

"Our object should be to leave open all the avenues of truth. As the most effectual hitherto found has been the press, it is, therefore, the first shut up by those who fear the investigation of their actions."—Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence.

POLITICAL REFORM

The more important movements of political reform are those concerned with the permanent improvement of political methods and institutions. These movements have for their object the extension of the suffrage to classes still excluded from it, or they aim to increase the political power of the people and to strengthen their control over their chosen representatives.

The National Platform of the Socialist Party contains the following political planks or "demands":

UNRESTRICTED AND EQUAL SUFFRAGE FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

THE ADOPTION OF THE INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM AND RECALL AND OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

THE ABOLITION OF THE SENATE AND THE VETO POWER OF THE PRESIDENT.

The election of the President and Vice-President by the direct vote of the people.

The abolition of the power usurped by the Supreme Court of the United States to pass upon the constitutionality of legislation enacted by Congress.

National laws to be repealed only by act of congress, or by a referendum vote of the majority of the voters.

The extension of democratic government to all United States territory.

The immediate curbing of the powers of the courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes.

The free administration of justice.

The calling of a convention for the revision of the constitution of the United States.

All these measures are essential, but in practice the Socialists lay particular stress on three of these demands: Woman Suffrage, Proportional Representation and Restriction of the Powers of the Courts.

(By Morris Hillquit.)

LIBERTY AND WAR

(By Harry Weinberger, General Counsel American Legal Defense League and Member New York Bar.)

Ideals cannot be killed by imprisoning the idealists. Ideas cannot be stopped as long as one brain continues to function. Governments, churches, judges and jailers have tried it as far back as the memory or records of men go. They have tried the noose, the rack, the dungeon, the cold steel and the leaden bullet, the excommunication of the church, the threats of hell here and hereafter; they have broken the bodies, but never have they been able to fully subdue the spirit of man. Ideas are contagious, and, crushed to earth, spread over it.

Americans must know they will continue to have as much liberty as they desire to have and the courage to hold and fight for. Our republic may be destroyed; it cannot be Prussianized. Liberty never is a gift. It is always a purchase, and the price is blood and tears, happiness and the personal liberty of the individual purchaser. Liberty always has been the great temptation for idealists.

Justice walks with leaden feet, and has lost her way, and cannot find many of the courtrooms of America. They are arresting and jailing our thinkers and humanitarians. Men are being sent to jail for reprinting the Declaration of Independence and distributing it on July 4; for wearing a button with an American flag on it and around the flag the words, "Our Rights, But No War"; for talking peace; for giving out peace pamphlets to patriotic citizens; for talking against war; for talking for universal brotherhood; for reading in public that part of the constitution which guarantees the right of free speech, free press, the right peaceably to assemble and petition the government; for "blocking traffic" while making a speech; for disobeying an order of a policeman, an order that the court admitted the policeman had no right to make; for insulting the United States uniform when protesting against soldiers and sailors breaking up peaceful meetings, claiming that all these things are disorderly conduct, tending to a breach of the peace.

We are all walking in the shadow of war. Most of us, however, have our eyes on the stars of peace and liberty, and because a few are articulate, expressing our hopes and our desires, judges are sending them to the penitentiary, to the workhouse, fining them, taking their property, and even ordering them deported to Russia, the new home of Democracy. If Christ gave out the Sermon on the Mount He would be sentenced to the workhouse for six months. Are

some of our courts the new bastilles, with petty judges as the wardens? Judges, with the dust of dead laws and dead theories in their eyes and mouths and brains, are stamping out free speech, are trying to shackle the brave spirits of those who see that the faults of liberty can be cured only by more liberty! The great fear is abroad in America! Public officials are crying, "Keep your mouth shut and obey the law"; others say, "Woe unto those who oppose us," while still others cry, "Treason! Treason!"

These are not the times that try men's souls. These are the times that give men the opportunity to stand erect, in the crisis of a world war; to stand firm while the man on horseback is abroad in the land; to be fearless when every petty judge or governmental official thinks he is a despot clothed with absolute and final power. These are the days of golden opportunity for men of courage. We are the heirs of all those in the past who have fought and died for liberty. Liberty is our birthright. As long as the memory of heroes and martyrs lives, liberty cannot be dead.

