

Regeneracion English Section

Edited by WM. C. OWEN

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HOW ZAPATA SOLVES The Agrarian Problem.

When the land of a nation has passed into the possession of the few, the masses, if they are to recover their lost independence and escape from poverty, are compelled by the necessities of life to expropriate those few. When it comes to the breaking-point the masses always recognize that to buy out the monopolists is to burden themselves with the support of parasites and perpetuate their former rent-vassalage under another name. Before the dispossessed can get back their lands, or obtain compensation, they have to regain control of the governing machine. For this, as far as I can construe history, they stick at nothing.

In Mexico the breaking-point came some five years ago, when the Revolution drove Porfirio Diaz into exile. It came of the necessity, for the land had passed into the hands of the very, very few, leaving the masses helpless. For example, in our issue of January 22 I reproduced an article from the "Tacoma Tribune," which ran, in part: "The size of these estates (in Mexico) is almost incredible. The property held by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst in Western Chihuahua is said to comprise 3,000,000 acres. The Rockefeller-Aldrich syndicate owns a 2,000,000 acre ranch in the State of Zacatecas. British and American interests hold under title, or lease more than 20,000,000 in the Tampico oil region. There are huge ranches and plantations owned by Americans scattered all through Northern Mexico. Most of the property in question was formerly known as 'community lands.' It was divided into small farms held and worked by peasants without titles. It supported in modest comfort a great population which, since the land was taken and consolidated into big estates, has been reduced to helplessness."

Such being the indisputable condition let us see how Zapata has dealt with it, and for that purpose I draw on a article by Harry H. Dunn, published in "The Wide World" of this month, May. Dunn has been in Mexico several years, and published, in the same magazine and as far back as September, 1912, an article on Zapata. After an exhaustive account of the steady consolidation of Zapata's power, the story comes down to the date at which Huerta had become Provisional President, and Dunn describes Zapata's course as having been as follows:

"Zapata voluntarily evacuated Cuernavaca, withdrew all his raiding bands into one compact army of close on thirty thousand men, retired to the mountains of Guerrero, and lay down quite for nearly two months, making only such forays as were necessary to supply his army with food, while he waited to see what the old warrior who had helped to overthrow Madero would do. Huerta did nothing, and then Zapata made the 'ten strike' of his life. In proclamations posted all over Morelos, Guerrero, Puebla, and parts of Tlaxcala, and Mexico, he announced that the poor of all the territory he controlled could have farms for the asking. Immediately he began the dispossession of such foreigners and wealthy natives as had not already been driven out of the five States named and the repartition of their lands among the peons of the country.

"Huerta, occupied with the financial question and with the opposition of the United States was in no position to enter on

a long and arduous campaign with so well entrenched a leader as Zapata, so he turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of the upper classes who had fallen under Zapata's dissoleasure, and the distribution of lands went on. In the two years which have elapsed since that time, more than ten thousand square miles of fertile, well cultivated land have been given to men who before this time never had even a hoe of their own, let alone land on which to use it. Poor laborers who had been born and lived all their lives in brush huts were given fine stone houses, while men and women who had never slept anywhere save on a dirty floor rolled in their rags, found themselves possessed of magnificent beds whose cost, laid down in interior Mexico, had been hundreds of pesos each. Out of the hands he had gained by lost Zapata gave these people mules and tools and seed with which to work their farms, and in hundreds of instances provided whole families with food until they could harvest their crop. Thus this amazing bandit established what Ismael Palafox later called, in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies, 'a new aristocracy of the soil.'"

Later in the article Dunn tells us how Zapata levied on priests to whom various terrified landowners had entrusted their wealth, and writes: "But the Master Bandit was too wily to take possession of any property himself. When he looted a town, he gave permission to the poor of the place to occupy whichever houses suited them best. If these peons could not agree in distribution of real estate, Zapata decided for them, allotting to each family what he considered a fair tract of farming land, and a good home in which to live. In the towns he wrecked, such as Yautepec, Jojutla, Jonacatepec, Cuauhtla, and others, whose sack was described in my previous article, he allowed the lower classes to divide the land and build such houses as they could. None of this land is allowed to be sold, mortgaged, or seized for debt; it must descend from the father to the oldest son, though all members of the family are to share in the products of the soil. Inasmuch as all deeds are carefully destroyed in each town captured by the Zapatistas, as well as all municipal and State records, it is doubtful if the rightful owners of these properties can ever recover them."

I have quoted at considerable length because Dunn knows his subject; because his article appears in a magazine of weight, that enjoys an international circulation, and because he seems to be by no means an enthusiastic admirer of Zapata; although I note that his present article is far from being as condemning as was that he published four years ago. Evidently he has become impressed, for he tells us that Zapata has been twice in possession of the City of Mexico, has named two Presidents and their cabinets, and had the Presidency four times within his grasp.

