

WHO IS DEMOCRATIC NOW?

In England when a King hints that he might make an unusual proposal to Parliament the Monarch is given the boot.

In the United States it is difficult even to get adequate public discussion of a proposal to assert the authority of Congress on social legislation as against the dictates of the Supreme Court.

Despite the trappings of Royalty which England clings to and despite the vaunted Republicanism of these United States there is still a question as to which country is more deeply devoted to the principles of Democracy.

In the United States it was impossible to discuss the question of curbing the power of the Supreme Court during the election for fear the Tories and the Liberty Leaguers would call the Democrats enemies of the Constitution — which was what happened anyway. Since the election it has been exceedingly difficult to get the so-called "molders of public opinion" to talk about a constitutional amendment. Now at least the issue does seem to be gaining some attention. The National Consumers League has made an important step forward by coming out for an amendment that will make it possible to pass labor and social legislation that will stick.

Frank P. Walsh, veteran fighting liberal-labor lawyer, is setting up an organization of lawyers who stand for social reform.

It is indeed a pity that the American Federation of Labor cannot make up its mind about whether a constitutional amendment is needed or not or what should be done to dilute the autocratic rule of this nation by nine Old Men who have

far more real power than King Edward VIII ever had. But the A. F. of L. lagged behind on the question of unemployment insurance and it has lagged on almost all vital issues of the day with the exception perhaps of the shorter working week.

The only argument that can be offered against the constitutional amendment is that it may take a long time to pass. It may be that in the interval other legislation will be needed that will limit the power of the Supreme Court and the Federal Courts to knife social legislation. But in the long run there can be no real expression of democracy in this Republic unless the national legislature is able to freely legislate, as the British Parliament does, to regulate business and indus-

try, in undertakings (public housing, health measure, or what not) for the welfare of the people.

It should not be necessary for any of the venerable justices to involve himself in a private scandal before the American people seriously raise the question as to how to assert their will as against the rule of these hardened judicial autocrats.

Down with all Kings, even those with the traditional number of lives of the housecat!

Reading Labor Advocate.

Modern Version

6 hours work,
10 hours play,
8 hours sleep,
8 dollars a day.

—The Flint Auto Worker.

Steel Magnates Talk of Keeping Profits Up

"We can not find an insurance company that will give us insurance against company unions revolting.

"We can not find out who joins the union. The U. S. Senate Committee investigating spies and civil liberties has run all the good stoolpigeons into the ground. The amateur stoolpigeons we hire always report a bunch of lies.

"The wage raise has cost us nothing. We use it as an excuse to increase prices. This pays for the wage raise, and we pocket the profits.

"Our company union experts (especially in Carnegie-Illinois Steel) several weeks ago reported that our company unions were safe. Since then the workers have been joining the CIO so fast, we do not know whether our industrial relation experts are working for us or the CIO.

"All our money could not buy the election for the Kansas snufflower. Maybe we should have invested our money in an Idaho potato.

"E. T. Weir spilled the beans about our sliding-scale scheme. He told the public it was no good. We herewith slap him across the hand for telling tales out of school."

Steel Labor.

GRADUAL SOCIALIZATION OF LAND AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES IN MEXICO

By E. Fanny Simon

"Mexico to size private property" said the headlines in the papers recently.

That, undoubtedly, caused shivers to run down the spines of our substantial citizens. The basis of the reports was the bill passed by the Chamber of Deputies in which the principle of "eminent domain" is extended to include property other than land.

Last September, President Cardenas sent to Congress the draft of a bill giving the President of Mexico power to take private property other than land for the public good. In asking for such a law, he was not without precedent. The practice of dividing the large estates for the benefit of the landless was decreed during the revolution in 1915. It was incorporated later into the new constitution as Article 27.

Upon it are based the Agrarian laws adopted since then both by the state and federal governments in Mexico. Also a number of the states have adopted laws permitting them to expropriate property other than land, if such expropriation is for the benefit of the public.

