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WHERE WILL STATE SOCIALISM STOP?

Deep, deep pessimism seems everywhere to mark the workers; a pessimism with which I personally have little patience. Everywhere the distrust and hatred is of civilization as a whole; the "What is the Use?" attitude; the "It's too much for me and I give it up" tone of despair; disgust with the entire business and, at bottom, a longing to get back to the wild. No one who follows attentively the talk at labor and agitation meetings can fail to notice this. There our entire social system is denounced constantly as rotten from top to toe; every one is said to have his price; modern life is treated as a perpetual warfare of conflicting interests, in which quarter should be neither given nor expected; immediate material gain or loss alone is considered worth discussion. Rarely does any speaker attempt to jock away this gloom, for to inject humor is to incur the suspicion of being insincere. No labor and revolutionary meetings are not cheerful.

This dejection stands out in marked contrast to the optimism which characterized the French revolutionists of the seventeenth century; men who felt themselves certain of their goal, confident of success, positive that they had an all-important mission which they were destined to fulfill. I have found a similar optimism among many Mexican revolutionists, among a few Anarchists and Socialists, but seldom, if ever, among Trade Unionists, of whom for many years I had wide and intimate experience. And this in its turn means that Labor, as a whole, has still no confidence in its future; has no self-reliance; is guiltily conscious that it still lacks the pluck to face its problems and, therefore, simply drifts, a thing of circumstance, a tool ready for the first master-hand that has the grit to seize it. Roosevelt knows that Wilson knows it; the dominant political minds of this generation all recognize that they can swing Labor which way they will, and they intend to swing it in their own direction. That direction is unquestionably State Socialism, the most toweringly ambitious all-government scheme ever formulated by the human mind.

There will be resistance; resistance of the most stubborn and bitter type; a conflict beside which that now rending Europe will pale into obscurity; the desperate opposition, for many years to come, of a minority too intelligent to look on indifferently while our race, with freedom in its grasp, passes into the very worst of slaveries. That minority will fight, and fight to the death. That minority must fight, for it will have as its would-be executioner the Will to Power of the dominant few using the will-less many as its cudgel. All this we can see developing under our very noses in these United States, which, passing annually five times more laws than all other civilized nations combined, forges the chain so deftly that the prisoner still thinks he is being born free. These United States, the intelligent are beginning to understand that no priesthood ever dared to regulate the lives of its followers as our City Councilors regulate the life of the American citizen today; that no baron of the Middle Ages, watching from his mountain eyrie, ever levied on the labor of a country as our

great industrial and political pirates levy on the labor of a world today; that no Louis XIV, however absolute his authority may have been, ever dared to hurl entire nations into war, as do our modern dress-coat kings.

The Kaiser set the avalanche in motion; the Kaiser was the first to step boldly to the front and put to the proof of action the general conviction that Labor, from all its high-flown talk, was only a vulgar bluffer; the Kaiser was the first to tell his subjects that they were his subjects and nothing else; slaves of his State chessmen to be moved hither and thither as his brain dictated; machine guns to fire when he gave the order. This he told them bluntly in a notable address delivered some twenty years or more ago. This he repeated so frequently that the thoughtless came to regard it as a joke; but I observe that late estimates give the German losses in this war as already five million lives. That is the supposed joke come home to roost.

Meanwhile other rulers have not been slow to follow the Kaiser's lead, understanding well from his experience that they also can snap their fingers safely at the national talk-shops. Everywhere, with war in the saddle, political governors have taken to themselves authority they never would have dreamed of usurping in times of industry and peace. One can understand how it is that the French, attacked and invaded, submit so enormously increased doses of State Socialism as a medicine rendered temporarily necessary by the war into which they have been plunged. One can understand the similar case of England, hitherto the most stubbornly individualistic of all countries. But the United States have not been threatened seriously by war, and here today militarism, whose God is "orders" and whose ideal is concentration of authority in the hands of a commander-in-chief, is for the moment sweeping all before it. How many "free-born" American citizens will you find to protest, against Wilson's imperially-autocratic decision that Carranza shall be President of Mexico? How many will be indignant over that gross usurpation of power by which Ill issued orders that this country should throw neutrality to the winds by giving Carranza's troops the advantage of passing unmolested through United States territory, while those of Villa or other leaders are to be shot down as bandits? How many will comprehend that in all this we have gone back to the days of absolute monarchy and are submitting to a one-man rule far more dangerous than that which provoked us into rebellion against George III of England? I note that Washington now warns the transportation companies against furnishing supplies to Carranza's enemies, and I ask again—"Where will this one-man-ordered intervention stop?"