Indeed his article closes with the declaration that Zapata today commands an army almost as large as that of the existing Carranza government; that he has the loyal support of a million peons who, thanks to him, are now landowners, and that nine Presidents have sought to suppress him and been worsted in the endeavor. And, although he lays much stress on the ruthless brutality of many of Zapata's methods, he also testifies to his method of courage, saying that he was the only revolutionist who, when our forces landed at Vera Cruz, immediately offered to op-

pose them, writing President Huerta as follows: "We shall lay down all differences and, as two brave men, fight side by side against the invader from the North. The moment the army of the United States starts inland from Vera Cruz my forces and myself are at your orders." Dunn adds that at that critical moment Carranza cringed and Villa hid behind him.

In short, Zapata is essentially a revolutionary leader; a type of those who, when confronted with the social problem, do not ask themselves how they can solve the riddle without breaking laws or infringing the national constitution, but only how they can solve it; how they can give the admitted victims of injustice quick and sure relief. Napoleon, whom men call "The Great," was of that type, and the French forgave him a hundred thousand murders because he restored their lands and stopped, to some extent, the greater and more cruel slaughter land monopoly entails. When we pass to Carranza we pass to the consideration of an entirely different type, which works by different methods. Him also we have to study as closely and impartially as possible, for between these two types all countries will have to choose in that great struggle which, as is now self-evident, cannot be deferred much longer.

Carranza, who at present enjoys much support among the Socialists and Single Taxers, and of whom Lincoln Steffens has written enthusiastically in this month's "Everybody's," will be the subject, therefore, of next week's editorial.

WM. C. OWEN.

'Regeneracion' Barred From The Mails

The expected has happened. Regeneracion has been barred from the mails as second class matter. We have just received notification from the Third Asst. Postmaster at Washington to the effect that the second class mail privileges enjoyed by Regeneracion have been revoked and that this paper can no longer circulate thru the mails as heretofore.

The reason given for this action is the same as originally advanced, viz., "that Regeneracion is not regularly issued," and that it is not a "newspaper or other publication within the meaning of the law."

As to these charges, we have dealt with them in former issues and little more need be said along these lines beyond pointing out the absurdity and discriminating nature of same.

During the last two years Regeneracion actually failed of publication for a number of times, but as these lapses were caused for very good reasons, the Post-office always accepted our excuses as valid, and without any difficulty. So, it is strange that now that Regeneracion has come out with strict regularity for the last seven months, its privileges should be revoked for irregularity. The charge of using the mails to circulate matter that "incited to murder, arson and assassination" is still more ridiculous and utterly discriminating when we only glance at the continuous murderous scream of the daily press and especially the Hearst organs.

All of this is so obvious and self evident that we consider it a waste of time to dwell upon it. But when we see our most sacred rights being snatched from us with a brutal and ruthless hand

it would be criminal and shameful to remain in silence.

The hand of Authority has fallen unusually heavy upon us of late and blow after blow has been dealt; to mention a few of these during the past week: Owing to Ricardo's delicate state of health application was made to have his bail reduced in the hope of getting him out of jail to receive proper treatment. This was met with stern refusal by the court, the Deputy Dist. Attorney going as far as to say that even if Ricardo were dying he would fight the motion to the last. The most that was granted by the court was that Ricardo could be taken to a hospital. After being taken there he found the treatment so much worse than in jail that he is actually anxious to return to the tanks. What he needs the most is fresh air, sunshine and exercise, but he is kept confined to a small cage without any chance for the above necessities.

Quick in succession came the exclusion of Regeneracion from the second class mails; while at the same time Raul Palma, a tireless and ardent young worker for Land and Liberty was given a prison sentence of 30 days for exercising his right of free speech. Palma was addressing his fellow workers as usual, at the Plaza, speaking mostly of conditions in Mexico, when he was arrested for "inciting to riot," but the charge was so ridiculous that even the "law and order" gang found it convenient to change it to "disturbing the peace". In the trial the prosecution with all its police witnesses was badly worsted by counsel for the defense and everything pointed to an acquittal, but things pre-

arranged and a jury of old fossils did their work.

From the above succession of acts against freedom of the press, and in particular against the libertarian work of Regeneracion and the Magons in behalf of social and economic emancipation for the Mexican people, we feel certain that the American plutocracy, thru its instrument, the government, is in concerted campaign to wipe out any libertarian activity that may interfere with the plans of the American and foreign plunderers to crush the Social Revolution in Mexico and establish a reign of bondage and slavery with an iron hand to protect the aristocratic looters.

