

Liberator

September, 1919

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One Man Against Standard Oil

IS it possible, after all, that the Standard Oil Company does not own the State of Oklahoma? Is it conceivable that the Standard Oil Company should fail—actually fail—in its efforts to “get” a chosen victim? Is it thinkable that a workingman should be able, single-handed, to beat the Standard Oil in the courts and secure his freedom?

The Standard Oil has its answer to these questions, and is prepared to settle all doubts in the October term of court when the Krieger case comes up for, as the Standard Oil officials hope, the last time. They arrested Krieger in December, 1917. They did not have a warrant for his arrest. They didn't have to. They are the Standard Oil. And he was a member of the I. W. W. His offence was being in a Standard Oil town, Tulsa, Okla. For this same offence, the previous month, sixteen workingmen employed by the Standard Oil Company, who had been discovered to be members of the I. W. W., had been taken from the county jail by a crowd of prominent Standard Oil citizens, stripped, robbed of their wages, beaten with whips, tarred and feathered, and driven into the woods, after their clothes had been saturated with Standard Oil and burned up. This was done under the personal direction of the Standard Oil chief of police, and under the approving gaze of the Standard Oil editor of a Tulsa newspaper, who had published editorial incitements to such atrocities.

Naturally, in this case, there was no warrant needed for the arrest of Charles Krieger. They just put him in jail, and left him there. When they got ready, they would indict him, try him, and finish him off with appropriate legal ceremonies.

They got ready seven months later. In July, 1918, they formally charged him with having dynamited the front porch off the house of a Standard Oil official, and otherwise “conspiring to obstruct recruiting.” That was all. No proof was offered that he had had anything to do with the dynamiting. No proof was considered necessary. Neither was any connection suggested between the Standard Oil front porch and recruiting for the army. That wasn't necessary either. When they got ready, they would fix him.

They got ready in October, 1918. But something strange—something absolutely unique—happened. The judge before whom the case was brought quashed the indictment! He said that there was no evidence to connect the defendant with the crime; no evidence to show that Krieger had ever heard of the Standard Oil owner

of the porch; no evidence that he was in Tulsa at the time of the explosion, or that he even knew that it had happened. “The record,” he said, “is absolutely silent as to this man's knowing anything about the crime,” and so saying, ordered the release of Krieger within 24 hours.

The Standard Oil Company was both surprised and annoyed. The idea of their having to *prove* anything! Well, they would take it into their own hands and see that the matter was done properly this time.

They swore out a new warrant, re-arrested Krieger, and hired *their own attorneys* to prosecute. At the new preliminary hearing, the case for the prosecution was conducted by General Counsel Owen of the Carter Oil Company, and a criminal lawyer named Moss, who admitted in open court that he was being paid by the Oil Company.

At the same time, an old-time jailbird named Harper was introduced into the case as a witness for Standard Oil. Harper, who has been convicted for robbing a postoffice in Arkansas and done five years for a bank robbery in Missouri, and is now a hired stool-pigeon of Standard Oil, testified that Krieger had “confessed” to him. On the strength of this expert testimony, Krieger was remanded to jail, and is now awaiting trial.

Standard Oil is determined to “get” him this time. The kind of slip that happened before will not happen again.

Krieger, a straightforward young workingman, 27 years of age, absolutely guiltless of any crime except that of being a member of the I. W. W., is slated to spend the next twenty years of his life in prison, in order to prove that Standard Oil owns the State of Oklahoma.

But do you remember that a parade of Russian workingmen in far-away Petrograd, in behalf of “Tom Muni,” brought the Mooney case before the American nation? If you lived in Oklahoma, perhaps you would have to keep your mouth shut, for fear of being tarred and feathered by Standard Oil. Or perhaps you are afraid to protest, even though you live in New York, or Illinois, or California? If you are, the case will prove that Standard Oil owns not only Oklahoma, but the rest of the United States, too.

If you are not afraid, if you want to help one man fight the Standard Oil for his freedom—and perhaps for yours—write to the Krieger Defense Fund, care of THE LIBERATOR, 34 Union Square, New York, and tell us you want to help.

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Clive Weed.

2.75%

“Ye can hardly wash down your food with this weak, soapy beer, Mrs. O'Brien.”

“Yes, an’ worse than that, ye’ve hardly any food to wash down.”

THE LIBERATOR

Vol. 2, No. 9 (Serial No. 19)

September, 1919

EDITORIALS

EUGENE DEBS was transferred from the West Virginia prison, to which he was sentenced, and sent to the Atlanta penitentiary. It happened just as the hot weather of summer began to make the Atlanta penitentiary unbearable. In the West Virginia prison Debs had been given light work and comparatively decent quarters. His health was defended, and his age and the elevation of his motives were respected by those delegated to hold him in confinement. In the Atlanta penitentiary Debs is treated as a common criminal. He goes to work in the clothing department at 8 o'clock in the morning and works until noon. One hour is allowed for dinner, and at one o'clock he returns to the shop and works until 3:45. Twenty minutes is then allowed for outdoor recreation. Supper follows, and at 5 o'clock he is locked in his cell, and stays there until seven o'clock the next morning—fourteen consecutive hours.

This is the reward which our American republic gives to her most noble citizen—the man of whom a renowned scientist, Alfred Russel Wallace, said, "Eugene V. Debs is a great man;" of whom a renowned poet, James Whitcomb Riley, said, "God was feeling mighty good when he created Gene Debs;" the man whom the convention of the western railroad unions last winter applauded as the representative of American freedom. His lot under our government is to die in penal servitude.

The motive of the ruling class in transferring Debs to this place of more effectual torture, may be inferred from a laconic remark of Attorney General Palmer to a newspaper reporter who had spoken of Debs' refusal to accept a pardon which did not include general amnesty for all political prisoners: "He may change his mind."

Debs will not change his mind, and there is only one way to save his life and bring him back to the ranks of his fellow-citizens who love him. We must compel a general amnesty for all. That is the task which his true revolutionary attitude has placed upon the workers. It is the rallying point of the social-revolution.

The Railroads

IN less revolutionary times the demand of the railroad brotherhoods that "American railroads be vested in

the public, that those actually engaged in conducting that industry, not from Wall Street, but from the railroad offices and yards and out on the railroad lines, shall take charge of this service for the public," would sound almost like a revolution. "To capital, which is the result of yesterday's labor," say the brotherhoods, "we propose to discharge every just obligation. . . . We demand that the owners of capital, who represent only financial interests as distinguished from operating brains and energy, be retired from management, receiving government bonds with a fixed interest return for every honest dollar they have invested in railways."

The *New York Times* calls this "a venture into radical socialism—a very long step toward the principles of Lenin and Trotsky and of Soviet Government."

Of course the establishment of a fixed hereditary aristocracy of government bondholders is not actually a revolutionary step, but it brings us to a point from which a revolutionary step appears more simple and its necessity more obviously apparent. It is not a long or difficult inference from the knowledge that capital is the result of yesterday's labor, to the assertion that it belongs to today's laborers. That the railroad workmen will prove capable of making that inference, far sooner than any of us expected, appears not so much in what they say, as in the tone of voice in which they say it. They present their demands in the form of an ultimatum to the president rejecting his compromise proposal, and although they talk only of raising a ten million dollar fund for political propaganda, the threat of a general strike to back up this propoganda is implicit in their militant attitude. And that is in fact "a step in the direction of radical socialism." Perhaps it is an actual beginning of the dynamics of revolution in America.

We reflect with regret that Eugene Debs was born into Socialism at such a time, and under such influences, that it led him away from the actual industrial conflict to the lecture platform and the political rostrum exclusively. What a torch of inspiration his spirit would be in the railroad unions to-day! They will come to him in time. They will see the identity of his idea with their purpose before they are through, and they will remember his service in the old days, and perform their duty of releasing him from prison. But how much faster he could have led them to that point!

Bela Kun

THERE is reason to believe that Bela Kun fully realized the blow to the international revolution involved in the resignation of his government, and that he held out with persistent courage until his overthrow became inevitable. When that happened he was cool-headed enough—he was sufficiently disciplined in the school of practical revolutionary intelligence of which Lenin is the master—to resign. His resignation is a less damaging blow to the revolution than his violent overthrow and the massacre of his supporters would have been. Therefore we rejoice that he was not persuaded by any emotional rebels into making a gesture of martyrdom.

The Hungarian proletariat arrived at their dictatorship without passing through the experience of "moderate" socialism, or of coalition with the bourgeoisie. They are now passing through that experience. They are well on the road to a complete disillusionment, and Bela Kun, although not nominally in power, is more powerful than he was before. This at least is our sober inference from the facts at hand, and we can say without any bluster of false hope, "The Hungarian Soviet Republic is dead—long live the Hungarian Soviet Republic!"

In the Atlantic Monthly

IN answer to the question, "Has the soviet program undergone reforms or changes since the establishment of your government?" Lenin cabled this statement to the United Press: "The Soviet government did not have a reformist governmental program, but a revolutionary one. Reforms are secured from the dominating class while the latter's domination continues; consequently, a reformist program consists generally of many points in detail. Our revolutionary program consisted, generally speaking, of one point—overthrow of the landowners' and capitalists' yoke, wresting the power from them and liberating the working masses from their exploiters. This program we have never altered. Separately various measures aiming at the realization of our program have often been subject to alterations, enumeration of which would occupy a volume."

Lenin always speaks like a teacher, and there are many who might profit by this particular bit of instruction. I recommend it especially to a literarious phrase-maker in the *Atlantic Monthly*, who writes on "The Hoax of Bolshevism." The theme of his essay is that Lenin has deluded the Russian masses, and a great part of the working people of the world, into thinking there has been a Marxian revolution in Russia, whereas there has been no revolutionary change whatever and there will be none. The writer is able to believe this, because he

does not know what a Marxian revolution is, he does not know that it "consists primarily of one point—liberating the working-masses from their exploiters." And then, besides, he does not know what the word "exploit" means. As a consequence of this ignorance, he happens, in his effort to prove that there has been no social revolution in Russia, to prove conclusively that there has been one.

"The great industries of Russia," he says, "are to-day owned in one of two modes. Either they are private property; or, *as in most cases*, they are owned by the state. The state has become the capitalist. The workers are still being exploited."

The italics are mine. We all understand that the process of expropriating private capital in Russia was arrested because of the war of defense. We know that a certain number of industries remain in private hands. We believe, however, that very few even of these industries, actually pay interest or dividends on the capital invested; and as for those that are owned by the state, they pay no rent, profit or interest to anybody. In other words, the private capitalists have been expropriated in Russia "in most cases," and *exploitation*—which is the accumulation in the hands of an employing capitalist of the wealth produced over and above his wages by an employed laborer—no longer exists.

We should like very much to know exactly to what extent Marxian Socialism has been concretely enacted in Russia, and our minds are somewhat in suspense about it, but we cannot find out from this essay.

Milch Cows

BABIES are being born blind in the defeated countries because their mothers lack nourishment. They are dying after birth by hundreds of thousands. Little children are dying, and their mothers and fathers are dying of starvation. It is well known that what they lack most is butter and fats. Yet the Allies are celebrating their victory over these countries by demanding the surrender of an enormous number of "milch cows." In order to be able to speak of this crime with composure, we must assume, although we have inadequate ground for it, that these cows are to be distributed gratis among the poor people of the victorious countries who need them. These people also are in dire straits, but they are not actually starving, and they have the resources of the Entente and of the United States behind them. They are the allies of those who own and control the earth.

What would our humanitarian war-shouters and great Christian preachers of hate have said of "The Hun," if he had incorporated such a clause in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk? For once I believe they would have been speechless with horror, because there is no name that has come down out of history, not from Atilla nor

from Genghis Khan, that can adequately characterize a little group of cultivated old men torturing and mutilating the dying bodies of women and children.

Free Speech Again

FREMONT OLDER'S radicalism is of the anarchist type. It is religious rather than scientific, emotional rather than practical. His recent editorial in the *San Francisco Call*, giving the *LIBERATOR* a kindly reproof (and a generous advertisement) for excluding the publisher's announcement of John Spargo's book on Bolshevism from its pages, is characteristic. We have violated, he thinks, the sacred principle of Free Speech. We have put ourselves in the same reactionary class as the San Francisco police, who are trying to exclude the *LIBERATOR* from public sale. He calls this a "Victory for Burleson."

Let us present our view. The whole occidental world is swilled full and flooded over with malicious and criminal lies about the Bolshevik government. These lies are the principal weapons with which the great capitalists will destroy that government if they can. Opposing this daily and hourly flood of corrupt profitable propaganda, we have a few little idealistic socialist and extreme radical papers standing up alone like quivering reeds at the outlet of a sewer. Nothing in the world but the truth in their fibre sustains them.

The *LIBERATOR* is one of these papers. It lives at a perpetual money loss because it can not get regular capitalistic advertising. Along comes a publishing house with an offer of good money if we will accept a certain kind of advertising—advertising, namely, of exactly those capitalistic lies about the Bolshevik government which we are so bitterly struggling to stand up against. We refuse to be bought. We refuse to be persuaded into doing something whose practical effect will be the direct opposite of that to which our efforts are dedicated. We refuse to be persuaded by money. Fremont Older will understand that. But with exactly the same energy we refuse to be persuaded by religion, by an absolute ideal, whether it be the ideal of free speech or any other. Our loyalty is not to abstract ideals, our loyalty is to concrete purposes.

Race and Class

THERE is cause for hope of an ultimate adjustment of the race problem, in the fact that the Negroes are showing some power of resistance to white persecution. If large groups of Negroes have learned enough in the army about their own value and power, so that they are ready to defend themselves unitedly against criminal assaults from the Whites, these assaults will be far less frequent. The first fruit of this new attitude of the Negroes may be seen in the following despatch from Gilmer, Texas: "Four white men charged with

lynching Chilton Jennings, a Negro, here on July 24, were arrested today after investigation by the Upshur County Grand Jury." If the four men are convicted, it may establish a precedent for which a few "race-riots" is not too large a price to pay.

It is to be hoped, however, that the Negroes will realize that the economic problem, the problem of exploitation and class-rule in general, lies in the heart of the race-problem, and that it is more important for them to join revolutionary organizations of the general proletariat than the special organizations of their race.

From the British Workers

THE revolutionary progress of the British labor movement can be estimated from the fact that Robert Williams, who sends a cable to the American workers through this issue of *THE LIBERATOR*, is now at the head of the unions one of which three years ago, under the leadership of Havelock Wilson, refused to carry the Socialist delegates to Stockholm. At the General Council of the Federation of Transport Workers last June the nationalists, led by Havelock Wilson, Ben Tillet and W. Thorne, were defeated by the revolutionaries who recognize Bob Williams as their leader, with a vote of 213,000 to 67,000. Williams is an agitator of Marxian training.

The significance at this time of the message from the president of the British Railwaymen's Union, which it is also our privilege to convey to the American workers, needs no comment.

THE LIBERATOR

A Journal of Revolutionary Progress

Editors, Max Eastman
Crystal Eastman
Associate Editor, Floyd Dell
Business Manager, Margaret Lane

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Cornelia Barns, Howard Brubaker, Eugene V. Debs, Hugo Gellert, Arturo Giovannitti, Charles T. Hallinan, Helen Keller, Robert Minor, Boardman Robinson, Maurice Sterne, Alexander Trachtenberg, Louis Untermeyer, Clive Weed, Art Young.

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TO OUR AMERICAN COMRADES OF THE RAILROADS

From the President of the British Railroad Workers

(By Cable to The Liberator)

I DESIRE to extend you hearty greetings across the Atlantic. I understand that you are well organized in strong but sectional trade unions, that you have power to enforce comparatively good conditions of labor, but do not officially use the power of your unions to safeguard your civil liberties. I do not know of the circumstances surrounding your movement, but would like to give you the point of view of the National Railwaymen's Union of the United Kingdom.

We believe in the industrial form of organization.

We organize men on the engine, on the track, in workshops and in the factory departments of the rail service. We believe our industrial power should be used to advance and protect our interests wherever they may be threatened, whether in our industrial or civil life. Liberty really means more to us than bread.

At this moment we are taking the opinion of our members whether they intend to take industrial action in order to recover the liberties they have lost during the war. In conjunction with the Triple Alliance we are balloting our members to determine whether they will strike in order to compel the Government to cease making war on Russia, abolish conscription, and abandon the use of the military in labor disputes. We are not taking this step without grave thought. But in our dealings with the Government, it has again and again proved false to its promises and false to the people.

We believe that direct industrial action is our only recourse.

We hope that you will approve our position, and that further, you will find some way of acting through your unions according to your own usages, to uphold us. As the needs of labor become international, more and more we must pursue the same roads to freedom, peace and economic equality.

(Signed) C. T. CRAMP,

President of the National Union of Railwaymen of Great Britain and Ireland.

(LABOR PAPERS PLEASE COPY THE MESSAGE)

TO THE AMERICAN WORKERS

The General Transport Workers of all Grades and Sections in Particular

From the Secretary of the British Transport Workers

(By Cable to The Liberator)

WE in Great Britain, despite our conservative outlook, have fashioned an industrial organization which is probably the most potent ever created—the Triple Alliance. In this body we 300,000 Transport Workers have allied ourselves for defensive and aggressive purposes with 500,000 railroad workers, and 800,000 miners. We believe it is our duty to use every means in our power to challenge the institution of capitalism and its domination of the working people.

Hitherto we have devoted ourselves to matters of an exclusively economic and industrial nature, but compelling circumstances arising out of the world war and its aftermath require us more and more to envisage our work in its entirety, political as well as industrial. Every class-conscious act of the working people tends more and more to become a political act, and only fools would draw a clear dividing line between industrial and political action.

To-day, we of the Triple Alliance are challenging the Government's policy in maintaining conscription, military intervention in Russia, and military intervention in Trade Union disputes.

We see in the fight against the workers of Russia an attempt to safeguard the interests of English bondholders, and we realize, perhaps more by instinct than by reason, that the fight of the Russian and Hungarian proletariat is in fact our own fight. We know, moreover, through experience that conscription means the possibility of breaking strikes by means of the intervention of armed soldiers and sailors.

Therefore we are taking the only means at our disposal to compel the Government to abandon conscription and get out of Russia.

We earnestly hope that America will not be the stronghold of capitalism during this world-proletarian crisis which is at hand. America with its international origin should be in the van of the world movement for working-class liberty. May we therefore urge upon American trade-unionists the duty of assisting struggling Europe in what is not a make-believe but a real fight for freedom?

(Signed) ROBERT WILLIAMS,

General Secretary of the National Transport Workers' Federation of Great Britain

(LABOR PAPERS PLEASE COPY THE MESSAGE)

The Blood of Munich

By Hiram K. Moderwell

We sent Hiram Moderwell to Germany because we believed he had the cool head and persistent good judgment of a historian. We sent him for facts, and we are justified in this article, which presents for the first time in America the complete story of the Munich revolution.

SOME weeks ago Lenin issued to his followers everywhere a warning against "dilletante revolutions." It was just after the collapse of the Munich Soviet Republic. No one could doubt that it was Munich that he referred to.

A revolution proclaimed not out of conviction but out of anxiety! A Bavarian industrial republic with the chief industrial city opposed! Munich seized the sword of Revolution as a child might seize a toy—but it seized the blade, not the hilt. No one was more surprised at this revolution than the men who made it. Some of them did not want it until months later. Some of them did not want it at all. And the others, who wanted it immediately, opposed it when it came. At one time there were three distinct governments in Munich, each trying to arrest the other. Then a new strength came, the strength of despair. But already the blood-judgment was hung over the city and the beautiful dream came to an end in the rattle of machine guns.

* * *

It seems strange that the Soviet Revolution should come first in that part of Germany which is of all the most predominantly agricultural and Catholic. The answer is not that in Bavaria the revolution was strongest, but that the reaction was weakest. Bavaria is like an island in the German Empire, separated by a channel of traditional particularism which Prussia dared not cross. Behind this defense, which it guarded jealously, it was able to maintain its own civil administration, its own post, telegraph and railroads, and its own army. The Junker reaction, which, since the armistice, Berlin has dispatched systematically through Germany, had not ventured to touch Bavaria. The Bavarian revolution was relatively free to develop in its own amiable, dreamy way.

The external form of the inner German revolution is the system of workers', soldiers' and peasants' councils. The authority which they possess is the measure and substance of its being. And in Bavaria, almost alone of all the German states, the councils had in March not lost their power. After the February upheaval occasioned by the murder of Kurt Eisner, it was they and they alone which saved the situation and restored order. They summoned a parliament and dismissed it. They named

and countersigned the new Hoffmann ministry. They dictated a programme of general socialization (the first and only one hitherto in all Germany), and placed their own man, Dr. Neurath, in office to execute it. They dominated the Bavarian soldiers, over whose casernes great red flags still waved. The workmen in the smaller north Bavarian cities, above all in Industrial Nuremberg, were coming by thousands to recognize their authority. The Majority Socialists, fearful of losing their following, were joining in. Given the chance of peaceful development, there was no limit to the possible consolidation of power in the hands of the councils. Bavaria, with the form of a parliamentary republic, was fast coming to have the essence of a Soviet democracy. In all the rest of Germany there was no other situation like this. The Berlin government watched it uneasily, but dared not interfere.

* * *

But the Bavarian reaction, thoroughly alarmed, attempted its clumsy sabotage. First, the commission appointed by the parliament to collaborate with Neurath during its enforced recess, adopted the policy of saying no to each of his proposals. Then the minor parliamentary leaders (for the responsible party heads had given a formal pledge to the councils) drew up a list for a new middle-class Moderate Socialist ministry. Finally a call was issued for a new session of the parliament for Tuesday, April 8, in defiance of the agreement made with the councils.

In the meantime a lively propaganda had been carried on in north Bavaria against the councils. The peasants were incited through the agency of the Catholic party, the conservative workmen through the right Majority Socialists, and the middle class through the German Democratic or liberal party. But above all, the reaction played upon the association which exists in the popular mind between all Socialist movements and the alleged terrorism of Soviet Russia. But now one must note a particular resource in the technique of the Junker propaganda, still cultivated exactly as it was during the war. When it cannot find any atrocity of which to accuse its enemy, it accuses him of *atrocious intentions*. Hence north Bavaria was flooded with stories of the violence and terror which the Munich councils were *contemplating*. As an active weapon a citizens' strike was prepared.