They may kill your body, they can close your mouth with the seal of death, but they cannot stop your message, if you have one. Dead men talk louder than live men. Will they be able to say of you, as they said of Ferrer:

"Glad came the news to tyrants as it ran.

The kingdoms of the world were less one man."

The first casualties of war, even in America, are free speech, free press and the right peaceably to assemble and petition the government. We are a government of and by discussion. Force is never a remedy, and all tyrannies, whether of majorities, petty judges or governmental officials, are as bad as tyrannies of kings.

The greatest right in the world is the right to be wrong. If the government or majorities think an individual is right, no one will interfere with him; but when agitators talk against the things considered holy, or when radicals criticize or satirize the political gods, or question the justice of our laws and institutions, or pacifists talk against war, or Socialists talk for the rights of labor or universal peace, how the old inquisition awakens, and the prison, the wheel, the torture chamber, the mob, are called to suppress the free expression of thought.

Expressed ideas have to bear the examination of the opposition and measure up to truth. Today, for the first time in the history of the United States, America sees hidden presses working night and day underground. Cannot the government see that is not the way to fight a war for democracy? Gutenberg, when he gave the printing press to the human race, gave them a fighting weapon more powerful than all arms, because he gave the people the power to think together and to protect themselves.

I am pro-American, and against all autocracy. But must we give up all the rights of democracy to overthrow autocracy? Must we kill democracy? Is the freedom of the individual to absolutely cease in America because we are at war with autocracy? Must men be compelled to violate their consciences and ideals? Mobbing or jailing speakers and writers do not settle questions of right or wrong, pacifism or militarism, peace or war. Don't we remember the story of Lovejoy and Garrison?

The purpose of the United States constitution was to enable every citizen at any time to bring the government and any person in authority to the bar of public opinion, and at all times to know and discuss all the facts of government and society.

Is it not true that wealth and privilege never bear a fair share of the burdens of government or war? Is it not true that in time of war vast profits always have been made by speculators in food and in supplies and transportation? If we must have conscription of men, of human life, let us have also, conscription of property or incomes. Let us eliminate war profiteering. Let us remember, also, that idle land means hungry men and women and children. As a war measure, let us force every acre into its fullest economic use, so that food may be produced to the greatest extent possible, so that none will be without sufficient.

Don't leave everything to the military and naval authorities. This is still a government of the people. Military and naval plans and operations, while being executed, should, perhaps, be censored, but criticism must be free, so that the civilian part of government shall keep its hands

on the steering wheel, as was found necessary in England after the military blundered.

Let guaranteed constitutional liberties be our cloud of smoke by day and our pillar of fire by night. History notes the presence in every age of men who will not bend their necks to tyranny of any kind, and literature preserves the inspired thought and burning words of the men and women who toiled for liberty even when tyranny was strongest. Are we Americans today stuffed, tongueless people? Don't we know that the foundations of our institutions and our liberties are the martyrs who, on the block, on the battlefield, on the gibbet, or in the dungeon, gave their lives, their freedom and their happiness to their ideals? We say to any despotism, as Lincoln said to the slave power: "Broken by it we may be; bend to it we never will."

We do not want the thought of America regimented and censored. We want men and women who are individuals and who know how to think and come to conclusion; who are not overawed by the idea of the state, nor of officials in high places; nor by the ideas of the majority, nor the doctrines of a church; men and women who are not afraid to be in the minority and to speak when others remain silent, and who stand for justice to all.

The freedom of the press must not be throttled; freedom of speech shall not be suppressed. Abuse of free speech dies in a day, but its denial shackles the race.

Dreams are the realities of life. Life without dreams is worthless, and the most wonderful dream of all is the dream of absolute liberty. It is an idea that will stand the strain of a world war and continue to weave itself into the life of humanity.