Wilson is allegedly a Democrat. Professedly, and by writings on which he was content to rest his title to fame before politics got hold of him, he was a Jeffersonian Democrat and believed that government the best that government has shown himself by far the most autocratic of all our Presidents. Not even Roosevelt, when he created a revolution in Colombia and sniped the Panama strip, acted so entirely on his own initiative as Wilson has acted in this matter of Mexico; no former President none ever acted so secretly; none kept so assiduously

from the public the very information which it was directly the public's interest to obtain. If the Kaiser has shown the world how hollow was the pretence of self-government in Germany, Wilson has performed the same kindly office of the smugly-self-satisfied voters of the United States. They thought themselves sovereigns and it was well that they should learn the truth.

If loudly-heralded Jeffersonian Democrats turn their coats the moment they get into office and bend every energy toward increasing the imperial power of the State, we have no right to be astonished at any thing avowed Republicans may do or announce their wish to do, for the Republican party has always been the party of Protection, of Paternalism of power concentrated in the State. Senator Borah, of Idaho, for example, seeks its nomination for the presidency, and Senator Borah has a State Socialist program which even Germany might envy. He urges that, crippled though Europe will be for years to come, we must protect ourselves against her armies, her labor and her products; that in short, as the "New York World" remarks editorially: "We must follow the evil example of a section of Europe that ignores the individual and defies the State." It adds that, according to Senator Borah, "to be truly great, America must accept the tutelage of Germany in its Socialism, in its militarism and in its aggrandizement of Government. Once it that strait-jacket, tariffs, subsidies, espionage and tyranny will come as a matter of course."

It is the Pan-American International High Commission which is supposed to have decreed this intervention in favor of Carranza, but the voice was indubitably that of President Wilson and his immediate advisers. It happens, however, that Dr. L. S. Rowe, secretary of the Commission, has published an alleged explanation of its action, and from this I quote for the benefit of any who may still suppose that the interests of the Mexican masses were those the Commission sought to further. Here, for example, is what Dr. Rowe has to say concerning the patriotic Mexican-chiefs "cientificos" and land monopolists—who ran at the first symptom of disorder, leaving their own country, to stew in her own juice:

"During the five years of turmoil through which Mexico has been passing a large proportion of the men best fitted to cooperate in the rehabilitation of the country have either exiled themselves voluntarily or have been compelled to do so. The same spirit of helpfulness which animated the deliberations of the Pan-American conferees in Washington and New York should now lead them to impress upon the newly recognized government the importance of a conciliatory policy—a policy which will restore to Mexico the valuable elements she has lost."

The Revolution rid the country of these parasites, who forthwith concentrated in Los Angeles, San Antonio and other fashionable resorts, where they plotted unceasingly for the restoration of the old regime. The Commission, now looks forward hopefully to their return to Mexico and participation once more in the mis-conduct of their country.

Again: if the Revolutionary struggle of the last five years has taught us anything it should be that until the disinherited Mexican receives back his heritage, becoming in some way owner of the land on and by which

he has to live, nothing can be done; that until then all schemes for improving his condition by public schools and similar utilities are palpably absurd. Listen now to Dr. Rowe, who says upon his head:

"The anarchy of recent years has served to make it clearer than ever before that the primary, fundamental problem confronting Mexico is, in its essence, educational. Those who are best acquainted with the Mexican 'peon' entertain no doubt that through education he can be made not only an efficient worker, but a capable citizen, sufficiently strong in his convictions to resist the allurements of false leaders and self-seeking politicians. To make such education possible will require great financial sacrifice on the part of the nation, but the permanent stability of Mexican institutions can be secured in no other way."

The situation becomes, therefore, clear as crystal. The Mexican revolutionists have done their utmost to rid themselves of their "undesirables;" those who preyed upon the workers, the secretary of the Pan-American Commission, who may justly be regarded as representing President Wilson's viewpoint, has grown and grown in the hopes that, with the recognition of Carranza, these undesirables may be induced to return to Mexico and help once more to govern even the most thoughtless. Today Labor shares that doubt, while sheepishly applauding the politician's promise, of thrusts its tongue into its cheek and cocks its eye in shrewd suspicion. Today Labor, down-uplifting him by the institution cast by years of bitter dissipation of State school and other pointment, is damning in its semi-charitable devices which have proved themselves the most intolerably toilsome and detestable of failures in other countries, and notoriously in the United States. The secretary, on the other hand, considers that if the peon is taught his letters all will be well with him.

