

Regeneración

English Section
Edited by WM. C. OWEN

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Better Roosevelt Than Wilson.

To be hated is nothing, for it means that you are a force, and he who has enemies is certain to have friends. But to be despised is to be spoken and thought of as "only" so and so; as only a Nigger, a Greaser, a Dago or a damned Hindu—that seems to be insufferable. It is to crawl through life; to eat humbled with every meal; to be a friendless Ishmaelite because your friendship is accounted worthless. Hence, as I conceive, the passion with which subjects of races, nationalities and classes struggle for independence. To me it seems idiotic to regard the Belgian, the Serbian, Mexican or our own workers as caring only about their bodies and fighting only because their leaders pass the order.

Our class struggle theory only scrapes the surface, leaving untouched great roots that lie far deeper. Indeed I regard the entire world as having been for years in the grip of a huge democratic movement; ardent for equality; consumed by an unappeasable thirst for social recognition. Even today, when work and wages are so bitterly debated, you may safely exploit the worker, but you cannot with impunity show that you despise him. Against that, outrage the profoundest instincts of humanity, conscious of a nobler destiny, rise in arms. Therefore I believe my thought to be essentially international. I have little patience with contempt for nationality and with the contemptuous vulgar insolence of men who have never paused to observe how every living being tries to guard its self-respect. Therefore I believe, I am able to understand and sympathize with the wounded pride of vanquished races, who write under the airs of superiority their conceited resume. Thereby I have found myself forced to the conclusion that a nation does wisely when it sends its last man and dollar fighting attempted subjugation. If Belgium is to be a mere annex of Germany the life of the Belgian will not be worth living. If Mexico is to be a mere annex of the United States, the Mexican people may as well be dead. How could I, an Englishman, draw a moment's happy breath if I were compelled every moment to remember that as the result of conquest, some other nationality was "over" me.

At the present moment, as I consider, Germany is "over" the United States—the country with which I linked my fortunes thirty-four years ago and of which I am a citizen. At the present moment, as I consider, Germany has terrorized the United States. At the present moment I am ashamed of my membership in the United States, which has faked, and proud of my nativity as an Englishman, because England has not played the coward. I am proud of the fact that thousands and thousands of Englishmen have stepped voluntarily into the firing line because they KNEW that the solemn promises of solemnly executed treaties must be kept; because they KNEW that, if weaker nationalities were allowed to be wiped out of existence without a protest, this world would become a charnel house of hell; because they KNEW that the bombardment of helpless pleasure resorts, the blowing up of innocent men, women and children travelling in helpless pas-

enger steamers, the shelling by Zeppelin's of helpless crowds in the great cosmopolitan metropolises of London, were infra-mundane which MUST be fought, which are beyond the pale of argument, which cannot be washed away with the soft-soap of politicians greedily for office and caring only for the winning of a trumpet election.

Never have I been an admirer of Theodore Roosevelt, for I have looked on him as a State Socialist, whose dream was universal government with himself as the universal governor. For that reason I have written much against him. But always I have been compelled to acknowledge that Roosevelt is a MAN, a virile figure, apart from and above the herd of spineless politicians. Often I have said to myself that it will may be that Roosevelt, conscious that purification of politics by slushy and designedly misleading talk is the most ridiculous of dreams can see no way out except through the man on horseback. We cannot look into men's hearts. We cannot analyse infallibly the workings even of our own brains.

Roosevelt has brought against Wilson charges that, in my judgment cannot be denied. I believe history's verdict will hold those charges proved. I have little doubt that Wilson will be regarded by posterity as having at once reflected faithfully and indorsed the abject attitude of a most abject age. An examination of the article by Roosevelt published in "The Metropolitan" of August last, and of the speech delivered by Wilson, October 12, at the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the "Daughters of the American Revolution," will show precisely what I mean. I take it that the speech was intended as a reply to Roosevelt's article, but that is immaterial. Both the article and speech must stand on their own merits, and I now give a faithful summary of each.

Roosevelt denounced the deification of peace, regardless of whether it is wise or righteous, as being "a peculiarly base and grobolic form of evil." He denounced vigorously the "policy of ultronegry" which, as he claims, Wilson's administration has pursued both as regards the Lusitania and Mexico. He denounced especially "the unspeakably silly and wicked thirty-all-inclusive arbitration-commission treaties actually negotiated under the present Administration." On these points Roosevelt expressed himself substantially as follows:

First, that no people can become a force for good unless it is willing and able to keep its promises, and that no people should ever consent to arbitrate its basic rights. I agree in that. I believe I should do my utmost to keep my promises, and I believe that I have certain basic rights which I am called on personally to defend and cannot submit to others. Would you invite a jury to decide whether another man should be permitted to assault your wife or daughter?