THE MINORITY SOCIALISTS OF FRANCE

The minority, or revolutionary, Socialists of France are at variance with the majority on two points of supreme importance. In the first place, they do not believe that the war with the central powers has necessarily destroyed the international movement, and are in favor of resuming ante-bellum relations with the Socialists of other countries, including Germany and Austria, whenever it is practicable to do so. In the second place, they advocate an immediate peace, on the basis of the evacuation of France and Belgium and the arbitration of all other points at issue.

The strength of the minority is rapidly growing among the rank and file of the party. This fact was demonstrated in striking fashion early in the current month at Bordeaux, where a national Socialist congress has been in session. Every radical proposition which was discussed received aggressive support, and when the question of continuing to vote for the war budgets in Parliament came up it was carried by the negligible margin of 218 ballots out of a total of 2,886 cast. Until very recently the voicing of serious opposition to the budgets, without which the war cannot be waged, would have been unthinkable.

The minority is represented in the Chamber of Deputies by a group of 28 members, as against about 100 majority Socialists. The total membership of the Chamber is 602.

As explained formerly, the minority offered no opposition to the government or any of its policies during the early days of the war. It was believed at that time that the struggle would be comparatively short, and even the most revolutionary communist was in favor of resisting the invasion of France. Indeed, it may be asserted that up to the end of 1914 the French Socialist party, politically, had no minority faction.

The latter was organized for action by certain former revolutionary Socialists and a few new adherents, after the long deadlock on the western front had made it clear that the war would last for years, if not for an entire generation.

The first public step was taken by three deputies—Pierre Brizon, Raffin-Dugens and Alexandre Blanc—who went to Switzerland in 1915 for the purpose of holding conferences with German Socialist leaders. Meetings took place in the villages of Kienthal and Zimmerwald. What program, if any, was adopted never has been made public, but it is known that the outlook for peace and the resurrection of the International were frankly discussed.

The uproar caused in France by these conferences has not yet died down. Brizon, Raffin-Dugens and Blanc were called traitors by the bourgeoisie, and were ostracised by

many of the pro-war members of their own party. The nickname of "Kienthalians" was applied to them as a title of scorn. Steps were taken to make further meetings in neutral countries impossible, and, needless to say, the Kaiser's government on its side was equally vigorous in depriving the German Socialist missionaries of their passport privileges.

But the courageous French deputies already had accomplished as much as reasonably could be expected at that time. Their Swiss visit served as an inspiration to all Internationalists. They returned home to do their part in crystallizing the now self-conscious minority.

It was unfortunate that no one of the three was big enough to develop into a national leader. Raffin-Dugens and Blanc practically have dropped out of sight since, and the role of their more forceful comrade, Pierre Brizon has been that of an agitator, a super-propagandist, rather than a chieftain.

Brizon's principal characteristic is fearlessness—sheer animal bravery, which nothing can quell. As soon as he got back from Switzerland he commenced a campaign for peace in the Chamber of Deputies comparable only to that of Liebknecht in the German Reichstag. In season and out of season he spoke from the tribune denouncing the prolongation of the war as a capitalist infamy. He declared that by winning the Battle of Marne and halting the invasion France had accomplished her only legitimate object. Peace, he pointed out, with a good deal of reason, could be obtained by negotiating with Germany for the evacuation of occupied territory. The annexationist designs of such allies as England and imperial Russia should not be allowed to cause the shedding of a single extra drop of French blood.

This doctrine was a year or two in advance of the times. It made Brizon unpopular, especially among the politicians. He was vilified in the bourgeois press, while the Socialist papers did not dare to give him any support. On the floor of the Chamber he was first hooted, then mobbed. Ink pots and rulers were thrown at him by irate colleagues. On many occasions deputies left their seats and attacked him, pulling his beard, spitting in his face and even striking him with their fists. Charges were filed against him whenever possible, and he was suspended from participation in the debates of the Assembly for numerous periods of 15 days and less.

But he returned to the attack with undiminished courage and energy. He was the terror of ministers when they appeared before Parliament to report on the acts of the government. Time and again the carefully censored platitudes of cabinet members were cut across by his strident cry of "Down with the war!"