But we are not to be silenced or deterred, and persecution will only intensify our determination and efforts in a cause we consider most sacred.

With the exclusion of Regeneracion from the mails we shall be compelled to use one cent postage on every copy, which will about double the present expenses, or cost an additional fifty to sixty dollars per issue in postage alone. The paper may not come out every week as before, but we will get it out as often and as long as our unceasing efforts will permit.

We ask those who care to help us out in distributing Regeneracion in their community to send us their names and addresses and we will send them a bundle with the necessary copies of the paper to cover the subscribers in their vicinity. We need not repeat that the present situation has forced the paper into twice the ordinary expenses; therefore, we ask those who care to see the paper live to redouble their efforts in its support, if they think its work is worth while.

Yours for Land and Liberty,
REGENERACION GROUP

THE CARRANZA HUMBUG.

Phineas T. Barnum no doubt voiced a sound truism when he said that the American people love to be humbugged. Of course this would seem to be a fitting classification for the average every day sucker and not for those who claim to do their own thinking, but it seems that it could well be stretched to include the whole flock, the "wise" ones not excepted. We are all humbugged, no doubt, some time or other, and perhaps like it, as Barnum would say, but this being a matter of degree, we can't help wondering how easy some "thinkers" will take their dose.

In this particular instance I have reference to the easiness with which Venustiano Carranza has succeeded in making a lot of "radical" folks believe that a political clown can actually do something for a downtrodden people. How any socialists, radicals of all shades and even so-called anarchists can pin any faith to a cheap fraud like Carranza, and expect him to do any thing just because he promises, is more than one is able to conceive, but unfortunately there are such cases and quite numerous too. This would be bad enough if it were something new, but when it is a threadbare and worn-out game like it is in Mexico, with the continuous rotation of would be Napoleons, it becomes really puzzling.

When Madero took advantage of the despoiled and outraged people of Mexico to induce them to follow him and put him in power with the promise of giving them the land free, it was not so bad to expect the people to rise and use any means to overthrow a dynasty that had crushed them for over thirty years, and especially when Madero actually appeared to be sincere. But when even this paragon of democracy betrayed and outraged the very people he so zealously professed to set free, it would seem that the question of expecting a political savior to do anything for a people was settled for good. But a-

gain we were mistaken.

There are men who call themselves anarchists who are actually hopeful and even anxious to see Carranza come into power in Mexico and establish an era of freedom and peace. What a stupid mockery!

Why should any man with common horse sense expect a vulgar politician who solemnly pledges himself to protect private property, corporations, investors, exploiters and slave drivers of all kinds, to do anything in the interest of the people, or rather the working class, who are the only people worth mentioning? The very idea is idiotic and sickening. The only redeeming feature about Carranza, as with most every politician, is his crass stupidity in trying to play the tyrant too early, as is naturally the case with all would be dictators who crave to be rulers, and in their anxiety betray the people and try to impose themselves before they are strong enough. Of this the bearded savior has given ample proof.

Like all his predecessors, Carranza has been long on promises but very short in carrying them out, and as no politician in Mexico dares come out before the people today without promising the land, he has gathered his following from these promises, but had neglected an element which he discovered over two years ago when he entered Mexico City. He had not reckoned with the city or industrial workers, and when he entered the Capital on what he thought to be the crown-triumph of his ambitions, he met with the rudest jarr of all his summers. He found there widespread discontent among the workers which was very disturbing to his peace of mind.

However he thought it was an easy matter to settle and proceeded to order the most active rebels shot. This aroused such storm of indignation that he was forced to leave Mexico City in a hurry and to stay away for over two years. By the time he reached Mexico

Veracruz, where he established his "government", he had learned a wholesome lesson, and in order to gain the favor of the industrial workers, he proclaimed at the end of his run in Veracruz, that from that day on the Social Revolution had started and that if all the workers rallied to his banner they would be fighting for their real emancipation. This had the desired effect and many labor organizations and groups banded together in what they called "Batallones Rojos" or "Red Battalions" and took the field in what they considered a most worthy fight. They were guaranteed absolute liberty to organize Unions in any way they desired and even encouraged to establish "La Casa del Obrero" ("The Worker's Home") and branches in all the cities.

An idea of the adroitness and "liberality" shown by the Carranza machine to bait and trap the workers may be gained from the fact that the most aristocratic Club House in Mexico City, called The Jockey Club, and only frequented by millionaires and aristocrats, was confiscated and given to the workers to establish their headquarters.

For a while all of this appeared to be the real thing, and the workers were beginning to congratulate themselves and to actually believe that at last the New Order was about to be established. But a very rude awakening was in store for them.

