

"It is a right to be maintained in peace or war. It is a right that cannot be invaded without destroying constitutional liberty. Hence this right should be guarded and protected by the free men of this country with a zealous care, unless they are prepared for chains or anarchy.—Daniel Webster on Free Speech.

DEMOCRACY AND THE RIGHT TO AGITATE FOR IT

In certain quarters where the desire for the dollar is the ruling passion there prevails the doctrine that after our representatives have betrayed us on the most vital questions, even those matters involving the sacrifice of our very lives, we must bow in reverent acquiescence, and cease all efforts to attain our rights. This doctrine is assiduously fostered in the purchased press and through every other avenue of publicity now in the control of the profiteers of the country.

This is not democracy.
If a minority, at the mercy of a manufactured majority is to be forever silenced—and that is the aim of the ruling classes in all countries—if this idea is to prevail, progress in the direction of justice will be retarded if not entirely stopped.
This is autocracy.—The New Age.

DID YOU EVER THINK OF THIS?

It has been stated many times, that strikes should not be permitted to occur, as the "third party," the innocent general public, is the sufferer in every instance where industrial plants are closed by strike;—the lockout does not seem to have the same effect on the "innocent third party," at least in the newspaper stories. Nor do these newspapers speak of an occurrence of an industrial depression as something in which the "innocent third party" suffers, and which therefore should be prevented at any cost, same as the strikes. In some later article we shall discuss this side of the question. In this article we endeavor to make plain the economic aspect of the strike.

Had it been possible to abolish strikes, it would have been done long ago, for they cause, not only inconveniences, but hardships which often reach beyond human endurance, and even force the workers to surrender unconditionally; but strikes cannot be prevented any more than the freezing of water at a certain temperature, or the issuing of smoke from the fire.

Strikes are only manifestations of conflicting interests contingent upon our industrial system; indications that, under the cover of our apparently existing prosperity, there are in operation latent forces, untraceable to the masses, yet most keenly felt by them.

The apparent, or the immediate, causes of strikes may be variable, and it may seem to a casual observer, that there can be no general cause for all the strikes, yet, there is, and it is not at all difficult to point it out.

The propelling power of the material life of man is the desire for betterment; his insatiable longing for security against every possibility that might render him or his posterity dependent for sustenance upon the vicissitudes of fate often reaches a state of coyness in which all regard for the welfare of others is forgotten. This, however, is not the result of the existence of some superhuman law, which directs the fate and destiny of man, but the result of our corrupt and unfit industrial system, which deprives the multitudes of all the luxuries provided by human ingenuity and nature's abundance.

While the immediate causes of strikes seem to be want and misery, desire for enjoyment and easier living, the solution of the problem cannot be found unless the industrial structure of the modern society is based on an entirely new and different foundation. The solution of strikes involves inextricably the solution for poverty, want and misery insofar as poverty is the result of exploitation.

There were times, when poverty, misery and want were even more prevalent than now, but the word "strike" did not imply cessation of work at that time; its present meaning is comparatively new, and expresses a change in our economic and industrial system that made it impossible for the workers to cope with the situation without at times collectively ceasing from work.

The strike is possible as well as unavoidable only under conditions where a few have come to possess the means of wealth production and distribution, the owning of which makes them the absolute masters over those without a share in such ownership.

From this it naturally follows that the solution of the strike question implies as its antecedent

the solution of the entire social problem in all its various forms.

Were it not for the fact that someone is getting something produced by someone else, and the equivalent of which he himself does not produce strikes would be impossible now, just as they once were. And no matter what means may be used to prevent strikes,—no success will meet the efforts, until the solution rests on a change of ownership, whereby the few will lose their power to exploit the many.

At present, two methods are followed in dealing with the question; one is the forcing of the workers to surrender, the other is trickery. But neither will succeed. The workers are becoming enlightened, and as they attain knowledge they also acquire power and achieve results.

And their growing power is the only weapon available when the time to solve the question once for all has arrived. The time, when the "crust of the old society begins to crumble and the expropriators will be expropriated," is near, as the deterioration of the system is already reaching its core.

THE MENACE OF DICTATURE.

With a sigh of relief we learned that the sittings of the Congress were adjourned till December. For a few weeks at least we thought we could sleep our nights without fear of new oppressive measures being enacted.

After having supplied the government with millions of men and billions of money; after having destroyed the most vital part of the American liberty; after having excited hatred against all who wanted to include the United States among the countries that should be made safe for democracy, the members of the Congress are returning home in grateful consciousness of the fact that the day of reckoning is still remote, the congressional elections not coming earlier than after a year.

We supposed that the Congress, and the President as well, were pleased with their achievements. But it doesn't seem so. At the last moment Senator Lewis moved that the Congress, on adjourning, give the President an unlimited power in all matters. Under that the President could take whatever steps he should consider necessary during the time between the sessions.