In the fall of 1916, for instance, when M. Ribot (then minister of finance, announced the success of the second national loan, Brizon waited until the inevitable word "victory" was pronounced, and interrupted: "The only victory we want is peace."

Bedlam instantly broke loose in the chamber, but every time that order was restored, and Ribot attempted to recommence where he had left off, Brizon shouted:

"Victory, yes—but victory by means of peace!"

He finally was submitted to the customary assault upon his person, and suspended for a short term.

Brizon has been a voice—same in its violence, discordant, but compelling. A man who knows him intimately told me last December that his personal mail, which amounted to about 100 letters a week at the time he returned from Kienthal, had risen in 1916 to 3,000 letters, most of them from soldiers, commending him for his stand on the war.

Working quietly in the background have been other and more able leaders. Of these the most influential probably is Jean Longuet, a deputy for the department of the Seine.

Longuet's father was a noted French radical, who lived in London for a long time, where he married the daughter of Karl Marx. Jean was born in London. The family returned to Paris when he was still a child, but not before he had received a solid grounding in English. Today he is one of the few men in French politics who has a perfect command of the English language. In private life he is a lawyer, with a large metropolitan practice, and he has been a frequent contributor to the radical press.

Jean Longuet is a great internationalist. There are many who regard

him as being the most brilliant man in the French Socialist movement; one who, if he were a moderate, instead of a revolutionary, would be able to wrest the leadership of the party from Albert Thomas. The present standing of the minority faction is largely due to his genius as an organizer.

His attitude toward the war is revealed in part by the following statement, which he made last June for American consumption:

"Nobody would accept any kind of peace. If we had to choose between a dishonorable peace, which would still further mutilate our country, everybody would insist upon going on with the war. But there are alternatives, and more and more the French nation demands that an attempt be made to get out of it honorably, but rapidly."

Other important figures in the minority are the Deputies Pressemane, Mistral and Sixte-Quenin. All of these are men who are destined to be heard from when Socialism makes its full strength felt in France. The minority, without representation in the government, of course, has been unable to modify national and international politics, such as the majority, under Albert Thomas, has accomplished in so dazzling a fashion. Its propaganda has been within the ranks of the party and among nonsocialist citizens. Much of its most effective work has been underground. In spite of the rigid censorship, secret literature has been gotten into the hands of the people. — Walter Adolphe Roberts in New York Call.

A GREAT VICTORY

The following quotation from the Oakland World is worth reprinting for its editorial value and viewpoint: "The acquittal of Adolph Germer at Grand Rapids, Michigan, is the greatest event in American politics that has taken place for years.

Germer was not really on trial and neither were his eleven associates. It was 100,000 Socialist dues paying members. It was 1,000,000 people who vote the Socialist ticket that were being tried for "Treason."

The jury announces to the world that our literature is alright and for the good of humanity and not against it. They announce that our stand on war is within the law of our constitutional guarantees. They, and the judge joined them, in saying there should be no difference in our courts of law in war or peace times. Even handed justice according to law and the constitution is due in the United States at all times.

We hope now that the government will realize that we have won and that they will be willing to allow expression of opinion when it does not levy war against the republic or give aid or information to the enemy that would betray military activity.

All Socialists congratulate Germer and his associates, but we should congratulate ourselves more when we know that we have a secretary with the nerve to stand his ground and bring about such a victory for his and our party.

The "Plute" Press said little of this acquittal. We wonder why? Suppose it had been the other way?"

UNHOLY CHEERINESS

This is the feeling of the B. C. Federationist on account of the recognition the paper has received from Seattle officials. Assistant U. S. District Attorney Donald A. McDonald has asked the postal department in Seattle, D. C. to bar from our sheep-pen the said paper, because it is fostering anti-draft propaganda in Seattle and other Pacific Northwest points.

