to be profaned by public sight and hearing, a document that was to be kept in the national archives and the Biblioteque Nacional, and only taken out on special occasions for the hoary and erudite sages of the Supreme Court to peruse slowly and solemnly and *con dignidad* that they might write lengthy, weighty and incomprehensible decisions for the proper guidance of the dear people.

In six months Felipe was out—and mad. He began making speeches to the peons on the haciendas. His brother-in-law, however, was a rich hacendado who be-

lieved that freedom consisted in his right to put chains on the legs of his peons. His brother-in-law loved radicals. His brother-in-law sent a man to kill Felipe. The man fired at Felipe in a public meeting, but missed. Felipe pulled his gun and shot the man dead. Felipe went to jail for manslaughter.

When Alvarado came to Yucatan, Felipe was released, and set to work ardently to organize the great Liga de Resistencia, which Carranza later destroyed with murder and rapine.

I remember listening to Felipe addressing the Indians one Sunday. He knew the old religious superstitions of the decades of the domination of the Spanish Church and State must be broken down before he could form any real radical organization. It was a subject that always required careful handling. I remember how cleverly he worked up the subject until he had the Indians with him. I remember how he cried out:

"For the love of Jesus you used to get up at three o'clock in the morning to go to work; for the love of Jesus you were whipped to work; for the love of Jesus your women were raped by the hacendados; for the love of Jesus you were hungry and ragged; now for the love of the devil you have happy homes and bread and your own bit of land."

I remember how the plaza rocked with the shouts of: "Viva el Diablo, viva el Diablo!"

Perhaps that is why, among other things, the Mayas turned the churches of the Conquest into meeting places for the Ligas de Resistencia.

I met Felipe immediately he came to Mexico City just after he had been forced to flee for his life, when federal troops had flogged one hundred of his neighbors in the public plaza of his home town. Murder was tearing Yucatan in its teeth; rapine was stalking in blood across the Peninsula.

Felipe was heart-broken. His beloved Indians had been shot down by hundreds on hundreds. The work of years had been destroyed in a few months. He felt himself back in the Diaz days.

"All is lost," he would groan, "all is lost." He had no spirit for anything. He scarcely cared to live.

I met him again when he came back from the hills of Zacatecas, brown and hard as nails. He was the same old Felipe again—joyous, over-optimistic, enthusiastic. He was burning to be off to Yucatan.

"This time," he vows, "I will do as Calles did in Sonora—give the Indians lands and guns. All Mexico and all the world will not take our rights away from us a second time."

There is a sentiment among all the leaders behind the new revolt to give the people land—Obregon, Calles, Carrillo, de la Huerta, provisional president and ex-chief of cabinet; Villareal, the most uncompromising agrarian of the revolutionary period, and now to be named Ministro de Gobernacion, Soto y Gama and Magaña, for

ten years irreconcilable Zapatista leaders—all have made public statements in favor of allotting available lands to the people immediately. This work has already begun, in fact, a few days after the revolution.

To-day, for the first time since Madero, the trains of Mexico are running on schedule without military escort. Every rebel, except the impossible Villa, has pledged support to the new movement—Palaz, the autocrat of the oil district, who is to be quietly side-tracked; Soto y Gama, the lawyer who has been fighting for ten years in the mountains of Morelos for land reform; Mixieuro, the peasant leader of Michoacan.

A cuartelazo is not a social revolution, and giving lands to the Indians is not Socialism, nor is it the ultimate solution of Mexico's problem. But it is not too much to say that never before during the past ten years of Mexico's checkered history has an event so fraught with social significance occurred as the recent "commotion," which changed the personnel of the government. Progress for some time to come in Mexico must depend upon such changes of personnel—until some form of political and economic organization is built up among the people. The present leaders have promised to further that organization, to permit labor to organize, to teach the peasants to form co-operative associations. It has been proposed to establish a national minister of propaganda, who will carry the meaning of the revolution to every village and pueblo of the country; to establish training schools for developing men who can carry on the reconstructive work that faces the country. Mexico is beginning to realize to-day that the failure of the Madero revolution is to be found in the lack of organization among a people, and if the present attempt is to succeed it must fill this void which is the origin of military intrigue, cuartelazas, foreign machination and a goodly part of the menace of intervention.

Announcement

WE extend our thanks to those subscribers and newspaper readers whose generous response to a recent letter has already insured the existence of the LIBERATOR for another three months. We hope they will not be disappointed if, in spite of their generosity, we find it necessary at times to issue the magazine in smaller size as we did last month. We confidently expect within six months to receive our second-class mailing privilege, and to be made secure in our legal right to newspaper distribution throughout the country, when these extreme economies will be unnecessary.

Please continue to cheer us when we take these occasional breathing spells. We will always be up before the count. Meanwhile, we are planning to make the next few months' issues, small or large, the most brilliant in the history of the magazine. For instance:

Boardman Robinson is on his way home from the

Grand Fiasco in Chicago with a pocketful of sketches of the chief mourners at the Republican funeral. It is only just that we should fittingly commemorate this ceremony.

As for that solemn Democratic event at San Francisco, we decided that the only person who could do justice to it is the author of the celebrated "Heavenly Dialogues" which used to appear in our pages, C. E. S. Wood. A person who is accustomed to report the conversations of God and the more interesting inhabitants of Heaven ought to be equal to that occasion.

Robert Minor has gone to West Virginia, where there is naked war between the coal-barons and the coal-serfs. His report of this prelude to the American Revolution—with drawings—will be in the August number.

Griffin Barry, Russian correspondent for the London Daily Herald, just six weeks out of Russia, has promised us his first story.

John Reed, who was "executed in Finland," according to recent newspaper accounts, has sent word that he is "safe" and that we may shortly expect his account of the Soviets in 1920.

Hiram K. Moderwell has cabled from Rome that his story of the great revolutionary strikes in northern Italy is on its way, and that he will attend the coming conference of English, French, American, Swiss, and German Socialists at Geneva, and tell us the truth about it.

Floyd Dell's next discourse on communism will be called "New Soviets for Old."

Max Eastman will write on "Communism and American Psychology"—among other things.

THE LIBERATOR

A Journal of Revolutionary Progress

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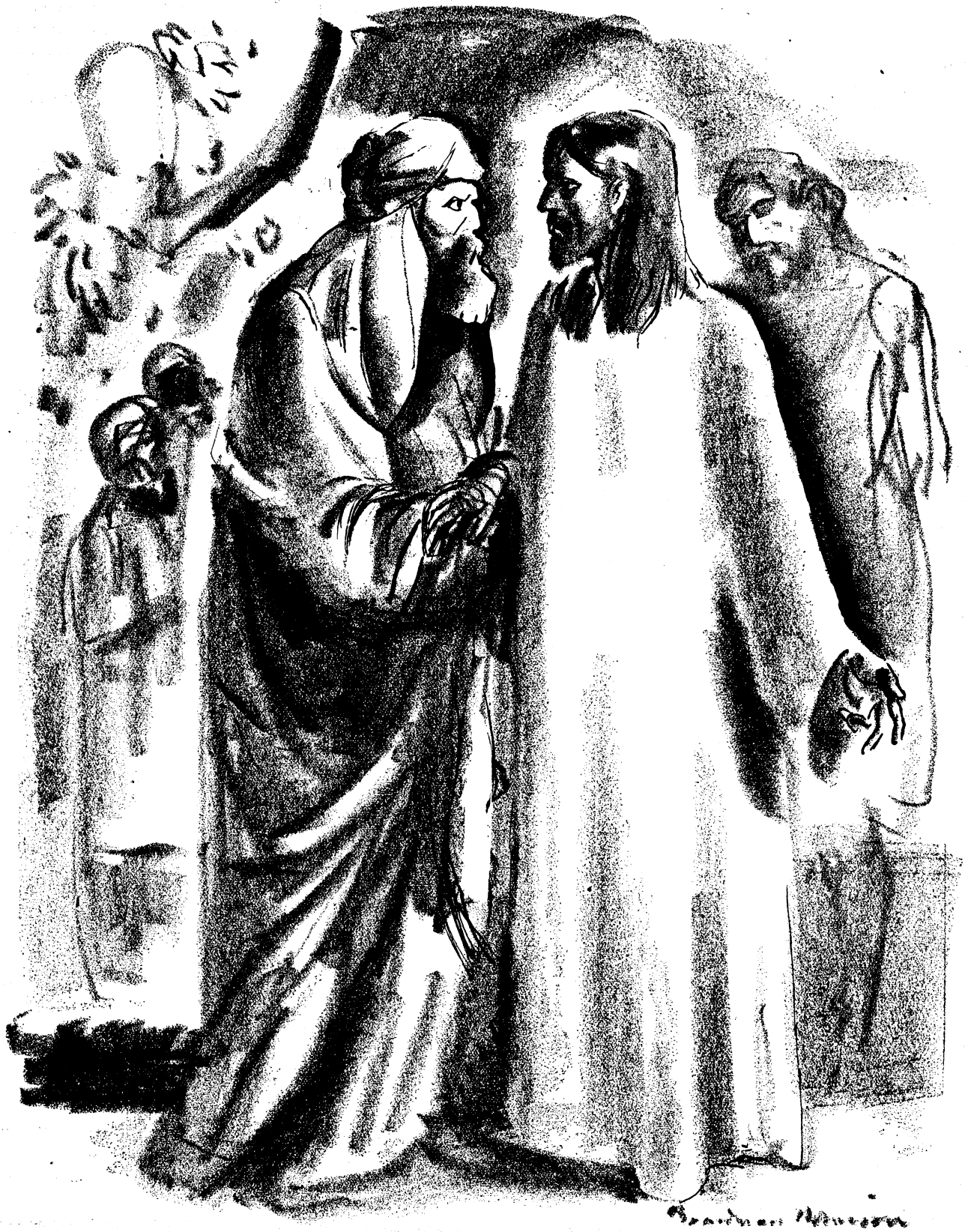
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Stanley Spencer

JESUS TO A CERTAIN RICH MAN: "Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor."



ROGER BABSON TO THE AMERICAN FINANCIER: "The value of our investments depends upon the strength of our churches. The religion of the community is really the bulwark of our investments. Let us business men get behind the churches!"

Caesar and Spartacus

By Hiram K. Moderwell

"Noske, being informed that the Baltic troops were about to enter the city, gave orders to the Reichswehr to spend the night ready for battle, and to be prepared to fire at the first sign of attack."

* * *

"As the Baltic regiments approached, the Reichswehr troops cheered and went out to join the revolters."

(From newspaper accounts of the Kapp-Lüttwitz revolution.)

THE German Junker revolution of last March overthrew a government that never had a real existence. It was a government supported not like a true parliamentary government, by the balance of two forces, but like a tight-rope walker, held in equilibrium by two dangers. It was such a government because it was the agent of an Entente policy which similarly has no real existence, but is merely the equilibrium between two fears,—the fear of Kaiserism and the fear of Bolshevism.

The Entente, in which France had the deciding voice, wanted two contradictory things of Germany. It wanted a Germany rich enough to pay an unheard-of indemnity; and it wanted a Germany so poor as never to challenge France's commercial prosperity. In order to keep Germany poor, France took away Germany's merchant marine, her colonies, and her chief supplies of coal and iron. In order to force Germany to produce richly, France threatened her with military occupation. If Germany became economically strong, France was prepared to starve her; if Germany became economically weak, France was prepared to coerce her.

The Ebert-Bauer government had pledged itself to keep Germany at once poor and productive, at once weak and strong. To this end it received the moral and diplomatic support of the Entente, which undertook to provide it with its chief argument for use among the masses: namely, that it would cut off food supplies if these masses chose any other government. Thus the Entente formally notified Germany, shortly after the Kapp coup, that it would blockade any "unconstitutionally" governed Germany, whether Junker or Communist.

But it happens that Germany is a nation industrially constructed. That is to say, she cannot feed more than two thirds of her inhabitants from her own produce; at least a third, must be sustained by manufacture for foreign trade. A Germany which does not compete with other countries in foreign markets is a Germany with twenty millions of starving and revolting inhabi-

tants. Yet France, supported by the rest of the Entente, does not intend to permit any regime in Germany to edge her out of the foreign market.

The problem then becomes: how to keep Germany permanently at forced labor with a third of the population in a state of actual starvation, or all of them in a state of two-thirds starvation? It is evident that this can only be accomplished by machine-guns. It is therefore the primary function of any government undertaking the job to get hold of the guns. But it is further evident that if you want guns to be used against the millions you cannot safely place them in the hands of the millions. The Ebert government at first naïvely believed that you could. But the regiments formed from among the millions soon became "unreliable" (that is, unwilling to shoot at the millions). Therefore it was obliged to put its guns in the hands of certain selected thousands who could be "relied upon" to shoot.

Now the thousands who are willing to repress the starving millions are those who are *not* starving themselves; they are those who have war fortunes or landed estates with which they can command the reserve stocks of food for themselves. They are those who have something to lose from any uprising of the people. In short, they are the big industrialist and Junker classes who made the Great War. These men, the only ones willing to undertake the work of repression, offered their services to the government, and the government was obliged to accept them. Thus it came about, quite simply and inevitably, that the class which made the war and which the Allies fought to disarm, got the arms back in their hands. Is it surprising that they thereupon felt it their privilege to overthrow a government incapable of finding its own defenders?

The Job of Noske

This work of disarming the millions and arming the selected thousands was peculiarly the work for which Noske has become famous in history. He no doubt would have preferred a national army sincerely devoted to his government and to the kind of Germany the Entente had ordained. But every effort failed. There was, it is true, some volunteering from the true middle-class of shop-keepers and house-holders; but all such volunteers looked dumbly to the Junker officers for their training and became the most obedient of reactionaries. Noske used to appeal pathetically to the Social Democratic workmen to join the Reichswehr. But somehow they would not join in. He was forced to fall back upon the only capable fighters who would—the Junkers

of the old army. It is true that the soldiers whom these officers commanded were mostly peasant boys, without any political ideas whatsoever. But that mattered little; they were willing to believe what they were told and to follow the colonel who would give them pork and butter. So Noske disarmed the German people and re-armed the Junker class.

But these men were not in Noske's army for Noske's purposes, nor for the purpose of the coalition politicians, nor for the purposes of the Entente. It may be taken for granted that when these feudal nobles and university bloods took their orders from Herr Noske, wood-worker, son of Herr Noske, weaver, they did so with a clear purpose in mind. That purpose, of course, was none other than a military reactionary coup d'etat such as Kapp attempted in March. The plan was known to everyone in Germany, except, apparently, Noske himself. It was the everyday conversation of the streets, and the weekly topic of discussion of journalists out of a subject. It was frequently discussed in the Entente press and was well known in all its outlines to the Entente politicians.

It is scarcely to be supposed that Noske was entirely ignorant of what was going on. Neither is it to be supposed that he was entirely privy to it. Probably in moot-ing the question, I am opening a controversy that will agitate historians for decades to come. But in guessing the answer one can easily err by attributing to Noske too much shrewdness.

The Soul of Noske

For Noske is no charlatan. There is a dog-like honesty about him that would be almost likeable if it were not for the primitive cruelty that goes with it. His concepts are simple as those of a child. Not the Kaiser himself ever had a more ingenuous and touching faith in the efficacy of force to accomplish everything on earth. This gives him a rude kind of eloquence in argument and action.

"If it weren't for my Reichswehr," he bellowed at his critics at the Weimar party congress, "you wouldn't be meeting here to-day." This argument, to men like the Majority Socialist delegates, was crushingly complete. When an Independent Socialist criticized him in the Reichs-

tag for one of his bloody deeds, he would hit back almost before the sentence was finished: "If you were not stirring up the working classes to riots, I wouldn't need to do these things." In his philosophy about his work he never had anything but these two ideas. The social order must be preserved by force; and the responsibility for force belongs to him who makes disorder. Never a variation on these ideas, never a shading or a human coloring in his picture. I think Carlyle would have liked Noske, and written some pages about "this great shaggy peasant-soul going bravely forth, while others stood questioning, to do the to-be-done thing," or such-like talk.