Secondly, that "a nation which, without the utterance of one word of protest, has seen the Hague Conventions which it signed torn to pieces and thrown to the winds; a nation which has not ventured beyond empty words when its ships were sunk and its citizens, men, women, and children, slain on the high seas, is in no position to help the cause of either peace or justice, and would excite merely derision if it proposed at this

moment the creation of a World League of Peace."

I agree in that, and I indorse Roosevelt's statement that Europe, where men "are fighting for what they think to be good," stands at this moment above the United States which, with what he calls "criminal timidity," has been afraid to insist upon the right. I agree that the fine words with which Wilson and other Peace-at-any-Price advocates adorn their pleas are simply apologies for an innate cowardice which is very real, and I indorse as a questionably correct statement that "there is no meaner moral attitude than that of a timid and selfish neutrality between right and wrong." All my experience has taught me that. If I find myself in the company of a man who will not condemn an outrage he recognizes as such, I KNOW, I am in the presence of a moral coward.

Roosevelt expresses most strongly the opinion that, in our hearts, we have no doubt that the sinking of the Lusitania was an appalling crime, or that Belgium has suffered at the hands of Germany "the most wanton, the most hideous wrong, and the wrong in the most largest scale, that has been perpetrated for over a century." I agree with Roosevelt as to that. I say that he states an unpleasant but necessary truth when he declares that the people of this country have no doubt as to the real character of such deeds, and I add that conversations with hundreds of men have convinced me that either they do not give a damn as to right or wrong away from home, or are afraid to express their true opinion. Either attitude marks as Roosevelt says, personal and national degeneracy most profound.

Quoting the Berlin "Lokal Anzeiger" as saying that Germany does not desire the love of the Americans but wishes to be respected by them, and that "the loss of the Lusitania will earn that respect for us more than a hundred battles won on land," Roosevelt remarks that what is really meant is not "respect" but "fear." He points out that, "as part of her program, Germany has counted on the effect of terrorism upon all men of soft nature," and he expresses his opinion that she has counted correctly. I agree entirely. So far as the United States is represented by Wilson and his cabinet the United States has been cowed by German terrorism.

Here I am not concerned with Roosevelt's views respecting Mexico, as to which I differ from him. But never, either in these columns or elsewhere, have I protested against American intervention because it would be dangerous to the safety of the United States. To use the argument of terrorism would be to give a "dare" to those who would be tempted by that very fact to take it up. No, it is on grounds of principle that I oppose intervention; because I consider it in the interest of land exploiters; because I believe the Mexicans should be allowed to solve their own social problem and are trying hard to do so; because I have no sympathy with those who look on Mexico and Mexicans as mere opportunities for getting rich out of the toil of others. What I am concerned with here is the fact that Roosevelt, as I see it, is uttering truth; and I compare him in that respect with Wilson, President of the United States, who, as I see it, is not. I am of the opinion that if this nation could have the truth, its influence would

have been felt throughout the world and would have gone farther toward bringing peace than will all the congresses Roosevelt so justly ridicules. Conversely I am of the opinion that Wilson and his cabinet, by condoning what they know is wrong, are prolonging this fratricidal struggle and will be held responsible by history for much of the blood that has been and will still be shed.

Wilson's speech, from first to last, was an appeal to patriotism, and to patriotism, as I understand it, of the narrowest and most concealed type. After referring to the birth of this nation as "the creation of a great free republic, based upon traditions of personal liberty," he added that "from generation to generation strangers have had to be indoctrinated with the principles of the American family; and the wonder and beauty of it all has been that the infection has been so generously easy." He started with the lying premise that America is peculiarly the land of personal liberty, and urged that now, when the rest of the world is in the crucible, is the time "to ask that every man who thinks first of America should rally to the standards of our life." Then came the following passage: "Neutrality is a negative word. It is a word that does not express what America ought to feel. America has a heart and that heart throbs with all sorts of intense sympathies, but America has schooled its heart to love the things that America believes in, and it ought to devote itself only to the things that America believes in; and believing that America stands apart in its ideals, it ought not to allow itself to be drawn, so far as its heart is concerned, into anybody's quarrel. Not because it does not understand the quarrel; not because it does not in its head assess the merits of controversy, but because America has promised the world to stand apart and maintain certain principles of action, which are grounded in law and justice. We are not trying to keep out of trouble; we are trying to preserve the foundations upon which peace can be built. Peace can be rebuilt only upon the ancient and accepted principles of international law; only upon those things which remind nations of their duties to each other and deeper than that, of their duties to mankind and to humanity."