Do Americans know what a citizens' strike is? It is, before all else, a strike of those professional persons who hold life and death in their hands. When a "citizens' strike" is in force, as it has been several times in Ger-

many during the Revolution, the physicians refuse to come to the home of a workman whose child is at the point of death, the midwives refuse to attend the delivery of a baby, the druggists refuse to sell medicines, and the officials in charge of food supplies lock up their shops and warehouses and put them under military guard. Middle-class newspapers boast that this measure quickly brings the workmen "to their senses."

Here is part of an appeal for a citizens' strike issued from Nuremberg in the early days of April:

APPEAL

TO ALL CITIZENS, TO OFFICIALS, TEACHERS, PHYSICIANS, DRUGGISTS, TO THE PEASANTS AND TO PRUDENT WORKMEN IN CITY AND COUNTRY. MEN AND WOMEN:

Spartacists, Communists, Solidarists, and whatever they are called, are again at work. New acts of violence are in preparation. Our poor fatherland, bleeding from numberless wounds, is to be utterly ruined. . . .

The citizens' strike must be our salvation if unscrupulous elements, such as are especially at work in Munich, demand the general strike. Men and women in city and country! Awake! Become conscious at last of your strength! You are a power which cannot be overcome. Hold together and *prepare yourselves everywhere for the general strike*. Nuremberg, in April, 1919.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY,
GERMAN PEASANTS' LEAGUE (A political organization of the Democratic Party.)

So war was declared.

* * *

The sabotage of the reaction stirred the impressionable Muencheners enormously. They streamed by the hundreds from the Majority Socialist Party to the Independents and the Communists. They demanded of their leaders that the revolution be protected. The words, "Soviet Republic" were in the air.

On paper none of the leaders were in favor of proclaiming a revolution. The Majority Socialists by their party doctrines were opposed to giving more power to the councils and were committed to parliamentarism, not to say inaction. The Independent Socialists were officially opposed to the formal proclamation of a soviet state until the revolution had reached a further stage of development. The Communists were cold to the soviet agitation in its present form and, as it later appeared, flatly opposed. North Bavaria was notably indifferent, if not actively antagonistic. The Independents in that section were like mules against the whip. The parties were helpless to secure unified action.

Nevertheless, the leaders uneasily observed that their power over the masses was slipping from them. They began to consult with each other, and in private to exchange strange words.

Was this a situation out of which a serious revolution was to be made? In retrospect the action of the Munich leaders seems criminally frivolous. The most charitable estimate is that it was the action of—dilletantes.

A little statesmanship could have diverted the energies of the south Bavarian workers to the defense of their authority, while holding them in check until the industrial cities of the north came in line. No political prophecy concerning Germany can be more confidently set down than that the Bavarian Soviet Republic could have been successfully proclaimed if, under capable leadership, it had waited two months longer. But the leaders, save only a handful of radicals, could see no further than their jobs.

Two events threw them into panicky action. The Munich Soldiers' Councils, learning of the intended irregular sitting of the parliament, announced that they could not give it their protection; and the Augsburg Workers' Council clamored for a soviet proclamation on the spot.

Niekisch, Majority Socialist president of the Zentralrat, or Supreme Council (the chief executive organ of the Bavarian council system), was worried. On Thursday, April 3, he went to Augsburg with the avowed intention of holding the local council in check. He saw the mood there, lost his head, and came out for a Soviet Republic. The Augsburg council was all but unanimous.

The next day emissaries from Augsburg were in Munich demanding instant action. In the Hof Brau Haus, over the dark beer, the factory councils, the trades committees and the delegates of the unions met in greatest excitement at the summons of the Zentralrat. The leaders were either purposeless or helpless. The Communists criticized but had no programme. The Majority Socialist party was demoralized. The Independents, though declaring their readiness to execute the decisions of the proletariat, counselled delay. Seeing the impulsive mood of the meeting, they proposed the most radical stipulations they could think of in an effort to frighten off the Majority Socialists. But all their most fearsome conditions were accepted with a light heart. The council leaders, Majority Socialists and Independents alike, were for the immediate proclamation of the Soviet Republic. The resolution passed by acclamation.

But now the relatively small Communist party objected. They left the hall after issuing the following statement:

"Having regard to the fact that the proclamation of the Soviet Republic appears not as a product of the strength of the class-conscious proletariat, but as a product of the anxiety of the leaders whom the masses are prepared to dismiss, the Communist Party of Germany declares that it regards this Soviet Republic as a type of state which is being created over the heads of the masses by a group whose members have not enjoyed their confidence. The only Soviet Republic acceptable to us is

one which places itself unreservedly on communistic grounds, that is, on the right of dictatorship deriving from the will of the potent majority of the class-conscious proletariat, and which bases itself on the council organization in the factories and on the continuous possibility of the recall of its representatives."

That night, the Zentralrat met, and virtually decided upon the revolution. Schnepfenhorst, Majority Socialist minister of war in the Hoffmann ministry, guaranteed that he would bring the Nuremberg Council into line.

On Saturday evening enthusiastic mass meetings were held all over Munich. At the same time, the Zentralrat, the Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, the factory councils and the central committee of the Peasants' Councils, under Gandorfer, met in the Hof Brau Haus and drew up the formal proclamation of the Soviet Republic, which was placarded over the city the next day, in these words:

TO THE PEOPLE OF BAVARIA:

The decision has been made. Bavaria is a Soviet Republic. The working population is master of its own destiny. The revolutionary working class and peasantry of Bavaria, including thereunder their brothers, the soldiers, no longer divided by party, are united in the resolve that there shall be no more exploitation and oppression. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which has now become a fact, aims at the realization of a genuine socialist commonwealth in which every worker shall have a share in the public responsibilities, a just socialist-communist economy.

The parliament, that sterile structure of an outlived bourgeois-capitalistic age, is dissolved; the Ministry which it established has withdrawn. Representatives appointed by the councils of the workers, responsible to the people, receive as commissaries for specified spheres of work extraordinary powers. Their helpers will be tried men drawn from all groups of the revolutionary Socialists and Communists; the many capable workers in the civil service, including the lower and middle officials, are called upon to render vigorous co-operation in new Bavaria. The bureaucratic system will, however, be speedily exterminated.

The press is socialized.

For the protection of the Bavarian Soviet Republic against attack within and without, the government assumes brotherly relations with the other German peoples, but refuses to work in any way with the despicable government of Ebert, Scheidemann, Noske and Erzberger, since these men, under the flag of a Socialist Republic, continue to maintain the imperialistic, capitalistic, militaristic regime of the German empire which has collapsed in shame.

Revolutionary Bavaria calls upon all the brother-peoples of Germany to follow its course. It sends its greetings to all the proletariat, wherever it fights for freedom, justice and revolutionary Socialism, in Württemberg, in the Ruhr district, in the whole world.

As evidence of its joyful hope for a happy future for all humanity, the 7th of April is declared a national holiday. To commemorate the first day of liberation from the accursed era of capitalism, work will cease on Monday, the 7th

of April, in all Bavaria, in so far as this is not necessary to the life of the working class, concerning which immediately further ordinances are being issued.

Long live free Bavaria! Long live the Soviet Republic! Long live the world revolution!

Munch, April 6, 1919.

THE REVOLUTIONARY ZENTRALRAT OF BAVARIA.

Then the news came that Schnepfenhorst had spoken against the Soviet Republic in Nuremberg and that the Workers' Council there had voted to support the Hoffmann government. Hoffmann and the remaining ministers had fled to Bamberg.

And Schnepfenhorst had gone with them.

It is easy to blame Schnepfenhorst as a traitor or as an *agent provocateur*. But Schnepfenhorst was neither. He was a much more common thing, a Socialist who wanted to hold his job. In radical Munich he was for the Soviet Republic; in cautious Nuremberg, against it.

The Communists were right in saying that the revolution was the product of the anxiety of the leaders. They were partly right in saying that it was not based on the will of the class-conscious proletariat, who, though the driving power of the revolutionary proclamation, had no very clear image of what they were doing. But the real point they missed. The real point was that the revolution should not have been proclaimed until Nuremberg, at least, to say nothing of Würzburg and Regensburg, Ingolstadt and Hof, were safe. Only dilettante leadership could have overlooked so significant a detail. With one outstanding leader, such as Eisner, or with a reasonable will to unity among the various leaders, the proclamation could have been withheld until the ground was prepared, and revolutionary action could have been synchronized in all the industrial centres. Again, they seem here, as elsewhere in Germany, to have been impatient of peculiarly German forms of organism and growth, and too eager to cut everything to the Russian measure—a fault which was the subject of another warning from Lenin. Their indiscriminating distrust of all leaders save themselves helped to bring disunity and disaster.

The Majority and Independent leaders were dimly conscious that they ought to wait. But they felt their hand forced by the impending citizens' strike, by the growing secession movement in north Bavaria, and what not. Yet they need not have been so anxious. The citizens' strike, if unprovoked, would have been a fiasco; the parliament had no material authority, and the secession movement would have taken months to develop.

What the Zentralrat should have done was to take the Hoffmann ministry under its protection, as against the parliament which was, contrary to pledges given, threatening to depose it. This would have been equivalent to arresting the ministry and preventing the formal authority of the Bavarian state from slipping into the hands of the counter-revolution. In the meantime, all the sabotage of the reaction, all the opposition to Neu-

rath's socialization, would have been so much agitational material for the Soviet Republic among the workers of north Bavaria, and the threats of a citizens' strike would only have excited revolutionary passion the more. As the inevitable tide to the left developed, a capable council from the various cities could have timed the revolution to the day.

But in Munich, on April 5, all difficulties seemed to have been miraculously removed. The bars were down; the flock scampered into pasture, and the spirit of Kurt Eisner was its shepherd.

* * *

It was the most well-intentioned revolution that could be imagined. Disorder and bloodshed were the things which the revolutionary leaders feared above all else. The dictatorship of the proletariat, certainly! But what has this to do with violence? What the leaders were aiming at was not the "stern dictatorship" of the Communists, but the end of class struggles, the brotherhood of man, the realization of economic schemes worked out with too much care in the study.

Chief among them were Niekisch, sliding comfortably with the crowd; Erich Muehsam, talented essayist and amateur philosophical anarchist; impulsive Silvio Gesell, with his theory of vanishing returns on property; and excitable Lipp, who out of the wisdom of his hopes informed Lenin by wireless that north Bavaria was "in flames" when north Bavaria was either indifferent or doggedly counter-revolutionary. Reichardt, who became commissary for military affairs, was the gentlest of warlords; a few weeks previously he refused my invitation to lunch because he had promised his wife, when he came home from the war, that he would take every possible meal with her.

But the spiritual leader of all these men was Gustav Landauer. Landauer later figured in the German newspapers as one of the seven devils of Munich. Yet every German editor knew who Landauer was. A poet, a crusader, with the passionate dreaming soul of 1848. A sensitive man, a man whom every one loved; a devoted admirer of Walt Whitman, whose work he made known to Germany. Because he loved beauty so passionately in pictures and books, he must perforce also love it in the world of men. And so he was drawn into the Socialist movement. Twice jailed for resisting the tyranny of Prussian militarism, twice discharged from his editorial job for resisting the tyranny of Socialist dogma, he had been forced to earn his living as clerk in a book store, as hack writer, as lecturer to women's clubs. It was Walt Whitman and Tolstoy, never Marx and Lassalle, whom he hoped to realize in new Bavaria.

"The spiritual in which you live," he wrote, "must become reality. The liberation from the world of old men and corpses, from the world of dead aims, from the world of injustice and capitalism, must become outward fact!" The Word shall be made Flesh! "First

we must become un-practical once more, then will something practical come out of our efforts! We must begin again at the beginning, and live together as craftsmen and peasants, and learn again to be kind and helpful to one another." This man, said the papers, was planning a reign of terror.

If Landauer praised the necessity of the un-practical, there was by his side one who was before all things practical, the twenty-five-year-old student Toller. As presiding officer of the Independent Socialist Party, and presently as president of the Zentralrat, he held the threads of action in his hands. He alone, it would seem, of all the Munich revolutionaries, understood. "We did not want the revolution," he said a few days afterwards, "until some months later. Only then would the people have come to an understanding of our aims. But the events overwhelmed us. We were obliged to act."

Yet he took practical account of the dangers inherent in the confused situation and forced guarantees to bind the Majority Socialists. He could not, however, effect guarantees against the capricious action of the Communists, who seceded after the die had been cast, viciously attacked the new regime, and (what was more serious) withheld their invaluable agitational support during the critical first week when propaganda should have been cementing all Bavaria. Toller, in a situation not of his own choosing, accepted the obligation manfully, and gave some direction to the revolutionary administration of Munich. Then, when the danger front had shifted, he assumed command of the red troops and led them to the first armed defense of Munich and to the capture of Dachau. And finally, when the catastrophe was at hand, when his alternative policies of energetic attack and of early negotiations with the enemy had both been rejected, when the Communist leaders had fled and nothing but slaughter impended, he went back to die with his soldiers. Patience, foresight, administrative ability, courage and unbreakable will, seem to have been in this young Napoleon of the working class, who talked the politician and acted the hero.

"If they will only give us a few weeks' time," he wrote to a friend in the early days of the revolution, "all will be well. If not, then it will have been only a beautiful dream."

But the reaction did not give them even a week. By Wednesday all north Bavaria was covered with placards denouncing "the Munich madness" and "the Spartacist terror." The peasants were incited to fury against Gandorfer, and volunteer corps were organized to march against the capital. Soldiers appeared in all the cities which were still neutral. The ancient walls and towers of Nuremberg bristled with machine guns.

From the peacefulness of Munich the Hoffmann gov-

*Later press dispatches report that Toller was captured and—having been saved from the death penalty by the protests of the Young Socialist Leagues of Europe—sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

ernment, now sitting in Bamberg, must have been misled into thinking that the new regime was a joke. (It is one of the quaintest fancies of the day that a Soviet regime cannot be actual unless there is general murder.) For the first few days it contented itself with sending aeroplanes to bombard Munich with hand-bills which seem to have bothered nobody.

But on Saturday afternoon there were rumors of an approaching upheaval. A crowd of workingmen tried to press its way into the railroad station, which was held by the *Republikanische Schutzwache*, one of the two regiments which was known to be favorable to the Hoffmann regime. The soldiers replied with rifle shots and there were seven wounded—the first blood of the revolution.

The Communists became uneasy. They began holding conferences and forming committees. They were evidently preparing for action on their own account. But events now gave the situation into their hands.

The same evening there appeared in the casernes of the *Republikanische Schutzwache* and the first Leibregiment the Loewenfeld brothers, with a secret commission from the Hoffmann government. They made speeches to the soldiers, explaining that the revolution had failed, that the Hoffmann government was everywhere in power, and that the Soviet regime would fall at the first push. Besides the Hoffmann government would raise their pay. Were they agreed? The soldiers, who had never openly accepted the new regime, were agreed.

Forthwith they began systematically pulling members of the revolutionary government out of their beds and declaring them under arrest. By Sunday morning they believed the ground was prepared for their coup.

Sunday is the favorite day for coups in Germany. In most of the cities there are no papers published from Sunday morning to Monday noon; the workers have ceased for the day to be a corporate body, and are scattered among their homes or on pleasant jaunts with their families in the country. So on Sunday morning there appeared mysteriously all over Munich a poster announcing that the revolution was over, the Soviet government was no longer in existence, and that the Hoffmann ministry was returning. The poster was signed "THE GARRISON OF MUNICH."

Later in the day there appeared another poster, which is very significant in the light of later events. It, too, was signed, "THE GARRISON OF MUNICH," and it read as follows:

"The Garrison has arrested a number of the chief ringleaders, several members of the Zentralrat, the arresting committee, etc., Dr. Wadler, Erich Muehsam, Killer, Soldmann. In case the Zentralrat or other persons take any hostages or lay hands on the representatives of the Hoffmann government, those arrested will be shot."

This is the first mention of hostages in the Munich revolution. The threat of the Hoffmann troops to treat

the arrested persons as hostages to be killed in case of further resistance, is definite and categorical.

When Munich read these bills there was general astonishment and uncertainty. The situation belonged to any one who would seize it.

Sontheimer, a crabbed old anarchist who had for years been boring the Munich trade union meetings with his attacks on the Church, grabbed an armored car somewhere, and with a few Communists dashed through the streets distributing hand-bills. Now and then he passed a similar car manned by the *Schutzwache* and the two took pot shots at one another. Sontheimer's hand-bills summoned the proletariat to a mass meeting that afternoon on the Theresien Wiese, where the first Bavarian revolution started.

The meeting was enormous, and there were speeches and cheers, pledging long life to the Soviet Republic. Soldiers were there, too, to tell their comrades the workingmen that they had not signed the posters, had known nothing of them, and would in all events remain loyal to the Soviet Republic. The demonstrators then formed a parade and marched toward the inner city. In the Schiller Strasse they were met with a volley from the *Schutzwache* in the railroad station. A few persons were wounded and the parade dispersed.

But the revolutionary soldiers, especially the First and Second Infantry regiments, accepted the challenge. On their own initiative, they moved to the attack and after a two-hour bombardment of the station took possession of it. The counter-revolutionary troops had fled.

The Communists, with their doctrine of aggressive action, were now in command of the day. They summoned a meeting of the factory councils, which met in the Hof Brau Haus while the fighting at the railroad station was in progress. The Communist programme was sweeping. The Landauer-Toller regime, because of its inability to ward off the counter-revolutionary flurry, was to be disowned. The Zentralrat, and the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils in general, which had given that regime its mandate, were to be disregarded. (The Peasants' Councils were already lost beyond hope.) The programme was accepted. The factory councils, primarily economic and not political bodies, thus short-circuited the Zentralrat, declared themselves the source of political authority, and elected an executive committee of fifteen with the Russian Communists Levien and Levine-Nissen at its head. On motion of Levine-Nissen a general strike of indefinite duration was called "to celebrate the liberation of the people." All able-bodied workers were summoned to the red army, and state support was withdrawn from all unemployed who refused.

Immediately the new government moved into the city *Kommandantur*, and began exercising its power. Landauer was taken into custody. Toller, who called to learn what had happened, was arrested, though later released and placed at the head of the troops, subject to the orders

of the new commissary for military affairs, the Communist Engelhofer. Numbers of suspected counter-revolutionists were arrested.

King Log had made way for King Stork. The Communists' principle was that tactics must be conditioned by the military situation. It was a state of siege which they established in Munich, and everyone felt the iron hand. Arms by the thousands were distributed to the workers. An impromptu military organization was created, and in two days something like a *levee en masse* had been realized.

The dress rehearsal came sooner than any one had expected. On Wednesday evening handbills announced that "the White Guard is at the gates of Munich." True, a regiment of Hoffmann troops had in the night quietly slipped up to a suburb of the city and was preparing for the attack. When night came, the church bells rang throughout Munich. It was the tocsin of the French Revolution.

The workmen, in factory clothes or in the Bavarian feathered hats and multi-colored waistcoats, rushed through the streets, rifles in hand, to their formation posts. The soldiers marched out of their casernes. Toller organized the morning attack.

It was not resisted. Soon all Munich with its suburbs was being securely patrolled by the red guard. Toller then ordered an advance on Dachau, a few miles to the north, which was strongly held by Hoffmann troops. Here there was a pitched battle, a flanking movement, a victory, with 150 prisoners and machine guns and artillery captured. Munich had a day of wild enthusiasm.

Toller, with at least 40,000 devoted troops under his command, was eager to press the attack and capture Ingolstadt. The Communist government hesitated. It was apparently awaiting new uprisings in the north. A day or two of uncertainty passed; then word came that Schnepfenhorst had called in Wurtemberg and Prussian troops (which the Scheidemann government in Berlin was only too glad to lend). Engelhofer ordered the red guard to withdraw to the defense of Munich.

The capture of Dachau was the high point of the Munich revolution. The red army had proved its courage and its fighting capacity. The Hoffmann government was uncertain. Most of its troops were unreliable. Nuremberg was stirring with rebellion. An officer in command of the Ingolstadt garrison later stated that if, on the day after the battle of Dachau, the red guard had attacked the city, he could not have held it. If the red troops had captured Ingolstadt, and advanced vigorously to the north, they could probably have won more battles, created the reputation for victory which was above all things needed, inspired the revolution in more industrial towns, caused further disaffection among the Bavarian troops confronting them, impressed the peasants, and assured the food supplies of Munich for weeks to come. So at least the Independents believe, and the

belief is not unreasonable. But for once the Communists in command chose the part of caution.

Days now passed, days of sickening inactivity and uncertainty. No papers were published except a daily sheet of Communist decrees, some of them unreasonable and most of them unenforceable. There was no news; the wires were either cut by the enemy or idle because of the strike. The government itself was in the dark. Railroad traffic was reduced to almost nothing for lack of coal. North Bavaria was definitely lost. Prussian and Wurtemberg troops were pouring in and had occupied everything north of the Danube. In the small farm territory remaining the peasants were sullen; the city could do nothing for them, and they would not surrender their grain for paper. Into Munich there came little food and almost no milk. The well became sick, and the sick died. Suspicious paper money began to appear. Plundering broke out. The idle population, still on strike, was subject to all sorts of depressing rumors.

It is now the middle of the third week. The factory councils meet nearly every day. They become restive under the Communist dominion. They begin to reject Levine's motions. They suspend the general strike. They restore the freedom of the press. They resume unemployment payments. Toller reports continued advance on the part of the Prussian troops. The military situation is hopeless; he urges negotiations while there is still time to avoid bloodshed. But Engelhofer will not hear of it; with each accumulating defeat, his will stiffens.

At last, on Sunday, the 27th, two weeks after the Communist *coup*, the councils pass a vote of lack of confidence against the committee. The next day a new committee of unknown workers is elected, charged with moderating the dictatorship, and securing terms. But Engelhofer, on Levine-Nissen's orders, gives the army the command to resist to the last. And Toller, who has fruitlessly harangued the councils, announces that he is returning to the front in order not to leave his troops in the lurch.

Now there is in Munich nothing but despair. News comes that Augsburg has been captured after a bitter fight. The Prussian soldiers are pitiless. It is said they take no prisoners; at least it is certain that scores of captured red guards are shot against the wall. An order has gone forth that all who are in any way in the service of the red army, including physicians and members of the sanitary corps, will be shot. At Starnberg, four medical non-combatants have been executed. The executive committee is helpless. It wants to resign. Six of its members actually decamp without further formality.