A man with a faith like this might lend himself to evil, but he could not intrigue like the great condottieri of the Renaissance.

He must have had dreams of dictatorship. But again his thinking failed for lack of finesse. Believing that force rules all, he felt convinced that somehow the man who rules the force automatically rules all. He certainly foresaw the reactionary coup, but probably took it for granted that he would be indispensable to it. I feel pretty certain that in the authentic plan of the coup there was to have been a place for Noske, at least for a time. But this is not to say that Noske was plotting the return of the Kaiser. He probably conceived the coup as a logical shifting of power into the hands of those who could wield it, namely the military class, with himself as chief wielder.

Why, then, did he place himself so helplessly in the hands of the reactionaries? Simply because there was no one else who would do his work. The army he



The President (Ebert) of the "Republican German Empire" and some of his friends.

Einzug der Garde in Berlin.
Rednertribüne auf dem Pariser Platz.



**The President (Ebert) of the "Republican German Empire" and
some of his friends.**

found when he took office was something like a popular army. It had been formed in the moment of revolution, composed of trade-unionists, revolting soldiers' and sailors' detachments, patriotic clerks and small property-owners, and a number of regiments salvaged from the old army. Altogether a pretty fair cross-section of the new Germany which overthrew the Kaiser and pledged itself to Wilson's fourteen points. And scarcely a Communist among them!

This army never made a single Communist demand and never joined in the realization of any Communist undertaking. Its politics were not Communist, nor anti-Communist. Its politics were simply to preserve the armed power in the hands of the people, so that the revolution could develop as the people wished.

But the people's vague ideas of universal peace and reconciliation, which had dominated the first days of the revolution, began to crystallize into class hatred in the face of the ever bolder efforts of the Junker class to regain power. The workers, the only portion of the millions with the will and organization to defend themselves, rallied around their quasi-soviet organizations to resist the repeated assaults upon them. And the army stood there to protect them. What if things went further? What if the people should one day decide to have no National Assembly and no Noske? Would the popular army obey Noske's commands in such a crisis? It was clearly necessary to disperse those regiments whose "allegiance was doubtful." But do you disperse men who have guns in their hands?

In this dilemma Noske listened gratefully to certain officers of the old army and to the story they told. They had, they said, from the very first days of the revolution been collecting "dependable" troops for just such an eventuality as this, and they would undertake to disperse the "doubtful" regiments if Noske would receive them into the national Reichwehr. Noske would and did. They dispersed the "doubtful" regiments, in a most melodramatic stage-setting, with flame-throwers, heavy artillery, asphyxiating gas and aerial machine-guns, and provoked the utmost amount of resistance for the sake of shedding the utmost amount of blood and spreading the utmost amount of terror.

Certainly Noske was flattered by the attentions of the aristocrats of the old army and their grave consultations in his councils. He was a more honest man than they, and probably took what they said as gospel. He acquired a kamaraderei with them, and noticeably, during the first months of his power affected their traditional gruff speech. Reliant on these men, and suspicious of all who came from the people, he continued "purifying" the Reichwehr. He was, perhaps, for brief moments worried by the criticisms of Scheidemann and other fellow party-leaders. He seems to

have soothed his flickering doubts by appealing to the rank and file of the "loyal" Social-Democrats to join the Reichswehr formations, and to the day of his fall he could not understand why Social-Democratic working-men were unwilling to join an organization in which they might be shot for changing their political opinions. He fostered the organization of parallel militia formations in all the cities and in the countryside, ostensibly for the preservation of the local hearth, but actually under the absolute commands of Berlin—of himself. The day arrived when the Reichswehr had been for all practical purposes "purified" of all but reliable reactionary troops, willing to fight whomever their officers told them to fight and to cheer for the Kaiser and the old Germany. When this day had arrived it became a mere matter of choosing the occasion for the coup.

The Young Bloods Cut Loose

It was on the choice of the occasion, I think, that the first coup, that of March, came to grief. Though the army was assured, it was necessary to choose such a time for the overthrow that the German middle classes would welcome it as a relief from intolerable oppression and anxiety. And the wiser heads among the conspirators believed, I feel convinced, that the day had not yet arrived. Ludendorff knew that the middle classes were not yet sufficiently free from the terror of having the Entente food withheld, to be willing to take risks. He certainly knew that the Entente was not yet sufficiently frightened of Bolshevism to welcome a German reaction as an ally.

But there was a minority of young hotheads who blushed with shame at this delay. They took seriously what the older Realpolitiker only ladled out for the befoolment of the masses. They writhed under the insults heaped on Germany by the Entente; they considered they had done something for the Fatherland when they had thrown a dinner-plate at some French officer in the Adlon. They felt that the demand for the surrender of the "war criminals" (a demand which even the Entente politicians made with their tongues in their cheeks), was the final insult against which Germany must rise in shining armor.

So timed, on the supposed resentment of the German people against the war-criminal demand, the counter-revolution of the young insurgents went off half-cocked. Instead of using the Berlin garrison on some apparently natural political issue, they used the troops which the Entente had once ordered to remain in west Russia to fight Bolshevism. They imported them into Germany and went through the hallowed preliminaries of a military coup.

What should have happened, according to the orthodox Ludendorff schedule, was the announcement of this



FRIEDRICH EBERT

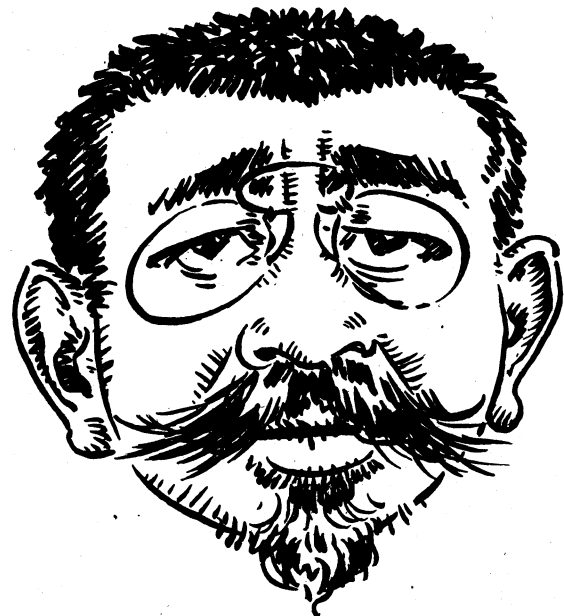


PHIL. SCHEIDEMANN

“Ebert-Scheidemann-Noske”

To millions of German workers these three words have become one compound adjective signifying BETRAYAL.

Berlin coup to all the provincial garrisons before the event was known to the people, so that they could take the oath of allegiance to the new government, from Königsberg to Stuttgart, in the first twenty-four hours of the disturbance. Thus the German people would have waked up with an accomplished military fact grinning in their faces. But because the hot-heads had chosen their own time, and a bad time, the provincial generals had their doubts. They did not intend to follow school-boys to the whipping post. They had not received the genuine *mot d'ordre*. Therefore it was that most of the provincial regiments remained—we cannot say true to the Ebert government, but aloof from the Kapp enterprise. And when Ludendorff and the other leaders of the orthodox movement saw that the revolt had failed to spread through the whole army, they realized that Kapp's chance was gone. It was in an attempt to save Kapp's face and salvage something of profit from the incident, that General Maerker made his



GUSTAV NOSKE

unauthorized trip to Berlin to "undertake negotiations" between the rival governments.

Who Threw Out the Junkers

Kapp fell, of course, starved out and chased out. But it should be noticed that he was not overthrown by the Reichswehr or by any part of it. The army, Noske's army, the army of the German republic, was either friendly to Kapp, or clearly aloof in sentiment. In Berlin and parts of Prussia friendly, elsewhere aloof. How the Berlin troops refused to lift a rifle in defense of the government is well known. Noske and his friends fled ignominiously from his army to the furthest possible corner of the Empire.

This was the army which Noske had personally created, for whose loyalty he had a dozen times given his guarantee. To build this army he had drenched a score of German cities in blood, and spread terror and hate from one end of the land to the other. When commanded to kill workingmen in the name of the Constitutional Republic, this army killed willingly; it killed with machine-guns and bombs, with death-spitting cars of steel and rivers of liquid flame; it killed them like criminals on the streets in the day and like dogs in the jails at night; it killed women and boys; killed, beat and tortured; killed, and laughed while it killed; killed, and intrigued with rumors and provocations that there might be more to kill. But when commanded to defend the constitutional republic, this army fired not a shot. It "cheered and went out to join the revolters."

This was done by all the Reichswehr troops in Berlin, including those guarding Noske's war ministry building and private house. So far from guaranteeing the whole Reichswehr, Noske could not even guarantee his own personal body-guard.

Who really overthrew the Junker domination, everyone knows. It was, only and solely and in the most literal sense, the German proletariat. The middle classes, though they were certainly frightened by the prospects of a reactionary regime, gave no considerable numbers to fight against it.

The resistance of the proletariat was of the most thorough-going sort: a moral resistance so complete that Kapp had not the shadow of popular approval on which to pretend to base his regime: an economic resistance so desperate that the new regime could not perform the simplest functions of government; and a military resistance which took the offensive in disarming and chasing out of the city some of the most dangerous companies and even storming them in their barracks.

Barricades Then and Now

Men's imaginations rise easily to the melodrama of this popular military resistance. Ever since "A Tale of Two Cities," bloody barricades have furnished one of the most delightful distractions for an idle summer's afternoon. The winged rumor that mischief is again afoot; the search for the hidden rifle, the crusts of bread which the mother slips into her son's hand as she prints her blessing upon his brow; the rush into the streets and

the fiery glance from eye to eye, the building of the barricade, the smoke of battle and the shout of victory,—all this indeed speaks of a kind of heroism far more inspiring than the machine-like daring of the open battle-field. But it scarcely suggests the pity and terror of barricade-fighting to-day.

It is one thing to storm a bastille occupied by a score or two of frightened Swiss guardsmen, and another to bare your breast to a modern engine of war, to crouch behind a paving stone while a shell bursts above you, a flame spurts beside you, a bomb descends upon you from the heavens and an armored tank crunches toward you



Straßenkämpfe in Berlin.
Zweifronten-Barrikade in der Schützenstraße

A Twentieth Century Barricade..



Straßenkämpfe in Berlin.
Zweifronten-Barrikade in der Schützenstraße

Original Aufnahme
Angel, Photochemie, Berlin.

A Twentieth Century Barricade..

from in front. A man who is not afraid to meet two of his kind in combat may well be terrified at such a duel with cold, impersonal Science. Never in the classic revolutions, and I suspect never in modern Russia, did revolutionary fighting demand such an insanity of heroism as in Germany to-day.

Some day a novelist will do justice to the barricades of the twentieth century as Dickens did justice to those of the eighteenth. He will show the rifle being extracted not from the family cupboard but from the depths of the vegetable garden; or distributed in the dead of night at a lonely spot where thousands of arms have been buried for months; or captured in fair fight from an arsenal. He will show how indecisive is the first victorious battle, and how the tenement heroes must patrol the streets night after night and then trudge out into the open to meet a new army without knowing if they will get to-morrow's meal or ammunition. Then he will show the slower-beating hearts which receive the tidings of disasters everywhere, and that final disaster, the only one which they are not men enough to face, the news that the trade-unions have deserted them and made peace with their enemies. Our novelist, being a romancer, will, however, distribute the glory on the spot, without remembering that in real revolutions his heroes are spoken of by the press only as thieves or pervers.

A romancer will have greater difficulty, however, picturing the reality of a general strike. Anything like the modern general strike is unthinkable in French revolutionary days. I am not sure that the Berlin working-class did not rise to greater heights in its general strike than in its military resistance. For cutting off your enemy's food and water and light means cutting off your own. For the first three days it is very fine. But after that the city's food stocks are exhausted. Little search parties must go from shop to shop. Housewives must begin sharing day after day to-morrow's reserves with their neighbors, and must dole out half-enough to children already half famished. They must trudge blocks or even miles to some well for water, likely as not through a zone of rifle fire. And in the meantime the husband goes to beg the railroad men *not* to bring his family any food from the country, the city employees



Defending the Revolution

not to supply them with water. There is no question here of the men going forth to deeds of valor while the women-folk crouch terrified in the corner stammering a prayer. The courage of a general strike is the courage of its women and no more.

The Crisis of Revolution

When this horror had been continued for a week, the Junkers were overthrown and the Ebert government was ready to resume its old occupations. Then arose the question before the Berlin proletariat whether they had endured all this suffering merely in order to go back to the old frauds and brutalities. If that were all, they would go on fighting. They demanded guarantees. If they could not get them, they would do their own guaranteeing.

It was the duty of the trade-union central strike committee to extract these guarantees from the returning Ebert government. The trade-union bureaucracy, composed mostly of Social-Democrats of the most reactionary type, like Legien, had only one desire: to get quit of the strike and get their comrades of the government back in their various Berlin palaces as quickly as possible. But it had to meet, or seem to meet, the demands of the strikers.

The terms finally agreed upon have that combination of valor and vagueness familiar in the transactions of trade-union bureaucrats. They included the disarming of the disloyal Kapp regiments and the resignation of Noske and certain other members of the government; the "democratic re-organization of the bureaucracy";



Revolutionstage in Berlin.
Panzerautomobilbesatzung im Hofe des Schlosses.

Ø 8.
S. G. S. L. B.

Phil. A. Gumb.

Defending the Revolution



OBERST EPP
Kommandeur des
Bayr. Schützen
-Korps

Fot. Orig. Aufnahme
H. Hoffmann
Schellingstr. 50.

Col. Epp, commander of the most lawless of the Reichswehr corps in the recent Ruhr fighting.—A type of the men whom Noske chose to defend republican liberties.

the socialization of "industries adapted to collectivism"; and the reorganization of the Reichswehr with the participation of the organized working class." Vague as these terms were, they were not even governmental pledges; they were merely *pledges on the part of party leaders to propose these terms for acceptance to their respective parties.*

The Berlin workers had then to decide whether they would exchange their only weapon, the strike, for these guarantees. The Legien committee itself did not pretend that they were satisfactory. It only offered them as a substantial something, and appealed to the strikers to return to work.

This is the critical point in the struggle. Its issue is an exact measure of the revolutionary spirit of the German workmen. A large part of the Berlin proletariat, between its strike-weariness and its lingering con-

fidence in its old trade-union officials, was willing to accept the terms.

The opposition followed the leadership of the Independent Socialists. The Independents had foreseen such a moment as this and had organized an "independent strike committee" which throughout the strike captured more and more authority from the Legien group. Many unions, like the Metal Workers, were entirely theirs, and thousands of individual workmen were falling under their influence.

The aim of the Independents, and of the Communists who worked with them, was not immediate revolution. It was to place the armed force of Germany in control of the organized workers. They demanded the dispersal of all, or at least the greater part, of the Reichswehr regiments, and the incorporation of the red guard formations, spontaneously organized in the fight against Kapp, into the new democratic Reichswehr. They did not demand that the new army be a revolutionists' army; merely that it be a working-class army. They were quite willing to have Majority Socialists in it, and even representatives of the middle class (or, for that matter, Junkers) in something like numerical proportions. But they objected to a selected professional army, representing precisely the smallest class of the inhabitants. They knew that the liberties of the people can never be safe (no matter how constitutional their government) so long as the weapons are concentrated in the hands of a class. •

"Liberty Guaranteed"

To win these terms would have been to win military protection for the workers' organizations, trade unions, shop councils, regional committees and the like. It would also have been to wrest control of the central trade union federation from the hands of Legien. It would have been something else: the government could not guarantee to disband the Reichswehr, having no armed force to do it with; the only power which could disband the Reichswehr was the armed proletariat. It could perhaps have accomplished the heaviest part of the job in another week with the aid of the general strike.

