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VERBAL BALOONING

With the exception of twenty or thirty wars we now have peace. That a democratic peace has been made no one can doubt after President Wilson's fervent affirmation of the fact. But, then, what is a democratic peace?

President Wilson has explained in his usual manner the League of Nations Covenant and, truly, we should be satisfied. His beautiful word picture of the League of Nations is very entrancing, but upon examination it just as meaningless as most of his previous speeches. Full of glittering generalities, it furnishes a fine verbal smoke screen for the League of Nations, which is nothing more or less than an alliance of the national groups of capitalists throughout the world.

Many senators are girding themselves for their opposition to the covenant. Their ponderous efforts are ludicrous. The squabble between "pro-League" and "anti-League" can mean nothing to the working class. It is merely the periodical "Punch and Judy" show for the edification and confusion of the "scissor-bills."

Sensible workers will keep their feet on the ground and refuse to be carried away by this verbal ballooning of either the President or his opponents. The League of Nations can never be more or less than an alliance of the robbers of the working class.

THE A. F. OF L. GAG

In the closing hours of the Atlantic City convention the "Holy Family" of the American Federation of Labor became apprehensive of the security of their future position and decided to entrench themselves.

There has been a strong tendency inside of the A. F. of L. to modernize the organization. Many workers have come to realize that the obsolete plan of craft organization is but the reflex of craft production and should pass away with the passing of craft production. They have come to understand that any organization that proposes to protect the workers in modern industry must be formed upon an industrial basis as a reflection of industrial production.

Further, as the development of the capitalist system has given a political character to strikes, by the more frequent and sudden use of the political weapons against the strikers, wage slaves have come to appreciate the value of calling a strike of the whole community.

These tendencies towards industrial organization and the general strike menace the security of the position of the dues-eaters in the American Federation of Labor and they have taken steps to stop it.

The Constitution of the Federation has been amended to make it illegal for any organization or members of the organization to advocate a general strike or industrial organization without the consent of the General Executive Board of the American Federation of Labor. Everyone knows how much chance there is for the Executive Board to approve of that kind of agitation.

There is an old saying that if a calf is given enough rope it will hang itself. It is quite certain that the A. F. of L. is getting enough rope. The question of its hanging rests with the workers.

THE MOONEY STRIKE

It must be admitted that viewing the country as a whole the Mooney Strike was a failure. Whether the next period of the strike in September, makes a better showing or not depends largely upon the understanding amongst the workers as to the cause of the failure of this one.

Until the A. F. of L. convention everybody was of the opinion that there would be a monster demonstration throughout the country. In reality, there were comparatively few workers on strike throughout the period set. In Chicago it is estimated by the strike committee that two hundred thousand were out, but in most of the large cities there was little if any demonstration.

In its work of crushing the Mooney demonstration the A. F. of L. served the master class well, as it did in many other ways. Merely because a capitalist politician appeared before the convention and pledged upon his word of "honor" that Mooney was going to get a new trial the strike was called off.

The so-called radicals within the A. F. of L. as well as the reactionaries laid down on the job. The reactionaries by assisting in befuddling the issue and following their old course of lending aid to the capitalists of the country. The radicals allowed themselves to be fooled by the combined activity of the A. F. of L. jobholders and government officials. The refusal of the A. F. of L. convention to indorse the strike together with Wilson's speech before the body completely demoralized them. They were apparently unprepared for the situation that confronted them. Anyone with any foresight at all should have been able to see that there would have been a government representative there to befuddle the situation. As for the refusal of the A. F. of L. to indorse the strike, who but an idiot ever expected them to do anything else? The strike should have been called in spite of the action of the convention. This the radicals within the A. F. of L. weakly neglected to do.

If a general strike is ever to be a success in this country it must be pulled in spite of the reactionary activity of the A. F. of L. leaders. Any organization that is interested in calling a general strike will take that into consideration and lay their plans to go ahead without the A. F. of L. The leaders are nothing but barnacles upon the labor movement and the quicker the rank and file follow the example of their European brothers and walk over their leaders the better.

GOVERNOR LOWDEN OF ILLINOIS

At the Elk's Convention in Atlantic City (Atlantic City seems to be the home of reaction!) Governor Lowden delivered himself of a speech which is highly amusing to those who understand. We quote him as follows:

"For years we looked upon the Socialist party as visionary, not destructive," he said. "The party now has thrown off all disguise. It sought in every way to obstruct this government in the prosecution of the war. It sympathized with every enemy who arose in our midst."

"Their propaganda must be met with propaganda of our own. We must show that our citizenship is not composed of classes whose interests are antagonistic to one another."

"In Russia the radicals are seeking not equality of opportunity but equality of fact. They close the schools and churches. To destroy the home they nationalize the women. They appeal to brute force. They know they must arouse class warfare, so they declare a war of the classes."

"They speak of the proletariat and bourgeoisie. There is neither in America."

The Governor speaks of meeting our propaganda with his own, and we challenge him to carry out his threat. If the propaganda which he handed out in his Atlantic City speech is a fair sample of his capacity, we have nothing to fear. Governor Lowden and his kind do not care to meet the socialist argument with argument, for they realize that even the best of them would be helpless in the hands of "a mere soap-boxer." The real aim of their speakers clubs and propaganda bureaus is to furnish rallying points for the Black Hundreds of America, that they may conduct their anti-Socialist pogroms.

In his statements of conditions in Russia, Lowden proves himself to be either a liar or a blatant ignoramus. The first real educational work ever known in Russia has been carried on by the Bolsheviks. As for the "nationalization of women" that charge has been proven ridiculous long ago.

With two per cent. of the people controlling ninety per cent. of the wealth, the statement that there is neither proletariat or bourgeoisie in this country is absurd. With a small minority rolling in wealth and luxury and the great masses slaving long hours to produce wealth which they do not receive, one cannot help but be convinced that there are classes in America. One class that receives its income by owning the tools of production (the mines, mills, factories, lands, etc.), this class is called the "bourgeoisie" the world over; another class made up of the