Representatives have this afternoon gone to the commander of the government troops at Dachau to ask terms of capitulation. The terms are unconditional surrender, and the delivery of the leaders. The army refuses the terms.

And now, early in the evening, a fearful thing hap-

pens. In the cellar of the Luitpold Gymnasium eight of the arrested counter-revolutionaries are shot. The executions are carried out under orders, but who gave the orders is not known. Perhaps it is a last desperate attempt to give pause to the Hoffmann generals. Or perhaps it is an act of hate. An official act of the government it is not, for the "government" no longer has any authority. Some half-crazed lieutenant, if not Engelhofer himself, gave the command. The news quickly reaches the Hoffmann troops and is diligently spread among them, with harrowing details quite imaginary, for the express purpose of making them see red. General Oven, who had intended the final attack for May 3, gives orders for an immediate advance.

Towards midnight the councils assemble in the Hof Brau Haus for their last meeting over their beer. The executive committee reports that it has failed to accomplish anything against the military command. Toller takes the floor. He has been to-day to the war office and has received a most unfavorable impression. The troops have been wholly demoralized by the methods of the Communists. Two drunken soldiers were demanding that they be allowed to shoot Count Arco-Valley (murderer of Kurt Eisner), whom he thereupon took under his protection. The whole war ministry was empty save for Engelhofer and one stenographer. Toller continues:

"From an eye-witness I have just received the horrible news of the slaughter of hostages in the Luitpold Gymnasium. When I think of this I feel like taking a revolver and shooting myself, to get quit of the shame of it. The commander of the government troops has said that five of his best officers have been killed by dum-dum bullets. In my opinion, this may well be true.

"This is no longer Communism. It is Levinism. The hopes we had placed in negotiations with the Hoffmann government have been shattered by the acts of certain individuals—and those individuals are not present to-night.

"I know the enemy is shooting your leaders and will shoot more of them. But the proletariat should not repay one bestiality with another. There is no place in its struggles for bitterness and hate."

And then, standing as he was by the grave of the Soviet Republic, he proposed a cheer. It was:

"Long live the Soviet Republic!"

The cheer was given and Toller went back to his last battle.

There was little left for the councils to do. The meeting took formal responsibility for all the acts of Toller and the other Independent leaders. They proposed that on the morrow the proletariat should celebrate May Day with a silent, weaponless protest against the presence of the government troops. Finally, they rose from their seats, in token of sorrow for the eight murdered hostages. This was the last official act of the Workers' Soviet Government of Munich.

Early the next morning, the Hoffmann troops were in some of the suburbs. Through parts of the city they advanced without opposition, or with no more than guerilla shooting to annoy them. A band of counter-revolutionists, students and officers, seized the Wittelsbacher Palais and the neighboring blocks of the city. By noon most of Munich was occupied.

But not all. In the Stachus, in front of the Karlstor, around the railway station and in the streets between, the red guard threw up barricades and fought out the battle foot by foot. They were not fighting for self-preservation. They could have thrown away their guns and, in civilian clothes, have walked about the city in comparative safety. But they chose to fight, perhaps in the vain hope of winning the Prussians over to mutiny, or perhaps in a delirium of vengeance that craves continually one more victim.

The fighting about the Stachus lasted through two days and the night between. Against the red guards the Prussians brought their machine guns, their mine throwers, their artillery and their liquid flame, while aeroplanes poured death down from above. There was no fighting in Berlin, in Hamburg, in Dusseldorf, to equal the bitterness of this. They say in Munich that Bavarian troops could never have gone through with it. Only Prussian soldiers, under old-regime officers, with the best discipline that had been salvaged from the war, could have captured the Stachus.

The Prussian military government, now established in Munich, moved to take vengeance for the shooting of the hostages. Blood cries for blood.

And so it executed *Landauer!*

Landauer, who had spent his nights dreaming how to keep the revolution bloodless, who during the last terrible days had time and again cried helplessly, "No mob! No lynching!" Poor, magnificent, futile Landauer, whose crime had been high treason for the sake of the brotherhood of man!

According to the account of an eye-witness, it happened in this way:

"It was on the second of May. I was standing guard in front of the great gate of the Stadelheimer Prison. About one-fifteen, amid cries of 'Landauer! Landauer!' a troop of Bavarian and Wurtemberg soldiers brought up Gustav Landauer. On the way into the receiving-room an officer—I believe he was Lieutenant Geisler—gave the prisoner a blow in the face. The soldiers were yelling in the meantime: 'The agitator! He must go. Give him hell!' Landauer was then thrown out into the first court-yard, past the kitchen, with blows of a policeman's club. He said to the soldiers: 'I am no agitator. You yourselves know how you have been incited!' In the courtyard there was a major in civilian clothes, who set upon Landauer with a club. Under all these blows Landauer sank to the ground. But he stood up again and tried to begin speaking. Then a guard cried: 'Oh,

get out! Amid the laughter and approval of the soldiers, the guard shot twice, and one of the bullets pierced Landauer's head. But he still breathed. Then the guard said: 'The mule has two lives. He can't be killed.'

"A sergeant from the Liebre Regiment said: 'Let's take his overcoat off.' He tried to take off the ring on Landauer's finger. I said to the sergeant, that he might at least leave the ring. But the overcoat was removed by the sergeant.

"Since Landauer was still alive, they turned him over on his stomach. Saying, 'Get back, and we'll give him one more to finish him!' the guard shot Landauer through the back, so that his heart protruded on to the pavement. Since the body still quivered, the guard kicked him till he was done for. Then his clothes were taken off, and the corpse was thrown into the wash-house."

But why think of individuals? The death that follows a victory of Berlin government troops in Germany is wholesale. The three hundred of the government troops and the six hundred reds who were officially reported killed in battle, are only the beginning of the story. It is after the rebels have acknowledged defeat, after the weapons have been surrendered, after the workers have been obliged to cringe before their new masters, that the real killing begins. It stalks about in secret. It enters the houses of the workingman, searching for weapons, for Communist literature, or even for defiant words or glances. The population is told that the city is being "cleansed" of Spartacists. Under this phrase all things may happen. An unreported weapon, the denunciation of a personal enemy, or a membership card in the Independent Socialist Party, may be sufficient ground for military execution. No one can tell how many persons were shot merely because some pathological soldier had a lust for blood.

In one of the suburbs of Munich, a few days after the entry of the government troops, some thirty members of a Catholic anti-revolutionary society held an unauthorized meeting. The meeting was discovered by the soldiers and the participants were arrested. In the guard-house the same night, twenty-one of the prisoners were murdered by their guards. The press-department of the regiment, after the matter came to light, publicly regretted the incident, but explained it by saying that the soldiers *thought the prisoners were Spartacists*.

The fact is, that the killing during such a time is absolutely irresponsible. There is no question of a court-martial. The martial law which hangs over the city authorizes the killing on the spot of anyone who in the judgment of the soldier present ought to be killed. Those who reach the court-martial receive, of course, the semblance at least of a military trial. For their persons there is the pretense of responsibility. But those who never get as far as the court-martial! There have been thousands of such killings in Germany. And in not a single instance has even a military inquiry been made as

to the justice of the execution, save only, under extraordinary pressure, in that of the murderers of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. To the Junker officers who command the government troops it would be something like high treason, or blasphemy, to call to account any soldier for the killing of a workman. And if the officers do not institute investigations, no one else can. You live to-day next door to a workman. To-morrow he is not there. He has disappeared in the night. He may have been arrested and shot in the guard-house. Or he may have been killed on the spot. But on the other hand, he may have run away. If you know that he was arrested, you do not know whether he is sitting in a prison in Bamberg or not, and the military will not tell you. And if you know for a certainty that he has been shot, if you can actually identify his corpse, the military will tell you that he resisted arrest, or that he tried to escape. And there were no witnesses to the act, save the soldiers who did the shooting.

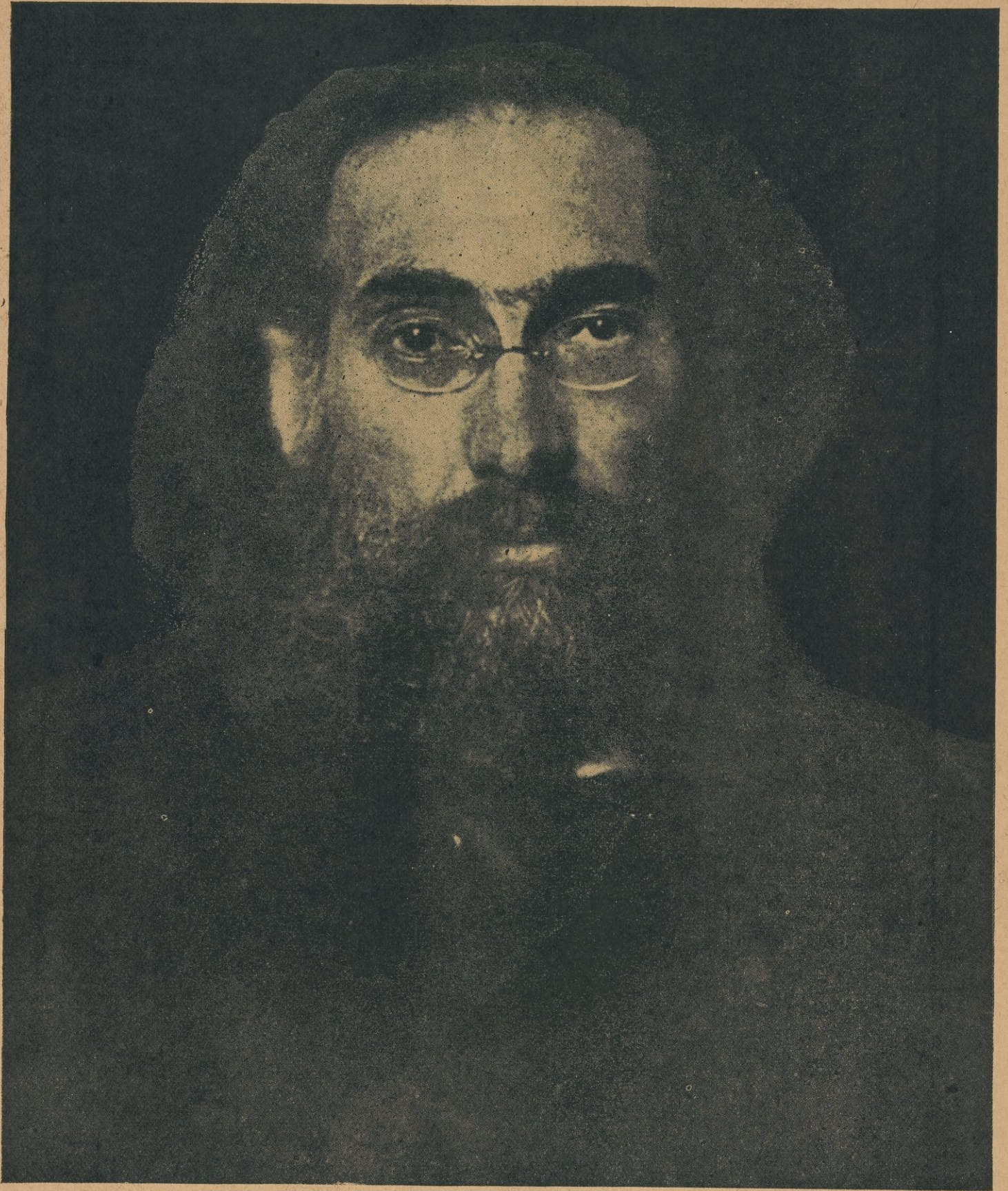
It is known that seven hundred workmen have thus been shot in Munich. It is known that two hundred and fifty were in the first two weeks placed under arrest. But how many more are in prison, or dead, one can only guess. This uncertainty is deliberately fostered as one of the most effective means of terrorism. Each worker feels that any suspicious word or act may bring about his death, and he will have no opportunity to prove his innocence.

Immediately upon the entrance of the troops, the conservative wing of the Majority Socialist Party formed a committee to take over the temporary administration of the civil government, and to attempt in some degree to protect the innocent. In a few days it was obliged to confess, in the Majority Socialist paper, that it had failed. It could not exercise any influence over the military dictatorship, and it could not restrain irresponsible denunciations. It could not, it admitted, even protect a man who was denounced to soldiers by a jealous woman on the street.

The regimental press releases tell nothing of all this. They tell of "cleansing" or "purging" this or that quarter of the city. They contain poems of "brotherly greeting" to the "liberated city." They relate anecdotes of "the Spartacists, those cowardly murderers and criminals." They tell of the capture of 30,000 rifles, 750 machine guns, 200 pieces of artillery, and a million and a half cartridges. But concerning the things that happen in the dead of night in the court-yards of workmen's houses, they are silent.

* * *

From the beginning it was of course unthinkable that a single city could maintain itself as a Soviet republic. The life of the experiment depended wholly on the spread of the revolution to all the Bavarian cities. A Soviet regime which could have exerted a wise authority over all the territory of Bavaria might have persisted indefinitely.



Gustav Landauer

Agriculturally, Bavaria could have supported itself without outside help. Its railroad equipment was still moderately good, and the administration of it was its own. Its peasants, though mostly small conservative landowners, under Catholic influences and demanding exactly the things which the city could not give them, would have accommodated themselves to any government that did not too much prick their prejudices. Above all, Bavaria's army was Bavaria's, and the whole population, not excluding the middle-class, was prepared to resent any interference from Prussia. If there had not been the remnant of a Bavarian government to ask for military aid, Berlin would never have dared place a Prussian soldier on Bavarian soil.

But the revolutionary government, once established in Bavaria, would have needed to administer the country at once firmly and moderately to prevent the outcroppings of counter-revolution. And it does not appear that there was sufficient ability among the revolutionaries to have assured such administration. At least the talents that existed were continually clashing. Only with difficulty could a man like Toller have come to the position of authority which he deserved. All in all, and making every allowance for the extraordinary difficulties of the situation, the government, especially after the first week, was inexcusably capricious, harsh and ineffectual. Some of the essential measures which the Buda-Pesth government took in the first twenty-four hours, were delayed for ten days. Important precautions were neglected until disorder and distrust had become general. The civil measures undertaken had in general no relation to the terrible needs of the moment. The factory councils busied themselves with the introduction of soviet self-government in the schools, with an ordinance forbidding amateur theatricals, with the promotion of a "revolutionary artists' soviet," with a general strike of the children to demand a shorter school-day. Instead of forming a financial reserve by the confiscation of gold, Maenner, the commissary for finance, announced that the issues of paper money which he was printing would protect the financial condition of the government for four weeks, *provided the Prussian troops did not capture the paper factory at Dachau.* (He actually issued 2,600,000 marks in notes.) But the supreme blunder was the ten-day general strike. The political-tactical reasons for such a strike are clear. It keeps the working class in a state of expectation and receptivity to mass movements and facilitates the recruiting and drilling of the red army. But in a city like Munich, which was practically beleaguered, it was suicidal. It shattered communication and traffic, demoralized the food supply, and created a general nervousness which led to mad results. In the end the workers attacked the general strike as the chief cause of their troubles, and the authority of the Communists was broken.

With so little political realism in its leaders, the Munich

experiment had scarcely a chance to succeed. Irresponsible mass emotions, frivolous or purposeless impulses among the leaders—these were the diseases of Bavaria. But not of Bavaria alone. They are diseases of all revolutionary Germany. The workers, new to the feeling of liberty, are opposed by a class which is master of all the arts of government by trickery and force. They allow themselves to be provoked with mathematical certainty, to be divided by absurd expedients. They are brave, inconceivably brave. They will walk up to the snout of a machine gun. But they will not trouble to find out whether anyone else will do the same thing at the same time. Workingmen have been slaughtered by the hundreds in Germany in the last six months, for lack of realistic and unified leadership.

The German workers are still children of the paternal Hohenzollern era. Their apprenticeship in revolutionary method has been all too short. They are impotent against the firm-willed, ruthless, Prussian military machine, which is becoming stronger, more brutal and more shameless every week. They are only beginning, as a class, to become aware of their enemy—the same feudal Junker autocracy against which so many armies struggled up to last November.

But through innumerable defeats they are becoming wiser. With the blood which ran in Munich's streets they are washing the scales from their eyes.

REPRIEVE

SO sweet it is to feel the shackles loose
 And sinking with no menace in their sound
 Down to the peaceful, water-freshened ground!
 So sweet to know that but mine own abuse
 Of the grave creed of duty wove the noose
 About my living throat, and that I bound
 Myself, a needless sacrifice, and found—
 What wonder!—God a stony-featured Zeus.

O soil beneath my feet, more wise than I!
 Your countless generations and your swarms
 In leaf, and scum, and crystal, all the storms
 That build the year and scatter it, they cry
 Throughout their deathless rainbow-rhythmed forms
 "The Law is yours to live by, not to die!"

Judith Ish-Kishor.

THE REBEL

THEY chained his wrists across,
 And the clean music of his lips they pressed
 From silence into loss.
 The slim red stains about his mouth and breast,
 Widened and dripped. . . . We thought that he had died . . .
 Felt sudden at our hearts life's dross.
 Yet . . . there was once another tried,
 And nailed upon a cross.

Kathryn Peck.

All About It

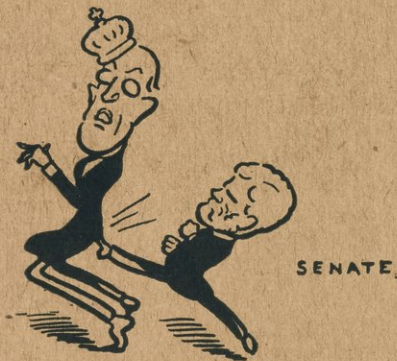
Art Young in Washington



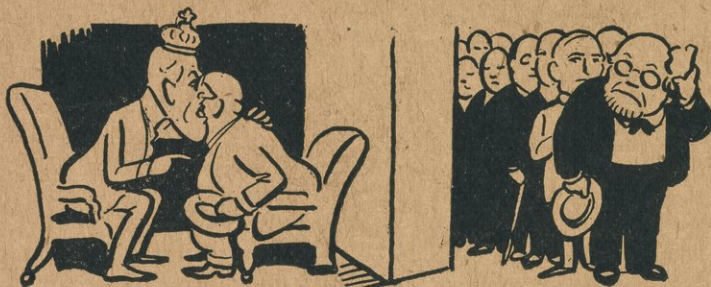
had to do it. And the chances are, his reasons for every page in the Treaty of Peace are as good as the reasons advanced against it, if you call this sort of thing reason.

WHEN Woodrow Wilson came down the gangplank with his League of Nations he had become so used to hearing that tearful admonition "Stand behind the President!" that he had a right to expect everybody to stand behind him, right or wrong, through reconstruction as well as war.

If not, why not?



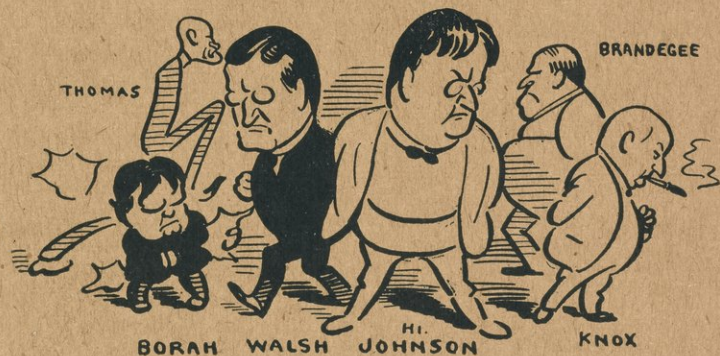
I went to Washington and found that this patriotic injunction, with its penalties, is not now observed, but instead, about half of political Washington is not standing behind the President, except for the purpose of kicking him.



Finding himself in an atmosphere of dissent, the President forthwith calls the disloyal Senators to confer with him—and to whisper secretly to each in his turn why he



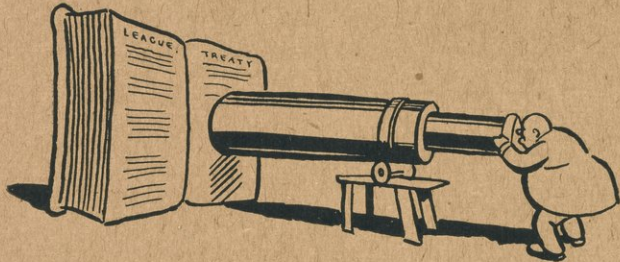
It ought to be remembered that the Senate, except for "a little group of wilful men," of which La Follette was the fighting member, got what it wanted from Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Wilson got what he wanted from the Senate when war was declared. As a result of that war the Senate now has a treaty and a League of Nations on its hands. And besides that it has revolutions, debts to collect, and other troubles the world over, and frankly the United States Senate doesn't know what to do. You might think that anything bearing the sacred name of "covenant" would be treated with respect. But it is not.



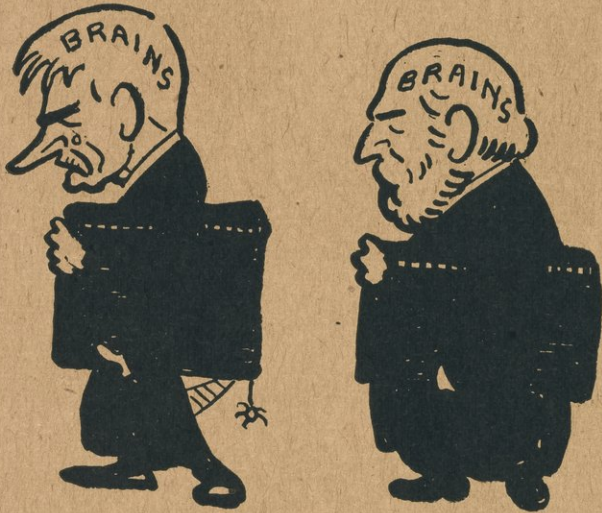
Both Democrats and Republicans criticise the treaty and the covenant. But of course the hypercritics are the Republicans. Thomas and Walsh are Democrats. Hiram Johnson, Borah, Brandegee and Knox are Re-

publicans. As a sample of the temper displayed by the opponents, take the following from Walsh, the Massachusetts Senator (Democrat):

"All the elements of greed, personal suspicion and jealousy are only too evident in almost every article of the treaty," and again: "The treaty is worse for us than even the League of Nations, bad as it is."