States Follow Suit

Cardenas himself, as governor of Michoacan, had had a law to that effect passed in 1930. In 1931 the state of Veracruz followed suit. More significant than either of these two laws, is the one passed by the state of Yucatan in 1934 giving the state the power to appropriate part of the large henequen plantations and organize them with co-operatives. To the success of the co-operatives the government has ordered

that the plantation from which the land was taken permit the use of its machines by the peasants and workers, members of the co-operatives. In case the plantation refuses to grant this, the machines are expropriated; the government proceeds to fix the price and the terms of payment for them.

The law just adopted by the Chamber of Deputies gives similar power to the federal government. In addition to the purposes for which the governments of the United States may take private property for public use, the Mexican law gives the president the power to denounce private property when it will (1) promote the profitable exploitation and development of natural resources, (2) conserve enterprises deemed of benefit to all the people, and (3) prevent hoarding or monopolizing for the benefit of a few to the detriment of the masses; thus making for an equitable distribution of wealth.

Broad Law

The law is, therefore, broad enough to include the taking over of any property which the President deems will promote the interests of the country. The government under this law may take factories, stores, and mines and turn them over to the workers to run.

The owner, whose property has been denounced, has the right to appeal. At the time of the denunciation, the President must state the purpose for which the expropriation is made and if the property is not used in the way stated, the original owner can sue for its return. Moreover, when property is taken, the government must pay for it within a period of ten years. The price set is

that given as its value for tax purposes. Changes in the value of the property after assessments are to be determined by an expert. In case the owner disagrees with the value set, they can go to the courts and the courts, after calling in experts, will determine its value. There is no further appeal once the court decides.

The Cardenas government has had the support of the great majority of the workers and peasants and seems to be following a policy of supporting the demands of labor.

Nevertheless, the statement made by Sanchez Tapia, the secretary of the Department of National Economy, that industrialists having investments in Mexico or who contemplate making them have nothing to fear from the law is correct. The Cardenas government does not intend to engage in wholesale expropriations. It will not turn Mexico overnight into a Socialist commonwealth.

It will, however, not permit to great an exploitation of the workers and peasants. At most, it believes in partial and gradual socialization of the land and other natural resources for the benefit of Mexicans and will prevent their exploitation for the benefit of foreign investors only.

Signs of the Times

The United States Steel Corporation has been summoned before a public body to confess and repent its sins in interfering with the self-organization of its workers. You may take that as a sign of social progress. U. S. Steel was born crying "Down with the Unions!" and now it's yanked into court for it.

Who Won The Election?

Suppose you have been knocked unconscious in an auto accident on the day before election.

And suppose you regained consciousness only yesterday, picked up the newspapers, and read these headlines:

"WPA Artists Fight Police in New York; 219 Ejected. Many Clubbed; Protest Dismissals."

"Pennsylvania to Cut 30,000 Off WPA."

"8,000 Being Dropped from WPA in New Jersey."

"Hundreds of WPA Workers Laid Off in Capital."

"WPA Dismissals Fought in St. Louis."

Lying in a hospital bed, with nothing to guide you but those headlines—

Who would you think had won the election?

Roosevelt? Or Landon?

The answer's obvious. You'd think it was Landon.

That's why we can't comprehend the administration's celebration of its victory with these wholesale layoffs.

There can be no question of money. Sufficient funds are available

to carry WPA along until congress reconvenes.

There can be no question as to local co-operation. States, counties and municipalities are calling for more, not fewer, WPA projects.

Is the public then, to conclude that the works progress administration has been captured by the Tories and their United States Chamber of Commerce, which has been crying ever since election for just such lay-off—to "force WPA workers into private industry?"

Are the American people to understand that reaction, which has been gunning for WPA ever since its inception, stands victorious today—in the wake of the worst political licking reaction ever has had in American history?