So when the Legien committee summoned the strikers to go back to work, the Independents' committee called upon them to continue the strike. This, and not the subsequent battles with the Reichswehr, was the real test of strength. The revolutionary workers of Berlin continued the strike for another week. But the majority obeyed Legien. They accepted the guarantees of the coalition government once more—and perhaps for the last time.

From that moment, the uprising in the Ruhr district was doomed. It never could have had a real revolutionary significance except in co-operation with the gen-



OBERST EPP
Kommandeur des
Bayr. Schützen
-Korps

Fot. Orig. Aufnahme
H. Hoffmann
Schellingstr. 50.

Col. Epp, commander of the most lawless of the Reichswehr corps in the recent Ruhr fighting.—A type of the men whom Noske chose to defend republican liberties.

eral strike. The various "red republics" in the Ruhr and in Saxony, which so startled the newspapers, were probably less revolutionary institutions than provisional authorities for local protection. The subsequent fighting in the Ruhr was less for the purpose of forcing a general revolution than for the purpose of salvaging certain local liberties and perhaps a local proletarian militia.

The moment the Ebert government got itself re-established in Berlin, the Reichswehr Junkers broke loose again. Far from respecting the government pledges, they did not even respect their own. Their behavior in the Ruhr was as brutal and lawless as ever. The government gave new pledges that the troops would be withdrawn. But it could not make the Junkers obey its orders. It cannot make them obey any orders. A month after it had promised the disbanding of the Baltic division, this division was living cheerfully in its camp at Döberitz, from which it had first menaced Berlin, supplied with large stocks of food and money from a source not officially named. And the "loyal" regiments similarly obey only when they see fit. The whole Reichswehr is preparing for a new coup, this time no schoolboy's adventure but a man-sized affair, guaranteed by the imperial general staff.

"Order Is Restored"

The fall of Kapp and Lüttwitz has left Germany physically much as it was before; except probably that thousands of workers have managed to take their rifles home to the vegetable garden. But it has, if signs are worth anything at all, left the spirit of the German working-class profoundly changed. The workers have accepted "guarantees"—the guarantees of Legien and of Ebert, for the last time. When the next Junker counter-revolution comes (and it will come) they will trust only to their own arms and their own institutions. The growth of revolutionary spirit among them cannot be measured wholly by the success of the Independents and Communists in the coming election. Thousands of workers who may retain some sentimental loyalty to the Majority Socialist par.v,

will work heart and soul with the revolutionists (as they did in the Ruhr last March) when the moment for action comes.

Nothing else in the whole situation has changed. The Entente still insists upon a partly starved Germany kept at forced labor by means of guns. The German Junkers are still the only people who will use these guns at the command of a Socialist government against the working-class. They are still only willing to do this for the sake of seizing power themselves. If there was ever a hope of bringing cheap bread from Russia to appease the German people, that hope is now vanishing with the Polish attack on the Soviets.

There is no peace in Germany. So long as the Treaty of Versailles remains, there will be no peace. There can only be war, the social war in which the middle class is vanishing—the war of Junker and revolutionist, the war of Spartacus against Caesar.

A Journey

UP that thin river, going over sand—
Down that deep river, purple to the sun:
My fingers fire; cool your quiet hand.
And your voice sad; and mine the ardent one.

So, silver-thin the flute-like running river
Threaded the sea-set purple stream; and we
Sat mingling voices solemn and a-quiver
Until we struck the storm and heard the sea.
Genevieve Taggard.



Spartacans Waiting for the Reichswehr.



Spartacans Waiting for the Reichswehr.

Dealing With the Reds



In America

DARK HORSES

ANYWAY, he kept us out of peace.

GOVERNOR SMITH has vetoed the Lusk and anti-sedition bills and constitutional government is still hanging on by an eye-lash.

THOSE who were depressed because all Socialists were not citizens are now incomprehensibly cheered up because Justice Benedict of New York has denied citizenship to five socialists. Or perhaps they are smiling through their tears.

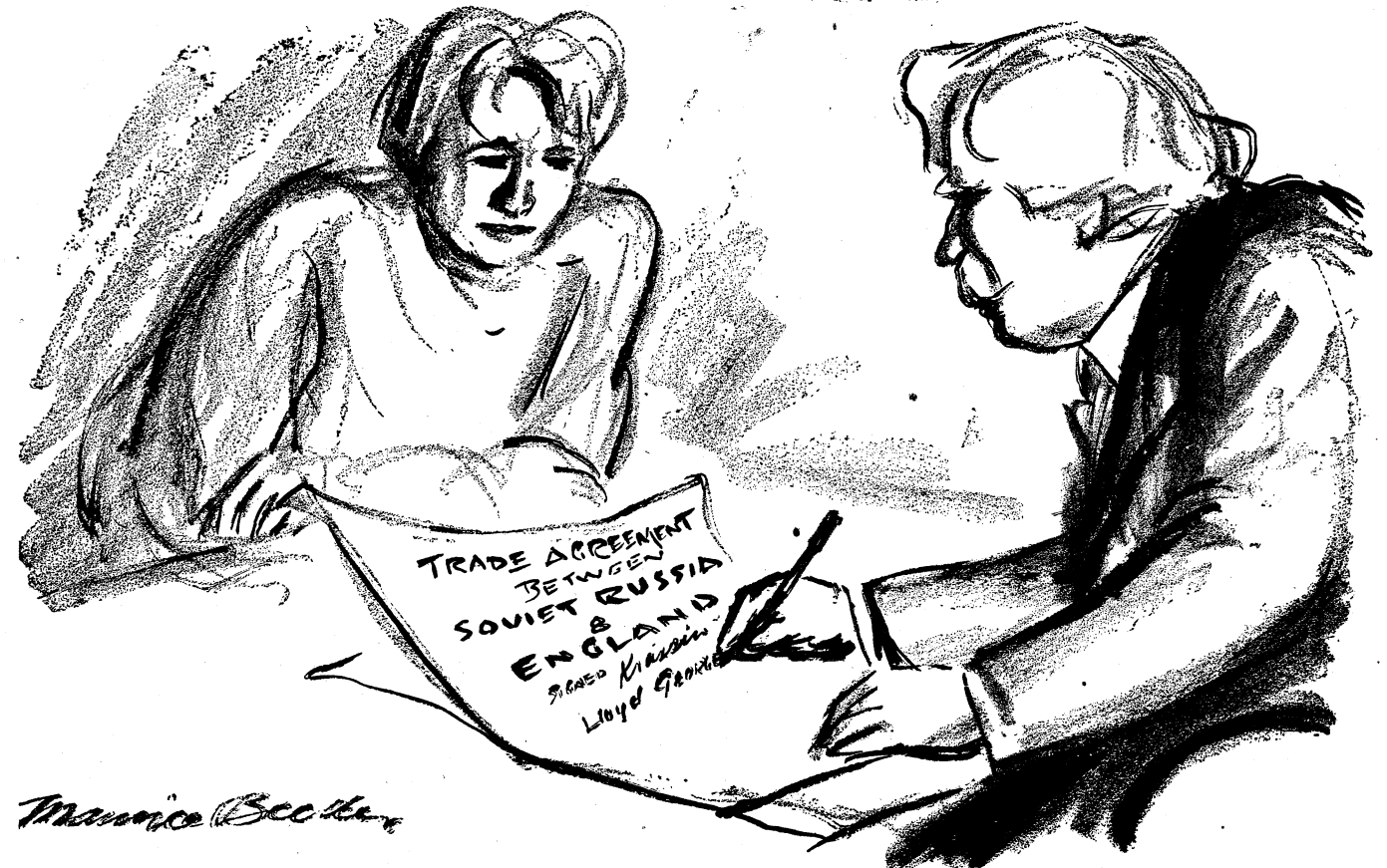
PALMER was right, after all; there was a bomb plot scheduled for May. A group of eminent and conservative lawyers have issued a statement proving that the Department of Justice is more vicious than the ex-Czar's cossacks.

THE Bureau of Myths and Legends presented us a Soviet Russia in which nobody ever worked. That proved distressingly popular, so now they are picturing a Russia in which everybody has to work all the time.

THE new myth is like the old in one respect. The Bolsheviki are so weak they can't last another month and so strong they menace the whole world.

SPEAKING of myths, how did America ever get the idea that Leonard Wood was an able man? "The Nation" shows that the superstition originated with his press agent, an ex-convict named Bellaire. A little jailbird told us.

PRESIDENT DESCHANEL of France was thrown out of a train by the sudden opening of a sleeping car window. After all, our American institutions are best; nobody can open *our* car windows.



In England

SEMENOFF of the Cossacks has at last found a defender. He was too drunk most of the time, says this ardent admirer, to commit all the crimes with which the Reds have charged him.

BOYS who stole \$600,000 worth of bonds got only \$9,000 for their work. Still, that is a larger share than most proletarians get, and the hours are easy.

ADVERTISING in this column gets quick and disastrous results. A brief tribute to William M. Wood as a profiteer brought him a federal indictment. Rates on application.

PROHIBITION enforcers boast that the price of spirits has dropped from one dollar to 35 cents a drink. Some day lawbreaking will be within reach of the masses.

THOSE Congressmen who were about to go joy-riding on the soldier vote have made the sad discovery that one man's bonus is another man's tax.

GOVERNOR LOWDEN is a direct actionist. He supplied his own campaign funds and he didn't waste them on advertising and fripperies but put them direct into the hands of the delegates.

GEMS like this drip from the lips of Candidate Harding: "I think the war will have been waged in vain if we do not go back to the old conditions that prevailed before the war."

THE Republican bosses at Chicago faced the gigantic task of finding a candidate who was at once less intelligent than Wood and less popular than Lowden. At last they succeeded.

BUT they had to work nights!

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The Socialist Party Convention

By Crystal Eastman

"WE must make clear what kind of socialists we are. We must have a key-note in this campaign," said Holland, the clearest-headed leader of the Minority in the Socialist Convention. "Is the key-note to be—'We are the only 100 per cent. American party destined to uphold the Constitution of the United States,' or is it to be . . ."

But he never made clear the alternative. Nor did any other member of the Minority make it clear. They were an earnest and honest Minority—about one-third of the delegates, and they could see that something was wrong with the Majority, but they had no firm ground of their own from which to attack it. They were soft and vague and unorganized and entirely spontaneous in their attacks. The effect of their presence, therefore, was merely to modify in a few points the glaringly conservative measures adopted by the Majority and lend the support of their numbers, and their sincere revolutionary intentions, to a movement absolutely controlled and guided by persons with contrary intentions.

It seems to me that the key-note of any socialist campaign at the present time must obviously concern our attitude toward the decaying institutions of political democracy. And there are just two possible attitudes. On the one hand we can say something like this:

"Despite the complete breakdown of the most essential democratic institutions during the past four years, commencing with the overthrow of the vital guarantees embodied in the first amendment to the Constitution, and reaching its climax when Congress twice refused to seat a man duly elected to represent his district in that body because he was a socialist, and when the Legislative Body of our largest state arbitrarily expelled five Socialist members, thus denying the very principle of majority representation on which the Republic is founded, nevertheless, we reaffirm our faith in democracy, we assert our abiding belief in the sacredness of its institutions, we declare that progress can continue only by a return to those institutions; and whereas all other political parties have basely forsaken the Constitution we declare our everlasting allegiance to it, we feel ourselves called by destiny to restore political democracy and bring this erring nation back to the faith of its fathers."

On the other hand we can say something like this:

"The last four years in America have demonstrated as never before in the history of the world, that human liberty cannot be secured or maintained through the institutions of political democracy. Those vital safeguards of the First Amendment, never of much practical value

in protecting the poorest workers, were completely abandoned by the government in the first week of war and have never been restored. Without freedom of speech, of assembly, of the press, the principle of majority representation is a mockery. The denial of these rights is a virtual disfranchisement of the workers. But not satisfied with this, the ruling class, by twice refusing to seat a duly elected Socialist Congressman and expelling five duly elected Socialist assemblymen from the New York State Legislature, has proved that any inconvenient provision of the constitution can be set aside, and has taken a long bold step toward openly disfranchising all who advocate fundamental changes in the form of government. These developments do not surprise us. They merely confirm our opinion and serve to emphasize a cardinal point in our socialist philosophy, that the state under capitalism, whether it be a democratic or an autocratic state, is bound to be, not a reconciler of, or arbitrator between classes, but an agent of the exploiting class. They serve to recall to reason those socialists who have put democracy before socialism, who have vainly expected the capitalist state to maintain democratic institutions against its own interest, and to stand quietly by while socialists, exercising their constitutional rights, vote to destroy it. The experiences of the last four years, which after all have been but the logical development of democracy under capitalism,—have recalled us from those childlike dreams to the stern realities of the class-struggle.

"Therefore, while we unite with all honest liberals in demanding the 'restoration' of civil and political liberty in America, we know that the way to 'restore' liberty is to destroy the capitalist system. And while we shall continue to exercise our political rights, whenever and wherever a capitalist government allows us, we know that the great hope of realizing socialism lies in the leadership of the masses by the workers organized in the industrial field, and that the chief function of a political party of socialism is to define, interpret and explain the industrial struggle, and educate the workers to play their historic part."

The choice was made between these two possible "key-notes" long before the convention began. The Stars and Stripes were as thick to the square inch on the walls of Finnish Hall, May 10th to 17th, as they can possibly be in Chicago or San Francisco. "Back to Democracy and the Constitution" was the key-note.

"I don't want any dictatorship, I want democracy," shouted Berger. And what Berger says is usually what the other right-wingers think. Berger would rather go

on fighting for his life and liberty and his right to sit in Congress in this capitalist democracy, than take a chance under a rough-and-tumble working-class government, and he says so. Ex-Assemblyman Waldman is also frank about his opinions. When he said up at Albany that he preferred the government of New York State to the Soviet government of Russia, it was not a false and cowardly admission. He knew he would feel more at home sitting on the steps of the Capital at Albany with the door shut in his face, than he would as a re-callable delegate to an industrial Soviet under communism, and he said so. Ex-Assemblyman Solomon's contribution at the Convention was equally frank: "I am proud of being 100 per cent. American," he said, "I support the Constitution. It is Sweet and Lusk who have betrayed Americanism."

Indeed the Preamble of the platform itself, drafted it is understood by Hillquit, makes this key-note of the Socialist campaign quite clear.

"In the short space of three years," it says, "our self-styled liberal administration has succeeded in undermining the very foundation of political liberty and economic rights which this republic has built up in more than a century of struggle and progress. . . .

"America is now at the parting of the roads. If the outraging of political liberty and concentration of economic power is permitted to go on, it can have only one consequence, the reduction of the country to a state of absolute capitalist despotism.

"The Socialist Party sounds the warning. It calls upon the people to defeat both old parties at the polls, and to elect the candidates of the Socialist Party to the end of restoring political democracy and bringing about complete industrial freedom."