To me all that rings false. I am skeptical as to the sympathetic heart-throbs of this commercial nation, and certain that the United States cannot be described truthfully as "standing apart." (Wilson meant loftily apart) "in its ideals." Those ideals have come chiefly from Europe, for hitherto America, as a young country, has been occupied almost exclusively with the production of material things. That is not entirely to her shame. Her task was the industrial subjugation of a continent, and she has performed that task with extraordinary rapidity and, therefore, roughly. When the Indians seemed to block her way she snapped her fingers at ideals and abstract principles. When a vast territory owned by Mexico was thought desirable, what weight had Wilson's "ancient and accepted principles of international law?" No honest observer can truthfully describe the United States of today as "peculiarly the land of personal liberty;" and was it ever such? Go back to America's early history and ask yourself if the Blue Laws or chattel slavery made this "peculiarly the land of personal liberty." Can you think of any other country, Germany not excepted, wherein prohibitory statutes and ordinances, all subversive of liberty, have multiplied so prodigiously? Why, today this is the land of the policeman, the spy and the detective; the land of Purity Squads and Comstockism; the land devoted-to-the-

public fakers who never wilfully let slip an opportunity of graft. I hold firmly to the opinion that he who makes light of the invasion of Belgium will acquire cheerfulness in the absorption of Mexico, or any other of the weaker nations, by a more powerful neighbor. And as for those who consider treaties of no consequence, I consider him a barbarian, whose only God is "Might." With them no civilized man or community has any right to be at peace.

The United States, stained with the shame of chattel slavery, has not reformed, as yet. Nowhere—thanks to modern machinery—has labor been so productive, and nowhere has it been exploited so ruthlessly and on so huge a scale. Nowhere has the cornering of land and the subsidiary necessities of life been brought to so fine an art or honored so highly. Nowhere, accordingly, have the extremes of wealth and poverty developed so rapidly. Hence the frenzied preparations made at the approach of every winter to guard ourselves against the fury (one is astounded it is not more furious) of the unemployed. Hence a suicide percentage—the surest symptom of general unhappiness—unequaled by any other nation. Hence an increase of insanity which fills all thinking persons with grave apprehensions for the immediate future. Hence overhanging penitentiaries, jails and workhouses. Hence constantly recurring strikes, which develop, out of necessity, into miniature civil wars. Do these testify in the character of this country as standing above the rest of sinful humanity in its ideals or as being "peculiarly the land of personal liberty?"

My President's critics tell us he has discovered that without the German vote he cannot be re-elected. I am most unwilling to believe it, but the President of a Republic who, at such a crisis, would distort the truth to serve his own ambitions would be a traitor without parallel in the history of this or any other country. Yet Wilson persistently misleads the public in regard to Mexico. His own private agents have told him, as reported frequently in these columns, that the trouble in Mexico is almost entirely economic; that it is the case of a people dispossessed of their natural inheritance, sold from under their feet to fortune-hunting speculators. It is self evident that if these speculators are to remain in possession of their holdings, which run into millions of acres, the Mexicans themselves must be in the future, as they are at present, a landless proletariat.

Does Wilson tell the American public that? No. On the contrary, he represents it persistently as a problem in constitutional government; as a question of putting good governors in the place of bad; as a question of political reform. He misrepresents conditions in the United States because, as I believe, he dare not offend the conservative element whose votes he needs. He misrepresents the situation in Mexico because he dares not offend the great land-owning interests by stating frankly the part Americans have played. Having this nation's honor in his keeping he allows it to be terrorized by the military autocracy of Germany, and thereby brings the name of American into a contempt for which no amount of material prosperity can make amends. We do not live by bread alone. We cannot win either our own respect or that of others by side-stepping ugly facts and asserting that we are "too proud to fight." When indifference takes the place of righteous indignation our day is done. Better, a thousand times, the hot blood of fighting youth than the ice-water of a coldly-calculated, insincere and garrulous senility, dead to generous emotions and seeking only its own safety.

Personally I long for peace in Mexico, but not for Peace at any price; not for a peace that shall sanction the ancient wrongs and give the old injustices a new and more extended lease of life. Personally I long for peace in Europe, but not on the Wilson-terms of shutting my eyes to patent facts, or pretending that a Democracy, however imperfect, can throw itself into the arms of a Military Autocrat.

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POR FIN.

Hemos recibido al mismo tiempo los paquetes correspondientes a los numeros 11 y 12 de "RE VINDICACION", el periodico anarquista que trabaja por crear en España un ambiente de simpatia para los mexicanos que luchan por su emancipacion economica, base de todas las libertades. No hemos recibido todavia los paquetes correspondientes a los numeros 6, 7, 8, 9, y 10, del simpatico colega, y pedimos por medio de estas lineas a su Grupo Editor, que nos haga la remesa de ellos.