During the campaign President Roosevelt gave his pledge that this sort of thing would not happen.

After election, at the United States Conference of Mayors, WPA Boss Harry Hopkins reiterated that pledge.

But even while Hopkins was making his statement, WPA workers were being laid off in great numbers. The lay-offs have increased steadily, and are scheduled to go on increasing steadily for the rest of the year.

Merry Christmas! — New York Post.

(Note: The Post is not a Socialist paper. It supported Roosevelt.)

Justice Here, There And Everywhere

Six young Nazis who on their own authority raided Leon Trotsky's villa at Hoeneffoss in Norway and stole a trunkful of documents were sentenced to sixty days imprisonment by the Oslo courts. On the other hand, thirteen former Social Democrats have been sentenced last week in Dusseldorf, Germany, to prison terms running up to nine years for no other reason than they once belonged to the ruling party in their own country. Justice be glorified!

NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE

Chicago, Ill. Thursday night, December 31, marks the end of another year. It will be a night of celebration as the old year fades out and the new year comes in. The comrades and friends of branch No. 1 JSF are going to celebrate this event at the SNPJ Hall. It's going to be a big "Party Nite" with everybody enjoying themselves till the early hours in the morning. In the upper hall Johnny Kochevar's orchestra is going to take care of the young dance couples. In the lower hall Frankie Gralshak and his partner, Tony Omerza, are going to be master of ceremonies.

The admission... It's only 40c if the ticket is purchased in advance. At the door the price will be 60c. Get them for the advance price from any branch member or at the office

of Proletarec. You can also make reservations by calling Rockwell 2864. Have your friends celebrate with us, wishing one another a Happy New Year Thursday night at the SNPJ Hall.—Pub. Committee.

SILLY SAYING

Of all the silly sayings of the self-satisfied of the present day, the oft-repeated falsehood that there are "no classes" in this country takes the lead, and is often made to serve as the prelude to the preposterous warning that periodically peals from the rich and sumptuous club banquets that "it is treason to array class against class in the United States." If there are no classes, how can they be arrayed against each other?—Eugene V. Debs.

THE MADRID SITUATION

(Correspondence from Barcelona)

It is quite apparent that the more punishment the Fascists inflict upon the inhabitants of Madrid, the stronger grows the moral of the city. The heartless cruelties of the Moors and Foreign Legionnaires directed by Franco—the intermediary of Italy and Germany—merely serve to create further hatred against them.

Tens of thousands of women and children are leaving Madrid in a continuous stream, seeking safety from the criminal bombardments. Everywhere people may be seen moving their mattresses and blankets, seeking refuge in some safe place. But no place is safe, when seven and eight-story buildings are torn down, from the roofs to the basements. The safety of the women and children is the primordial problem. The men are anxious to get their families out, so that they may concentrate freely upon the battle against the Fascists.

Never was there as much unity of purpose among all sections of the population as there is now on the anti-Fascist question. Even those who maintained an indifferent attitude as to which government should be in power, reactionary or radical, are today combined with the anti-Fascist forces against black reaction. Despite all the atrocities committed by Franco upon the Madrid population in order to force them into an at-

titude of submission, through horror, the effect on the people's spirit has been precisely the opposite to fear and resignation.

The tearing down of buildings and the destruction of innocent lives is the best propaganda Franco and international Fascism could have made against themselves. No "red" propaganda of any organization could ever have had such a tremendous effect upon the people as the acts of the Fascists themselves and their inhuman treatment of defenseless citizens.

The men of all classes in Madrid with the militia from all regions of Spain are determined to put an end to Fascism not only in a defensive counter attack, but by means of a powerful offensive. It is most inspiring to see the response of the people, their optimism and courage. The morale of the people of Madrid will be a very promising factor for a final conquest over Fascism.

Capitalist Prosperity

The weekly letter of the Administrative and Research Corporation says, "There are still nearly nine million unemployed."