These leaders of the Socialist Party seem to have forgotten what it was like before the war. They talk about profiteering as though it were a new phenomenon, as though "charging what the traffic will bear" were not always the principle under which capitalist business is conducted. They talk about civil liberty as though it were a blessing enjoyed by all prior to April 3, 1917. Have they forgotten Ludlow and Lawrence? Have they never read the findings of Frank Walsh's Industrial Commission? Don't they know that there has been no free speech in Homestead since 1892, nor in any other unorganized steel town? Don't they realize that the shooting of five detectives in West Virginia last month was the final flaming revolt against conditions of feudal tyranny which have prevailed in non-union mining towns for thirty years? Consider an ignorant foreign miner living in a company camp in West Virginia, with no right to go or come except on a company pass, with no right to attend a meeting, with company detectives watching to see that he doesn't get together with four or five fellow workers and talk things over, with company guards ready to shoot down any union organizer

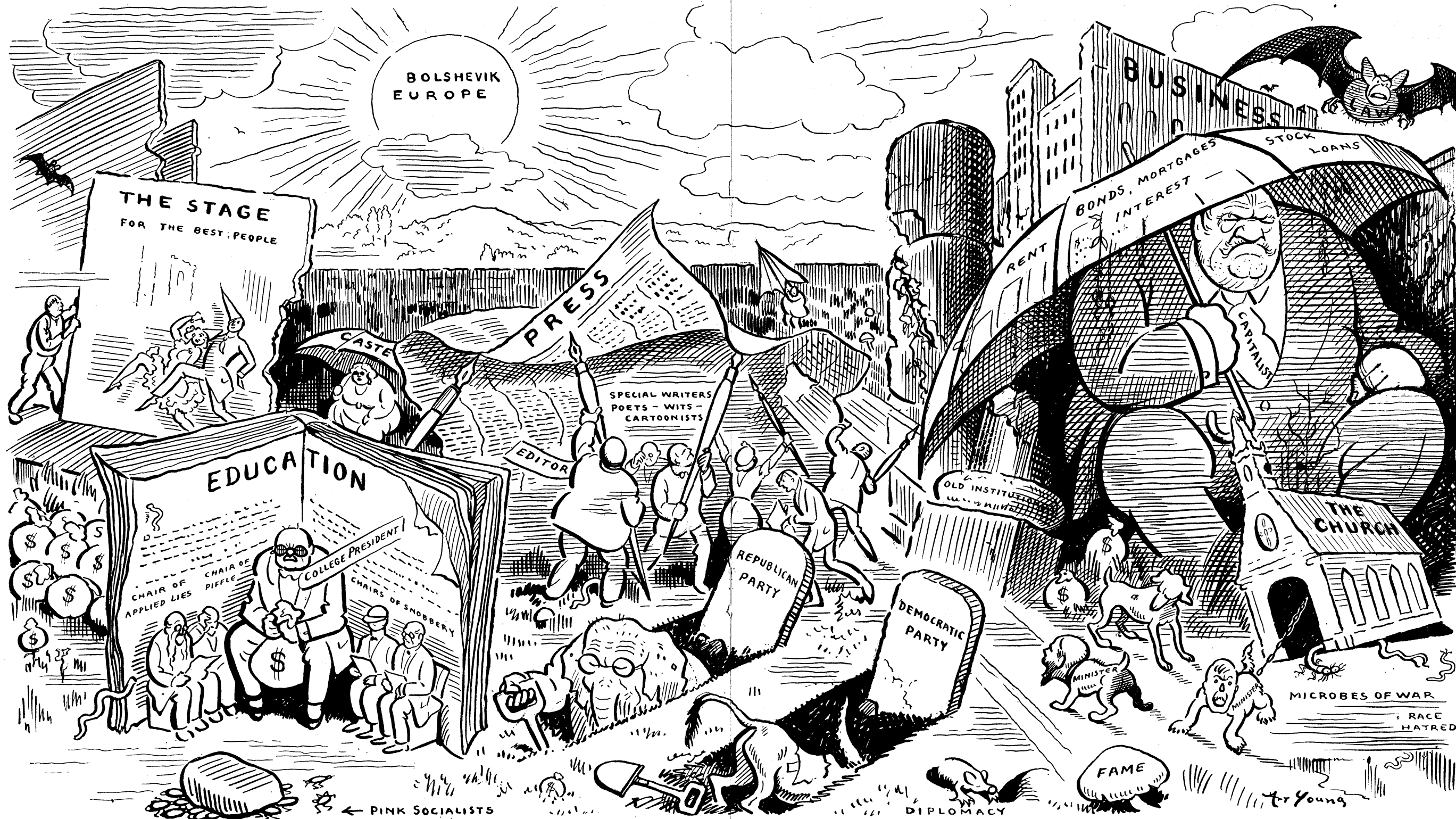
who attempts to get in and teach him his rights. He has been in that situation ever since he came to this country. What is the sense in telling him that he was free up to April 3rd, 1917, and now we are going to restore that freedom?

Surely a socialist ought to know that the First Amendment is as good to-day as it ever was. And it was never any good in a crisis. It has never been proof against a strain. The war was a very big strain, that's all. The contest of industrial forces set going by the war is a bigger strain still, and the breakdown of democratic institutions is correspondingly more complete. Our revolutionary understanding ought also to be more complete.

But the war, which brought socialists and liberals together in the fight to maintain civil liberty, was as bad for the socialists as it was good for the liberals. The fight for free speech demanded constant reference to the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. To demand that these documents be lived up to, was the most revolutionary thing a socialist leader could do, except go to jail. And from demanding that they should be lived up to, some of these leaders have apparently gotten into the habit of believing they will be lived up to, and that when they are, that will be the Social Revolution.

Hillquit spoke playfully perhaps when he said that the Socialist Party is "the only conservative party in the United States," but he stated the literal truth. The two old parties have progressed rapidly during this military and economic crisis. They have thrown over the old-fashioned political ways of thought, along with the old documents, and are bending almost all their energies to perfecting the economic dictatorship of the capitalists. The Socialist Party leaders have taken the opposite course. They have abandoned their former economic view-point, ceased to criticize the political forms of democracy, and taken refuge in pre-Marxian documents like the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. They are the party of old-fashioned Americanism.

Their preamble could be taken over verbatim by Hiram Johnson if he should bolt the republican convention next week. And their whole program would make an excellent getting-together ground for the Committee of Forty Eight, the Labor Party and the Non-Partisan League when they meet in Chicago next July. There is something in it for everybody; cancellation of war debts, democratically elected international parliament, free trade, disarmament, and self-determination for the liberal pacifists; election and recall of federal judges, direct election and recall of President, an easier method of amending the constitution, for the civic reformers; an anti-injunction clause, child labor, minimum wage, and shorter workday provisions for "labor." It goes without saying that "trade with Russia," "Recognition



Too Much Light

of the Irish Republic," Amnesty, and Repeal of the Espionage Act are included. The Social worker will be glad to find government insurance covering sickness, accident, old age and unemployment. The Single Taxer is well provided for. And of course there is a comprehensive government ownership plank, with a sort of Plumb Plan provision for administering publicly owned industries "jointly by the government and representatives of the workers," for those who are socialistically inclined.

As for the Declaration of Principles—it seems to have been written with the double purpose of fooling the party rank and file by half a dozen paragraphs of good socialist theory, and fooling the Department of Justice and the New York Assembly by a naïve insistence on the party's innocence of the intentions implied in that theory. A characteristic sentence is this:

"The Socialist Party seeks to attain its end by orderly and constitutional methods, *so long as* the ballot box, the right of representation and civil liberties are maintained."

The italics under "so long as" are mine.

Several thousand political and industrial prisoners already serving long sentences in jail and no end to the prosecutions; excessive bail a common place; search, seizure and arrest without warrant a notorious practice; martial law in every big strike district; the socialist and labor press struggling against complete post-office tyranny; free speech so dead that hundreds of bourgeois liberals,—clergymen, editors, lawyers, even a senator and congressman or two,—are out crusading to revive it; Berger twice thrown out of Congress; the five Socialist Assemblymen just picking themselves up from the steps of the State House at Albany;—What more do they want?

What wonder that capitalist editors in New York believed these Socialist leaders to be insincere, and merely adopting a fake platform as camouflage for a secret revolutionary plot? The press thought they were insincere because it could not believe that they were so simple. But I can testify that there were no revolutionary plots, secret or otherwise, in the air at that convention.

There was just one moment in the whole week when the spirit of revolution breathed over it. That was on Thursday afternoon, the fifth day, when Debs was nominated for president. Debs' friend, Henry of Indiana, in an awkward little nominating speech, told of his recent visit to Atlanta—of how as he walked along the prison corridor with the guard he caught sight of that beloved figure, the great, gaunt man in prison clothes. He told of Debs' sudden childlike joy and surprise on seeing him,—the beaming smile, the long arms stretched out, the simple human cry, "Oh, comrade, I am so glad to see you!" . . .

Why is the thought of Debs in jail so heart-break-

ing? It isn't because he is sixty years old. It is because he has the heart of a child,—warm, trusting, merry heart,—and who can think of a shut-in child without crying?

Tears and cheers dissolve for the moment most differences, but nothing will make Engdahl and Kruse and Glassberg and Holland and Tucker and Dreyfus, and the rest of that large Minority, *who actually represented Debs' opinions at this convention*, forget what happened the next day. The Illinois delegation had come instructed to censure the lawyers who defended the New York State Assemblymen at Albany. Friday was their last chance to do it, for not a word about the Albany affair had been allowed to creep into the proceedings of the convention, and they had to make their own opportunity. After warning everybody that they were going to do it, and that they were doing it in no unfriendly spirit but rather for the sake of harmony and unity, they drafted and introduced a resolution of "regret." Tucker read it. It specifically mentioned three statements taken verbatim from the record at Albany,

- (a) That in case of attack upon this government by the Soviet government of Russia, American socialists would fight for the U. S. government and against the Soviet government.—*Hillquit*.
- (b) That the government of New York State is preferable to the Soviet government of Russia.—*Waldman*.
- (c) That the provision which requires an elected socialist official to place his tentative resignation in the hands of his constituents on taking office, so that he can be recalled if he ceases to do their will, is a dead letter.—*Gerber*.

After quoting these statements, the resolution continued on its gentle way: "We regret that these statements were made and we declare that they do not truly express the position of the National Socialist Party."

But all that gentleness was wasted. They might just as well have said, "We heartily condemn and excoriate these base betrayers of our cause." For the moment Tucker stopped reading, Hillquit, no longer suave and satirical, but ugly with anger, arose to his feet, demanding a vote of censure on those who had introduced this resolution! His motion was lost in a general storm of indignation against the Illinois delegation, but before a single word had been allowed in defense of the resolution, Meyer London moved that it be expunged from the record. And while a half dozen minority members were still demanding the floor, and protesting their desire to "explain," and while Hillquit, London and the other Majority leaders were shouting "No! No! Sit down! We don't want to hear you!" London's motion was put and carried *viva voce*.

That was the real spirit of the ruling group at the Socialist Convention. And it convinces me that Debs

would not have been their chosen candidate if he hadn't been safe in prison, where he will lend them the glory of his name without the embarrassment of his clear-thinking revolutionary leadership.

But why not go back further? I like to think that if Debs had been "out" last summer, if his wisdom and experience and generous spirit had been at the service of the growing numbers of the left-wing,—as, granting his freedom, I think it would have been, we should have had a different sort of split. Instead of the more actively discontented left-wingers being forced out to form a new party, the more hopelessly conservative right-wingers would have been forced out to form a new party, or to affiliate in some way with the growing Labor Party as many of the honest reformists among them desire to do. That would have left the American Socialist Party in the control of its genuine majority, unmistakably

communistic in thought and purpose, and definitely affiliated with the Third International.

Moods

ALL human moods are swift and strange,
Only the earth shall master change
The winds blow hot, the winds blow cool,
And they are always beautiful.

Esther Whitmarsh.

Notice

WARNING is hereby given that Robert Haimowitz, who for a few weeks this spring acted as subscription agent for the LIBERATOR, is no longer authorized to receive money or orders in the name of this magazine.



Drawn by Maurice Becker.

Wall Street Agitators: "Long Live the Revolution!"

In the Shell of the Old

By Michael Gold--Drawings by Robert Minor

HAVE you ever, my revolutionary readers, sat through one of those old-time debates we used to have on political versus industrial action? I mean in the good old by-gone days when we were still free to say that we were not free in America? The local, with its mouldy floor, its gas-jets spurting wild flame, its dusty engraved portrait of our Karl in all his hairiness, its as-yet-uncriminal red bunting, was crowded like a village church. In troubling themselves about that fateful question, the comrades found a peculiar saintly delight; they turned out in droves. Some smart young Aleck, a cub lawyer generally, sprucely attired in the best Canal street had to offer, lifted his lance for the politicians. A battered old Wobbly, bitter and gray in the struggle, had the floor on the other side. There were never so many good arguments heard before on each side of a question as these two presented. We lesser comrades grew more and more confused as the debate went on. At midnight our heads were in a whirl, and we would adjourn to McSorley's and drink ale and eat raw onions, still busily arguing. We never seemed to get anywhere—maybe there was nowhere to get.

For when you argue such a question out in the abstract, you can never get beyond ale and onions. Logic is a drab who is faithful to every comer. Life is truer; she stands on the fact. She creates something—like Niagara Falls—and you simply cannot argue that roaring fact out of existence. It's there.

Victor Berger can reduce the high cost of living, increase wages, revolutionize the militia, and erect the New Jerusalem before your eyes, with one wave of a pink slip called the ballot. But it's not there. Victor Berger's newspaper is there, and his check-book, and his Congressional honors, and his happy, satisfied smile are there, but not the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is still writhing and grinding in the muck, struggling to be born.

I went to the fourth biennial convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, held in Boston at the end of May, and I loved every moment of it. It was real as a hickory club—solid as a monument, true as the smack of a baseball in the catcher's big mitt. I am an old newspaper reporter, among a thousand other things, and have been poison-gassed in my line of duty at innumerable business and civic conventions. I have suffered from the same occupational disease at red political rallies, too, but I swear I could not scent a mephitic whiff in this meeting of the Clothing Workers. Their



Sidney Hillman, General President

minds were clean and limber with action and with movement among living truths. They had created something actual and nobody would ever debate or even vote them out of it. They did not waste their time arguing about political vs. economic action; they were busy, in their corner of the harvest-field, *bringing in the social revolution in America as fast as it can be brought*. What more can be asked of angels or men?

It was a soviet of the sweatshops—of practical and serious delegates discussing the problems of an industry nearly their own. I can still remember the east side sweatshops of my boyhood. They were dark sinks of all the evil in the world. Filthy, opaque windows that were never washed from one end of the year to the other shut out the blessed sunlight. The floors were knee-high in rubbish and lint; there was a stench from

the putrid toilet; a fog of steam and sweat hung in the room and made it ghastly and dim as an inferno. The whining of the machines sickened the heart like an endless dirge. There, in the gloom, in the stench, under the wavering gas-light, pale, melancholy men and women labored and suffered and died.

Consumption was rife; it was the one door out of their misery for these thousands of wretched Jews. The working-week was from sixty to seventy hours long, and even as late as 1914, the year of the great world crusade, the average weekly wage for women in the industry was \$5, and for men, \$12. Despair haunted the sweatshops; they were inhabited by literal paupers; Morris Rosenfeld, their poet, could only sing of tears and sorrow. The sweatshop long remained for me the symbol of all that is wasted and tragic, all that is broken on the rack of the world.

But did purple-robed Tragedy stalk at this latest convention of the sweatshop workers? Was there the doleful wailing of Israel in the wilderness, and the showing of wounds, and the despair of thousands tossing in darkness? There certainly was not. A revolution has taken place in the sweatshops. Those crawl-

ing slaves have risen from their knees and used their Jewish brains and Italian passion to good purpose. They have formed the most powerful, the most revolutionary, the *canniest* industrial union in America. They now receive higher average wages than school-teachers, ministers, newspaper reporters, plumbers, and other superior persons. They have won a 44 hour week, and have given a mandate to their executives to go after 40 hours during the next year. They are their own bosses in the shop—the employer cannot fire one of them; he must appeal to their shop committee to permit him to. They fix their standard of work; they decide on efficiency; they understand every process in their factory. They only tolerate the boss and pay him legal tribute in profits because the rest of America still forces them to. Wait till the other industries catch up with the clothing workers!