Thus State Socialism invariably works out, feeding the famishing with glittering phrases and heading off which glowing promises—and troops—every sincere attempt by the disinherited to get actually the actual things they actually need. And just as worship of the State has led the Germans into their Kaiser—baited trap, with a loss already of some 5,000,000 lives, so will our own idolatry cost us a loss in life no man as yet can estimate and weaken incalculably our whole social fabric, materially and morally. Had the people of the United States been really consulted as to intervention in Mexico; had they been informed as to the true conditions—the ruin wrought by land monopoly, the monstrous fortunes made by worse than worthless speculators out of the life—blood of the starving peon; had they been really consulted and really informed, as partners have the right to be, never would they have consented to the shedding of one drop of blood or the spending of one cent for the re-establishment of those iniquities which it has been the righteous business of the Revolution to overthrow. But they have not been consulted. All has been secretly arranged behind the scenes; hatched out in darkness of the privy council; based on the prejudiced reports of secret detectives whose first anxiety is to please their masters: shaped to the fancy of a single dictator who, with democracy ever on his lips, is the type par excellence of that State Socialist dictatorship which in Germany has blossomed out into the Kaiser and his war mad following.

Wm. C. OWEN.

JOTTED DOWN

"I do not want to live under a philosophy. I do not want to be taken care of by the government, either directly or by any instrument through which government is acting." And again: "I, for one, do not care to live in a country called free, even under kind masters. I prefer to live under no masters at all." And yet again: "I don't care how benevolent the master is going to be, I will not live under a master." There's Anarchism for you! The quotations are from "The New Freedom," by Woodrow Wilson, now President of the United States. "The Alarm," brought out once more by the International Propaganda Group of Chicago, reproduces them.

The same paper cites B. C. Forbes, financial editor of the "Chicago Evening American," as pointing out that annually in this country we pass five times as many laws as do all the other countries of the world combined. During the last five years 62, 600 new laws were passed. And still we are neither good nor happy.

Wilson's "America first" speech was his opening bid for re-election and was challenged immediately by the Republicans, who score him mercilessly for lying down to Germany. At the coming session of Congress they will arraign also his autocratic, star-chamber methods in the matter of Mexico, and insist on production of the public documents hitherto withheld by President Wilson on the plea of "public utility." These happen to be the very grounds on which we have attacked the President in the last three numbers of REGENERACION. We have no use for those who make war only on the weak,

great idea—the liberation of the people from those unjust privileges of which the feudal system was the incarnation. But they were pioneers, lacking in experience, possessing for their guidance none of that great body of established facts which the last century has placed at our disposal. Almost to a man they looked to the State as to their savior; almost to a man they believed that the one will of the centralized government must be supreme if out of chaos order was to come. If ever devoted State Socialists seized the reins of power those State Socialists were the French Jacobins; and they discovered, to their immeasurable confusion, that their remedy was far worse than the original disease they sought to cure. They abolished the comity of Mexican institutions comparatively harmless Louis XVI and crowned in his stead the arch-type of the warrior autocrat, whom men still speak of as Napoleon the Great, to teach the Europe of his day the lesson of only half digested and is now re-learning. Since then the saintly character of the State has justly be regarded as representing President Wilson's viewpoint, has grown and grown in the hopes that, with the recognition of Carranza, these undesirables may be induced to return to Mexico and help once more to govern even the most thoughtless. Today Labor shares that doubt, while sheepishly applauding the politician's promise, of thrusts its tongue into its cheek and cocks its eye in shrewd suspicion. Today Labor, down-uplifting him by the institution cast by years of bitter dissipation of State school and other pointment, is damning in its semi-charitable devices which have proved themselves the most intolerably toilsome and detestable of failures in other countries, and notoriously in the United States. The secretary, on the other hand, considers that if the peon is taught his letters all will be well with him.

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we have no use for those who take democracy while acting as not even His Infallibility, the Pope, today dares to act.

By what God-given instinct does Wilson know that Carranza is purer than Villa, more upright than Zapata, more in touch with the masses than Ricardo Magon, and so on down the list? Who made THEE a ruler over US?

We anticipate that facts will prove more powerful than words, and that as England has been forced into a fighting position she will have to go the whole hog and adopt conscription. But she must go the whole hog. Not only Labor but the Privileged Class also must be conscripted. Now that England has to fight for her very life those who claim to own her should be made to contribute to their last acre. The day of the real Social Revolution is drawing very near.

For a year past nine-tenths of this allegedly self-governing nation has been down on its narrow-bones, praying to the Great Father at Washington to keep it out of war. That gives the measure of our self-reliance. That shows the level to which a generation of paternalism and worship of the State has brought us.

Having crawled out of the Lusitania controversy with Germany, our cartoonists now picture Uncle Sam beaming with satisfaction over "An incident closed." As if such an incident ever COULD be closed!

However, Mexico is looked on as a Mr. Easy Mark; and it is thought, albeit there are doubters, that the game can be won cheaply and will be well worth the candle. A Dame Partington of a nation; good at a puddle but covering before a storm.