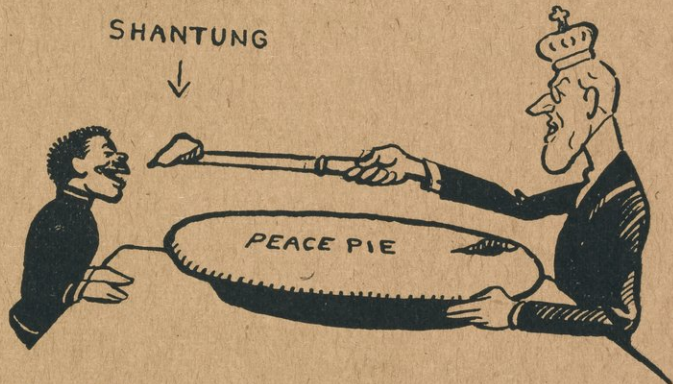
Some of the Senators have said that they would like to have the wording of the articles "clarified."



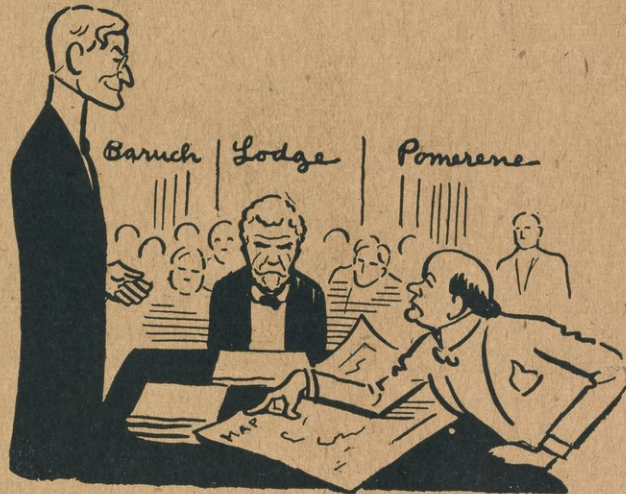
Now enter Elihu Root and Charles E. Hughes—professional clarifiers. After deep thought they propose that reservations be attached to the act of ratification, and, says Mr. Hughes, "Those either here or abroad who oppose reasonable interpretations, or reservations, on our part will take a heavy responsibility." So, of course, the interpretations will be "reasonable." Be it said that Mr. Taft also advocates "reasonable" reservations.



There has been very little impromptu speaking in the Senate on the League and treaty. The weight of the subject has prompted the statesmen to carefully prepare and read from their manuscripts. Most of them speak with the typical intensity of a lawyer with a difficult case. Senator Harrison of Mississippi loudly characterized the opponents of the sacred document as "hell-hounds," at which Senator Borah rubbed his nose and smiled.

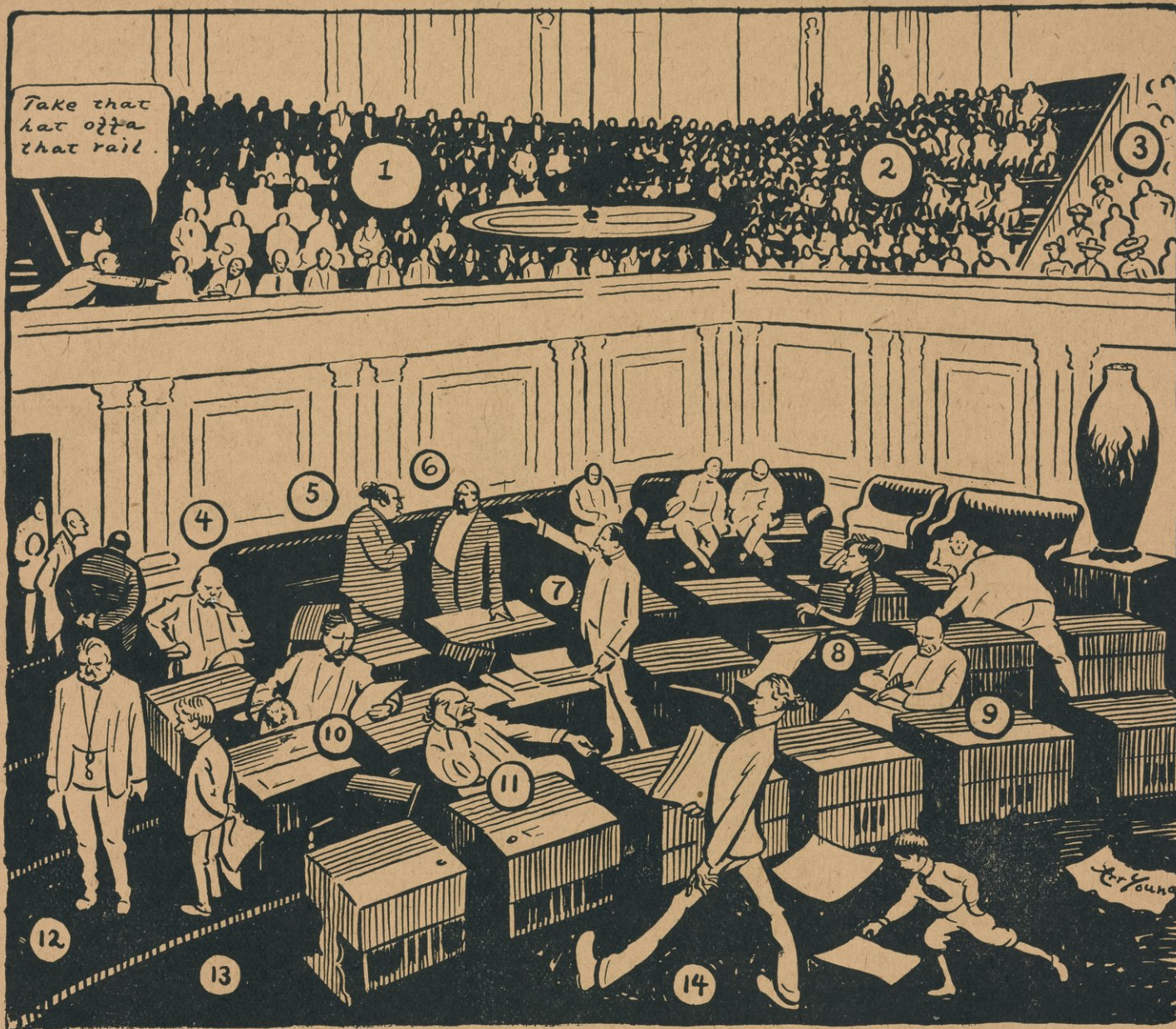


One of the questions that most engages the minds of the mighty statesmen is Shantung. In cutting the pie, why did the President give Japan a piece? It was all right for John Bull to get all that he craved, but it should have been enough for Japan just to sit at the table.



No objection has been shown to the punitive indemnities, the penalties, and sums of money, to be paid to the Allies. Republicans and Democrats seem to agree that these provisions are not too drastic. If, however, besides the 170,000 milch cows, Germany had been compelled to give up 170,000 babies to be raised in a country of high ideals—where they could have an opportunity to grow to manhood and womanhood and listen to United States Senators—the Treaty of course would have been still better.

But how to make Germany pay what she hasn't got, is a proposition of absorbing moment. Hearings were held daily by the Foreign Relations Committee. At



The Democratic Side of the Senate

1 and 2. Visitors' Gallery for men, where the conversation consists of a whispered, "Who's that talking?"

3. Gallery for men and women by card.

4. Atlee Pomerene of Ohio—a Senator, not a fruit.

5. Senator Bankhead of Alabama, sometimes referred to as "Bunkhead."

6. Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia—veteran of politics, and rich.

7. Senator Pat Harris of Mississippi, sketched while making his maiden speech. He is saying that "he who holds Ireland in higher respect and in greater esteem than his own blessed United States, ought to move to Ireland."

8. Senator Wolcott of Delaware—just another lawyer.

9. Senator Thomas of Colorado—who recently said: "There is too much talk in the United States Senate." His quota of talk is exceeded by none.

10. Senator Swanson of Virginia—successor to Jim Ham Lewis as defender of the administration, and director of the voting machine.

11. Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi—a book-fed debater on any subject, purposeless, and fond of droll abstract philosophy.

12. Senator Lee Overman of North Carolina—author of the Espionage Law, pompous before the war, now bends at the knees and sags.

13. Senator Ferniford Simmons of North Carolina—wizard of finance.

14. Senator Gilbert Hitchcock of Nebraska—ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations. He walks around with a responsible dignity, jerking one leg ahead and then the other, the while wiggling his fingers as if to find the right key.

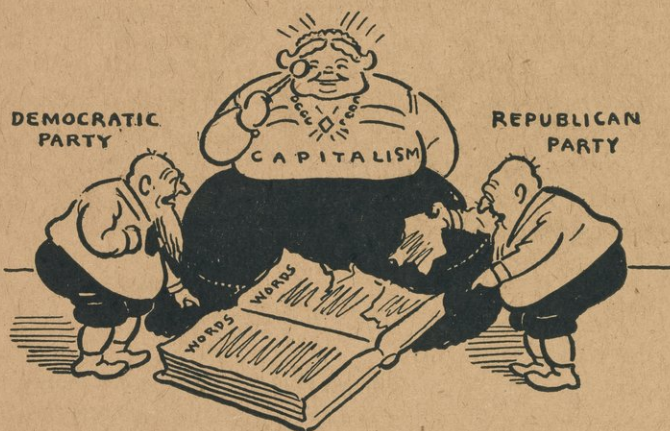
To the right of the picture is a vase given to the Senate by the French Government—reported to be worth \$5,000. The door-man told me he had his doubts.

This is the Democratic side of the Senate as I saw it the last week of July and, except for the palm beach suits, at any other time it is quite similar.

these hearings Bernard Baruch, economic adviser to the American peace delegation, told the Senators what could be done to guard American interests.



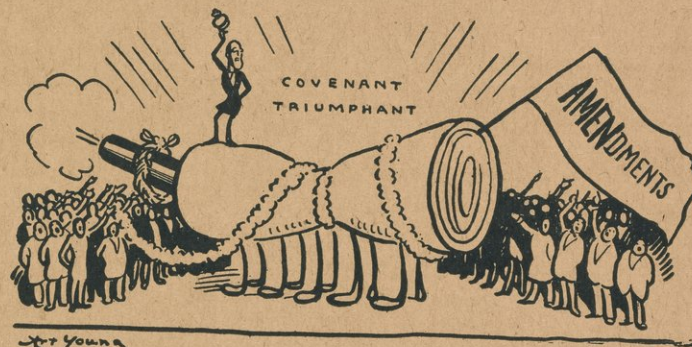
Obviously the League of Nations is an attempt to form a trust, to put down international competition. In that sense it is "a step in the right direction" for capitalism. And just as any trust is helpful and sympathetic toward a private individual who is trying to gain his freedom in his own way, just so the League of Nations will help and sympathize with Ireland, or Hungary, or any nation struggling for its own kind of freedom—especially if that freedom happens to be industrial in its nature and not merely political. That is the covenant. It is the last stand of Commercial aristocracy, in collusion with kings, premiers and labor fakirs. But it is not yet plain to American business that we had better form such an alliance. If we do, there must be plenty of reservations. Capitalism of course is already international, so why make a covenant out of it? The next thing you know, *people* will become international and align themselves boldly against the common enemy. So let us make "reasonable" reservations.



Out of the discussion the Republicans hope to get an issue. Just as the tariff on tin was an issue for ten years, the next issue may be the right or wrong of Shantung. There is this to be said for a League of Nations—it sounds good. A federation of all people without regard to nationality, sounds better to one listening for peace and happiness.

In spite of doubts and discord the Senate will ratify the treaty and accept the League of Nations. And in the grand finale the Republicans will sing in the chorus of

ratification. Their singing will be out of key, however, and they will point with pride to their amendments as the feature that saved the show from failure.



PRIMAVERA

I SAID, "This is a lovely day."
 The spring lay on the hillside where we lay.
 And you replied,
 "There is no peace, my friend,
 Like friendship. My content would end
 If love should come between us like a sword."

 I laughed a little, low,
 "Then all this same would be no more the same."

 "For all these green-leafed trees would be aflame."

 "And all these skiey clouds would rest
 Burning and white like hands upon my breast."

 "And all your burnished hair,
 Spread out beside me there,
 Would be red poppy petals wilted round your face,
 And all your throat would be a silken snare."

 "Indeed," I softly said,
 "Our pleasure would be pain,
 And love would wound us like a whetted blade."
 And yet,—again
 Next day, returned we to that place.

Mary Senior.

SPELLS

THIS moment
 Is like a charm bearing a secret perfume.
 It drifts about us
 To the singing of plaintive strings,
 To the calling of sad flutes,
 From the red fury of the world we capture
 A tombed magic out of old Asia,
 A gift as frail as life.

Babette Deutsch.

BLOCKING THE GENERAL STRIKE

Paris, July 28.

THE calling-off of the general strike announced in France for July 21 was a great victory for Samuel Gompers. It marked the adherence of the leaders of the French trade-unions to the Gompersian program of class collaboration. The old tradition of the French syndicats had just two points in common with the Gompersian tradition: it was a trades-union tradition, and it was opposed to political action. It was opposed to political action because the French workers believed that political action meant a truce in the class struggle, and they believed they could attain their revolutionary goal more effectively through economic means. Fundamental in the old tradition was the doctrine of the relentless class struggle. And the July 21 strike was called off nominally because the government promised an amnesty law and measures against the high cost of living, and because the government seemed about to fall any way!

Such excuses show how far the trade-union leaders had strayed from their old tradition. In reality the strike was called off because the leaders of the General Confederation of Labor had never wanted the strike, had done nothing to promote it, and were hunting for excuses to call it off. It was called in the heat of the great June strikes when half a million men were on strike in France and revolutionary feeling was running high. Union workers came very near declaring a general strike spontaneously without waiting for their leaders. Then Jouhaux and the veterans of the Confederation stepped forward.

"We will call a general strike," they declared, "for July 21." July 21 was six weeks away. Before July 21 came, the metal strike had failed, the workers were back in the shops, and the psychological moment had passed.

Jouhaux and his colleagues deliberately postponed the general strike in order to avoid revolution. They told me so, privately, at the time. "We are not ready for revolution," they said. "It would mean chaos. The masses are mad to-day—if we call a twenty-four hour strike they will stay out. They won't go back to work. That would mean revolution—and chaos."

"But," they added, "we have to call a strike to keep them from doing it themselves. So we put the date six weeks hence when people will be calmer."

Then they proceeded further to sabotage the strike. The original plan was a three-country strike against intervention in Russia and Hungary. The French leaders announced that it would be for demobilization and amnesty as well. A few weeks later, when the revolutionary excitement of mid-June had died down, they announced that it would be against the high cost of living, too. In the manifestoes which preceded the day of the

strike there was almost no word against intervention in Russia and Hungary—nothing but the high cost of living. Naturally the workers lost interest: a strike against intervention might have some effect, but it was evident that a strike would not bring down the skyrocketing food prices. The bourgeois propagandists naturally pressed the point in all the capitalist press and in the posters with which they adorned the public buildings of Paris.

The Confederation of Labor did *nothing* to push the strike. They did not put up one poster in reply to the huge bills, "Bolshevik Strikes," "Marxism vomited by the Germans," "The Strikers against France," which met the eye everywhere. The manifestoes which they issued in the labor press were apologetic, hesitating, some thought deliberately weak. Bidegaray, the secretary of the railwaymen, was quoted in the capitalist press—and quoted correctly—as denouncing the strike, and claiming that it would upset demobilization for two weeks. Naturally some of the provincial railwaymen's unions voted not to join the strike.

Clemenceau called Jouhaux and his fellows of the executive committee of the Confederation into conference July 18. He promised an amnesty to over a hundred thousand military and industrial prisoners (though his promise has since developed leaks; his project of amnesty excludes the military objectors and strike leaders); he promised to hurry up demobilization; he assured them that it was really the British government which was backing Kolchak and Denikine. Jouhaux did not know, as he talked, that Clemenceau had just been beaten on a vote in the Chamber; one of the Socialist deputies sent him a note to that effect, but he did not open it until he had left Clemenceau's office. That night the executive committee heard the news. With a sigh of relief they grasped the straw and claimed that the fall of the government was excuse enough to call off the strike. To be sure, the government did not fall; Clemenceau changed his food minister and the Chamber voted itself satisfied. But the strike was off.

It was a great victory for the policy of class collaboration, of trusting to governmental promises, of heeding the advice of Samuel Gompers. The defeat was the defeat of the French working-class and a setback for the working-class of the world but it was not due to the generals of the bourgeoisie: it was due to the generals of the French trade-unions. They are the same men who in 1914 renounced the struggle of the working-class and sacrificed everything for the national defense; they have not changed since. The French socialists have changed their leadership; the fiasco of July 21 has justified those who are working for a change in the leadership of the trade-unions.

LEWIS GANNETT.

TO A SYCAMORE

THROUGH jail windows, down a city street,
 Against the cloudless winter sky I watch you,
 Old friend Sycamore, your branches tossing stiffly,
 Your myriad seed-balls swinging in the wind
 Like little bells hung upon a Christmas tree,
 Making music in the winter breeze for those who know your
 song.

For those who know your varied grandeur in the valleys
 Where mottled giants rise, stretching up bared arms to
 heaven

Gleaming white against the blue;
 For those who know you in the summer forest,
 Towering, gaunt, open in the mass of green,
 Your sparse leaves dancing merry in the wind;
 For those who know you in the gold of autumn
 And in the greening-gray of spring . . .
 To them all I proclaim you best in winter,
 In your naked beauty of smooth round limbs,
 Your skin of changing browns and greens and cream—
 Your fairy pendant bells swinging, ringing in the wind,
 And I proclaim you best this winter,
 Here where in the murky city street you stand,
 That we, shut in from life behind these bars, may watch and
 hear you—
 We who know your song.

Roger Baldwin.

A SQUIRREL

I SAW a factory hand
 Let out for his twenty minutes at noon,
 Watching a squirrel in a cage
 Treading a wheel.
 "Gee, it must be something awful
 To have to do that day in and day out," he said.
 Just then came the shrill shriek of the whistle.
 The man shot into the factory door
 As if blown in by a gun.
 I don't know what the squirrel thought.

Annette Wynne.

AT YOUR TRIAL

YOUR name is called
 And you step forward to the bar,
 Unafraid and unashamed you stand
 A challenge
 To them who are to take you from me.
 Men tell of your crime,
 How you dared to speak the truth
 To workingmen,
 How you tried to give children laughter
 And starved souls beauty.
 The judge frowns and the jury is shocked,
 People whisper about the terrible Bolshevik,
 But I feel very humble in the thought
 That you have given me your kisses.

Martha H. Foley.

TO THE WHITE FIENDS

THINK you I am not fiend and savage, too?
 Think you I could not arm me with a gun
 And shoot down ten of you for every one
 Of my black brothers murdered, burnt by you?
 Be not deceived, for every deed you do
 I could match—out-match: am I not Africa's son,
 Black of that black land where black deeds are done?

But the Almighty from the darkness drew
 My soul and said: Even thou shalt be a light
 Awhile to burn on the benighted earth,
 Thy dusky face I set among the white
 For thee to prove thyself of highest worth;
 Before the world is swallowed up in night,
 To show thy little lamp; go forth, go forth!

Claude McKay.

MY NEIGHBOR SAYS

"Thank God, the War Is Over."

THANK GOD! A wounded world to-day
 Has torn the armor from her breast
 Has thrown the dripping sword away,
 And lies at rest.

Thank God! The fields, once fair and fresh,
 Now wet with many an ugly stain,
 Will soon be rid of rotting flesh
 And bloom again.

Thank God! Pale women, motionless,
 Who lost what they were forced to give,
 Will throw aside the mourning dress
 And try to live.

Thank God! There's nothing left to harm
 And all we loved is bruised and cut;
 A crippled world lays down her arms.
 Thank God! For what?

Evelyn Gutman.

THE DEAD SING

MOURN with us, who were too wise for wonder,
 Or futile railing at the things that are;
 But wove light song against a warp of thunder,
 And went out in the red dawn, like a star.
 We shall not feel the freedom of great spaces,
 Or hear the gutters run with April rain,
 Or know the touch of soft hands on our faces,
 Or rest that follows in the wake of pain.
 We shall not waken when the winds of dawn
 Lilt down the orchard where the vireos warble,
 Or watch the ceiling where the sunbeams creep;
 Nor shall we ever even look upon
 The dear inimitable white of marble
 That you will rear above us where we sleep.

John French Wilson.



THE LIBERATOR, September, 1919.

The Internatio



ational Situation

British Labor is Moving

By Crystal Eastman

IT was my good fortune to see the great British Labor Party, at its official convention on Friday, June 27th, vote overwhelmingly in favor of industrial action to stop the Allied butchery and torture of Soviet Russia. It was a 2 to 1 vote on a motion to instruct its National Executive "to consult the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress with the view to effective action being taken . . . by the unreserved use of their *Political and Industrial Power*," to stop Allied intervention in Russia, "whether by force of arms, by supply of munitions, by financial subsidies, or by commercial blockade."

This action was not taken blindly or with temporary emotion. The use of "direct" or industrial action for political ends has been quite widely and on the whole respectfully discussed in the British press for the past two months. Liberal editors have gone out of their way to praise the strike as an excellent weapon for achieving industrial ends—wages, hours, conditions of labor—but to warn against it as dangerous, undemocratic, and unconstitutional when employed for political ends. The old line labor leaders, like Clynes, Ben Tillett, and Have-lock Wilson, have made it clear that they are in violent agreement with the capitalist editors on this point. Arthur Henderson, also, of course, is firmly and sadly opposed. Henderson is still executive secretary of the Labor Party, but nevertheless, with his black coat and his general air of being a shrewd and solid banker superintending a Sunday School, he belongs irrevocably to the past, and he seems to me to realize it. The Labor Party Executive did their best to keep the issue from coming up at the conference. They urged, in their report to the conference, that "if the British labor movement is to institute a new precedent in our industrial history by initiating a general strike for the purpose of achieving not industrial but political objects," the trade unions themselves, and not the Labor Party, should determine the plan.