No, there was no tragedy at the sweatshop convention. Revolutions are the antithesis of tragedy—they prove that nothing is insoluble here below. Their revolution had done these sweatshop slaves a lot of good. It had put a little beef on their ribs, some color in their faces, and some of the best clothing they make on their backs. It had given them that jolly nonchalance of the fighting man—they kidded each other in Yiddish, Italian and cheerfully-murdered English—trench joking, most of it, centering about the class war. Success and optimism radiated from these delegates with their big badges decking them all like medals; they were almost smug. And I repeat, I loved it all. I want to see labor radiating success and good-humor in its fight. Let the bourgeoisie from now on radiate the gloom and tragedy. We have had a monopoly of it long enough.

Something like eight years ago these sweatshop workers were organized in a rickety, flivverous affair sponsored by the A. F. of L., called the United Garment Workers. It was not a union—it was in reality a conspiracy against labor. It was one of those deliberate insults the A. F. of L. has levelled time and again at the immigrant and unskilled workers of this country. A few typical labor-fakirs appointed by Gompers, came in and contemptuously herded the sweatshop workers. They were pulled out on petty strikes, and sent back again. They were assessed, and fined, and disciplined, treated as Pershing treated the "boys" in France. They were never consulted on anything; they never saw their "leaders" face to face even during a strike. Worst of all, no real attempt at organizing them was made. The few who drifted into the union out of conviction, were used and manipulated; the rest were let alone, to scab and to struggle blindly.

As a protest against this sort of 100 per cent. A. F. of L. Americanism, the Amalgamated rose spontaneously during the great New York strike of 1912. The A. F. of L. machine had simply broken down, Kerensky fashion. It didn't guide the unorganized pauper thou-



August Bellanca, of the General Executive Board



**Lazarus Markovitz,
of Montreal**

for the fray. When the strike was over, the new-born organization was still there, and claimed 7,000 dues paying members, or thereabouts. Now it is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, an organization with a membership of 200,000, and having local centers of sweetness and light in some forty American and Canadian cities. Such is life. If the sweatshop workers had accepted logic or the Victorian (I mean Victor Bergerian) metaphysic, they might have had a few nice Congressmen by now, making fierce speeches at Washington. But they chose the primrose path of direct action, and it plunged them so far in sin that they were only able to send \$100,000 to the steel strikers a half-year ago, with promises of more when necessary.

The Amalgamated preamble recognizes the class war, says that the working class must accept industrial unionism or be doomed to impotence, and ends with the following curious dogma:

"The same forces that are making for industrial unionism are likewise making for a closer inter-industrial alliance of the working class.

"The industrial and inter-industrial organization, built upon the solid rock of clear knowledge and class consciousness, will put the organized working class *in actual control of the system of production*, and the working class will then be ready to take possession of it."

Read these foregoing two paragraphs over again, and you will discover a new annotation to the gospel as we know it. These clothing workers chose a new way out, when the A. F. of L. failed them. They did not wait in sullen resignation until election day, nor did they go off

sands who walked out in despair because it was better to shiver and starve at home than at a machine. It didn't feed them, or raise funds for them, or give them heartening speeches, or teach them how to picket, or even unionize them. It just let them drift. But they didn't drift. God gave my fellow-Jews long heads packed with brains. Shop committees were elected, leaders were appointed, and a whole new organization, vigilant and effective, sprang forth, full-panoplied

and scatter themselves on an attempt to form a national rival to the A. F. of L. They merely cultivated their garden; they concentrated on their own industry, and built up a 100 per cent. revolutionary union there. Read that phrase calling for a closer "inter-industrial alliance of the working class." It is an intimation of the course industrial history may take in these United States. The radical groups in the A. F. of L. are one by one being sadly pried loose from their Rock of Ages. Most of them are not developed enough to immediately affiliate with the I. W. W., and so there is nothing better than that they should intensively build up and propagandize their own industrial field. In time there will be organizations such as the mine workers, the recent railroad outlaws, and the building trade insurgents of New York, everywhere. And the Amalgamated, the leader in this secessionist movement, may well be the force to bind these powerful elements into a "closer inter-industrial alliance," that will be "ready to take possession."

Not that the Amalgamated people have definitely formulated this for a program.

"I have no ultimate program," said Sidney Hillman, their president. "Some of our members talk of our Amalgamated train as if it were an express, with stops only at Paris, Berlin and Moscow. I would remind them it is also a local train, and its stops now are New York, Boston, Chicago and Baltimore." The Amalgamated union, in American life, is situated much the same as Russia is in the world. It has won its victory, but it must wait till the rest of labor wakes up to guarantee and complete the fruition. It has established a virtual control of its industry, but it is not yet able to move toward possession. It is holding itself in readiness.

Control—management—scientific production—these were



Jacob Freedman, of New York

the big words at the convention. They are new words in American labor history. The A. F. of L. in its narrow way, and the I. W. W. in its more universal manner, have become soaked with the mere military aspect of labor's struggle. They have taken little thought of the plateau—years before the peaks can be reached. They have not begun building the new structure in the shell of the old. The Amalgamated is doing this subtly and surely. I confess to a sense of greenness at their convention. I felt like a hasty, haphazard novice of revolution among these men. They were men living in and by an industry, knowing that it must give them bread before and after and during any great social change. They had to meet and confer with the boss, whether they liked him or not. They had to strike—and win strikes. They had to do something now, at once.

There was the question of unemployment, as it came up at the convention. Such a question can be solved politically, by Congressmen and legislators, and it can be solved by the spittoon-philosopher's method of sitting around a local hall and waiting for the revolution. But supposing you were a clothing worker with a family, and found your industry idle at least three months in the year. Would you not act the way the convention did? It voted to create an unemployment fund to which the employers would be the chief contributors; the money to go to idle workers in slack time. Thus the employer was penalized for his failure to keep the industry going all year, and thus he was stimulated into a little of that efficiency he prides himself on already having.

Or take the question of a working-week standard of production. This is a question on which the fate of revolutions hangs. How much work shall be demanded of the men in the factories? The convention went into a long and grave debate on this matter. The organization had previously acted to abolish piece-work, that most deathly and degrading of industrial evils. But it had found that on changing to a week work basis, numbers of its members were "laying down" on the job. Labor cannot afford to have capital dictate the amount of work to be produced, because that would be worse than piece-work. Neither can it, at the present moment of economics, give the employer less work than he is paying for. The Amalgamated convention solved this puzzle by voting to appoint a commission to study what should be the standard amount of a week's work. Not what the boss wanted, but what a healthy worker could produce without breaking down his health, or without giving up that leisure that is his soul health.

This standard would be established in the industry, and every worker would be expected to come up to it. The fight around wages would not enter at all; wages would be adjusted by the old Amalgamated methods of arbitration backed by strikes. The standard of produc-

tion would be fixed, non-fluctuant, based always on the scientifically-determined unit of human capacity, as determined by the human beings involved. There is something permanent about such a conception; it is like one of those reversible collars, it will show up clean and useful even after the revolution.

But perhaps it sounds to you like the polite and scientific tyranny devised by Mr. Taylor. Some of the delegates hotly charged this at the convention; many of them said that labor standards would delay the revolution. The standards were adopted, nevertheless; for there is something strong and self-confident in the Amalgamated, some clear-eyed deathless loyalty to the great goal that makes the organization daring enough to try all, certain of its own underlying integrity. Sidney Hillman, the president, incarnates this cool, experimental, confident spirit of the Amalgamated. This man, as he revealed himself to me during the convention, seemed another smiling professor of the revolutionary science such as Lenin is in Russia. He is not as great as Lenin; he has not the cultural background, nor the Titanic genius and will of Lenin, nor the revolutionary passion, perhaps; yet he is cut of the same stuff, and in America he is a significant personality. There was a debate on whether the Amalgamated should establish its own credit and banking system, leading to co-operative producing and consuming later; a large question, a revolutionary question. Frederick C. Howe came to speak on it; Doctor Warbasse and others spoke. Hillman made a short speech, and I want to quote part of it, as a sample of the shrewd, concentrated quality of the man's mind:

"The Chairman regrets that the discussion has been so long as to nearly talk this subject to death. This is one of the most important of the subject matters coming up before this convention, and it is only important if the subject matter is brought up from the point of view and in the spirit of the Amalgamated. If we are going to have a theoretical discussion to establish theoretically whether from the point of view of the revolution, or something else, the co-operative movement is desirable, I would suggest that we specify another time for that kind of discussion.

"If, when we started the movement for a shorter week, we had stopped to discuss whether the shortening of the week's work would help the revolution or hinder it, we would not be here to discuss any subject matter. Our people would still be in the sweatshops, afraid to join the organization. If we had discussed whether small wages or higher wages are in the interest of capitalism, there would not have been enough of us to discuss it. We would have had to put in 80 hours to make any kind of a wage. The great problems will find their ultimate solution. It is for us to attend to our work so that we may make our own contribution in that direction; and we feel, as officers of the organization, that

the time has come when the Amalgamated can give part of its time and part of its ability to this movement because ability is developed when there is work. We believe that hundreds and thousands will spring up from the ranks and will make their contribution, not only to the co-operative movement, but to the other work of the Amalgamated as well.

"I feel even more strongly that the time of simply talking wages and cost of living—that time, I hope, will soon pass. I want to be frank with you delegates. I am tired of it. We go into conference and we gain another \$5. Wonderful victory! Another \$5! And then you find the cost of clothing has gone up enough to take it away—not because of the \$5 granted you, but because of the tremendous waste in the methods of production and distribution—there is where the high cost of living comes in! We want to go into banking, not because we do not believe in other ways of starting the co-operative movement, but because we have found out that the gentlemen in the banking concerns have close connections with everyone of your tailor shops. We want to have our own credit, so that we don't have to go to the gentlemen who control credit to get them to help us establish the co-operative movement."

The convention decided to experiment with credit unions and co-operatives. And it also decided another great issue: to affiliate with the International Garment Workers, an organization of 150,000 workers, and with the Amalgamated Textile Workers, thus forming one immense and all-inclusive union in the clothing industry. The foregoing words of Hillman give the impression that the Amalgamated is in the danger of falling into the "ourselves alone" policy of ordinary trades unionism. When Hillman says Amalgamated, however, he really means industrial unionism, with all its revolutionary implications. The Amalgamated has grown strong enough to be unselfish. The textile workers union was built up with Amalgamated funds and with the help of Amalgamated organizers. It already has recruited some 50,000 workers in its year of life; and now, after affiliation, it ought to gather in thousands more out of the shepherdless, exploited million of textile slaves in this country, neglected by the A. F. of L., as the once neglected garment workers were.

The Amalgamated has the sacred and necessary egoism by which alone a living thing can flourish. But it never forgets its place in the greater movement, and as in the case of the organization of the textile workers, it reaches out its generous and powerful hands in help of the workers' cause everywhere.

"If any one will tell us that national and international problems are not our concern, our answer will be that everything of importance is the people's concern," said Secretary Joseph Schlossberg, who is a dark, passionate orator and a fine administrator, the exact Trotsky to Hillman's Lenin in this organization. And so the con-



**A. I. Shiplacoff, General Manager,
of the New York Joint Board**

vention did not forget to call for the amnesty of political and industrial prisoners, to send a message to Gene Debs, to demand recognition of Soviet Russia, and to cheer for the Irish republic. It listened to speeches by representatives of all the radical causes; it was enthusiastic and ready for anything. Even Bob Minor was not too notoriously "left" to get a rousing reception when he rose to speak.

The Amalgamated has become a highly prosperous affair; it is in the aristocracy of labor. But it will go wrong with difficulty; for it is its own best conscience and critic. It has officials of a strange, new breed—such as Alex Cohen, for instance, a gentle working class libertarian who could get up at the end of such a convention and say that the organization was becoming too materialistic, too loth to hear new ideas. And it has a rank and file realistic enough, while endorsing political action without debate, to turn down with laughter a proposal to endorse the Socialist Party. That is how the convention acted. And so I missed that good old discussion on political versus the other kind of action, but I saw the social revolution striking root in our own harsh native soil.

Fellow Criminals!

By Floyd Dell

NO doubt you are rather surprised, and perhaps a little hurt, at being addressed in this way. I know it is not exactly polite to refer right out in company to a person's previous criminal record. Not that a criminal record is anything in particular between friends. There are so many laws that it is almost impossible not to break some of them, unless you give your whole time to the job. If you have never got run in by a motorcycle cop for taking the air too enthusiastically it's merely because you can't afford a car. If you didn't get jailed for having a bad opinion of the war, it was because such opinions were too expensive at the time for you to possess.

But you are a criminal just the same. You may never have been caught at it, but you've broken some law or other; it may be the Prohibition Amendment, it may be the Anti-Strike law. The way things are today, we're all criminals. Even you, Professor!—you who are so all-fired careful to preserve your respectability by camouflaging this magazine within the folds of the New York Times when you read it on the street car—look out! You have at least *thought* things—about the country and the government and the way things are being run. Which is a direct violation of several of the latest laws; and it is only a question of time when you will be caught talking in your sleep, and haled before the bar of justice. So what's the use trying to deny it? Let's just concede that we are all criminals, actual or potential, in the eyes of those who make a living by believing we are, and trying to persuade others so. Let us, fellow criminals, I say, admit the soft impeachment, and settle down for a nice comfortable little talk about crime.

Let's take your crime first. Let us say that you are criminally violating the Anti-Trust law. . . . But I hear you protest that that is impossible. You are not, you say, a Trust. Well, who said you were? What's that got to do with it? We're not talking about *facts*, we're talking about laws. But, you insist, you are not in business at all; you are a workingman. Exactly—that is why I picked out the Anti-Trust law for you. You don't suppose the Anti-Trust law was intended to apply to Trusts, do you? Good gracious, how simple-minded you are, to be sure. Don't you know what a Trust is—legally? A combination in restraint of trade. Very well; you are a workingman, and you belong to the union of your craft, and you go on a strike. *That* is a combination in restraint of trade—as has been proved over and over again in the most convincing manner in the United

States courts which you pay taxes to support. You are *ipso facto* a dangerous character, and I can expect to see you in jail any day.

How dare you, sir, combine to restrain trade? I hear you explain that a trade union is formed to secure a living wage and decent conditions for its members. But how? By legal means? It's all right to try to secure such things by peaceable, orderly, legal means—nobody, not even the Supreme Court, would deny that. If you want better pay and shorter hours, you can vote for the Republican and Democratic candidates. And what more could anybody ask? As for strikes—they are not peaceable, they are not orderly, and they become less and less legal every day. Why, what is a strike? Nothing less, my friends, than *direct action!* And you know, or ought to know, that direct action is a crime. It is, you suggest, the only way of getting what you want? Well, that is just why it has been made a crime, if you must know. If you want to be a good, law-abiding citizen, you stick to the ballot.

As a member of a union, you believe in strikes; you may not actually at this moment be engaged in formenting strikes, but you are committed to that pernicious doctrine. Every reader of the capitalist newspapers knows what bad things strikes are. They mean disorder, danger, sometimes bloodshed! In a railway strike, for instance, the companies are likely to put scabs on the job who don't know how to run an engine and who mistake the signals and wreck the train and kill half the passengers. And that, of course, is your fault. You have withdrawn your efficiency, your knowledge, your skill, your experience—and the result is chaos. Anarchy, in fact! *And this is what you believe in.* If I were a district attorney, I could find evidence in your trade union constitution and by-laws to send you to prison for the rest of your life.