Just as soon as Carranza felt he was strong enough he began to show his teeth and proceeded to carry out his real intentions and program. He began by dispossessing the workers of their mansion in Mexico City, forcing them to vacate and driving them to the suburbs, while at the same time restoring the palace to his aristocratic friends.

Today the harlot has thrown the mask aside altogether and stands naked with hardly any more pretense of liberality. After shedding their blood for the land and emancipation from all exploitation the peons are told to move on, that they must buy the land from the government or the landgrabbers if they want it. This in the face of the fact that even if the land was free it would amount to nothing if a pack of thieves and exploiters are allowed to gamble with and grab the products of the farmers.

When the workers go on strike Carranza and his lackeys are ever ready to protect the interests of the exploiters and shoot the workers down if they don't behave. A few words from Carranza himself are perhaps not amiss, here is what he said in a recent speech: "If the revolution has combated the tyranny of the capitalists, it cannot sanction the tyranny of the proletariat, and this tyranny they are reaching now, especially the members of the Workers of the World's Home, who are not satisfied with the benefits and concessions made to them, but instead persist in multiplying and exaggerating their demands, until they become a reproach to the constitutional authorities, who have been their allies and supporters. The constant efforts of the agitators tend to make the workers take advantage of circumstances to force their demands."

"The government must recognize the right of the companies that ask for aid in forcing respect of their rights and protection of their properties."

This is only a brief outline of things as they now stand in Mexico, and the way Carranza is carrying out his promises. Much more could be said about this matter but space will not permit. However, more about this will appear from time to time.

R. G. Cox.

Intervention

The Hearst and other papers are urging intervention in Mexico. "To save American lives, to safeguard American property, to bring the

people of Mexico out of their frightful misery". These and other high-sounding expressions are used. Is their any meaning in them?

"To save American lives!" Pure bunk! If American lives are so important, they could have started long ago in the American industries, where 35,000 workers are murdered and some 700,000 maimed and crippled yearly in industrial "accidents." Have the papers now shrieking about the killing of Americans in Mexico ever hollered for a war on the United States Steel Corporation, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., and other homegrown bandits that have snuffed out so many thousands of lives yearly? No! On the contrary, every effort on the part of the workers in these industries to make them decent and safe places to work in has been fought tooth and nail by these papers that are now howling for "intervention."

"To bring the Mexican people out of their frightful misery!" Nothing was heard of their frightful misery so long as Hearst, Rockefeller, and other leeches were quietly sucking the blood from the Mexican workers under the protection of Diaz. Nothing was mentioned of millions of the Mexican people being bought and sold as slaves, living (!) crowded in little vile hovels, reeking with vermin and filth, the women violated with impunity, men, and children lashed or killed for unwillingness or inability to work as hard or as fast as their masters demanded. You know how friendly Hearst and Rockefeller are to American labor—we have had plenty of experience with them—and you can imagine how benevolent they are towards Labor in Mexico. It is only now, when the Mexican people, learning their lesson through betrayal, are taking possession of the land, the mills, the workshops, the railroads, for themselves, that Hearst and the others weep crocodile tears over the poor, downtrodden, people of Mexico.

"To safeguard American property!" What property do you own in Mexico? What is meant by American property? If a bunch of Scotch, English, Jewish, German, and American plutocrats are America, then there is American property to be protected there. But if you refer to the ninety-odd millions of American people as America, there's nothing to be lost, for not one in a million of these owns anything in Mexico.

The workers of Mexico are fighting the same enemies as we American workers fought at Ludlow, Calumet, Paint Creek, and Youngstown, only the Mexican workers are going far ahead of us in the struggle for industrial freedom. Shall we be "loyal citizens" or traitors to our class if we help Big Business in their attempt to force the Mexican workers into slavery once more?

"Clean up Mexico!" howl Hearst and the rest of the pack. The first truthful expression that has passed their frothy, snarling lips. They want to clean up Mexico—to clean out Mexico—and with Mexican labor. And they want American labor to "clean up" Mexican labor.

Refuse!
(From "THE ALARM", Chicago, Illinois.

Report of the money received by Los Angeles Branch Workers' International Defense League for MAGON defense:

Workers' International Defence League.

Receipts for week ending May 15th, 1916.

Previously reported:—\$383.21

Grupo Risveglio, Ybor City, Tampa Fla., \$37.15; W. S. & D.B. Fund No. 276, Evergreen, N. Y. \$2.00; Anarchist Red Cross, N. Y. (Regeneracion) \$25.00

Total for week \$64.15

Total received to date \$447.36

P. D. Noel, Fin. Secy.

The trial of Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magon is set for May the 31st. All those who disapprove of the procedure against the Magons may send their protests by writing to Judge Benjamin F. Bledsoe in charge of the case, and Dist. Attorney Albert Schoonover, Federal Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.