The chairman in his opening remarks declared: "Either we are constitutionalists or we're not constitutionalists. If we believe in the efficacy of the political weapon—and we do, or we wouldn't have a labor party—then it is both unwise and undemocratic, because we were defeated at the polls, to turn round and resort to the industrial weapon."

But the new leaders, Smillie, with his 600,000 miners behind him; Frank Hodges, the keen young miners' secretary who has won distinction on the coal commission; Bob Williams, General Secretary of the Transport

Workers who carries the majority of their votes; Cramp, President of the Railwaymen's Union; the Glasgow men, David Kirkwood and Neill McLean, M. P.; the Manchester group, all these declared themselves in favor of a general strike in defense of Russia. They did this clearly and intelligently and without illusions as to its possible consequences.

"They call this measure unconstitutional," said Bob Williams, who is a big Welshman, fiery, eloquent and humorous, "but I tell you the constitution of the Trades Union movement is what circumstances make it. Is the war against Russia a constitutional war? There is much talk about the Triple Alliance, but it isn't only there that the workers are ready. Churchill has thrown down a challenge on this Russian matter and I believe at least a million, the pick of the British workers, are ready to accept it. All we ask is an opportunity for trades union workers to determine the question. Unless the leaders act, the workers will act by themselves. . . . And what's more the soldiers and sailors and police cannot be relied on to defeat a general strike if and when one takes place. The soldiers to begin with aren't very reliable; the sailors are more unreliable than the soldiers; and the police are more unreliable than the sailors!" Shouts of laughter and applause followed this. Williams seems to be accepted as an orator chiefly, a man who perhaps goes farther in a speech than in action.

Smillie is just the opposite type—a man whose thoughts and plans, I am sure, go ahead of his public utterances. Smillie had fought this question out in the meetings of the Triple Alliance, and he must have known which way the strength of the Congress lay, for he just said enough to show where he stood, and sat down. These were his points: (1) It is a strange and sinister thing to find Mr. Henderson and the Executive Committee of the Labor Party taking the same position on this question that every exploiter of labor in the country is taking. (2) What is called direct action may be constitutional action. For every trade-unionist to stop work at once might be perfectly constitutional. It would be justified if the cause was sufficient. (3) It is impossible to draw the line between political and industrial questions. Nationalization of the mines is certainly a political question, yet no one will deny that the government was forced to action in this direction by the miners' strike, and the Executive Committee of the Labor Party will congratulate the miners on their action. (4) Direct action does not mean an end of political action. Labor failed in the elections because the workers are not sufficiently class-

conscious, and because they were deceived by the government. Now it is our duty to let our 62 members in parliament know what we want—by industrial action.

Next came James Seddon, M. P., of the Dockers' Union. He was greeted with "Hello, Jimmie—another forlorn hope!" An oldish man with a caved-in face, he managed with the help of the Chairman's frequent appeals, "Give order, will you please! Shut up and give order, will you?"—to state the ancient case.

"What's the use of talking about industrial action? There are 4,000,000 trade-unionists, yet we got only 2½ million votes in the general election and a large part of these were from the middle class. (As if this weren't the very central argument for direct action!). . . . There is a more comfortable way of dealing with Churchill when the next election comes around, yes even if it takes four years (cries of "How about Russia?" "What will happen to Russia?") it's better than risking civil war. A general strike will mean a revolution. You'll be letting mad dogs loose, you'll be encouraging an element rife today in the trades union movement, *an element you can't control*," etc., etc.

He was perfectly right. It would be letting loose an element which he and his type—labor leaders, as one speaker put it, "who like to be called level-headed trade unionists in the Capitalist Press"—cannot control.

Then followed Bromley, an engineer who briefly supported Smillie, "We've been betrayed politically. We mustn't take it lying down. We must swing the industrial movement back of the political movement and unite them."

The opposition countered again with an M. P., but by this time the delegates, knowing how they were going to vote, were very impatient and unruly. The Chairman, a likable Irishman named McGurk, made a last desperate appeal—"There were no interruptions when Williams spoke, or when Smillie spoke or when Bromley spoke. Well for God in heaven's sake, be tolerant now and give order!" This won Brace a chance to say that he "knew no more slippery slope" for labor to start on than this one of industrial action for political ends. "We've been declaring we should soon have a labor government—we must have faith, we must use the trades unions to build up the political party. We must have patience, we must educate the worker. . . ."

So it went. Every opponent of industrial action called attention to labor's defeat at the polls as a warning and thus gave his case away. For if labor in Great Britain, though strong industrially, is weak at the polls, there must be something the matter with the polls as a register of labor's will. Labor is weak politically because all the institutions which influence and control its political mind—schools, churches, movies, newspapers—are capitalist institutions; and labor is strong industrially because it can't be so easily fooled about questions immediately relating to the job, and because its industrial mind is in-

fluenced more and more by its own press and institutions. Moreover, the only kind of education labor needs just now is the realization that political questions are fundamentally industrial. One of the women delegates made an unconscious comment on political methods, that amused the conference. She was pleading for support for some parliamentary measure. "Just deluge the Government with resolutions," she said, "so that their waste baskets will be bulging with your letters!"

The debate which had started rather informally over the clause in the executive's report quoted above, was sidetracked for a day and a half, on the chairman's guarantee that it should be resumed on the introduction of the formal resolution. When the time came, the resolution was formally moved by "Councillor" Davies—a Welsh miner now on the Manchester Town Council. It was seconded by Neill McLean, a Glasgow engineer, one of the I. L. P. candidates returned to Parliament last December. He is a real labor member, who laid down his tools on "the Saturday," as they say, and took his seat in Parliament on "the Monday."

Ben Tillett began the attack. He is a short powerful man, an able and moving speaker, but he was helpless with this modern audience. He tried the time worn dodges to rouse labor against the Socialists.

"This conference is 99 per cent. trades union and 1 per cent. professional politician," he said. "The 1 per cent. moves this resolution. Do we want to be led by the nose by professional politicians? We've got the fighting to do. We know these eloquent speakers, we've seen how they act when it comes to a fight. The lions on the platform have very often proved to be rats when the soldiers turned on them. . . . For this conference to pass such a resolution is an insult to the workers. . . . I tell you the Trade Union movement will not allow you to boss them"—and so on, until they booed him down.

Then young Frank Hodges, earnest and fine, a miner educated at Ruskin College, now Secretary of the Miners' Federation, quietly repeated the earlier arguments, closing with these sentences, "I think the Parliamentary Party would welcome that industrial support which would make it a power in the house of Commons. In every great political question labor must be backed by what will always be the greatest power of the workers, their industrial power. This country can move through to the social revolution perhaps in a different way from any other. But if you deny it a chance to move through those channels provided in the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress, it will move some other way, perhaps not for the best."

J. R. Clynes, M. P., dean of the labor politicians, was the last speaker. He is a neat little gray-haired man—always re-elected to the labor party executive despite his reactionary tendencies, because of his ability. He said nothing new except this: "If you try to terrorize this government by a general strike, you'll establish a dan-

gerous precedent. Suppose a labor and socialist party gets in power—will you give another class the same right to terrorize a labor government?" The cries of "Yes-Yes!" "Let them try it!" "There won't be any classes!" which greeted this stroke seemed to grieve him, and he soon sat down. After this the direct actionists would listen to no more speeches. They demanded the vote and got it!

1,893,000 for the resolution.

935,000 against.*

Of course it is merely an instruction to their executives to consult the parliamentary committee of the trades union. It is not action. But in the light of all the events and discussions which led up to this vote, its significance is very great. Six days before at a conference in Manchester representing 70 trade union branches, several trades-councils, and a number of Socialist branches, a Hands-off-Russia Committee was formed to arrange a series of sectional labor conferences culminating in a national unofficial labor conference to determine the question of industrial action on behalf of Russia. And four days before, the Triple Alliance executive, representing the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, the National Union of Railwaymen and the Transport Workers Federation (over a million workers in all), decided to convene a full delegate conference in London, July 23rd, to decide what action, if any, should be taken in order to compel the Government to repeal conscription, cease intervention in Russia, raise the blockade, and release conscientious objectors.

The Labor Party convention contained 975 delegates, representing millions of voters of whom 99 per cent. are trades union members. Its vote was a vote for action at a time when action was under consideration by the most powerful unions. Such a vote passed by the delegates of a political party cannot but indicate an even greater readiness for action among the rank and file.

I saw the proof of this two days later at a meeting in Manchester. It was an I. L. P. or Socialist meeting, but it was also distinctly a labor meeting, a working-class audience and every speaker a trade unionist. These are some of the statements which won the enthusiastic approval of the crowd:

"The Trades Unionist movement can either become direct actionist now or be left behind."

"Don't let us apologize about the Bolsheviki—if we are sincere we know that *we* are Bolsheviki, everyone of us. They are our comrades. . . . You tell me the press calls them murderers. Well, so does the press call you murderers when you go on strike. . . . All those Glasgow workers were murderers to the Provost Marshal, when he sent the soldiers out to shoot them down. The Press tells you the Bolsheviki believe in free love!

*They come as instructed delegates and vote by the card system, one card for every 1,000 votes. Miners, railway men and transport workers make up more than half of the vote in favor.

Was there ever a Socialist or labor leader that rose to a position of power that they didn't make the same attack on him? The accusations they make against the Bolsheviki are the accusations they will make against you when you show your power."

"It's the duty of every working man and woman in Great Britain to see that Russia wins through. If Russia wins through Germany will win through. If Germany wins through France will win through. And then by God we'll win through!"

"You've got to have industrial action, you'll always have to have it. I'm not sure even if you get a labor majority, that you'll get a labor government."

"If ever we get a working-class tribunal of justice, I want to see Winston Churchill in the Dock—that hero of Sidney St. who has become the assassin of new republics!"

And finally the chairman, who is President of the Trades and Labor Council of Manchester (a city of a million) and a strong industrial unionist:

"If I ever vote for a labor member of Parliament it will be to close the House of Commons. If we get control of the industries, and establish our central committee representing all the industries, we can take care of everything. We won't need the House of Commons."

"We want soviets!" somebody called out. The chairman proposed "three cheers for the Revolution!" and they were given with a will.

Later By Cable

AS was expected, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, when requested by the Labor Party executive to convene a special meeting of the Congress to consider the proposal of direct action, refused. On July 23rd the Triple Alliance (Railroad workers, Transport Workers, and Miners) in a full delegate conference at Caxton Hall, London, voted by an enormous majority—217 for, 11 against—to take a strike vote. The strike ballot, which is now being distributed, reads: "The government having refused to abolish (1) Conscription, (2) Military intervention in Russia, (3) Military intervention in trade union disputes,—

"Are you in favor of withdrawing your labor to enforce the abolition of the foregoing?"

Smillie is all hope. I will send an interview with him for the next number.

C. E.

A DISPATCH from Coblenz states that "American military police, armed with machine guns and sawed-off shotguns, put down a strike of German workmen yesterday in less than two hours after the men had walked out, merely by their presence in the district." From which we gather that the war for democracy is still in progress.

The Spartacide Insurrection

By Robert Minor

This is the first section of Robert Minor's account of the Communist revolt in Berlin. It was held up by the censor and we published the last section first. Robert Minor will give us next month the story of his experience in France.

"ACH, so-o-o-o! Ganz Schoen!" said the first German soldier I met, as I came through on a prisoner's train out of Russia. That, with a broad grin of delighted welcome is all that I ever found of German national feeling against Americans, except—

In Vilna it was necessary to visit the German "Eisenbahn Direktion," where a stiff blond officer emitted a ceaseless flow of German invective upon the "low-down Russian Jews" who waited in line for permits to travel on the railroad. "Weg! Weg!" (Away! Away!) spat the officer. "Unmo-o-o-o-e-glig," he drawled with acid pleasure in the power to refuse. "What you need is to have discipline put into you. . . . Get out of here, you! Weg! Weg! . . . No permit for you!" he sputtered away automatically, stamping a permit for this man, throwing the application paper back into the face of that one.

Suddenly he caught sight of my fur cap and Russian-looking beard above the heads of the crowd. His face twisted with astonishment and convulsed with rage. He shrieked: "TAKE OFF THAT CAP!" I couldn't resist the temptation of pretending not to understand. He trembled, and snorted. "Take off that cap, I tell you! Mein Gott! Can you not understand plain German? Take off that cap!"

I allowed a long-bearded patriarch to whisper to me in Russian that one is forced to take off one's hat in the office of a German "goy," and then I removed the cap, lying in broken German to the effect that I hadn't understood. When it came my turn and the officer learned I was an American, his rage was increased by the multiple of wounded pride. In a voice that tried to do the honors for his fatherland, he informed me that "Germans do not love Americans any better than the Bolsheviks do, and the Bolsheviks shoot Americans." Every German I have since met has smiled upon me because I was an American, but *that* one kept me waiting two days, just to show that he could, in that strangest of towns—the "back home" of so much of our New York East Side, including Abraham Cahan of the Jewish Daily "Forward." During my exile in Vilna, I learned what had put the German officer in such a cross mood:

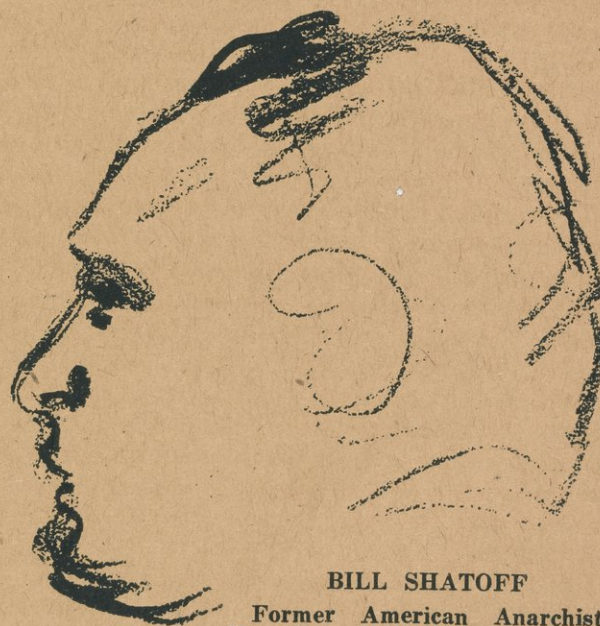
most of his soldiers had neglected their rightful superiors to attend the fascinating meetings of the workmen's soviets, which were organizing to "take over the town as soon as the Germans should be driven out."

On the train to Berlin, the soldiers spontaneously selected one of themselves to occupy my first-class seat, explaining that the mere fact that I could buy a first-class ticket did not entitle me to any class privileges. They didn't know what a privilege it was to me to hear them say it. But one simple fellow didn't get the spirit of it, and commenced triumphantly to rail at me as a Jew. I got angry and thundered at him a lecture. "Suppose I am a Jew," I said. "What of it? The spirit of your talk is what made the war and caused ten million murders. Haven't you got enough of that? There are no Jews and no Germans, no Englishmen and no Frenchmen—there are only *men*. You have no business to call anyone 'Jew,' but only 'man.' However, I am not a Jew. I am an American, if you want to make distinctions. But I don't call you Germans; I call you brothers." The debate went to me by unanimous consent, and when we reached Berlin the soldier called me "thou" as he handed me my broken Russian tea-kettle which he had sat upon while he thought I was a Jew.

* * *

The incoming train was met by a distribution of circulars pleading with the soldiers not to revolt.

Berlin was the same old Berlin. I could scarcely no-



BILL SHATOFF

Former American Anarchist—
Now Petrograd's Chief of Police.



Liebknrecht—he looked more like this than like the pictures you have seen.

tice a difference in the five years since I'd been there, except the iron spring tires on the automobiles and the flaring posters to warn the proletariat against the one great sin—*Bolshevism*.

* * *

Coincidence is a persistent clown. In 1914 I had lodged in a little hotel at number 114 Wilhelmstrasse. Upon this return in December, 1918, I searched out the same hotel, where I found a sign reading: "Office of the Rote Fahne" (The Red Flag).

Tall, gaunt Karl Liebknrecht was there. His face bore traces of prison. An impression stole into me, and frightened me, that he had been weakened in body and spirit by the stone and iron. Astonishingly unforceful, sounded the voice of the man whose courage had shaken a world.

While Liebknrecht explained that he was very busy, a messenger came to say: "The Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils is about to abdicate to a constituent assembly." "I must go quickly," said Liebknrecht; "come with me if you wish to talk," and he and I and another man hurried down to the Abgeordneten Haus a few blocks distant. In speech after speech, the Majority Socialist leaders exhorted the delegates to submit to the bourgeois order of things. Only in the uncompromising honor and democracy of President Wilson, they said, could Germany place her faith; the workers must not anger the Entente and American governments by taking up the proscribed Bolshevism, and a Russian alliance must be scrupulously avoided lest it lose for Germany the chance of life which had been promised her through Mr. Wilson.

Gradually it dawned upon me that the hall was full of "phoney" delegates. The "workers' delegates" were

largely superintendents and foremen, and the "soldiers" were officers. The German bourgeois are clever and quick. Knowing that the danger of revolution lay in the inevitable forming of workers and soldiers' councils, the bourgeoisie, through the Majority Socialist Party, had taken care quickly to form "soviets" with a membership chosen by itself, before such things could spring up naturally with revolutionary membership.

So, in this congress the Spartakists, and such Independents as had their courage with them, were talking to a stone wall. On the tired face of Liebknrecht I read the hopelessness of it. "Soviets?" Is that name, too, now stolen from the ever-robbed proletariat? Macchiavellian politics has never received a greater contribution than from the German bourgeoisie since the abdication of the Kaiser.

"All power to the Soviets!" was the planned and only reliable battle-cry of Liebknrecht. "Very well," was the cool reply of the speakers for the bourgeoisie, "all power to decide Germany's fate shall rest with the Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets (the membership of which we have attended to). What are you going to do about it? Do you really mean 'all power to the Workers and Soldiers' Soviets,' or do you mean 'all power to Liebknrecht'?" The Soviet Congress decides to have a constituent assembly. We abide by the decision. Do you?"

"Peace!" shouted Liebknrecht, as Lenin had shouted. "Certainly, peace," said the bourgeoisie. "Mr. Wilson will sign peace only with a democratic Germany, which means a constituent assembly. Let us have no fighting."

"Socialism!" shouted Liebknrecht. "Yes, Socialism," said the bourgeoisie, through Scheidemann, "Socialization just as soon as it can be done without the smashing of the industrial system."

The fraud was too subtle for the minds of German labor. There was no sharp distinction between what Liebknrecht said and what the bourgeoisie's Socialists could say just as well. It boiled down to a question of which leaders to trust, and though all thoughtful proletarians were readier to trust Liebknrecht than Scheidemann and Ebert, still very few are thoughtful, and even fewer of the war-tired men were willing to fight over the only issue that was clear to them—that of their leaders' personal integrity.

* * *

Everybody has to be Christmassy when Christmas comes near, no matter who one is. The German newspapers just had to have something Christmassy to talk about, and so they took President Wilson. As this day approached, the inveterate desire to have a Savior bloomed into eulogies of the President across the sea. The fabian socialist paper, the "Republik," filled its heart and its first page with "The Hope in Wilson." Wilson was the Messiah, he was the Star in the East, he was the Three Wise Men, and the camel, too.

The fabian fish swallows whatever is on the hook—all the fourteen hooks.

* * *

In a quiet suburb I rented a room with heating and bath included, only there was no fuel and the bath was not working. Amongst the abominations of hyper-decorated furniture, sea-shell bric-a-brac and oil paintings from the furniture store, I made my home. I rented of a funny little, wrinkled-faced, white-haired woman, four feet tall. She had a five-foot sister, equally aged, who worked out in a tailor shop. Both were old, old maids.

We quickly got acquainted, and I soon learned that they were *very* respectable people; they had always been connected with the Herrschaft (gentility). They had served a Graf. Their family, their mother before them, had worked for the Graf and Gräfin all their lives, and the Gräfin had left them some money, said little Frau Four-foot, only the sly lawyers had cheated them out of it. They would be rich now, with thousands of marks, if it hadn't been for—. They had always been connected with the Herrschaft. And their mother would have been really married, on the Graf's big estate, if it hadn't been for—well, anyway, the Gräfin promised to take care of them always. Always, all their lives. She had said it just that way many times, once right in the presence of the Graf, when they were little girls and the Gräfin was a young lady.

In the evenings when I came in to rest from sputtering machine-guns, bloody sidewalks and the blazing light of today, these two little ghosts of the past would falter into my room to show me the old, musty documents "with the seals right on them" to prove their connection with the Herrschaft of long ago.

To my perplexity I discovered that I was their "Herrschaft" now. They came into my room every morning to bring with great ceremony my *ersatz* coffee, to bow stiffly before me, to open the window curtains and to place at the bedside my carefully polished shoes which they had cleaned in the night. They had to have a Herrschaft.

On the wall hung a cheap engraving of God standing in Heaven, behind the spinning globe, His hand raised in benediction. A lady angel flew with art-school grace, at the side of the picture, and fat-legged cherubim floated in the scrolly clouds. God's head was drawn too big for his body, and His beard was lopsided, but the composition was good and altogether it was a pleasing picture. Beneath, in Russian, German and Polish, was printed "God's Creation."

I told little Frau Four-foot that the picture was good. Her face lightened up. "Ah, we are Catholics, Herr." And so I learned that the whole intellectual life of the two wizened wrecks was supplied by the priest around the corner, and their votes carefully directed to the Catholic Zentrum party.

The Volksmarine Division had come to Berlin in the conscious glory of having started the German Revolution.

I have several times noticed that it is the first task of a "revolutionary government" to get rid of the soldiers that made the revolution. It seems to be a natural phenomenon and has perfectly sound logic. Troops start revolutions by refusing to obey, by themselves deciding whom to fight, and when to fight and how; and after the overthrow they retain the habit. Now it is obvious that soldiers must obey the "revolutionary government." Therefore the "revolutionary government" must get rid of the soldiers that made the revolution, and must hold power through soldiers that have been obeying all along. Scheidemann knows that.

The government decided to quietly slide the Volksmarine Division down the skids of demobilization. City Commandant Wels decreed that it was the *irrevocable* right of the tired revolutionary heroes to be demobilized and go home.