And, if *you* were a district attorney, no doubt you could do as much for me. And yet we both know each other to be ordinary sensible people with no melodramatic fondness for riot, famine and gore. I do not blame you, brother, because the legal imagination constructs a deadly conspiracy out of your efforts to get a little more pay with which to support your wife and kids. I know you for an honest citizen who would not even want to beat a butcher's bill. You do not go on strikes for the sheer love of upsetting things, you go only because you must. But do you know why your strikes are more and more being pronounced illegal? It is because

otherwise you would keep on striking with greater and greater success, until you had actually gained all you earned, and there would be no profits left for distribution—and if there were no profits there would be no capitalism, and *that* would be revolution. So, in the interest of preserving capitalism, it is *necessary* that your efforts to better your conditions be pronounced illegal. I am sorry, and I think none the worse of you, but you must face the fact that you are a criminal.

And what about me? That's what I want to talk to you about. Suppose—just suppose . . . but let me whisper it—

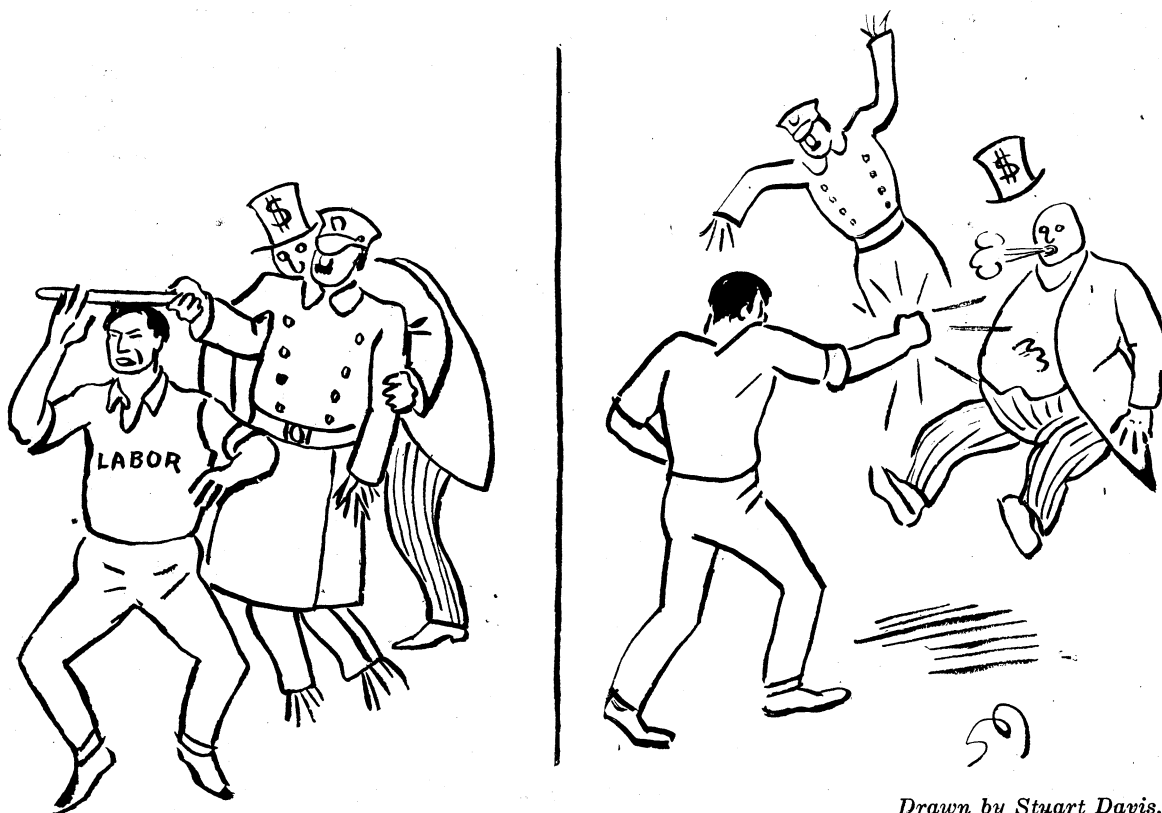
suppose I were a Communist!

Mind you, I don't say I am. If I did, I would be in jail before breakfast. I only say, *suppose* I were. Purely a hypothetical case, you understand. Well, if I *were* a Communist, I would be a worse criminal than even you are. I would be arrested and sent to prison for thirty or forty years (which to me seems quite a long time) under the Criminal Anarchy Act. And yet—have you ever read the Criminal Anarchy Act? Well, would you believe it, that law *appears* to have no more to do with people like me than the Anti-Trust law has to do with people like you. You might read it all the way through, and never once think of me. So far as anybody but a

lawyer could tell, it deals with an entirely different kind of critter—the sort who go around with bombs in their pockets and conspire darkly to assassinate people whose views they don't agree with. You know the sort of persons I mean—you've met them often. In the cartoons. And in the headlines of the capitalist newspapers.

Some people have a sentimental tenderness toward the "ideal of freedom" which is supposed to motivate the practice of bomb-throwing as it is found in other countries. But I confess I do not share this tenderness; and I notice that the Workers' Government in Russia does not share it either. Only last fall a gang of bomb-throwers started operations in Moscow. I read in the government newspaper, the *Izvestia*—or rather, had translated to me—an account of the measures taken to restore law and order. They included the surrounding of the bomb-throwers' headquarters by the troops of the Workers' Government, and a battle between the troops and the bomb-throwers which ended with the blowing up of the headquarters by the bomb-throwers themselves, with their own bombs, and the death of everybody in the building.

It was a Communist Government which put those bomb-throwers out of business—and I think that sufficiently expresses the practical attitude of Communists



Drawn by Stuart Davis.

Two Kinds of Strikes

toward bomb-throwers. The government business and the bomb-throwing business are incompatible. And one reason why the believers in Communism have never had any use for the idea of bomb-throwing is that they have always intended to set up in the government business themselves, as soon as they had a majority of the people on their side. Working-class rule is majority rule; and the bomb is essentially a minority weapon. Now, minorities have their rights, but certainly these rights stop short of killing off all the others who disagree with them. As a mode of expressing political disapproval, the bomb is too hellishly extreme.

Of course, if you have a real weakness for bomb-throwing, you will perhaps find yourself meeting with encouragement from what might seem to you an unexpected quarter. In Russia for many years the bomb-throwers were subsidized by the police—and the chief of the most influential of the bomb-throwing organizations, Eugene Azef, was himself a police agent. This seems queer at first, but you must realize that the police would lose their jobs if there were no disorder; and they find it necessary sometimes to encourage disorder in order to earn their pay in putting it down. I don't say that this is widely the case as yet in the United States; but the police have their own troubles, what with vice investigations and all that, and I leave it to you if the discovery of one single real bonafide bomb-thrower wouldn't cause rejoicing in the high places! They can't go on scaring the public to death forever on these monotonous and unconvincing yarns of theirs. Do you imagine that a poor maniac who thought he wanted to throw bombs but didn't have the ingredients to manufacture them with would be allowed to go in want by the police spies who belong to every radical organization and have unlimited funds at their disposal, generously apportioned to them out of the taxes you sweat so hard to pay?

But to come back to the Communists. I have said that they intend to set up in the government business themselves some day, and so naturally they would not want the idea to get around that every Tom, Dick and Harry who didn't like the way things were being run should express his minority opinion with a bomb. No, it is going to be hard enough to get the new government started, without having to put in a new set of officials every few days.

That being the case, you might ask why I should restrict myself to a merely hypothetical assertion of my Communism; why don't I come right out and say that I am a Communist? Not so fast, brother! Let us turn once more to the Criminal Anarchy Act: "Criminal anarchy is the doctrine that organized government should be overthrown with force or violence, or by assassination of the executive head or any of the executive officials, or by any unlawful means. The advocacy of such doctrine either by word of mouth or writing is a felony."

It seems innocent enough, doesn't it? You wouldn't think that any honest citizen need ever fear coming into conflict with that law, would you? No, you wouldn't. But I, who have never done anything more criminal to a soldier than buy him a drink, have heard myself denounced in a courtroom as one who conspired to promote mutiny and insurrection in the Army and Navy of the United States! The burnt child dreads the fire. Let us go slow right along about here, and watch our step. If the printer misplaces a comma, I get indicted—and you, too, for reading what I have written. This lends, so far as I am concerned, a certain zest to the proceedings. How about you? Do you want to take a chance? You are a criminal, you know, anyhow, and you might as well get some fun out of it.

"Any unlawful means." Mark that. I confess that I think things could be run better by the workers than they are now by the capitalists, and that I would prefer a government which put that system into effect. There is nothing illegal about *wanting* that. And I think I have made it plain to you that I do *not* want anybody assassinated in order to bring about such a state of affairs. But—how can I be sure that the means which I *do* believe in are lawful? And if they are lawful today, how can I be certain that they will be lawful tomorrow, with the legislatures sitting up nights to pass laws against this and that?

For instance: they had a strike up in Winnipeg, Canada. A big strike. You might call it a general strike; and on the theory that, if there has to be a strike, the more general a strike the better, you might say that you approved of a general strike. No harm in that, surely! But if you ever do say anything like that, I advise you to be very careful to see that the printer does not slip in a hyphen on you, and make it a "general-strike." The distinction is very important—amounting to at least ten years in the penitentiary. A general strike, in the sense of a widespread strike, is lawful—or still was when I read the papers this morning. But a "general-strike" is illegal, and your advocacy of it would lead you straight to a prison-cell. A "general-strike," you must understand, is (as legally defined) a strike intended to overthrow the government. Now in Winnipeg, the strike was so general (without the hyphen) that it would have been impossible for a baker to deliver a loaf of bread or a hospital to receive its milk for babies, except that the strike-committee, in its natural desire to prevent such suffering, issued permits countersigned by themselves, which enabled the bakers' carts and milk-wagons, and so forth, to go on their errands. A kindly action, you will say. So, no doubt, they thought. But when they were up on trial a few months later, those permits were used against them in court as proof that they had attempted to usurp the powers of government. It is legal, you see, for a politician to say that a milk-wagon may deliver milk, but it

is criminal anarchy for a committee of workers to say the same thing. Thus, by almost imperceptible degrees, the innocent general strike merges (in the view of the law) into the criminal "general-strike." And if I were to say to you, as one kindly man might to another, "If you are ever on a strike committee, be sure and see that the babies do not suffer for want of milk," I would be advocating by word of mouth the doctrine that organized government may be overthrown by unlawful means.

But that brings us to the situation in which the workers of the United States are now placed. In China, I have read, there used to be a fire-department in each town that came and haggled with you about how much you should pay them for their services in putting out the fire, before they turned on the hose—or whatever they put out fires with in China. So far as I know, there was no law in China which made it criminal anarchy to propose the organization of a communal and efficient fire-department. But if there had been, a situation would have arisen in China somewhat comparable to the one in which the workers of America now find themselves. Capitalism is becoming more and more inefficient in the job of producing goods—it is halted in that work by continual quarrels about how much profits it is going to get out of the job. And meanwhile, it is criminal to suggest that we throw capitalism on the scrap-heap, unless we do so in such terms as make it impossible for some highly-imaginative district attorney to convince a frightened jury that we are advocates of "violence." And yet it is perfectly certain that in the end, a fire-department which cannot put out fires is bound to go.

And so it is with Capitalism. You are perhaps one of those who complain of the high cost of living. Prices of everything to eat and wear and keep warm by and take shelter under are going up and up, and wages are not following suit so as you could notice. And what are you going to do about it? In many basic industries you cannot strike, for that has been made unlawful. And even if you can strike and get higher wages, what is to prevent the Meat Trust and the Coal Trust and the rest of the Plunderbund from raising the prices two more notches to your one? And what can you do except strike again, and again, and again? It's like the old riddle, if for every 12 inches you climb out of the hole you fall back 24, how long will it take you to reach China? In order to keep even with the cost of living, you will have to stay on strike all the time. That's on the one hand.

On the other, from the employers' point of view, it is impossible to pay you enough to enable you to buy back all you produce, for if that were done, where would there be any profits? Clearly, increased wages cannot be offered you as an incentive to keep you working, and so the other device must be used—smaller and smaller wages, as an incentive to keep you at work. You may

not at first see the point. Small wages may not seem an incentive to you. But think it over. The smaller your wages, the less you can buy to eat, and the less you eat the hungrier you are, and the hungrier you are the more willing you become to take a job at any wages whatever. Oh, yes, small wages are a splendid incentive. But the best incentive is being out of a job altogether. When you have been out of a job for a while, you become terribly anxious to work. So, to make you really enthusiastic about working, it is necessary to give you a nice long period of enforced idleness now and then. The capitalist system automatically provides those periods of idleness. When you have produced more than you are able to buy back, the factories have to shut down. Then you stop thinking about higher wages, and commence to worry about some kind, any kind, of a job to keep body and soul together. It works, after a fashion, this capitalist system of production. But how do you like it?

And if you don't like it, what are you going to do about it? Are you, perhaps, going to try to "overthrow" the government? I wouldn't, if I were you. That advice, coming from a hypothetical Communist, may surprise you. For you have been told that that's what the Communists want you to do. On the contrary, that is what the capitalists have been telling you to do for the last hundred years. If there is a Republican government in power, they tell you to rise in your might and walk to the ballot boxes and overthrow that iniquitous government. If a Democratic government is in office, then it is the Democratic government that you are told to overthrow. And you have generally taken their advice—you've been overthrowing some kind of government every four or eight years, and it hasn't changed matters much. The cost of living gets higher all the time. And you are on to it at last. Nobody can tell you that you will be happier or better fed or have to pay less rent if Senator Harding takes Professor Wilson's place next spring.

This notion of improving your lot by turning out one set of political rascals and putting in another, is founded on a fallacy. What is government, anyway? The government is supposed to govern in the interest, not of the capitalists nor the workers, but of a mysterious third entity, the Public. You have often heard of the Public. Its representative at a recent industrial conference in Washington was John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Mr. Rockefeller was not there, you understand, in the interest of Mr. Rockefeller, nor (and this you can readily believe) in the interest of his employees, but in the interest of—both?—neither?—it is not just clear what, but whatever it was, that was what he was there representing. It is the same way with the government. By virtue of some mysterious influence emanating from the ballot-boxes, a well-known corporation lawyer, when elected to the United States Senate, forgets his past life utterly; he

Theory and Practice



Drawn by Stuart Davis.

**"My God, this is a free country, ain't it?
If a man don't like his job he can quit."**

**"The dogs ought to be driven back to
work at the point of a gun!"**

goes into a deep sleep, and when he awakens in his place in the United States Senate, he asks, "Who am I?" and they tell him, "You are a United States Senator, and you are here to pass laws favoring neither the corporations nor the workers, but solely in the interests of the Public." Well, you may believe that, but the corporations who put up the boodle to elect him go upon an altogether different theory. They think that he is there to represent capitalism. And, strange as it may seem, the Communists think the same thing. They know that whether Senator Oil is elected as a Democrat or as a Republican, his job is essentially the same—to look out for the interests of Oil.

Take it from Karl Marx (of whom you may perhaps have heard—he used to be a foreign correspondent of the New York Tribune)—that government does not change in any way worth mentioning until the economic system of which it is a reflection changes.

When the utter inefficiency of our present economic system has been demonstrated to the mass of the workers, and when they have ceased to believe in the lying promises of its defenders to patch it up and set it going

again, they will throw it on the scrap-heap and build a new economic system that *will* work. They'll have to—or die of hunger. The new order in economics will commend itself to the mass of the people first of all as a means of keeping them fed and clothed and generally speaking, alive. The new system will begin to manifest itself as the old system wheezes and snorts in its last efforts to keep going. There will be voluntary associations of workers to serve certain economic purposes formerly served by capitalism. And at a certain point, while the new kind of economics is still trying to get started and the old kind is not yet dead, something will occur in the nature of a show-down.