Also, a dictature.
Thus our hope of an interval of rest was roughly shattered.

In fact, the granting of such absolute power cannot very widely differ from what hitherto has been the rule. In every matter of any importance the Congress has dutifully surrendered to the commands emanating from the White House. We at least are ignorant of any instance where the attitude of the Congress had been different from that. Such a miracle was about to happen in connection with the Espionage Act. The Congress struck out the provision for establishing a censorship of newspapers. This inexcusable mischief was made up afterwards by enacting a law doubly as harsh in its suppression of the freedom of the press. Indeed, we are wholly unable to imagine anything that the President, upon the advice of his military guides, could wish and not obtain from the Congress.

As a matter of principle, the proposition of Senator Lewis ought to make even some of the upper classes to realize into what a bottomless gulf we are rushing. Our constitution draws a distinct line between the jurisdiction of the executive power and that of the legislative. The fundamental basis of all Republican forms of government does not allow of any further intrusions to the latter's disadvantage. From a constitutional point of view Senator Lewis' proposal is contrary to the law. And if it were declared constitutional by some strange trick of "construing," the fact remains that the proposed action would destroy the very foundation of our Republican mode of government.

War is ruinous to all democracy—even a war waged for "the safety of democracy."
The shipyard strike in Astoria is not a recommendation for the capitalist plan of production. Many workmen who had never thought of their own interests before, are now beginning to believe in the co-operative plan of society,—real democracy, in other words.

The slogan of the wide-awake working man is "Organization and Education." The capitalist class believes in disorganization and ignorance for the working class. Therefore, being a working man, get together with others of your class and learn to eliminate the parasites from your daily life.

WHAT DO YOU CARE!

What do you care whether big business gouges enormous profits out of the things you need?

Why are you concerned when those who gamble with the people's destinies, coin fortunes out of your distress?

What right have you to complain when American citizens are deported, sent to prison and shot for asking for more wages to meet the high prices exacted from us by the industrial overlords?

Where do you get the right to become dissatisfied with the conditions so nicely arranged by the "honest, patriotic, industrious, intelligent, sober, saving and philanthropic" men of big business affairs?

What of it if bread in England, made out of American flour, is cheaper than here?

Why do you continually criticize such "thrifty, honorable" men as Morgan, Schwab, Rockefeller, et al., who have by their "rigid economy" made hundreds of millions for themselves in a great and glorious country in which everyone has an unequal chance to become a millionaire—some day.

Don't the men of big business affairs claim to have more sense than you? Don't they claim they are not the spendthrifts that you are? Don't they say if you will save your money like they do, some day you will also be a millionaire?

Why do you sneeringly refer to such "trifling" incidents as the killing of men, women and children at Ludlow, Colorado?

Why do you try to deny the right to Mr. Rockefeller to import gunmen into Colorado to shoot and terrorize at will? Didn't the miners of Colorado interfere with his profits?

Why do you find fault when those elected to office have one law passed after another to suppress the freedom of speech, assembly and press, guaranteed in the first amendment to the Federal Constitution?

What right have you to growl and grumble at Congress when it passes a law giving one man the power to crush each and every paper or any piece of literature in the United States that is distasteful to him?

"Stop that nonsense," I hear someone saying. But if it's nonsense, let me ask you, are not the few things I have enumerated a living reality? Or are you so blind and deaf to existing conditions that you neither want to see them, nor hear of them? If you have vision to see and your ears are attuned to the wails of protest, and if your heart beats for a better order of things, what are you going to do to bring about a change?

Haven't the people alternately tried the Republican and Democratic parties and haven't they proved a dismal failure? Believe us when we say this dark hour would not be one speck brighter had Hughes been elected last year instead of Wilson.

The capitalist system, whether administered by the iron fist of an absolute autocrat or whether it sails in the name of democracy, has furnished the sad music to the world's mad dance of death.

In normal times there is a difference in the political and civil liberties between an autocracy and a democracy, in favor of the latter. So long as we have capitalism, however, and the private ownership in the sources of life endures, we will have the Ludlows, the Bisbees, the Homesteads, Hazeltons, exploitation of the masses, national and international rivalries and consequent wars.

You, my dear reader, may not like the Socialists. Perhaps you understand their teachings or you may not. If you don't you have nothing to lose by reading their literature. But whether you do or not, whether you are blindly prejudiced or not, you will admit that if the Socialists were in power,—here and in other countries,—they positively could not have made a worse mess of it than the peoples of the world find themselves in to-day.

This leaflet is addressed to you in the hope that you will dismiss whatever hostile feeling you may have toward the Social-

ists and that you will get acquainted with them and their literature. And further, that when you understand them, you will join the Socialist Party and become an active worker for a world democracy.