The paper says it has long felt that it "was not receiving due and proper recognition of its intrinsic merit. There are at present 105 copies of the Federationist going to the United States. Of these 68 are exchanges, 14 are paid subscriptions to points inside the state of Washington, and 23 are paid subscriptions to points outside that state. And we are assured by government agents that an 'anti-draft propaganda' has been carried in Seattle and other Northwest points. It must have been serious or these 'government agents' would not have noticed it. And 14 paid for copies and less than half a dozen exchanges to the whole state of Washington, and but 105 copies to the whole United States, has thus caused the republic to so rock upon its foundations, that even 'government agents' noticed it, and the assistant district attorney felt impelled to call upon 'department' Burleson to come to the rescue and exorcise the damned thing, 14 copies of which had

caused such a tempest in a teapot in the 'Northwest.'

"The Federationist is undoubtedly entitled to feel chesty. It has evidently been able to accomplish, with only 14 copies in the 'Northwest,' what the entire British nation was unable to do in the glorious days of 1776, for it has apparently frightened a great republic of 110,000,000 people into a state closely bordering upon complete collapse, while Great Britain in 1776 couldn't frighten a measly 13 colonies with less than 4,000,000 population. And how fortunate that the terrible plot was discovered before it was too late. The circulation of The Federationist has reached the amazing figure of 14 in the state of Washington during the last nine years. Had the remarkable discovery of the 'government agents' not been made for another nine years, the circulation might have been doubled, or nearly so, and then there would, indeed, have been 'hell a popping.' It would have been too late to have even saved the ruins. The erstwhile proud republic would have gone and its territory probably given over to the Huns, the jack rabbits and the sage brush."

As soon as official recognition of the superior merit of The Federationist as a great propagandist is received from Washington, the subscription price will be correspondingly raised. "Fame is worthless without suitable recompense," says the paper.

SUFFRAGISTS TELL JUDGE BLUNTLY THEY WILL OBEY LAW WHEN GIVEN VOTE.

Washington, Oct. 29.—The trial of Miss Alice Paul and her associate suffragists for picketing the White House was more sensational in many respects than any previous trials.

Miss Paul and Miss Winslow told the judge some very plain things. "Have you anything to say before I pronounce sentence?" Judge Muldowney asked Miss Paul.

"We simply wish to say that we do not consider ourselves subject to the jurisdiction of this court," replied Miss Paul, "nor to the laws or the rules of this court. We have had no voice in the making of these laws and do not consider that we should be bound by them."

"Did I understand you to say that you do not consider yourself bound by the laws of the land?" cried Muldowney.

"Yes," came Miss Paul's quick response. "I consider that, since we have no voice in making the laws, we should not be held responsible if we do not obey them."

"Well, what do you think of the poor 290,000 people in the District of Columbia who are without a vote in their affairs?" pursued Muldowney. "Would you suggest that they should not obey the laws of this court or the laws of the land?"

"I think that if the people in Washington would think more about this situation it would not be very long before they would have a part in making their laws," retorted Miss Paul.

"Well, have you anything else to say in regard to the sentence of the court except what you have already said?"

"I have not."

"Seven months in the workhouse."

MOTHERS REVOLT AT HIGH COST OF MILK

New York, Oct. 29.—Mothers in all parts of the city, driven to desperation by the sudden increase in the cost of milk, the most necessary article in the food of babies, held protest demonstrations all over town last Saturday at 2 p. m.

In the name of their children they appealed to the citizens of Greater New York to give them a change of administration that will concern itself more with the citizens at home than with the enemy abroad, and to give them a vote and voice in the election of the administration. Milk, the chief nourishment of their babies, is 14 cents a quart and still going up. The mother cannot pay it. They hope to raise their voices loud enough to reach the mayor, the governor and the president.

GERMAN SOCIALISTS UNITED, BRITON SAYS

London, Oct. 29.—Arthur Henderson, the labor member of the British war cabinet, who resigned because the government refused to issue passports to English delegates to the Stockholm conference, declares in an interview that the allied governments will probably discover that they have made a mistake in preventing the proposed gathering—that is, if they really desired to weaken the German military caste.