The Volksmarine Division suggested that as it had precipitated the revolution at a time when Scheidemann was supporting the Kaiser, it would be best for them to remain under arms to safeguard the revolution. But Commandant Wels pronounced the Division demobilized and stopped its pay.

The division went all at once, with rifles on shoulders,



SCHEIDEMANN

to see the commandant about it, and took him back with them into the Schloss (Kaiser's palace).

The First Cavalry division of Potsdam and some young troops just off the train from the murder expedition in Finland with that now staunch pro-Ally, General Mannerheim, surrounded the royal palace and stables. All night the artillery and machine-guns bombarded the atrocious architecture of the Schloss (thereby atoning in some measure for German destruction of good Gothic architecture in France).

When the cannon were heard throughout the city, the promenaders on Unter den Linden said "suppression of criminals" and went on promenading. Some Democrats mostly remained in their "referred-to-the-executive-committee" state of mind and kept to their daily tasks of conveying the best food to the bourgeoisie and protecting property.

From some factories on the outskirts of the city, several hundreds of workmen who didn't have party discipline, left their labors upon which the life of the community depended, and came down town with revolvers—not in uniform and with no authority whatever. In front of the Lustgarten they waved their revolvers, shouting, "Nieder die Regierung; alle Macht dem Proletariat!" and clashed with some Social-Democratic Party soldiers who were fully authorized to preserve order. The shooting, yelling and general disorderliness drew crowds and caused a chaotic condition from the working-class district back of Alexander Platz, clear to the down-town streets. It created scandal. People said it was awful, and then explained how it happened. The promenaders stopped in little clusters to explain; some of the shabbier

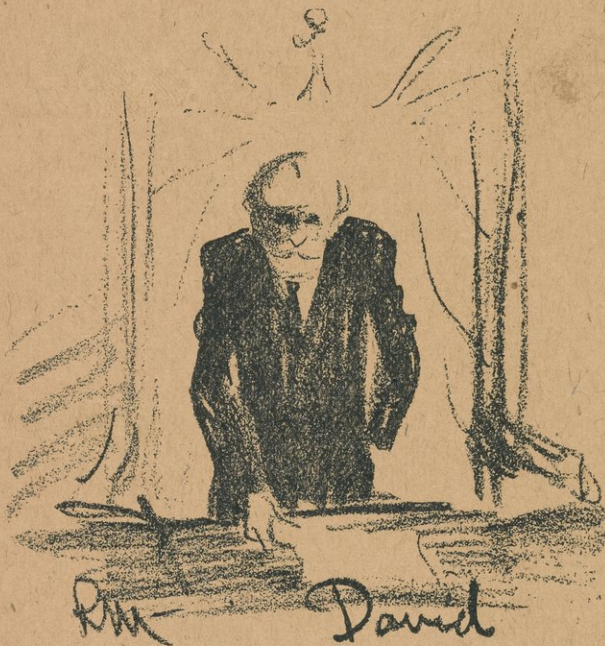
men began to argue, and then the crowd commenced to think.

It is the strangest sight in the world when a crowd begins to think. Promenaders stop promenading, and nondescripts quit hurrying to where they are bound, and nobody says, "Move on, there!" but everybody talks earnestly to someone he never saw before. Anatole France tried to explain it in describing the French Revolution, and since the Russian Revolution a few more efforts have been made to tell how crowds think. But most of it remains to be told, it is almost an unexplored field. It is an astonishing, flabbergasting thing. The first thing required is a lack of policemen, then a big, life-and-death issue, and there comes a sort of chemical action in the crowd, like the turning of milk. The human mass that was flowing easily in whatever direction its owners chose to pour it, suddenly congeals at a peal of thunder—cannon thunder—ceases to pour and is no longer sweet to the taste of those who have been drinking it. Something happens that we shall have to think about a lot and talk about until we figure out just what it is.

The crowds gaped about the scene of battle all night, watching the government's batteries fire, and then walking over to watch the shells explode in the midst of the dead architecture and live sailors. They talked about how the fire spat from the guns, and how loud it was, and how soon the "disorder would be suppressed"—and then they discussed which side was right and talked about what the sailors had done; the bombardiers talked, too, and pretty soon they suddenly wouldn't bombard any more.

In the morning more people came down from their homes and stopped in the streets to argue, full of the virgin opinions of the day before. "Finden Sie in *mir* einen Verbrecher?" politely expostulated a neatly dressed Spartakist, and I knew that late arrivals had been saying that the marines were bombarded as criminals. No-o-o-o! of course the gentleman was not a criminal; and so the argument continued throughout the day. The soldiers melted into the crowd, to some extent, leaving their officers in perplexed impotence. The mob, the complacent mob that governments use, wouldn't pour any more.

I can never forget that Christmas Day on Unter den Linden. Discarded handbills of every political faction lay in a trampled and sloppy carpet over the street. The human flood swirls and eddies and breaks into little groups that are polite, kindly—attentive to anything that anyone will say. The little groups get abstract and then concrete, and are amazingly wise. People that never thought before, begin to think right before your eyes. Men that never talked before suddenly speak wisdom that they never had before. It seems as though a whole multitude suddenly begins to revel in the delight of using some obscure muscle that it never used before. There are no policemen, and everybody forgets about law and order and is kind and courteous instead.



David, the Majority Socialist, who said in the Reichstag (I think it was in July, 1918): "We are preventing a revolution, and we shall continue to do so."

As far as the eye could see, knots of men and women were talking, talking, discussing the fourteen dead sailors in the Marstall (royal stables) and whether it was right that they should be dead. Nearly everybody started out with the official opinion that it was right to attack them; nearly everybody finished by thinking it was wrong to attack them. The ten thousand tiny voices made one big rumble; a multitude buzzing, milling, milling, churning about all day. A crowd thinking.

This happy Christmas evening I went calling on the marines in the Marstall. Their piratical-looking, cool-looking, kind-looking outposts stood a hundred yards from the building, explaining to the crowd's volunteer messengers, who, when they grasped a good argument, hastened away to use it to finish up some dispute on Unter den Linden. Inside the Marstall, the door guard, whose head was horribly bloody and bandaged, asked my companion for a cigarette and asked me to tell him something about Russia. Another asked me if I wanted a rifle and a window to shoot from. The sailors told us that they didn't know very much but that they knew whoever holds guns, rules, and I thought that was a great deal to know.

When the soldiers began to think, the government decided not to disarm the sailors. It is astonishing and funny, that governments can't do anything when crowds and soldiers think. But they don't think often.

* * *

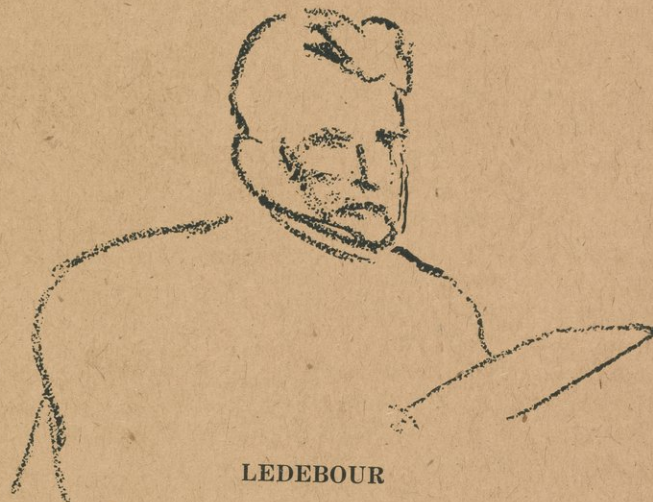
On this birthday of Jesus who drove the money-changers out of the Temple, some ragamuffins with Jesus in them drove the "Scheidemaenner" out of the Vorwaerts printing shop. The unbeautiful, artificial-stone walls contained the Altar of their Kingdom to Come. They had seen their Temple defiled by hands that had been in glove with the Kaiser. Every day they saw the Vorwaerts—their Vorwaerts—turn crafty words to defeat their dreams, and that in the very time of dreams coming true. They couldn't stand it any longer, and at last they took machine-guns of a kind that Jesus didn't have, and they drove the money-changers out of their temple. The next morning, Vorwaerts spoke as they wanted it to speak, with a wild, lusty call to the revolution, the kind of call for which Vorwaerts was founded many years ago.

The ragamuffins were wheedled and driven out of the Vorwaerts office by promises that the Kaiserliche editors would write differently in future; but on the morning after, the restored editors printed heavy, respectable, flustered editorials taking back all the promises.

* * *

Fourteen dead bodies of workingmen or sailors are a dangerous thing for a government to leave lying around. There have to be funerals.

By tacit agreement the half-Jew Liebknecht was to be the priest at this funeral. Nobody thought of anything else.



LEDEBOUR

The government retired to obscurity for the day, with as many officers as possible barricaded behind machine-guns. The bourgeois press frantically appealed to comrade workers to come to Socialist meetings in the outer residence districts; out of reach of the sight and sound of the terrible Liebknecht.

All of downtown Berlin was given over to the funeral, every street. First the mourners—the avengers?—met in Siegesallee, and Liebknecht stood before the coffins and told in simple, brutal brevity why the sailors had been killed. Then the monster cortege, like a black and red serpent, pushed its head through the center of Berlin. A taxicab squeezed through the jam in Unter den Linden and stopped in front of the Police Presidium. Liebknecht climbed onto the roof of the taxicab. He stood silently. Then he pointed to the closed, shame-faced door of the Police Presidium. Not a word. He was startlingly like another gaunt, kind-eyed Jew who first delivered to me the message of the Revolution, years ago, in America.

Liebknecht told again sharply and plainly why there were dead brothers to bury. His boney, prison-pallid finger pointed persistently at the Police Presidium, which we knew bristled with machine guns behind its shutters, at his back.

A crowd of workingmen lifted him down and into the car, seeming proud to touch him, and the taxicab drove away with a sailor on its top, a big automatic pistol in his hand.

In front of the Schloss stood Ledebour on a stone wall, wearing a long black cape, his white hair bared to the rain. He, too, told why the government had fired upon the revolutionary sailors. There was a queer impression of rivalry between these two men.

Some of the bourgeois didn't want to take off their hats as the funeral passed, but some workingmen spoke to them, and they did.

* * *

In the evening, little Frau Four-foot and her five-foot

sister waited for me, trembling with fear. At their church they had learned that the Spartakists were going to kill everybody. To me, as the Herrschaft, the only authority besides the priest, they came to ask if they were likely to have their throats cut—whether the murderous orgy of Spartacus was likely to spread to their dingy neighborhood. "Herr Minor, are they going to murder us, two poor old respectable women? Ach, schrecklich! schrecklich! The Spartakists kill women and children, they despoil the church, they have no mercy. . . . You say it is not so, Herr Minor? Ach, you do not understand. They will surely kill us, and will capture the Rathaus where the money is that we ought to get only the lawyers cheat us, and they will steal it. Ach, ach!"

I tried with all the authority of my status of Herrschaft to quiet them, but always a bomb or a cannon-shot would detonate somewhere, and they would turn pale again and tiptoe off to bed to tremble and whisper all night, afraid to sleep.

* * *

I think it was the 30th of December that the "Kommunist Party" was formed, and Karl Radek made a speech urging a revolt and an entente with Russia. The German bourgeoisie was perplexed and terror-stricken. It was so damned irregular! The Germans had never gotten used to what the Russians call "illegalism," just as Americans have not yet learned that method of revolution and will not learn about it until they shall have grabbed Russia through Kolchak, and try to rule it.

* * *

The New Year brings fresh preoccupations. The bourgeois and monarchist newspapers thunder at the proletariat to please, *please* come and vote. "Democracy!" they gladly, or anxiously, cry. They have been told the great secret: that democratic government doesn't hurt property. "What is the difference," they delightedly whispered to one another, "between a republic and a monarchy? Only this, that a republic is a *safety-device* monarchy! Ha, ha!"

* * *

Chief of Police Eichorn was caught in the most treasonable conduct! *He had given arms to factory workmen.* What a police chief! It was unheard of, irregular, undisciplined, un-party-disciplined.

And so, on Sunday morning, January 5th, Vorwaerts and the bourgeois papers announced firmly that Eichorn was dismissed.

But have you ever seen a government decree issued while factory workers had guns in their hands? It is as impotent as a solitary flake of snow in April. "Auf! Auf! Arbeiter!" called the Rote Fahne and Freiheit, and by nine o'clock in the morning the great Siegesallee swarmed with workingmen, couples of them, here and there, carrying machine-guns between them. By ten o'clock the streets were flooded with a human sea.

At Pariser Platz a wagonload of government handbills arrived. They were unloaded in the middle of the Platz, the stacks of paper carefully loosened up, piled so nicely as to tickle one's sense of order, and set on fire. One of the stokers politely gave me two copies of the circular at my request.

The head of the procession swept past, composed of Spartakists, Independents and a tremendous mass whose only politics was a consciousness of being workingmen.

Twelve men with rifles stepped out of the procession, heavy cartridge-belts around their working clothes and factory grease on faces. There is something terrible in the sight of men in working clothes with rifles in their hands. They strung out, twelve abreast, and walked quickly up the broad avenue on the side that was not filled with paraders. A hunchbacked man came out of nowhere and silently began to tear anti-bolshevik posters off the walls. Spectators looked at him without speaking, and then joined him. He reminded me of a man I had seen selling newspapers under Brooklyn Bridge.

The crowd stopped singing. Someone called out "Scheidemann!" and the voices roared, "Nieder, nieder, nieder!" in unison. "Liebknecht!" "Hoch, hoch, hoch!"

I ran ahead, hardly realizing what I was doing, to watch the twelve men with guns. They were walking rapidly. Each military officer they met they asked courteously—yes, damn it! with the most kindly courtesy—to take the cockade off of his cap. Each officer complied with sheepish readiness. Except when some unarmed workmen accosted officers in a side street, out of sight of the men with guns. An officer refused to remove his insignia, sneered at the shabby man before him. The shabby man slapped the officer's cap off and the amazed gentleman drew back into the arms of his wife. A half-dozen angry bourgeois stepped between the opponents. "You shabby fool! You treat an officer of the German army this way!" A workman ran up with a big revolver, and the officer, wife and bourgeois melted into the crowd.

The street was being littered with falling, tinkling, rolling little painted tin disks that marked the sacredness of the Kaiser's own officers. "And this Unter den Linden!" exclaimed a woman. I stepped across an open space in the crowd. Someone caught sight of my nondescript costume of fur cap, high boots and Russian army coat and shouted, "Der Russe!" Everybody smiled and someone called me "comrade."

Across the avenue came a big limousine with a shiny bright officer sitting stiffly in the rear. Workmen shouted, the chauffeur tried to outrun them, but some young fellows headed off the machine. The General was asked to get out and have his epaulettes taken off. He hesitated. They jerked him out of the car and hacked off his shoulder-straps with a big knife. Another high officer tried to cross the avenue in an automobile, and then several more. Soon a troop of happy small

boys was kicking the shiny gold braid of the Kaiser's glory up and down Unter den Linden. I stood entranced on the corner.

I went out to Alexander Platz, where Police Headquarters overlook that Poor Man's Square. The tall red brick building was surrounded by immeasurable waves of shabby men, waves that surged and ebbed and flowed about the foundation of the building where workmen had got rifles for *their own* cause. Waving hats and hands and smiles were the foam on these waters. It was the first time that I had ever seen a "police chief" loved out in the open by shabby men. But, damn it! he was not a *real* police chief.

The government soldiers did not come anywhere near Alexander Platz that day, and there were no policemen in the police headquarters, except Eichorn who had been "removed."

The revolution always won at those moments when it had a concrete issue.

* * *

On Monday, Liebnecht spoke in Siegesallee, urging the workmen not to allow the government to remove Eichorn. Liebnecht looked tired. I went down Wilhelm Strasse, where, near a government building I saw two hundred men from factories, with guns in their hands. They were just standing around. I asked some of them who they were. I expected them to say "Spartakists," but they only said "Arbeiter," and I was surprised to realize how dangerous it sounded.

Vorwaerts had been captured again! And here was the paper on the street, edited by the ragamuffin Jesuses. It said, "Up, Men, Up! All on the street! The Revolution is in danger!" I went down to Mohren Strasse, near the best-built church I ever saw: its nooks and corners make good sanctuary against bullets. A government machine-gun on a nearby stone balcony sputtered away now and then, but it was shooting over our heads at something further off and its ways were soon learned by the crowd which stepped back and forth, gracefully avoiding its stream of bullets as well as the occasional passing taxicabs.

An automobile drove past us with a dazzling bunch of gold lace and uniform to the door of the Kaiserhof Hotel; no one could see who it was. "Ludendorf?" whispered the crowd. "Hindenburg," said one. "The damned dog," said another.

* * *

For one memorable day the German government was confined to about four city blocks at Wilhelm Platz. Elsewhere everybody seemed to be joyously thinking, forgetting about the government. The soldiers most of them said they were neutral. They were trying to think it out (and did not succeed in thinking it out until after they had been disarmed).

Wilhelm Platz was crowded with irate, with scared, with sick bourgeoisie. With them were some working-

men, timid, well-behaved, hesitant people who watched other persons with great concern to do properly. Ebert came to the side window of the Reichskanzlei to make a speech to the little cramped street that seemed all that was left of his domain. He appeared worried. Someone fired a rifle to call the crowd to attention. Ebert jumped. It was a mistake to fire the rifle; everybody was startled and failed to understand it. Ebert talked; he said what was in the papers that morning. I couldn't help laughing. A government with all its clothes off is such a tiny thing.

Over in Mohren Strasse a few Spartakist partisans walked into the square to argue with the bourgeoisie and the tame workmen. The arguments became heated. The Spartakists were outnumbered. A big Spartakist sailor, empty handed, was arguing at the corner where the Kaiserhof Hotel abutts into Wilhelm Platz. The bourgeois closed in on him, pushed him, pulled him and shook fists in his face. Suddenly someone fired a pistol. The sailor lunged to make room for himself and then pulled from his shirt a hand-grenade. The crowd scattered as he tossed the bomb. Silhouetted in the white smoke I saw a bunch of black rags that went up and then flopped in the gutter, a dead man.

The crowd scattered to the corners of the square, and the bourgeois began beating up the propagandists. Too-thick crowds packed about each of them, pummeling them with such fists as can reach an individual in a too-thick crowd. A rusty-haired Spartakist tried to cover his face with his arms, lunging back and forth as fists and fingernails caught him on cheek and neck. A big man with a derby hat and cutaway coat hovered on



GROBER—CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

the outskirts of the trampling group, trying to reach the Spartakist's head with a piece of board. Nervous anxiety covered his face as his reach fell short several times. As he tried and tried again, I thought, "that's a man who succeeds in business." The crowd thinned out between him and his mark, and he brought his stick down on the bobbing head. A slab of hairy skin peeled off, and there was the white skull, which turned red. The man in the cutaway coat dropped his board, dusted his hands and walked away.

A little ragged Jew ducked like a rabbit through the legs of the assailing crowd, crawled on hands and knees and dashed away, knocking down two who tried to stop him. A pink-cheeked fat man broke a stick over the head of another. A well-dressed boy of sixteen began to cry and said to me, "It isn't right, it isn't right!" A big, old man with a sad face began to break up all the sticks he could find, saying, "It is better so."

* * *

I found Herr X. sitting lazily in the lobby of the luxurious Adlon Hotel. When he saw me, he motioned a cordial invitation to a second big arm chair. Herr X. had a proclivity for American newspaper men, and no one had yet warned him against me.

We talked half an hour about the treaty then being drawn up in Paris, he sounding me for speculations as to its probable harshness. A rifle fired outside.

"What do you think of the Spartakists?" I asked. He smiled faint-heartedly. After a bit, he said, "You know, I can't live any way except as a bourgeois. . . . Maybe the Spartakists are right, but that is not a question for me. I am a bourgeois, and I must live and act as a bourgeois."

"The Spartakists have captured the Anhalter Bahnhof," I read from my afternoon newspaper. He frowned, and then he smiled like a good sport. "It looks as though we are going to lose, but we can do nothing but go on and try. As long as any soldiers remain loyal, we must keep them fighting. . . . This is the only life I can lead—this life here—" and his gesture indicated the luxury of the big hotel.

"You had better become a 'people's commissar,'" I taunted. "Take my advice; study up a socialist vocabulary."

"I suppose," he grinned, "the first thing they would appropriate would be this hotel."

"Headquarters," I replied. We heard a machine-gun spit, in the distance.

"I'm afraid I shouldn't master the Socialist philosophy," said Herr X.

"Socialist *vocabulary*," said Mephistopheles, through me.

He smiled. "You know my friend Scheidemann?"

"No," said I.

"Scheidemann is a good man," mused the Herr.

"Socialist?" I asked.

"Well," answered Herr X., "he's—well, Scheidemann knows that these theories of the fellows out there on the street wouldn't work."

"Is Scheidemann a Socialist?" asked I again.

"Call him a non-Socialist, if you like," replied the Herr. "He knows those theories won't do at all—those theories out there on the street. . . . I wouldn't call him insincere—not at all." Herr X. looked at me just a bit distrustfully.

"You couldn't do without Scheidemann and Ebert," I said softly.

Herr X.'s face lightened and he inclined toward me, a sympathetic hand upon my arm. "You appear to understand," he said wonderingly. "You don't seem to be like most newspaper men. They don't think about such things."

A little spasmodic firing in the distance. Noske's men.

"I wish you'd meet my friend Bernstorff."

"I suppose," I said, "you'd have been expropriated already if it were not for the Majority Socialist Party—"

"Do you see that?" he said. "The advantage we had is that the German working class was organized and accustomed to putting their faith in responsible men whom they could trust—"

"Whom they *thought* they could trust," I interrupted, and he looked at me suspiciously again. "—and whom *you could* trust," I added.

He smiled with relief. "Scheidemann and Ebert are splendid men. In the crisis, nobody could save the situation except men who were known as Socialists."

"And yet, who are *not* Socialists?" I asked.

"Oh, they are members of the Socialist Party; have been for years."

"But they don't want to put over Socialism," said I.

"Not for the present. The time we are concerned about is the present."

"Tell me," I said, "isn't it true that what you need is a government that calls itself Socialist, but is not Socialist?"