In Russia when Raymond Robins wanted something done, he found that the Kerensky government couldn't do it, but that the workers' Soviets could—and did. This meant that actual power was being transferred from the dying economic system represented by the government, to the newly beginning economic system represented by the Soviets. Colonel Robins concluded that it was merely a matter of time when *all power* would be so transferred, and the Soviets would constitute the government. That

is just what actually did happen. And that is exactly what may be expected in any country where capitalism breaks down.

As a hypothetical Communist, I do not expect such a complete breakdown of capitalism as this to occur in America this week, nor yet next. I cannot tell just when it will happen. But I predict it with as much confidence as a veteran meteorologist predicts that spring will come after winter. In the Bolshevik Calendar, it is not by any means the First of May in these United States. It may not even be April yet. All that we know for certain is that the days are getting a leetle longer.

But, whenever this transfer of power from those who are trying to patch up a broken-down economic system to those who are trying to institute another, whenever that moment arrives, it will be the *actual fact* now being widely referred to under the somewhat sensational term "revolution."

It should be clear that such a moment as this cannot be brought about by either good or evil intentions. Such a revolution cannot be "started." And it cannot be stopped, either. You cannot legislate against people taking thought to secure themselves something to eat. If Capitalism cannot feed them, then Communism will—and that's that.

Communism is founded on the belief that such a moment will arrive—a moment inexorably brought about by the operation of economic forces, in this and in every country, when the workers must choose between starving outside of empty factories guarded by the machine guns of the employers, or finding some way to secure for themselves the possession of those factories.

So far, I believe, there is nothing illegal in these views. For it may surprise you to learn that, with so much that *is* illegal, there is nothing criminal in thinking, or even in teaching, that the workers of the world are going to own and operate the world's industries. It is permissible to believe in "revolution" in its strictly economic sense. It is even permissible to believe in the overthrow of existing government, incidental to such an economic change—*provided* that the overthrow is not to take place by "unlawful means."

So that brings us to the question: what means do Communists conceive as being used in such a change? The workers will take over the mines, mills and shops—yes, but how?

Would they, in such a period of crisis as we have envisaged, enter into a political campaign, and elect senators and representatives pledged to submit to the legislatures of the forty-eight states a Constitutional Amendment transferring ownership of certain duly specified private properties, with or without payment, as the case might be; and would they then enter into legislative campaigns in the said forty-eight states to elect representatives duly pledged to ratify this Constitutional Amend-

ment? And—if their representatives had not been expelled from Congress and the various state legislatures before any of this could happen, what would they do in case the Supreme Court (appointed for life) pronounced the enforcing law unconstitutional—as it should, or what is a Supreme Court for? Would they, the majority of the American people, knowing perfectly well what they wanted, pursue these absolutely peaceable and orderly and eminently legal methods of securing a change in the ownership of industry and incidentally of government (and remember that even so much as the hint of a strike *for the political purpose* of enforcing their will in this matter would be, as it is to-day, a crime)—would they pursue these strictly legal methods for years and years while industry remained at a standstill, and everybody starved? And would they, when their legal and orderly methods had run into the final snag of the Supreme Court, sit down and wait another sixty years or so (for Supreme Court justices are notoriously long-lived) until a new Supreme Court could be appointed?

The eyes of the district attorney are on me, and I must answer these questions, because if I failed to do so, my reticence would be taken to mean that I had something to conceal. And so I reply: *Maybe they would!*

But that forces me to ask another question. What would the capitalists be doing all this time? We know how gol-durn legal and orderly *they* are, from Ludlow, Coeur D'Alene, McKee's Rocks, Everett, Centralia, Butte, etc. Well, would they be waiting peaceably while the workers went about getting the legislatures of the various states to ratify the Amendment which would take their property away from them? Would they sit around their clubs and say, "Looks like in another three months we'll be out of a job—only three more states needed to ratify"—would they? The district attorney can answer that question himself, if he wants to.

The American workers will never have to face the choice of legal or illegal means when it comes to changing from Capitalism to Communism, because before that time comes there will have been a capitalist counter-revolution which will have swept away the last vestiges of traditional legality and constitutionality from our government. There may not be any state legislatures to submit an amendment to, nor any Congress to pass such an amendment. If we who now want such a change are denied representation in the law-making bodies, if what it really comes down to is a question of how the Man on Horseback, ruling by naked and illegal might, is to be thrown on the ash-heap by the workers of the nation, then I must say that the question is unimportant. It may be by a referendum of the American Congress of Soviets, it may be by a corporal's guard—I do not care.

Those are questions which I am willing to leave to the American workers to decide when the time comes. Why do I concern myself so deeply about a matter which is of

so little practical and immediate import? Because, and simply because—the devious and far-reaching implications which the Criminal Anarchy Act puts upon my remarks as a hypothetical Communist, compel me to show, in an equally roundabout way, what the tabooed word “revolution” really means. If I said, without explanation, that I believed in revolution, it would be legally taken to mean that I want to go out next Thursday morning in company with my fellow “Reds” and stick up posters to the effect that the Co-operative Commonwealth is hereby inaugurated. But on the other hand, if I say that I do not believe in revolution (as in this silly sense I certainly do not), then I am understood to be hypocritically pretending that I think a change from capitalist to working-class management of industry can be effected

by a series of municipal ownership bills here and there.

As a hypothetical Communist, let me merely say that I am prevented by the Criminal Anarchy Act from explaining to you exactly how remote my intentions are from criminal anarchy. There are, by a generous estimate, half a dozen people in the whole country who are eager to go out and start throwing bombs. But there are several hundred thousand people who want to start the working-class along the road to Communism. The Criminal Anarchy Act is not designed to restrain those six lunatics from throwing bombs; it is designed to keep the several hundred thousand Communists from explaining to the several million workingmen how much more orderly, peaceable, and generally better Communism will be than Capitalism. That is the truth.

NEW ENGLAND AFTERNOON

EVEN before our dinner was quite done,
It seemed that something happened to the sun—
While we had still one field of unraked hay.
Horizon-lightning slit the blackened day
As if one sliced a knife-blade through the sky.
Dad yelled at me to whip the horse, but I
Was moving faster than his words: old Prince
Seems ten years older, poor horse! ever since.

My hay-rake clutched and rolled into a mass—
As you roll matting up—the fragrant grass.
I sent the old horse at a gallop through—
So fast he could not snatch a straw to chew.
Every few yards I had to dump the rake
To drop the mountains clawed up in our wake.
Our clang and rattle made as bad a din
As fifty madmen, beating each his tin.

The staked hay-wagon, shaking dad and Bill,
Came rattling like a dice-box down the hill.
Bill's great straw-hat half jiggled and half blew
Where I had raked it up before I knew.
Dad, leaping off, forked windrows to a mound
The while Bill brought the sweating horses round.
“You've got to act alive now, Bill!” dad said.
Bill, spitting on his hands, cried, “Heave ahead!”
Dad seemed to spear great elephants of hay
And pitch them up to Bill to stow away.
Bill climbed on each still closer to the sky—
Yet kept his head out, hard as dad could try.
Before I'd made a generous dozen rounds
I was alone except for lessening sounds
Of wheels that ended on the far barn floor.
Never in our town's history, before
Or since, has so much hay, by any men,
Been mowed away so quick as that was then!
They looked so melting-sweaty when they came
They were like snow-men set before a flame—
And like men grimed with powder from a fight:
Piebald with hay-seed, O a dreadful sight!

No rest, however! They must lift, load, run
As soldiers in a battle serve a gun.

The thunder now broke almost with the flash;
The sky was cracked and dazzled with the crash.
Like charging ranks across the hills, the rain
Came at the double. Tree-barricades were vain
To stay its onset. Dad yelled “Cut for shelter!”
We scurried like routed soldiers, helter-skelter.
Prince did not need the whip. One reckless wheel
Took half the bar-way down. From his hind heel
Gravel and stones scratched up into my face.
I wish I had been driving in a race!
Dad didn't linger, then, to light his pipe:
He stood, leaned over, gave the pair a swipe
With the reins' end: it was as if he hit
Dynamite. Looking back, I saw him sit—
Quite suddenly and lucky not to lie.
Bill, not prepared for this, was straddled high;
Somehow he managed, nevertheless, to stick:
Never at sea, he says he's been sea-sick.
He rolled, tossed, smothered, almost drowned, in hay;
Grass-gags prevented what he had to say.
The great gray bulging, lunging, shaggy load,
Mammoth-like chased the horses up the road.
I saw it coming, and I swung the door
Wide, and they pounded in across the floor,
With stamping, backing, pawing, shouts of “Whoa!”
And jangling of heads and harness to and fro;
While I, outside, unhitched the twitching Prince
(I've often wished I had the same speed since!)
I ran him clomping in, just as the rain,
Like soldiers with the bayonet, leaped in vain;
While over them the big-guns of the thunder
Flashing and crashing, shot the sky asunder.
The hay was dry!—but rain could not have wet
Dad, Bill, and me, more than we were with sweat.
We felt a trifle tired, but anyway,
If we had killed ourselves, we'd saved some hay!

E. Merrill Root.

SONGS OF SEWING--By Hazel Hall

MONOGRAMS

I AM monogramming
Seven dozen napkins,
With table-cloths to match,
For a bride.

Ninety-one times my needle shall trace
The leaf-like scrolls that interlace
Each other; up the padded side
Of the monogram my eye shall guide
For ninety-one days where the stitches run;
And every day one more is done.

She is tall and fair;
She will be married
In June. . . .

The linen is fine as satin is fine;
Its shining coolness flaunts design
Of death-white poppies, trailing ferns,
Rioting richly from Grecian urns.

Ghost-flowers,
Cold, cold. . . .

All these patterned splendors fade
Before the crest my hands have made;
In the lifeless flax my stitches cry
With life my hands may not put by.

June. . . .
Real flowers—
Moist and warm to touch
Like flesh. . . .

And by and by with all the rest
Of intimate things in her bridal chest—
Gentle muslins and secret lace—
Something of mine will have a place;
Caught in these scrolls and filigrees
There will be that which no eye sees—
The bulk of a season's smothered wonder,
My ninety-one days stitched under and under.
They will be decking an altar
With white roses,
And lacing an aisle
With white ribbon. . . .

BUTTONHOLES

CUT a little opening
And overcast it, then—
Throwing the thread across each stitch—
Stitch it, round again.

A moment's stitching finds it
Finished—but not until
The sun has burned its beauty out
And dropped behind the hill.

PUZZLED STITCHES

NEEDLE, running in and out,
In and out, in and out,
Do you know what you're about—
In and out, in and out?

Fingers, going to and fro,
To and fro, to and fro,
Do you know the path you go—
To and fro, to and fro?

I might tell you why you're taking
Such good stitches—you are making
Out of linen fine as breaking
Ocean-spray upon a bluff—
Pleating for a Bishop's cuff!

I might make you understand
That a Bishop's white, white hand,
Because of you, will be more fair,
Will be raised in better prayer.

Even then, would you know
Why you're going to and fro—
Would you doubt what you're about,
Running in and running out?

NEEDLE, YOU MAKE ME REMEMBER

NEEDLE, you make me remember things. . . .
A path through a wood that ran like wine,
A turn, and the bubbling smell that clings
Close as breath to the lips of springs
Where the sun is sprinkled fine.

Needle, you have a path to run
Where never the boughs of trees have met
And never has escaped the rain of the sun,
But long is the way you have just begun. . . .
Needle, you make me forget.

England and the White Terror

I DON'T know to what extent you are concerned with the counter-revolution. But I assume that the course of reaction is as essential to your analysis of revolution as it is to mine. Budapest has a clear title to being the center of the European counter-revolution. Every thinking communist on the continent is following developments in Hungary eagerly.

I don't believe England's share in Hungary's White Terror has been recognized.

It all began with Colonel Cunninghame, the military representative of the British Empire in Vienna. Cunninghame submitted a proposal to Bela Kun on July 25, 1919, the burden of which was, "If you resign, England and her Allies guarantee that there will be no political persecutions whatsoever in Hungary." A week after this message was conveyed, Kun, threatened by Rumania's advance, resigned. Since then, 5,000 moderate socialists and communists have been butchered in Hungary; another 47,000 have been interned or imprisoned. Even the old conservative trade unions have been scattered to the four winds, and if a worker has the impudence to ask for more than starvation wages nowadays, Horthy has him thrown into a cell and whipped. But all this doesn't phase the well-manicured Colonel Cunninghame. You know how it is with agreements signed by Allied diplomats. What's a promise among friends? The Colonel has long since forgotten his pledge to Bela Kun. Some day, the Colonel's promise will doubtless be published in the comic supplement to the British White Book.

When Sir George Clerk, British High Commissioner, came to Hungary in September, 1919, with orders from the Entente to build a new government, after the Soviets were dissolved, the first thing he did was to order the Rumanian troops to withdraw beyond the river Theiss, thus leaving the Magyar White Guard as the only armed force in Hungary. It was easy for Horthy to declare himself Regent of Hungary, shortly after he invited Sir George to accompany him on a hunting trip on the royal estates.

A few weeks ago, Sir George was openly charged with being responsible for the White Terrorist government in Budapest—the régime that has been rescued from destruction only by the British aegis. Sir George answered this accusation with his historic knack for repartee: "Horthy," he said, "is a gentleman." I wonder how many socialists one has to slaughter or imprison before one can pass muster as a gentleman.

England's motives in Hungary haven't been very deep. Britain had grabbed Batum and Baku and their rich oil fields from the Russian workers. She didn't even

bother about the conventional mandate. Then she looked around for a port, through which she could ship this Batum oil. It could only be transported via the Danube, and so the English government staked out her claim at Budapest. Moreover, the control of Hungary gave English commerce a strangle-hold on all Danube navigation. Any Hungarian government that recognized the divine right of British imperialism would do in a pinch. Horthy met this requirement. Lloyd George was more interested in Danube water than in Hungarian blood. Horthy's Hungary forthwith became a suburb of London, and Budapest a British harbor.

And so, naturally, I wasn't surprised last January when I heard that a person named Hohler had been appointed British High Commissioner to Hungary. Hohler is an old pal of Horthy. They used to play about together down at Constantinople, before the world was made safe for gentlemen. Ever since Hohler arrived in Budapest, he's been informing the British government that things in Hungary are as peaceful and unruffled as a Quaker meeting. Thousands of people have appealed to Hohler to help them; they came with stories of "vanished" husbands, murdered fathers, and violated daughters. Hohler says there is no White Terror in Hungary. I guess Hohler is a gentleman, too.

Dr. Barczy, a Tory who was Mayor of Budapest for twelve years—and who has been serving, a little reluctantly, as Horthy's Minister of Justice, tells me this story:

"Hohler came to see me," said Dr. Barczy, "and asked whether there is actually a White Terror in Hungary to-day. I happened to know that Hohler has been in Budapest for four months. I couldn't understand how an English ambassador who has seen things in Budapest for himself, and who has been living where they talk of nothing but the Terror,—I just couldn't grasp how he could ask such an absurd question. I just couldn't help laughing at the ludicrousness of it. A few days later, Hohler told one of my friends that he'd been to visit me. 'And,' continued Hohler, 'when I asked Barczy whether there is such a thing as a White Terror here, he laughed at the absurdity of such a suggestion.'"

The *Daily Herald* of London published a story about

The possibilities of a LABOR FILM SERVICE backed by the labor and radical elements are tremendously self-evident!

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the British officers in Budapest, who went, as amused spectators, to witness the hanging of Korwin and Laszlo, two of the martyred communists. Lloyd George denied this story. Baron Hatvany's chauffeur has now publicly admitted that he drove the auto in which the English officers went to watch the executions. The chauffeur says he stood next to the officers while they enjoyed the spectacle. He says they liked it more than a cricket match.