Los companeros de toda la America que deseen leer REIVINDICACION, deben pedirlo a Ricardo Flores Magon, P. O. Box 1236, Los Angeles, Cal., U. S. A. acompañando a su pedido el valor de la suscripcion: \$0.60 semestral; \$1.20 por una anualidad, moneda americana.

Ayuda: ¡que más ayudad! tu ayuda es necesaria para que la carga no nos quede injustamente solo a unos pocos.

TO ARMS!!

Capitalists, Parsons, Politicians, Landlords, Newspaper Editors, and Other Stay-at-Home Patriots.

Your Country Needs You in the Trenches! Workers, Follow Your Masters!

Some time prior to Barker's arrest on this charge, he was interviewed by the Police following a question on the subject in the Legislative Assembly, who informed him that their instructions were to ask that the poster be withdrawn from circulation, in which case, they informed him that the matter would be dropped. Barker agreed to cease the publication of the poster, and as far as possible to prevent its further circulation.

Some weeks later, however, the question was again raised, this time in the Legislative Council. Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald, M. L. C., on that occasion informed the House, in the course of a bitter attack on the Industrial Workers of the World, that he would make it his special business to interview the Chief Secretary on the subject, when, he had no doubt, immediate action would be taken.

It will be readily seen from these facts that action was instituted by the authorities, not because of the tendency of the poster to prejudice recruiting, but because it offended the susceptibilities of a few politicians prominent in the late recruiting campaign, and who, to judge from their public utterances, were anxious to find a scapegoat in order to cover up their own blunders and incapacity as recruiting agents.

A fund is being raised to fight this case through the Courts, and we invite the assistance of your organization in this direction. But, apart from this aspect of the question, in these days, when autocratic legislation is making such dangerous inroads on the liberty of the subject and freedom of speech, it behoves all progressive organizations, and especially members of the working class, to enter an emphatic protest against the Prussian-like tactics of the State Government authorities.

We would further draw your attention to the fact that the Federal Government has recently amended the War Precautions Act, reserving to itself the sole power to institute proceedings. This is, on the face of it, an admission that some State officials were, to say the least, over zealous in administering the provisions of the Act. However, this does not release us from our responsibilities to a member of our class, who has been made a victim of the autocratic behaviour of a few vindictive individuals, and we trust that you will cooperate in registering a protest against sending a working man to rot in goal for the crime of telling the boss to go to the front.

Communications or funds should be addressed to the Secretary, Barker Defence Committee, Box 98, Haymarket, Sydney. Resolutions should be sent to the Hon. D. R. Hall, Minister of Justice, Sydney.

"AN INJURY TO ONE SHOULD BE THE CONCERN OF ALL."

F. J. MORGAN, Secretary.
D. GRANT, F. J. MORGAN, W. RANCIE,
J. B. KING.—Barker Defence Committee.

Jose Valdez.

Este firme, abnegado y sincero companero de ideas, se encuentra preso en la carcel del Condado de esta ciudad. En legitima defensa hirio a un individuo que, se dice, entro a su casa y agredio a su familia con un punal.

Los tramites lentos de los tribunales son la "causa" de que el buen companero se encuentre preso todavia.

Bueno seria que los companeros que puedan hacerlo, visiten a Jose ahora que se encuentra entre las redes de la ley burguesa. Los dias de visita son los martes y los viernes, de diez a doce del dia y de dos a cuatro de la tarde. No lo olvidéis, companeros.

Cosa curiosa: el agresor está libre, mientras el agredido está preso.

¡ATENCIÓN, TRABAJADORES!

Todos los domingos a las 7 y 7/2 de la noche, hay milines de propaganda en el Local del Centro de Estudios Racionalistas, situado en la calle de San Fernando No. 767—Asistid a aprender cómo dejar de ser pobres.—Entrada gratis.

LA OFICINA DE REGENERACION.

Para llegar a la oficina de REGENERACION, tomese el carro colorado de Edenahle, en Sexta y Main, cuando el carro camine rumbo al Oeste. Bajese en Farrago St., y andese sobre la izquierda, hasta encontrar Ivanhoe Ave. Caminense cerca de tres calles hasta tener a la vista un lago. Los jacales que se ven en el bajio son el taller de la imprenta y la oficina del periodico.

ARGENTINA.

La compañera Elvira Fernández, de la Libreria "La Escuela Moderna," calle de Estudios Unidos, No. 1299 Buenos Aires, Argentina, ha tomado cargo de la Agencia de REGENERACION en aquella region.

Tomámpense, companero, en conseguir buenos suscriptores a REGENERACION.