Henderson contends that the majority and minority factions of Socialists in Germany are equally opposed to the war, and that if they could have got direct word from the representatives of the workers in the allied and neutral countries, it was their plain duty to make a fight for the immediate enforcement of democracy, and that they would be supported in every way by the democracies of other countries. The junkers would soon have felt their power slipping. Henderson believes that, as the Socialists constitute the most powerful party in Germany, the allies ought to recognize it.

The death penalty has recently been abolished in Missouri. This makes eleven states in all where punishment by death may not be legally inflicted.

FIGHT FOR LIBERTY WAGED IN GERMANY

The struggle between democracy and junkerism is on in full blast in Germany, even though many American dailies, for reasons best known to themselves, are attempting to make the people believe that the masses of Germany are cowed and controlled by autocracy.

At Frankfurt on the Main, for example, a mass meeting was held in which 50,000 persons participated, and it was necessary to utilize six platforms to address all the people who desired to hear the war problems discussed.

Speakers, representing the "democratic bloc"—Socialists, Radicals and Catholics—pounded hard against annexation schemes of the imperialists and in favor of an honest and democratic suffrage system.

Meetings are also being held in other cities to arouse the people and the junkers are being forced on the defensive more definitely than ever before.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Is the revolution in Germany, so prayed for and so feared, at hand? Dispatches, "unconfirmed," from Amsterdam seem to indicate that Germany's fate is about to be decided, not on the battlefield alone, but at home.

When the late chancellor, Dr. Michaelis, was appointed in place of von Bethmann-Hollweg the world wondered if the revolution had come. The N. Y. Call at that time said that the government was shaky, and that it was undecided whether to give in to the revolutionary elements or to repress them with a strong hand. And that was the meaning of a colorless and undistinguished bureaucrat like Michaelis, whose policies were utterly unknown.

Today we read that the "unconfirmed" wireless from the Dutch city reports that the chancellor has been summoned before the Kaiser, and that his resignation already is in the hands of his master. If that is true, it means only that the scheme has failed utterly. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg made his mistakes; he was a reactionary posing as a liberal. But he has some sort of character. And the late chancellor was as completely unsuccessful as it is possible for a chancellor to be. He was given every power; he was given the whole strength of the Kaiser's forces. And he failed.

This means but one thing—the revolutionary forces are more powerful than the Kaiser's supporters bargained for. The Social Democrats, and all those who are weary of the war and the unbearable junkerism, cannot be held in check. And some new tactics must be used.

There will be one of two things—either the Pan-Germans, sensing defeat, will give in more and more to the Socialists in a vain effort to stem the revolutionary tide, or else they will tighten the screws, trying to rule by main force. Either way is a confession of defeat; the retirement of Michaelis—if it is a fact—is a stinging defeat for the powers that have driven Germany to its ruin.

The upshot will be revolution. It can be nothing else. There are no two ways about it. The revolution may be here; the Kaiser may be sent to a German equivalent of Siberia within weeks, just as the czar was dethroned within a few weeks of the change in the ministry that showed that the bureaucracy was tottering.

The revolution may not take that form. There may be revolts, like that at Wilhelmshaven, that will make Germany a battle ground again. But the revolution cannot be postponed very much longer.

And the capitalism of the world fears it, just as they fear and hate the Russian revolution. They will fight junkerism as their enemy; but they would rather a thousand times have a junkerism than a revolutionary government.

It is ours to watch and wait. Time will tell. But, just as surely as Russia overthrew czarism, Germany will overthrow junkerism—and will not stop there. And that is where the decades of incessant Socialist teaching will bear its wonderful fruit.

Capitalism wants a quick "knock-out," and then peace. But peace will not end it. Peace will usher in the social revolution; and Russia and Germany, side by side, will be the greatest powers in all the world to make the world over safe for humanity.

The next moves will be watched with fear and trembling by plutocrats all over the world; they will be watched with confidence by the workers all over the world, who know what they mean.

Michaelis is as such an insignificant pawn as was Sturmer. But he seems destined to be as important as the Russian, in being the immediate cause of the liberation of the world.—(New York Call.)