Its figures would naturally be conservative. There may still be over 10 million. However, nine million is sufficiently tragic. And they call this prosperity!

AT LEAST!

By COVAMI

I hear the thunder mutt'ring, the brewing of the storm,—
I sense the Old World dying, the New World taking form:
I see the feasting rich men their ears to justice seal,
And hear the peoples groaning beneath the Iron Heel.

From out the slums and jungles beyond the Golden Coasts,
Where bread in fear is eaten, where hunger haunts the hosts,
I hear a protest rising: it is the bitter cry
Of women, men and children that Greed condemns to die.

I see the Workers coming in One Big Union strong,
The red flags gleaming, flaming, their battlelines along;
I see the future rising in glory from the past,—
I see the Workers moving in unity at last!

TRIUMPHS OF MODERN CIVILIZATION



To ring out this old year and to ring in the new, we'll gather at the S.N.P.J. Hall Thursday evening, December 31, in large numbers, I hope. The old custom calls for rejoicing, hilarity, fun and an abundance of eats and drinks. None of these will be lacking on the occasion. If mere wishing really meant anything, we'd have all the happiness human beings can possibly enjoy. But wishing is a fanciful habit, though not harmful, certainly not the least meaningful. From custom, and as a habit, some people go about wishing happy new years without giving thought to what that means. From one to another they pass their handshake. In giving the Socialist salute we give the thoughtful wish of intelligence, tolerance and forbearance. We can prevail upon others to see the fallacy of not knowing why they shower others with their empty wishes. How we wish that some of the workers would get wise to themselves and wish themselves some good sense.

New Year's day is the day on which you should sit down and ponder. Yes, glance back over the past and plan for the future; individuals as well as organizations. Our Party has gone thru a critical year. It has survived the terrible misunderstanding and the spiteful damage by the boldness of a limited few to carry on. The world has been rocking from the blasts of Hitler, Mussolini and Japan. Thousands of strikes everywhere is an indication that the workers are active. Russia's war strength has served as an equalizer in Europe. There were no serious outbursts among the American Slovenes in 1936 and our Yugoslav Socialist Federation is still nurturing the one hope of awakening the Yugoslav workers. We are a race of

OUR XMAS PARTY

Chicago, Ill. We had a Xmas party last Thursday evening at the Slovene Labor Center. Approximately 40 of our friends and comrades were present and enjoyed a fine evening of entertainment. The "Grab Bag" was the center of attraction and everybody got a big kick from the presents they received. Games were played and gifts awarded to the winners. The tables were covered with good eats and candy and nuts were also plentiful. We also had plenty of musical entertainment. Thru the courtesy of Solar's Music House, 3215 W. 26th St., we got the loan of a RCA Victor radio and gramophone combination set. Frank and Angela Zaitz brought along a fine selection of records so we had all kinds of good music. A fine spirit prevailed and we enjoyed ourselves till the early hours in the morning.

A Member.

To believe that Hitler would ever keep an agreement is idiotic. As long as such agreements serve his purpose, they may be respected. Just as soon as they become a hindrance to his program of destruction he'll ignore them. I suppose one could say that it is too bad they have to deal with a killer like Hitler. Maybe, it's the diplomatic way of avoiding an early conflict. The question then arises, is it better to have an early or a late conflict? Does anyone believe that a conflict with Hitler can be avoided? Giving Hitler the tools with which to destroy your home is bum strategy.

With more government regulation something may yet be done to forestall the next depression. However, there is nothing that can prevent the system from tumbling into the abyss when it becomes topheavy in credits, borrowings, underconsumption and low wages. Only socialization of the means of production and distribution will permanently right that wrong. And to us Socialists it doesn't make a particle of difference who does the socializing just so it is done by honest, sane and scientific methods. We oppose the present administration and the republicans because they secure power to serve the rotten capitalist system which is the deadly enemy of socialization.