"You've got it right," laughed Herr X. with animation, "but I never heard it put that way before. . . . Don't you want to meet Bernstorff?"

* * *

Leipsiger Strasse is filled with workmen carrying rifles and hand-grenades. From the War Ministry a machine-gun opened fire into the thick crowd. The workmen scattered to the roofs and windows of houses, from which they rained bombs and fired rifles upon the War Ministry.

The government officers sent out a promise to quit firing. The fight stopped and most of the workmen wandered away, a few remaining to load the injured into an ambulance.

Then the government opened fire again. Five dead and fifteen wounded.

January 7th: The "Boersen Courier" (Stock Exchange Courier) contains a stirring appeal—

"TO ALL WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' SOVIETS OF GERMANY!"

—telling the working class just how the editors think it can emancipate itself from Capitalism. Of course, *order* is the first thing.

* * *

Workingmen have captured and made forts of most of the newspaper offices.

Noske declared martial law, some people said, and some said he didn't.

January 8th: The revolutionary workingmen met in Siegesallee, in the beautiful Thiergarten. At one end of the fine driveway stands the Iron Hindenburg and down both sides are statues of royal heroes of Germany's past, in a style called typically German, but really conceived in that monument foundry to the bourgeoisie, the Ecole des Beaux Arts at Paris.

Across a stretch of park, through the winter-naked limbs of trees, could be seen the Reichstag building. And many eyes looked at it through the trees, from Siegesallee. It was held by government troops, and in the distance the tiny noses of machine-guns peeped through the stone balustrades. Workmen began to drift over toward the Reichstag building, and lean against the trees and look.

The workmen hailed the soldiers as "Brueder," but there was no response. Some went out into the open and shouted, asking the soldiers to talk to a committee. No reply. They waited a while.

It was one of the most dare-devil things that ever happened: a hundred or two men with rifles and machine guns charged across the open square at the Reichstag building. It is impossible to know why they did it.



Against stone walls bristling with death-sputters. The machine-guns methodically shot them to death.

* * *

What soldiers are those on Brandenburger Tor? Spartakists? But nobody knew. Nobody ever knows who anybody is in a city revolution. I passed under the great arch. There was a tall, corseted looking officer, his neck held in a four-inch white collar. He leaned over a nervous little man who had a cartridge-belt wrapped around his waiters' dress-shirt and a too-long rifle in his hands. The big officer talked as though ordering a meal, and the little waiter seemed worried to get the order right. "Government troops," I knew.

Firing began from all sides, and I walked down Unter den Linden with an inarticulate notion that I wanted to be among the *other* people if I got shot. The noise stopped. The crowd milled about as it had in the earlier days when it was making up its mind. For a half an hour. At the corner of Wilhelm Strasse the crowd gathered, an open space of two blocks being kept clear between there and Brandenburger Tor. Workingmen were talking to soldiers. "Are you not our brothers? Would you shoot us? Come over to us. We all want Socialism."

A message came from Brandenburger Tor. "Don't let the crowd talk to you," was the order to the soldiers. The crowd stepped back and then commenced to talk again. "We only want peace, brothers. Why do you kill us for the Kaiser's officers?" Another messenger arrived from Brandenburger Tor. This time he whispered his message. The soldiers withdrew, and the crowd stood wondering and talking.

"T-R-R-R-R-rat-tat-tat!" a big-calibred machine-gun sputtered from Brandenburger Tor. A man in sailor's breeches threw up his arms, a heavy bullet spattered through his neck. It *spattered* through, and sloshed blood around. He flopped onto the street and slid, scraping the skin off his cheek-bone on the pavement. His head was half torn off and purple stuff poured out, which I stepped in because I could not stop quick enough. A small boy smashed against the wall with a bullet through his leg, and rolled over on his back.

* * *

On January 9th and 10th the white heat of battle flamed on Jerusalem Strasse and Linden Strasse, clustered with newspaper offices, very much like our own Park Row. The "Taeglicher Rundschau" fell to the government troops, then most of the other bourgeois offices. Vorwaerts, the last stronghold, held out.

In a lull in the fight, I slipped into the Vorwaerts building, past the big paper-roll barricades and the friendly-looking men who were looking out through the cracks at their sight of day.

L—— was sitting at a desk, sleepily trying to work, and talking to another man about getting some food. L—— told me how they felt about Vorwaerts, as I have written it in this story.

The next day L—— was killed.

Signs of the Times

THE Mayor of Winnipeg, testifying at the trial of twelve strike-leaders, stated that "for ten days the city's government was absolutely in control of the strike committee." We may accept his testimony as final. The French Commune lasted only seven times as long.

"I BELIEVE," says Frank P. Walsh, "that our organic law is elastic enough to meet any condition that may confront us if we act intelligently, even to the extent of a change in our entire social structure, and even though that in turn involves a change in our form of government." It shows a commendable elasticity in Frank P. Walsh.

THE Social Service Bulletin of the Methodist Federation for Social Service contains this sentence in its May issue. "*The Question for the Church: Will it stand for the right of labor to strike, when the right leads in the direction of a fundamental change in the organization of society?*"

THE Advocate of Evansville, Indiana, a paper for twelve years endorsed by the American Federation of Labor, devotes a fine big front-page box to a denouncement of THE LIBERATOR. This means that the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor are beginning to read THE LIBERATOR. "It should not be difficult," says The Advocate, "for the secret service, or any other police authority, to discover where the money comes from for expense of this publication." No, it is not difficult, and both the federal secret service and the local police undoubtedly know. That is just the trouble—it doesn't come from Russia!

ON Saturday, the 31st of May, the centenary of the American poet, Walt Whitman, was solemnly celebrated in Paris—not at the French Academy, but at the Labor Temple, the great hall of the Union of Syndicats of the Seine.

"The great Walt," says a writer in *La Vie Ouvriere*, "the great comrade of all men and of all women beyond seas and frontiers, has been glorified as it was appropriate that he should be, and where it was appropriate."

A JAPANESE renegade Socialist has formed a "Royal Socialist Party." It has adopted the imperial flag in place of the red flag, and will preach a "socialism that revolves round the royal family as a center." This is a little better than our renegades, whose socialism only revolves round themselves.

A DISPATCH from Papeete, Tahiti, says that "a sort of communist republic has been set up in the Island of Mauke by soldiers who returned recently from the battlefields of France. Mauke is one of the Cook group of islands west of Tahiti.

"Reports from Mauke say the soldiers have taken entire charge of the island, displaced the government resident, assumed direction of the trading stores, set prices on the goods for sale, and established government by committee."

WILLIAM HARD concludes an article in the *New Republic* on the recognition of Mannerheim and the persecution of the Soviets, with a plea to Wilson and Lansing, which freely translated amounts to this: "Please, for God's sake, don't furnish me any more proofs of Marxism. My brains won't stand it."



Mom: "I'm afraid I shut the cat in the ice-box!"

A GREAT Dutch banker made the following statement to a newspaper man: "We are all in favor of socialism, for the Dutchman is too great a lover of democracy to stop at anything. Those of us who have property will resist and be killed, but the proletariat are in the majority and must win in time. In a way it is a gloomy outlook, but perhaps we shall be as happy then as we are now!" It is an ultimate portrait of human nature.

THE gentleman who is circulating a petition for the impeachment of President Wilson could think of only twenty-one counts against him.

THE leadership of "barbarous" Russia in the movement for the rationalization of life and industry may be explained a little by this observation of Montaigne: "I am very fond of peasants. They are not educated enough to reason incorrectly."

"IN former peace treaties," said Gompers, at New Amsterdam, "the victors only tried to seize land, money and peoples, but this treaty was based on new principles entirely." He must refer to the fact that in this treaty, besides seizing the land, money and peoples, they have seized the cows. But he is mistaken in thinking this is an absolutely new principle. The Latin word for money, *pecunia*, actually means "cattle," and in the language of one of the old Aryan tribes which overran India two or three thousand years before Christ, the word for war literally translated meant "a desire for cows." It may be true that the Big Four have outdone anything in the historic era, but if we count the gorillas among our ancestors it is not impossible to find a precedent for almost any way of destroying an enemy.

FRIENDS who feel that they are not being asked often enough to subscribe money for support of THE LIBERATOR, may send a contribution for Comrade Raymond Pericat's weekly paper, "The Internationale," in Paris. It is so forceful and intelligent a paper that we read with dismay of the possibility of its reverting for lack of funds, to the form of a monthly review.

The S. L. P.

THE editor of the *Weekly People* asks me to retract the statement, in my article on the New International, that the Socialist Labor Party repudiated the Bolsheviks. She seems to think it will pain me to do this; I do not know why, because I am very glad to know it is not true, and very sorry I was misinformed. The editor also implies that the S. L. P. has declared for affiliation with the Communist International. A contrary implication is contained in the resolution of their National Executive Committee of May 4th, 1919, which speaks of the party as still at that time "awaiting an official call for the formation of the New International." Its resolutions do, however, emphatically support the soviets and emphatically repudiate the Berne Congress of Social Patriots, and it is to be expected that the S. L. P. will soon explicitly endorse the third international.

M. E.



"Isn't it lovely to be out here alone together!"
 "Yes, you know that last train leaves at 5:30."

"The U. S. Revolutionary Training Institute"

By H. Austin Simons

FORT LEAVENWORTH during the last two years has become the little Siberia of America.

The most obvious comparison is between the treatment administered to prisoners in the Czar's prison-camps and the handling of American young men by American soldiers in this American military prison. The most subtle resemblance between our prison and those in Siberia is in the atmosphere of "underground" that prevails in both places. . . .

At the time of the prisoners' strike, last February, the main group of objectors, numbering about 150, was in the seventh wing, an open-cell unit, an "honor wing," in which ordinarily no sentries were on guard and where we had freedom to move about the entire corridor. It was there that the first actual organization took place.

After our refusal to work, we were sent back to the cell house. As I was starting up the tiers toward my cell, one of the "hard guys" called to me:

"Hey, sixty-one, if we're goin' to have a strike we gotta find out what we're strikin' fer an' what we're goin' to do."

"You're right," I said. "Organize!"

"We gotta have a meetin' an' speeches."

"Well, if you and the other fellows feel that way about it," I said, "get the men together tonight and I'll talk to them."

"But we oughta have it right now, before these zibs get a chance to scab."

"All right," I agreed, "but how about the screws?"—referring to the sentries who were coming into honor-wings during those troublous times.

"We'll give you protection. Go to it."

So we went to the rear of the wing and held the first meeting of the strike. I stood on a bench and talked to about 250 men who crowded around the bench on which I stood, closely, so that their heads concealed the numbers painted in white across each leg on my trousers. Whenever guards entered the wing, a lookout rang the gong, I stepped down from the bench and lost my identity in the mass of ugly uniforms. When the soldiers departed we resumed the meeting. . . . These are simple wiles of the underworld. By such means the "seventh wing soviet" was organized secretly and was prepared to lead the whole prison-body next day when the officers agreed to meet a general committee. . . .

But the most significant similarity between the Fort Leavenworth military penitentiary and the Siberian places of isolation is that both have been schools for revolution. . . .

Maybe it was Secretary Baker's enlightened liberalism

or it may have been an indication of the present administration's naive faith that it can alter a thing merely by changing its name that led to the official statement that the Disciplinary Barracks should not be regarded as a military prison, but should be called the "U. S. Vocational Training Institute." The objectors were the only ones who took that announcement seriously. The only vocation they studied was the technique of rebellion.

We did not despair when we found ourselves for the first time in cells, with "box car numbers" painted across our thighs and between our shoulders. We refused to consider ourselves "buried alive" or even confronted by a number of years of lost youth. The reason why we were able to maintain this point-of-view without becoming bitter or vindictive is to be found in the pleasure and the sustaining comradeship we discovered through our joint intellectual activities.

Our first request of the officers was for books; our constant fight was for magazines. We got some through authorized channels; others we obtained by underground. In one way or another we got *THE LIBERATOR* nearly every month. We also managed to get many of the classic books and pamphlets on Socialism. Once a political objector showed me a small volume bound in black, on the cover of which was stamped in silver letters, "New Testament."

"Look inside," the comrade said.

I did so, and found not a page of "scripture," but the entire Communist Manifesto. It had been smuggled in and had been rebound by a prisoner in the printshop. It may seem extraordinary that such a thing could be done in a prison printing-plant; it will appear less impossible when it is known that other prisoners working there printed and forged government checks and vouchers to the amount of \$60,000.

But we were anxious to co-ordinate our studies and to use systematically the educational talent among us. So we began, early last winter, to hold evening classes in Billy Treseler's cell on the fourth tier of the seventh wing.

The instructor sat on a stool and the students crowded about on the "double-deck" bunk, the concrete floor, and the tier-railing outside. Soon the number of pupils became too great for this small space. So we arranged benches and a table in one corner of the main floor of the wing and made that our classroom. Others besides objectors came to listen. General prisoners from different wings took the risk of trial by the executive officer to come to the lectures and discussions. The corner-classroom was crowded at every session and dozens of men sat on the tiers above, listening. We were able

to do all this because we objectors were popular among the other prisoners, because no sentries were in that cell-unit and because no cells there were locked.

Allen Strong Broms, a Socialist from St. Paul, Minn., who in 1917 was, next to Victor Berger, the most indicted citizen of the United States, taught the first classes. He had been an office engineer for a railroad corporation in civil life; he gave us a course in "Efficiency in Propaganda." He also had been a lecturer on sociology; so we arranged a second class for him and he gave lectures on these subjects: "Is a Science of Sociology Possible?" "Sociology Among the Sciences," "The Idea of Evolution in Sociology," "The Socialist Contribution to Sociology," "Sociology and Political Economy," and "The Making of Progress."

Meantime, Carl Haessler, Ph.D., Oxford graduate, instructor at the University of Illinois, had come to prison. The very fact of his presence was dynamic; it changed the aspect of many things. . . . I was the fifth objector to arrive at Fort Leavenworth. For months there were less than fifty of us and most of those, young and unknown. I felt keenly the apparent failure of the anti-draft movement, its lack of large numbers, the absence from it of great personalities. Then, one Saturday noon at mess, a comrade who worked in the executive office, said to me, "Dr. Carl Haessler was 'dressed into numbers' this morning. He wants to see you in your cell right after mess."

I was excited at that prospect; but marching out of the mess-hall I met for the first time Clark Getts, who later was secretary of the prisoners' strike committee. Getts was known as the most handsome and the most popular man in the jail, one of the most effective spokesmen of the movement and the most active man in prison-politics and prison-propaganda. One of the hard-guys, speaking of him to me, said:

"You know, there's a geek I just can't help likin'. I may not believe w'at he t'inks, but I couldn't dislike 'im if I wanted to. . . ."

When I left Getts I hurried into my cell and found Haessler lying on my bunk, already discussing ideas with a crowd about him. As I listened to him tell of his fight against the reactionary elements in the Harvester Trust's state university at Urbana, Ill., of his work as a journalist and propagandist in Milwaukee, and prison anecdotes which incidentally revealed his courage and shrewdness at every encounter with military officers, my doubts of our movement disappeared. At last, the conspicuously competent leader had come. . . .

Haessler soon was acknowledged the intellectual leader of the objectors, not by themselves alone but by the officers as well. At one of the innumerable psychological examinations to which we prisoners were subjected, Haessler (who in camp had obtained a higher mental rating than any other person in the National Army) was examined by a "shavetail."

"How long did you go to school?" the lieutenant asked. "Twenty-two years."

"What was the reason for your quitting?"

Adopting the prisoners' favorite phrase, Haessler replied, "Why, there hain't no more."

That first afternoon in my cell, Haessler read Plato to us. So greatly we enjoyed it that thereafter we often listened to him read and discuss the Greek philosophers, and Freud, and the pragmatists. When Broms' courses were done, we arranged a series of lectures by Haessler on pragmatism—"Illusions of Progress" in civilization, religion, knowledge, morality, truth.

When we were segregated in "Wire City," the small stockade adjoining the prison proper, we started a night school with the following program:

Monday, philosophy, taught by Haessler; Tuesday, English composition, by Simons; Wednesday, Marxian economics, by Carlton Rudolf; Thursday, logic, by Haessler; Friday, biology, by Getts and Schmieder. This school continued until the transfer on June 18 of five members of its faculty to Alcatraz Isle, San Francisco harbor.

Out of our intellectual desires and our delight in frustrating official attempts at suppression, arose other activities. The prison-censor prohibited Bertrand Russell's "Four Roads to Freedom." In consequence we held "a symposium on social, economic and industrial movements of today." Otto Wangerin of St. Paul defined socialism; Broms, collectivism; Haessler, syndicalism; Simons, anarchism, and a dozen other fellows participated in discussion that followed. Thereafter on Sunday nights symposiums were the regular things.

To spread Bolshevism and to practice the technique of agitation, we held open street-curb meetings, mounting benches, drawing in crowds, manipulating applause, expounding industrial unionism, the theories of socialism and the soviet system of government.

We celebrated revolutionary occasions. The first such meeting was held March 9, in observance of the second anniversary of the Russian revolution. Openly, in defiance of sentries and "rats" or stool-pigeons, we gathered in the rear of the wing and reviewed the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, discussed deportations of radical aliens and prophesied the advent of the proletarian dictatorship in America. With heads uncovered we sang the funeral march that had sounded through the streets of Moscow at the "red burial." We filled the prison with the music of "The Black Standard." . . . We observed May Day and the birth anniversary of Karl Marx. We had a Whitman Day program instead of attending the Memorial Day ceremonies presided over by the chaplain. . . .

But what was the result of this constant activity? Did we affect the prison?

In innumerable ways, yes. Leading the other prisoners, the "conscienceless" objectors—the red ones—

created a sort of jail-democracy, a prison-bolshevism.

By frequently fearlessly enduring solitary confinement, by forcing the War Department to abolish the practice of shackling prisoners to the bars, we largely demoralized the discipline that had been imposed upon all prisoners. As a result of the strike which we led, we established a prisoners' committee which now superintends sending the gangs to work, which has charge of the discipline in the cell-wings, the mess-hall and the yard, and which tries all cases of breaches of rules, except those under the jurisdiction of general court-martial.

We gained scores of converts among the prisoners. One fellow asked me, shortly before my release, "Hey, sixty-one, do youse Bullsheviski need any box-fighters or blackjack-men in the movement?"

"There's a place for everyone in the movement," I replied.

"Well, youse guys can count me in! I'm a Bullsheviski from now on. I' been talkin' to some o' your gang an' I see now where I got a dirty deal an' where we all get a dirty deal an' how it's all the fault o' the system an' we' got to change the whole damn' thing."

He wanted to know how it should be changed. We taught him. He's reading proletarian papers now.

My "buddy" in the Disciplinary Barracks was a fellow from the Air Service Flying School, Fort Worth, Texas, who had been convicted on charges preferred by an officer whom he had rivalled in a love-affair. Soon after he came to prison he came in contact with our group. We took him in. Several months later he was called before the officer in charge of the disciplinary battalion.

"Do you want to be restored to duty?" the Major asked.

"No, sir."

"Why not? I should think that, with this sort of charge against you, you'd be glad for a chance to be restored to the status of honorable duty."

"Thank you, sir. But I'm done with Uncle Sam and his army!"

"What do you mean? Are you a c. o.?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why, you're not listed as one."

"I know it, sir. I didn't come in here as one, but I'm going out as one!"

He did. His sentence of one year expired in July and he came to Chicago to study the movement and to find a place in it.

We reached the guards, too, with our propaganda. Shortly after the strike I was seated in the mess-hall next to the aisle. I noticed a soldier standing by me but paid no attention to him, thinking that he was inspecting the table or the food. Presently I heard him whisper:

"Don't look up. Don't recognize me. You're Simons;

I know you by your number. My name is J——. And I've wanted to say to you that I'm for you and Haessler and Getts. And I'm not the only one; you fellows have some real comrades in the guard-companies. . . ."

And we ourselves underwent great changes. I do not know about the religious c. o.'s; but of the majority of the politicals I do know that we were confirmed and determined as revolutionaries by our experience in prison, as many leaders of the movement in Europe were influenced by their earlier sentences to exile. Those who had been "parlor radicals" planned to join one or more actually revolutionary organizations upon their release; those who had been active before going to prison were resolved to devote themselves entirely to the movement. No better can this devotion to a single cause be realized than by knowing the changed attitude of the men in this group toward amnesty. In the last issue of the "Wire City Weekly," the typewritten magazine we published surreptitiously, this statement appeared:

"The motto of the objectors is no longer 'We want amnesty!' It is 'We want revolution!'"

The night before Allen Broms was released we held a farewell meeting and the spirit of the men was expressed in such words as these:

"You, comrade, are fortunate enough to go out before the rest of us go. We want you to be our emissary from this underworld to those comrades and sympathizers on the outside who can help us. Urge them to work for the freedom of us all. Do not forget us who still are in numbered uniforms."

The last farewell gathering I attended was on the night before my own departure. We were in the fourth wing basement then, with sentries guarding us. We waited until lights were out and the soldiers had withdrawn to the far end of the dim corridor; then the fellows came and sat on my bunk and on the cots around it. Speaking almost in whispers, they gave me this message to the outside:

"Of course, we want our freedom. We believe that the time for amnesty is present. But that is not the great thing. Tell the comrades to work for The Revolution.

"For ourselves, our only hope is that the fact of our imprisonment may abet the movement. For that fact is a challenge to American liberalism. If the 'liberal' president does not accept the challenge, his liberal followers must do so for their own integrity. When they do so, they will find themselves forced into radicalism. Thus, it is for our comrades on the outside to justify our imprisonment by propaganda, as well as to end it as soon as may be."

And then, in a murmur that rose and fell and died away like a little wind in the night, they sang,

"Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
We'll keep the red flag flying here."

RUNNING THE GAMUT

Open Covenants

A SHADY-LOOKING character, wearing a mask and false whiskers, was discovered lurking near the White House. The cop dragged him out into the light and removed his scenery.

"Oh, excuse me, Senator," he said. "I thought——"

"All right—natural mistake," said the statesman. "Just a little conference with the President on the peace treaty."

Logic

"WE must not have any special alliances or secret treaties," said the President. "Therefore any special alliances which we may have must be kept secret."

"I don't quite see that," said the Senator.

"Otherwise," replied the President triumphantly, "it would break the heart of the world."

Forearmed

THE police department issued an order forbidding a mass meeting of Russians.