When you say you are "too proud to fight" for right and justice what do you REALLY mean?

Reverting to the President's "America first" speech; former Senator Bourne; head of the Republican Publicity Association, puts it thus:

"We are entirely willing to contrast the diplomacy of Seward and Blaine and Root and Hay with that of Bryan and Lansing and Wilson. We are willing to put in parallel columns Mr. Wilson's notes to Germany and Mr. Blaine's notes to Italy. We do not regard a 'strict observance' which was not enforced, as equal to a 'Perdicaris alive or Raisoul dead,' which produced results."

A bit rough, perhaps, but, as it seems to us, straight to the point.

If the German and Austrian capitalists really started this war, as so many of our revolutionary editors still seem to think, they certainly were poor business calculators. Not only has their foreign trade been blown to smithereens but they have been compelled to contribute in forced loans a sum generally estimated as approximating \$8,000,000,000, which is no sneezing matter.

We call attention to the cartoon "El Militarismo Prepotente" (in free translation "Militarism on top") which appeared in our issue of Oct. 3. There, as the editor of this section considers, is the real origin of this war, and militarism is essentially the creation of the State. Industry seeks customers, but militarism seeks territory, land; and that is quite another matter.

"Natural law," says a writer in the "Middleton Guardian" of England—a stalwart opponent of Land Monopoly and staunch friend of the Mexican Revolution—"asserts the right of individuals to life. Karl Marx and the German Emperor deny this. The former claims the individual as a State property or chattel; the latter as a chattel of a military despot. The consequence is a belief by Marx in the divine prescience of the State, and by the War God in a similar qualification possessed by himself." That seems to us well put. In our view State worship always ends in autocracy, and autocracy always ends in war.

The same paper takes "Freedom" (London organ of the Communist-Anarchists) sternly and most properly to task for its gross ignorance of what the followers of Henry George, who are numerous and active in England, really want "Freedom" thinks they want to tax land whereas what they seek is the expropriation

tion by the public of the land values which the public itself created, and not the monopolists who at present pocket them. In all sincerity "Freedom" is today a champion of Kaiserism and landlordism. When it ousted Kropotkin and Tcherkesoff it beggared itself of brains.

"Bureaucratic interference with personal life," writes Henry W. Nevins, "long the plague of most European capitals, from Lisbon to St. Petersburg, threatens to infest the world. We are called upon to accept 'the expert' as our controlling guide, and 'efficiency' as the final test of government. . . . Bees and ants are efficient, but their progress appears to have stopped—stopped dead, as we say; or if you want expert government, watch the law and order of sheep before a dog. . . . Even under the most efficient officialdom, the governed suffer a degrading loss of personality. It is disastrous, to maintain order, however technically perfect, or to organize virtue and comfort, however judiciously proportionate, if personality and variety are gone. Self-government is better than good government, and self-government implies the right to go wrong. It is nobler for a nation, as for a man, to struggle towards excellence, with its own natural force and vitality, however blindly and vainly, than to live in irreproachable decency under expert guidance from without."

We can think of nothing truer than that of no age to which it could apply more aptly than to the present; of no country more seriously menaced by the blight of bureaucracy than is the United States. And United States bureaucracy now has its eye on Mexico.

In San Francisco, where the labor politician ruled the roost so many years, Labor's candidates for Mayor went down recently to most ignominious defeat. In Los Angeles "Progressivism," which formerly swept all before it and absorbed the Socialist movement, has been snowed under. Who cares a snap of the finger today whether Socialism does or does not control Milwaukee? And as for the Socialist Party itself, about the only "peep" it now ventures to let out is that German militarism is showing us how "efficient" and, therefore, desirable is State management and ownership. The I. W. W. is notoriously a busted balloon and the American Federation of Labor, worsted in its half-hearted conflicts with capital, sinks more and more deeply in the mud of a despicable conservatism. As for the Anarchists, Jean Grave, who is perhaps the leading European spokesman, begins his leading article in "La Libre Federation" with the assertion that "at this actual hour they are disorganized and, more and more, 'desorientés,'" which means that they do not know whither they are heading. Yes, indeed. A movement that does not understand that its basis is the free individual; that does not understand that freedom implies abstention from invasion and battle to the death against the invader—such a movement has exactly the strength and consistency of a rope of sand. The future necessarily belongs to Anarchism, for man unquestionably is destined to be free. But it will be an Anarchism founded on principle and not the sensational hodge-podge that has of late, under the driving of greedy notoriety-hunters, usurped the name. The clouds are breaking and the great contest of the future, that between Freedom and Authority, is taking visible shape. With a true German revolutionist, though of an age now past—Ludwig Pfau—we sing: "Thank God, this too hath a King; this too hath a great King done!"