If you can cast aside your prejudice long enough, stop the first Socialist you meet and ask him some questions concerning the objections to our movement. Don't flinch in these days that try men's souls. Thousands are flocking to the standards of the Socialist Party as the only haven of hope out of the world chaos.

Local Notes

Allen Acquitted.

James Allen, superintendent of the McEachren shipyards, was acquitted this morning in Justice Carney's court of the charge of unlawful importation of strikebreakers. It appears that the jury was not sufficient, and so the evidence acquitted him.

Assured of Protection.

Fears of the workmen of Astoria that the soldiers were about to be removed is now proved to be without foundation. Ship workers are invited to go back to the yards again and the Sammies will see that they are not molested by German or Austrian soldiers. However, the yard owners remain obstinate and will not give in to the closed shop proposition and are keeping the men from their work. In the mean while it is reported that the strikebreakers have a ship about completed and expect to launch it most any day. It is suggested that the honor of christening it be conferred on Three-Fingered Jack.

Sabotaging Our Streets.

It seems, according to local press reports, that some one has been practicing sabotage on our city streets. An excavation near the corner of Ninth and Duane streets a few days ago disclosed the fact that the pipe leading from the catch basin to the sewer had never been connected but was simply extended into the street below the pavement.

Whether some pro-German contractor intended to breed disease here to destroy the city, or whether it was the work of some pesky I. W. W., to make more work, is so far a conundrum. However, an investigation is said to be going on and startling revelations are expected.

Godwin Unpopular in the Red Light District.

Three-Fingered Jack and a party of Christians, so press reports say, made a pilgrimage to the red light district of the city last night to tell the inmates thereof that they must be good or leave the town. The inhabitants put out their lights and barred their doors, which shows

they have pride left anyway. The party tried to break in, but there was nothing doing.

It is not thought that this rebuff will dampen the ardor of the evangelist to rescue these wayward souls, as he is a man of enduring persistence. On the contrary, it is rather expected that his next move will be to get the business men of the community to agree to give each woman of the underworld a job at, say, twenty-five dollars per week with Saturday afternoons off and a two-week vacation once each year at full pay. This is in line with his practical christianity and is expected to meet with hearty response from members of the Chamber of Commerce and other citizens.

THE CHRONIC KICKER

When a resolution is introduced, he is sure to offer an objection. Sometimes he kicks on the subject matter itself. Then he protests against the form in which the resolution has been presented. Frequently he finds fault with a word in the construction of a sentence, and often he will offer an amendment which puts the original resolution out of business. He is primed for every parliamentary dispute.

He seems to be familiar with every communication that is read at the meeting of the local. He knows the leaders and their follies. He is on the job all the time, with both feet, both fists, and with a tongue that is sharper than a two-edged sword. He takes himself seriously. Never does he crack a smile. He has a mission, and everybody soon comes to know it. Often have we wished him in Timbuctoo, where he could spout to his heart's content on all the "isms" that so glibly glide off the end of his tongue.

But honestly, we'd miss him if he should go. Miss him not because we love him, perhaps, but because he is one of the necessary factors in our development. As a matter of fact, without him, we'd soon drift into a rut, because most of us are too lazy to think of an objection, to say nothing of an original proposition. There's at least one thing that we must say to his credit—he always attends the meetings. Furthermore, he must spend considerable time in reading and in study to know as much as he does about current events, and the theories which men are discussing. He actually thinks.

He may not always be right, but he certainly is awake—and that's another point to his credit. Also, he keeps the rest of us awake. And that isn't bad. But he is more often right than not. We object to him because he is like a bee buzzing about our heads, but even the bee is a useful creature.

Sometimes it hard to be patient with the kicker. But there are others who are worse than he is—for instance, the fellow who never shows up at the meeting and then does his kicking outside, where it does a whole lot more harm. He's the chap that should be jumped on, and not the man who is sincerely, usually intelligently, though not always wisely, registering an objection in the open meeting to proposed actions which would often spell disaster.—B. C. F.

It sometimes seems mighty queer that the buying value of a dollar has steadily decreased in the last few years. And wages are much higher—that is, we receive more dollars—today than formerly. Where is that worker, unless it be some alleged "patriot," who cannot see the justice in asking for more money in return for his labor?

"United We Stand, Divided We Fall"

The time has arrived when the workmen of the country must unite! Organized capital is strongly united in its efforts to crush the rightful demands of the workers. The so-called capitalist papers are always trying to form public opinion against the workmen. They publish news and articles in the interest of the master-class only.

The workmen of Astoria and vicinity know this to be an absolute fact. The workmen of this community can see there is only one paper in Astoria that is publishing the facts about the strike and that paper is "the Daily Toveri" (The Daily Comrade).

This paper has been published in the Finnish language only, for about ten years, but we saw the urgent need of a paper that could be read by the English-speaking people also, so we decided to do all we could to let all the people know the real facts about the strikes and all other matters important to the workmen, which are kept dark by other papers.

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