"But these fellows are anti-Bolsheviks," said the reporter. "They want us to recognize Kolchak."

"Every Russian is liable to turn Bolshevik if you give him any encouragement," said the third assistant deputy of the free speech department. "The antis don't stay anti."

Forewarned

THE manufacturer had just added twenty-five per cent to the price of shoes.

"The war is over," he explained to the retailer, "and it is time prices were coming down. They must have a nice high place to come down from."

Perspective

THE race riots were over for the day, the bodies had been removed and there was quiet in the streets of Washington. The gentleman from Texas arose and said:

"We must invade Mexico. Life is not safe there. They have no respect for law and order."

Virtue

A THIRSTY stranger approached the proprietor of a place of refreshment and displayed a yellowish-looking bill.

"Is this a law-abiding place?" he whispered, "or is the law openly flouted?"

"The majesty of the law is supreme here," the former saloon-keeper replied. "The flouting department is in the back room."

Fifty-Fifty

THE United Mine Workers of Indiana had just adopted resolutions demanding the release of Debs and the removal of Burleson.

"We try to be fair to both sides," said the coal miner. "Debs and Burleson should both be let out."

Transfers

SAID Job Hedges, humorist and receiver for the New York street railways: "We are abolishing free transfers except at four points where anyone may use them freely at the risk of life imprisonment."

"How are you going to keep the public contented?" asked the magnate admiringly.

The receiver chuckled Hedgefully. "We are issuing a statement that we would gladly give transfers at Fifth avenue and Forty-third street, only we haven't any cars there."

The Longest Way Round

THE cable had just brought the news that Kolchak had retreated eighty-seven miles.

"Never mind," said the headline writer, "the world is round." Seizing his pencil he wrote: "Kolchak Advances on Moscow."

HOWARD BRUBAKER.



Look yourself in the face—are you honest?

BOOKS

American Fiction

Winesburg, Ohio, by Sherwood Anderson. B. W. Huebsch.

Twelve Men, by Theodore Dreiser. Boni & Liveright.
The Taker, by Daniel Carson Goodman. Boni & Liveright.

The Groper, by Henry G. Aikman. Boni & Liveright.

MODERN fiction is a kind of spiritual adventure. Every one knows that life is infinitely wider, more various, and more complex than the versions of it given in the story-books. The great innovations of the romanticists and the realists of yesterday seem timid enough to us when we reflect upon how tiny an area of incident and emotion they have exploited. If we mark out on the map of life the part dealt with by our novelists, we see huge mountain ranges, dark forests, vast deserts and great seas of human life untouched, until our own time—and suddenly we see a kind of literary exploration and colonizing begin. Our modern story-tellers are not content to deal with materials that have proved themselves amenable to fictional treatment; they are tired of the well-trodden literary tracts—they yearn beyond the skyline where the strange roads go down. They want to make the bounds of literature equal to those of life.

The contribution of America to this spiritual adventure appears to be a kind of undisciplined pioneering. The author of "The Groper," for instance, is in his literary method a little like his hero, whose enterprise consists solely in buying good real estate and automobile stock; not that he understands real estate or automobiles. Mr. Aikman has been enterprising enough to leave the highroad and "squat" on a piece of good fictional territory; but it cannot be said that he shows much enterprise in exploiting it. His theme is the transformation of a well-meaning young idealist into a "successful" business man—the same theme as that of H. G. Wells in "Tono-Bungay." But Mr. Wells comes to his task well-equipped; one can see him starting out with camera, test-tubes, microscope, telescope, and the latest psychological paraphernalia. He is ready to make a good job of it—and he does! There is very little left unexploited in that theme when Mr. Wells gets through with it. He has seen all there was to see, and found the most vivid way of presenting it to us—he has worked his piece of ground to the utmost. Mr. Aikman leaves a dozen aspects of his theme untouched; and what he does deal with he handles less vividly than might be asked; and yet it can be said that he is quite honest, and that his honesty leaves us with a feeling which we never get from Mr. Wells' more brilliant work, the feeling that these events are taking place in reality rather than in the mind of their author. Best of all, he gives, without wearying us with undue detail or buffeting us with surprises, a sense of the accidentalness of life. In comparison with

the standards set by modern English novelists, there is a lack of thoroughness, of richness, and almost a failure to achieve an art-form in his story. Its defects in this last respect are the corollary of its specific quality; it is less like literature because it endeavors to be more like life. But it should make up for lack of pattern by greater depth; it remains too near the level of incident, it penetrates too little into the subsoil of psychological motive. If Mr. Aikman is going to illustrate his literary method in each novel by his title, I hope he will call his next one "The Digger." And if he comes to the job equipped with some modern psychology, there is no reason why he should not produce a book as remarkable and revealing as this present one is honest.

"The Taker" does go deeper, but not quite deep enough. It deals with a successful business man, but chooses to ignore almost entirely the commercial aspect of his success, in order to deal with the psychology of "taking" in the field of human relations. There is no lack of detail here, but there is a lack of vividness; but that is more than anything else the result of the author's manner, which precludes the showing of any particular enthusiasm or zest for his story—a sort of bored air borrowed perhaps from his master, Flaubert. What I particularly complain of, though, is that he does not fully understand—or at any rate, does not take the trouble to make clear—the psychic forces involved in his hero's erotic "successes." His theme is almost identical with that of Theodore Dreiser's recent novel, "The Genius." Instead of Mr. Dreiser's admiration for the exploits of his hero, Mr. Goodman has a kind of contempt; but when two of his hero's feminine victims commit suicide, we feel, more than anything else, a baffled curiosity. Doubtless there *are* such dull and commonplace Don Juans—one reads of them in the newspapers; but how do they put it over? Mr. Goodman tells us the facts; and the facts contain the explanation to any one who knows enough of Freudian psychology to read between the lines; but these facts are not arranged in such a way as to bring out their significance. I very much doubt whether Mr. Goodman really does understand the significance of his facts; for he relies on the by now outworn naturalistic method which is a confession of ignorance, which says, "Life is like this, doubt it if you can." Well, we do not doubt it, but we demand something more of fiction nowadays—we demand not a photograph but a history. And history is not the record of facts, but an explanation of why certain things come to pass.

Mr. Dreiser is a naturalist, but he is also a writer of extraordinary power. He does not arrange facts, he does not even apparently select among them, except unconsciously. But he can write, and his book of "Twelve Men" is accordingly one of the most interesting examples of naturalistic fiction that America has produced. Perhaps it ought not to be called fiction, for it is rather a book of lives—chosen only because they made a deep impression upon the man who observed them—and recorded with impressive fidelity. It, too, has the accidental quality which I like in fiction; and it has what is the

fundamental virtue of fiction—zest. It is as if these lives were strange, rich drinks—not only “lucent syrups tinct with cinnamon,” but sometimes darker, heavier, perhaps dangerously drugged, but still to be savored with delight. Whatever Mr. Dreiser’s intellectual convictions about the riddle of existence may be, he is in love with life, and his books reveal his profound unquestioning surrender to its dark allurements.

But naturalism, as we now realize, was only the revolt against inadequate formulas of explanation. It was an endeavor to get the truth told, by telling not only such truths as we could understand but more especially the truths that defied explanation. It has succeeded in bringing into literature a vast amount of new material—familiar enough for the most part in life, but left out of fiction because not sufficiently amenable to literary exposition. It is clear that the next movement in literature must be one of scientific explanation. That movement has now begun, and naturalism already seems old-fashioned. It is not sufficient to observe men and women as if they were insects, and record the strange things they do. Fabre has made us *understand* the insects, and literature cannot lag behind entomology. The scientific movement in literature, founded on modern psychology, is already well under way. America, with the very notable exception of “Peter Middleton,” by Henry K. Marks, has remained behind in the naturalistic stage.

Yet there are other exceptions not easy to classify, of which Sherwood Anderson’s new book of short stories is the most significant. The naturalistic movement was a reflex of Darwinian science, with its emphasis on “the struggle for existence”: it was, as we see it now, an elaborate series of illustrations of the alleged fact that the strongest were the fittest to survive, and that beauty and idealism and soft-heartedness always got a raw deal. It is natural to expect that the literature of the present will be to some extent less a scientific and historical exposition of human nature than an emotional reflex of certain of the truisms of modern psychology—such as, for instance, the motivation of our lives by unconscious impulses, chiefly sexual. The lead has been taken in the neurotic rather than scientific illustration of such truisms by James Joyce, and there are writers in America who belong to the same school. Sherwood Anderson stands apart from them, not because of any scientific or historical method, but by virtue of greater power as a writer, a more thorough imaginative equipment, which makes his novels and stories pictures of American life that rank among the best yet produced. His new volume, “Winesburg, Ohio,” is a magnificent collection of tales, not free from neurotic compulsions of the same kind as those with which he deals, but vivid and in spite of some grotesqueries, beautiful, and in all but the finest sense true. If less faithful to fact than Mr. Dreiser, he is more of an artist, and he has broadened the realm of American fiction to include aspects of life of the first importance.

I think I am not ungrateful to these American pioneers of modern fiction, and I hope I am not unduly impatient; but I wish that our American writers would educate themselves a little better for their job, and not try to get their

knowledge of human nature wholly out of their own heads; there is a lot to be learned from the masters of psychology, and their English confreres are learning it. Modern psychology will free them from the crude unselective methods of naturalistic realism, and enable them to write more compact, powerful, well-arranged, delicately modulated and *artistic* stories. “Beauty is truth” is a maxim that works both ways.

F. D.

Judging the C. O.’s

The Conscientious Objector. By Walter Guest Kellogg, Major, Judge Advocate, U. S. A. Boni & Liveright.

MR. KELLOGG was a member of the Board of Inquiry which passed judgment upon the sincerity of the conscientious objectors. In his inability to perceive the mental backgrounds of the C. O.’s he shows a total unfitness to pass judgment upon them. H. P. S.

Jimmie Higgins

Jimmie Higgins, by Upton Sinclair. Boni & Liveright.

JIMMIE HIGGINS is exactly what Sinclair would have been if he had never been to college. That is to say, Jimmie Higgins with Sinclair’s training would have been writing articles about the “man with the lean jaw” instead of carrying messages and fighting desperately in the battle of Chateau-Thierry. And if Sinclair had been sent to Siberia to help put down the Russian revolution he would have mutinied just as Jimmie Higgins did. As a matter of fact, he did mutiny, sitting in his comfortable office surrounded by his garden, in Pasadena, California. There isn’t any use evading the truth, a lot of us mutinied right here at home. Nothing ever swept away the confidence of the great mass of simple working people and honest intellectuals, who believed that the war was really a war for democracy, like Mr. Wilson’s private war against Russia. One is mentally nauseated at the picture of American boys screaming in agony on the fields of France, giving their lives and their youth at the same moment that Mr. Wilson was secretly supporting the Russian reactionaries, the most despicable people in the world, with all the tremendous influence at his command and five million dollars of his “personal fund.”

Jimmie Higgins is a great character, a great American character. His mental and physical struggle with the militarists in Siberia is so real that it *hurts*. That is why it is only natural that the *Times* and the *Tribune* and other faithful reflectors of Prussianism in America are calling for Sinclair’s blood. Not only must he be censored—he must be *punished!* I would consider such criticisms of a fiction story a rare compliment, Upton. The Tsar used to send men to Siberia for writing tales like Jimmie Higgins’—but the tales will be literature when the Tsar is dust. If our own oppressors aren’t careful they will force men to produce art in America out of this very oppression.

LOUISE BRYANT.

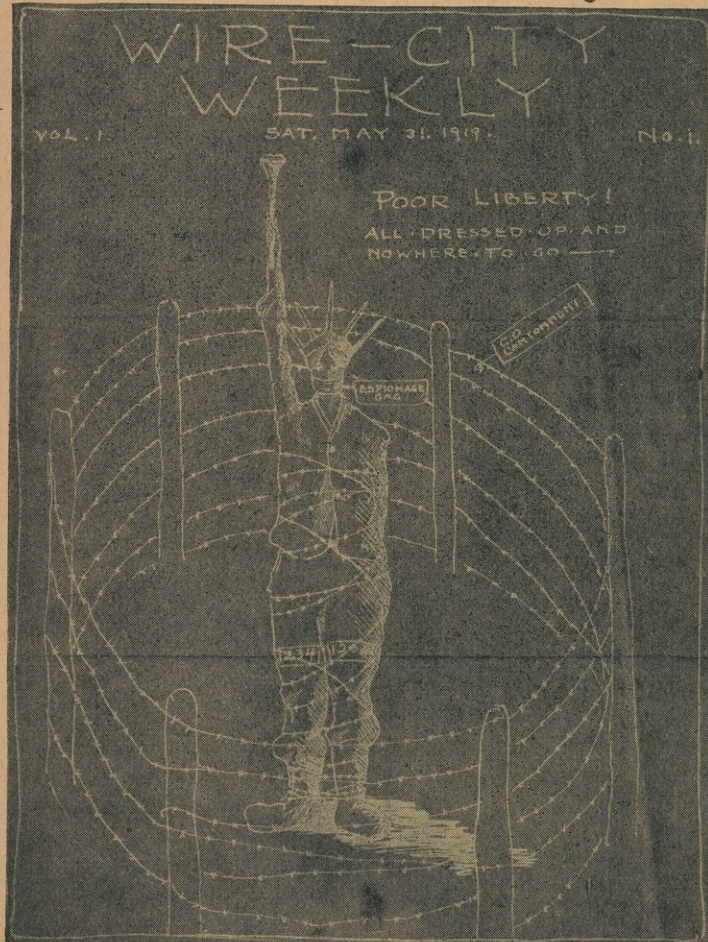
A Prison Magazine

THE latest and most daring enterprise in American radical journalism is—or doubtless we should say *was*—the *Wire City Weekly*. It is the product of a group of men whom the United States Government has imprisoned, tortured, and some of whom it has killed, in the effort to break their spirits. It is the last and most flagrant proof of the failure of that effort. It has already been extinguished by the huge hoof of American militarism; but it has existed, and should not be without honor among us.

"The Wire-City Weekly. Published every week at Wire City, Kansas. Circulation—secret. One of the 1,500 Bolshevik papers in America. Barred from the Postoffice as First Class Matter." So runs the description at the top of the editorial page. It is the organ of the Soviet in the United States Disciplinary Barracks, the military prison at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

This militant journalistic defiance of militarism is typewritten and carbon-copied, one or two columns to the page, on sheets of typewriting paper, with hand-made covers, one of which is reproduced here.

And its contents—well, what do you think its contents would be like? Guess again. It is not a record of the brutalities, the filth, the tyranny of Ft. Leavenworth. It is not a cry of protest. It is a variety of things, but first of all it is a very jolly, good-natured publication. It treats the prison very much as a witty dramatic critic



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treats a bad play—it laughs at it. It is a paper written by men who are interested in ideas. But it is not solemn. It has the easy, good-humored critical quality of the conversation of radicals the world over. It is the kind of paper Socrates and the other philosophers would have got out if the Athenian government had shut them all up in a dirty jail together; they would have gone on arguing, and making jokes about each other as well as about their jailors.

On the first page of the first issue is this "Lusty Birth-Cry": "So clamant a community as Wire City was bound sooner or later to find a channel for its manifold vibrations. In the natal number of The Weekly, the promoters do formally invite the clamorous of all sorts to proclaim, declaim and acclaim through this organized medium. Wobbly poets and Socialist lecturers, religious seers and mystics, children of God and children of the Devil (particularly the numerous latter), anarchists, aliens, pro-Germans, pro-Americans, internationalists, Fenians, Sinn Feiners, Bolsheviks, Republicans, and EVEN Wilson Democrats are welcome to our columns."

The leading article in this first issue is by Carl Haessler, and deals with "The Gang Spirit and Morale." Here is the opening. "The man who has never belonged to a gang is hardly human. He has missed the thrill and sweep of gang plans and gang successes and he has never felt the common strength with which a gang rises from defeats that would crush the individual. In short, the man has never known the gang spirit. Aristotle, the most influential of ancient philosophers, stated in practically so many words that Man is by nature a Gangster. The gang spirit runs in humanity's veins." The article goes on to discuss the ways in which governments manipulate the gang spirit for their own ends, and the limitations of this manipulation, when "morale"-creation meets with "demoralization," and it ends with suggestions for an expansion of the gang spirit which will really serve the interests of humanity.

Carl Haessler, by the way, is the editor; his associates are C. H. Getts, H. D. Cohn, L. B. Marcowitz, J. B. C. Woods, and H. A. Simons. "Subterranean Correspondents," Earle Humphreys, Jr., and Roderick Seidenberg (of the basements and sub-basements).

The editorial in this first issue is an admirable criticism of Wilson's message to Congress. Then follows an announcement of the Walt Whitman centenary, to be celebrated by an all-day program on May 30th, the leisure of Memorial Day being dedicated to this purpose. The program includes a "hike" around Wire City, with chants of the songs of the open road by the Whitmaniacs, addresses and readings, and outdoor sports. Next is a short article on

prison architecture and management. Poems including "An Adventure in Free Verse," and jokes, including this one:

"Watch this space. We have nothing to put in it, but watch it anyway."

One can imagine how this insouciant little magazine was handed around in the cells and read thin! The next issue is twice as large, with a sporting section in which the baseball game between the Religious C. O.'s and the Bolsheviks is described in detail. There is also a chess department. One learns moreover that the most widely read books that week were volumes by Bertrand Russell, Haeckel, Darwin, Eugene Sue, Carl Sandburg, Chekov, Dostoevsky, Galsworthy, Upton Sinclair, Walt Whitman. All the books newly arrived in prison are also announced. There is an article on Biology, dealing with the one specimen of animal life readily available for study under the circumstances, the bedbug; it is pointed out that the plants feed upon the earth, the herbivorous animals upon plants, man upon the herbivorous animals, and the bedbug upon man, it being thus proven that this insect is the ultimate crown and purpose of creation. There is a page of announcements of "intellectual events," namely, classes in logic, biology, philosophy, English and economics, conducted by various prisoners. There are political articles, and an editorial discussion of "The Conscienceless Objector." It appears that "the conscienceless objector resents being known as a C. O., as a conscientious objector, in a common lump with the socially futile anachronisms of the sterile sort. He aims at putting his mark on the community fabric, he plans to be socially productive, he conspires to shatter this sorry scheme of things entire and then remould it nearer to the heart's desire."

In "Advice to Spring Poets," H. Austin Simons judiciously undertakes to explain to the contributors who have been flooding the editorial tables with verse, the difference between prose and poetry. He tells them that what can be said should not be sung. To the extent that ideas, moral concepts, etc., become the subject-matter of poetry, the writer becomes a "didactic" poet; and "didactic poetry is to the lover of the art what near-beer is to a bacchant; what 'slum' [a kind of prison grub] is to the epicurean, what an old maid with hip-joint disease is to the young and ardent philanthropist." Most of the poetry submitted to the weekly, he says, is of this didactic class; and he offers a method by which any writer may discover whether he is really called to the service of the muse or whether it is a false alarm. The method is admirable, and in effect is this: Learn to write good prose, and put everything in that you can. What won't go into prose,

the things that you must sing instead of say, are poetry. In short, if you can possibly keep from being a poet, you aren't one.

Nevertheless, a poem entitled "Plums" appears to have got past the editorial Cerberus. It is a pity that there isn't enough room here to quote it. The commandant of the prison, to whom the fat, juicy plum of the prison-job has been handed, a plum "sweet with the luscious squirt of privilege and military glory," is figured for us as an old woman preserving plums—

"All that was passionate and vibrant in life is lost to this old harridan
Except the lust for sweet-stinging juice of the ripe, round fruit . . ."

But her senile joy is spoiled, for there are many anti-militarist worms wriggling defiantly in the heart of her plum, bittering its flavor.

Next week we find an editorial on the controversy between the right and left wings of the Socialist movement, entitled "The Right is Wrong."

The fourth issue continues the discussion of world and domestic politics, and gives more and more space to the debate between the various factions among the prison radicals. And along with this it remains human and funny, with little personal notes and jokes, some of them unintelligible to an outsider, in the style of the village newspaper. There are signs, too, that this happy circle of free spirits is being broken up, as in this humorous "Obituary":

"Alexander, Americo V., one of the most esteemed inhabitants of Wire City, departed this life for a better world June 18, 1919. Despite the Department of Justice, which was called in during the last few days of Rice's relapse, he failed steadily, and on the night of June 17 the revolutionary conclave

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administered extreme unction. The typos here, our readers, and all his acquaintances, wish him happiness hereafter. On his headstone have been inscribed these simple, touching words:

"Home—La Bonne Parole—Home."

But there are Luskung Committees in the Wire City, too, alas! (For you have doubtless been wondering why we did not all move there and enjoy their freedom.) A "raid" conducted upon the offices of the Wire City Weekly by the prison authorities—it seems just like home, doesn't it?—suggests the reason why we have received no more copies of the paper. "This week's material, already set up, for the fourth issue, was seized from the editor's table by a major. *C'est magnifique, messieurs les officiers, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!*"*

And so, alas, an end of these articles, debates, jokes, book-reviews, poems, the efflorescence of a vitality which has made Ft. Leavenworth one of the intellectual centers of America. It will not do to let these young men talk and laugh so loud. It will especially not do to let America overhear them—lest America say to herself: "So prison is not so terrible after all, when you have an ideal to sustain you. They have not been broken. They laugh at their tormentors. They laugh even at themselves. They are happy. Why is it? Is this what Bolshevism means?" F. D.

*The editors have since been transferred to the prison-hell of Alcatraz.

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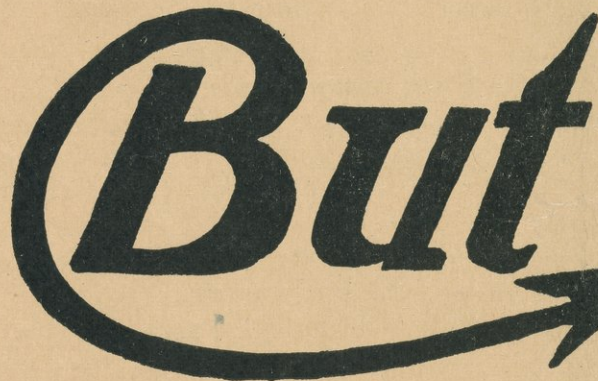
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