It was at the end of March that the Magyar White Guard drew into the town of Tiszefüred (on the left bank of the Theiss). Though Tiszefüred has only 5,000 inhabitants, 400 of them, who avowed in the face of the White Guard that they are socialists, were dragged away to Eger, where they were interned. As socialists, they were naturally tortured. It happened that this detachment of the White Army was accompanied by two English officers—some of the order-maintainers, no doubt. When the treatment of the 400 prisoners at Eger became intolerable, the Catholic priest there appealed to the two English officers on behalf of the interned socialists. The two Englishmen actually spoke to the White Guard commander. The Hungarian authorities promised to release the prisoners within 24 hours, providing that they signed a document, swearing that they had not been maltreated. The interned men agreed to this lie as the price of their freedom. The statements, containing the 400 prisoners' signatures, and attesting that they had no fault to find with the Whites' behavior; were duly shown to the two British officers, who, satisfied that the reports of atrocities had been invented, left Eger for Budapest. Of course, you've guessed the rest. Yes, the 400 socialists were held, and are to-day interned at Eger, suffering the same old brutalities. Meanwhile, the two English officers, to the eternal delight of Horthy, Hohler & Co., have reported officially that accounts of atrocities at Eger are baseless.

And then there's the little affair of Captain Johann Ransenberger, the Magyar White officer who crossed the Austro-Hungarian frontier at Wiener Neustadt on March 5th. He succeeded in slipping over the boundary by showing the customs authorities an official passport from the British Military Mission in Budapest. The pass was issued to "Mr. John Ransenberger," who (so the document read) is a member of the British Military Mission. The passport, which a friend of mine saw, was officially sealed and signed by the head of that British Mission. Five days later, Captain Ransenberger was caught when he attempted to break into the hospital at Stöckerau, where Bela Kun was then interned. He admitted that he intended to "get" Kun, and had come to Austria for that purpose. It wasn't widely known then that 250,000 crowns had been placed on Kun's head by Horthy.

But the Union Jack has other uses. It has been float-

ing above trainloads of munitions, constantly streaming from Austria into Hungary—to keep the socialist workers from overthrowing the counter-revolution. The munitions are being used up. But the revolutionary spirit of Hungary's proletariat is not much longer to be curbed. I can't help remembering another day, when British labor had to deal with one of Horthy's predecessors.

It was just after the revolution of 1849 that General Haynau, commander-in-chief of the Austrian army, acquired the title (now bequeathed to Horthy, of Hungary's Hangman. Haynau, supported by the Czar, bathed the Hungarian revolutionists in their blood—after they had dropped their weapons. Horthy—pardon me—Haynau imprisoned relatives of the rebels and flogged their women-folk. A year later, Haynau went to England. Being born German, he at once visited Perkins' brewery where they produced more beer than his province, Hessen, could drink. The brewery workers heard that Hungary's Hangman had come to their premises. A crowd of laborers collected about him. One of them playfully tossed a bundle of hay on General Haynau's head. Blows and kicks followed. The General fled, as the workers shouted after him, "That's how we receive a man who hangs rebels!" And the newspapers of London then wrote, "The rough but honest brewery workers have preserved England's honor."

Communists are accustomed to refer to proletarian dictatorship as the sole alternative to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Anyone who still believes this is just an empty phrase should come over and learn the lesson of Hungary. The most revolutionary worker and the scion of Magyar nobility have one conviction in common: "For us," they both say, "there can be revolution or counter-revolution. There is no compromise!"

The counter-revolution has, in this respect, kept its word. Horthy has made "Communism" synonymous with Death; he has hounded the most tepid mensheviks into exile, thrown pale little liberals into cells, and erected a feudal edition of Czarist Siberia right in the heart of Europe. He has condoned the raping of socialist women by his White Guards; he has winked slyly at atrocities that none but a pen able to deal with obscenities could describe.

But Sir George tells us Horthy is a gentleman.

FREDERICK KUH.

Budapest, Hungary.

The LABOR FILM SERVICE has been organized primarily to serve the supreme ideal of helping human progress through the effective utilization of the motion picture.

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BOOKS

Our Debs

Debs: His Authorized Life and Letters, by David Karsner. (Boni and Liveright).

I CANNOT say that I like the Gospel according to St. David Karsner; nor the gentle Debs, meek and mild, who is therein presented. I do not doubt that there is that aspect of Debs, the aspect of loving-kindness; indeed, Mr. Karsner authenticates his description with innumerable letters and speeches, in which Debs stands clearly revealed as one of those rare persons to whom the Brotherhood of Man is not a phrase or a dream, but a living reality. Debs loves us all, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks and Opportunists, common men and congressmen and capitalists, without exception; he can't help it. He loves his enemies; he loves his jailers; he loves—yes, he probably loves even the editors of the New Republic. He is built that way. But some of the rest of us are not; some of us not only do not love our fellow-man, but we don't particularly see why our fellow-man should trouble to love us. And as for Debs, we not only feel altogether unworthy of his love, but even a little embarrassed when we think about it. We are sort of bothered by a biography like this of David Karsner's. It is true enough; but it is not our truth. Besides Debs the great souled, there is another Debs—Debs, the clear-minded, the far-sighted. There is iron beneath the warm affection of his hand-clasp; there is even, we may be permitted to suspect, irony there. He loves his fellow-man, but he can see through his fellow-man, too; he knows what his fellow-man is up to all the time! His is a kindly realism, but it is realism none the less—not sentimentalism, as one might suppose who observed only his manner.

Take his reception of the committee from the Socialist party who came to Atlanta prison to offer him the nomination. All the world has doubtless heard by this time that Debs kissed the committee. It is a thing not generally done in American politics. It is hard to imagine Senator Harding kissing a committee of Republicans. But neither can you imagine Senator Harding spanking the Republicans and sending them to bed without any supper. And that is what Debs did to the committee of Socialists. He kissed them as a father

might his naughty infant before administering chastisement. Debs loves the Socialist party; but don't imagine for a moment that he doesn't know what the Socialist party has been up to in his absence! What he said to them—gently as he said it—must have blistered their consciences.

But not all the world—and perhaps not even all the Socialist world—knows what it was Debs said to that committee. That's the trouble with people like Jesus Christ and Gene Debs; their kind sayings are remembered and their stern ones forgotten; but you can depend on it, Jesus wasn't crucified just for being nice to people, nor Debs put in prison for being the kindest man alive. So if you don't know what Debs said to that committee, here it is; and if you do know, read it over again; it is worth remembering:

"I must be perfectly frank with you. I have read the platform adopted by the convention, and I wish I might say that it had my unqualified approval. It is a masterly piece of writing, and it states the essential principles of the Socialist movement. But I think it could have been made more effective if it had stressed the class struggle more prominently, and if more emphasis had been laid on industrial organizations. I do not believe in captious criticism, but I want to be frank with you, and state my position. I must do this if I am

A number of good friends of the Liberator have written to say that they cannot afford to contribute even a dollar to the Paper Fund. We would like to suggest to them that they can help us even more, in the long run, by sending us someone else's dollar for a new subscription.

Turn to page eleven and read the Editorial Announcement once more. Do you know any magazine that can offer its readers a brighter prospect than that? Read it aloud to some friend of yours who is not a regular reader of the Liberator, and then ask him to give you one dollar for a five months' subscription.

Will you try that to-day and let me know how it works?

*Margaret Lane, Business Manager,
138 West 13th St., New York.*

One must admit the necessity of the LABOR FILM SERVICE in times such as these.

(See Back Cover)

to prove worthy of the high confidence reposed in me.

"However, a platform is not so important, after all. We can breathe the breath of revolution into any platform. . . .

"I have always been a radical, never more so than now. I have never feared becoming too radical. I do fear becoming too conservative. We must guard

"Many books have been written on the same subject, but few have approached it from the standpoint of such wide experience and in so comprehensive a fashion."—*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.

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against any policy or attitude of fear to state our position clearly. Socialist platforms are not made to catch votes. Our purpose should be to state the principles of the party clearly to the people. There is a tendency in the party to become a party of politicians instead of a party of the workers. That policy must be checked, not encouraged. We are in politics not to get votes but to develop power to emancipate the working class. I would not do or say anything to catch a vote for the sake of that vote. Our duty is to tell exactly what we seek to accomplish, so that those who come to us do so with no misunderstanding. . . .

"Before serving time here I made a series of addresses supporting the Russian revolution, which I consider the greatest single achievement in all history. I said at that time that I was a Bolshevik. I am still a Bolshevik, but I am not a Russian Bolshevik in America. I regret that the convention did not see its way clear to affiliate with the Third International without qualification.

"There is some difficulty about that unfortunate phrase about the dictatorship of the proletariat. A 'dictatorship' does not imply what we mean. It is a misnomer. Dictatorship is autocracy. There is no autocracy in the rule of the masses. During the transition period the Revolution must protect itself. The French Socialists in their recent congress took what I believe is the correct attitude, that everyone believes in a dictatorship as a thesis. But it is an unfortunate term, and leads to misrepresentation. I am sorry it is used. I am opposed to dictatorship in every form. We are for freedom and equal rights. When we say we are for dictatorship, we give the capitalist press opportunity to attack us. Phrases do not make a revolution. . . .

"What I have said here is for the purpose of maintaining my own integrity. I could say it more clearly if I had the opportunity to write. I wish I could issue a formal statement. . . .

"I heartily support the Russian revolution without reservation. I should avow fealty to the Third International, but it has no right to commit us to any tactics whatever in this country. It has always been a fundamental policy to reserve the right to all parties to determine their own tactics. . . .

In copying these words from the *New York Call*, I have left out some remarks in which the kindly Debs of Mr. Karsner's book appears. What is left is kindly enough, heaven knows, but it reveals the iron integrity which is fundamental in Debs. Here speaks the man

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have demanded a clear statement of the real issue involved.

He believes that the issue involved in the separation of left-wing elements from the Socialist party is not a question of Socialist principles. It is a question of courage, or rather of mistaken ideas of discretion. If the rank and file of the Socialist party had explicitly repudiated the principles of Socialism, as carried to victory in Russia, Debs would have been, I think, the first to leave the Socialist party. The fault with which Debs charges the leaders of the party, in the gentlest but most unmistakable terms, is the fault of hesitating to tell what Socialism really is for fear of losing votes. If there is a more clear-cut distinction than that between the Socialist party as a whole and the two Communist

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parties, if they stand for revolution and the Socialist party for something else, then Debs is sadly mistaken.

But the Socialist movement in America has been thrown into confusion by the sudden and unexpected victory of the working-class revolutionary movement in an economically backward country; that victory has compelled us to think furiously, and to revise our tactics to meet the crisis which the vast and overwhelming, if as yet incomplete, breakdown of capitalism in Europe has thrust upon us. The crisis is to us in our confusion less an opportunity than a challenge. We are slowly adjusting ourselves to an understanding of it. Very soon, no doubt, we shall find ourselves divided into those who accept the challenge and those who evade it. But in America, remote as we are from the crux of the world-debacle, we have every reason to be temporarily muddled. It is to this state of Socialist muddlement that Debs addresses himself—not to any imaginary clean-cut division in America between Bolsheviks and

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renegades. He points the Socialist party to the right road—unqualified alignment with the Third International, and a domestic party policy unhampered by vote-catching and political-job-getting motives.

One thing that necessarily increases our muddlement is the use of new phrases. When Debs says, "During the transition period, the Revolution must protect itself," he has said all that is meant by "the dictatorship of the proletariat." The term is, as he says, unfortunate. It offends our idealism. The question is not, however, whether one approves of the term, but whether one approves of the fact. Debs approves of the fact. As for the term, which Lenin, in an endeavor to explain, called "a Latin, scientific, historical, philosophical term," it appears to be a product of the German nineteenth century reaction against sentimentalism—a reaction which took the form of calling one's belief by the ugliest possible name, instead of, according to our English and American practice, by the sweetest and prettiest name we can think of. Well, a dictatorship of the proletariat in America will be just as effective if we call it the Workers' Watch and Ward Law, or something like that,—as we probably will!

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use really mean? Do they mean Socialism, or liberal reform? I myself have no objection to a Socialist platform written in the latest slang, so long as it has the real Socialist punch in it. Nikolai Lenin was once reproached for using in a speech the phrase, "Rob the robbers." He pointed out in reply that this was a translation of the classic phrase, "expropriate the expropriators"; and he asked: "Must I speak Latin to my own people?" No, gentlemen and leaders of the Socialist party, you need not speak Russian to us, but look to it that what you do speak has the right meaning.

That is what I understand Debs to be saying to you from the prison doors as you leave him to go back and prepare your Socialist campaign. And it is the Debs whom we seem to hear saying these things to you, that we recognize, we others to whom the loving-kindness of your hero seems not his chief virtue, as our Debs. F. D.

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Whether your windows
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Long have I kept
Vigil below you
While others slept,
Thinking of footsteps
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That passed from your threshold
And came there no more.

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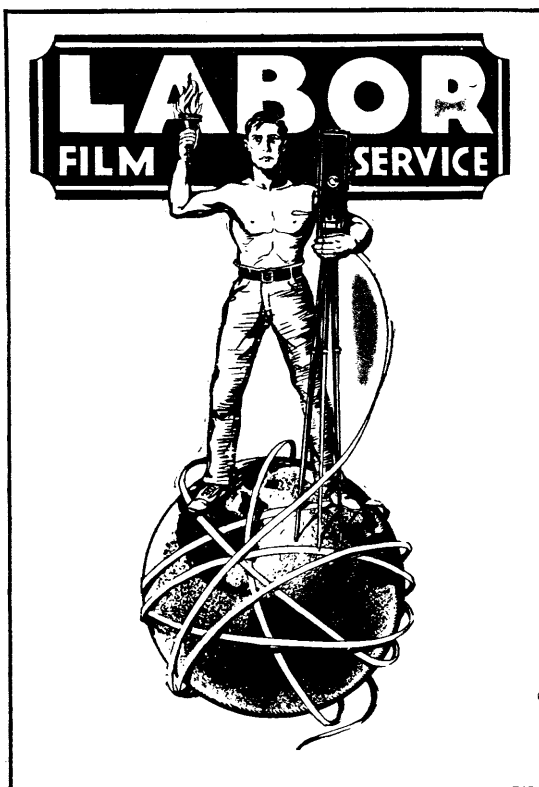
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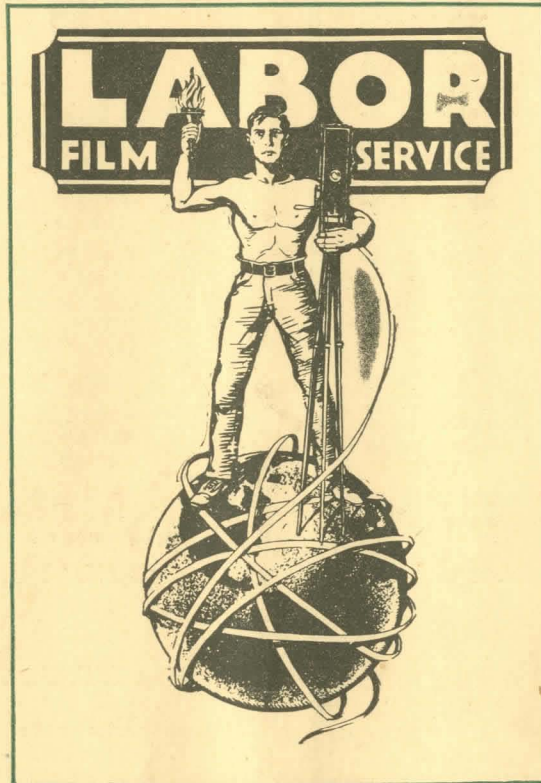
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The activities of the LABOR FILM SERVICE will be governed by the judgment of an advisory council drawn from the leaders of the Labor and Radical Movements.