

White Terror in Cleveland

SINCE the workers of Cleveland made their splendid demonstration on May Day, when forty thousand left the shops and factories, closing scores of them, to participate in the celebration of Labor's International Holiday and demonstrate for freedom for Debs, freedom for Mooney and all other political and industrial prisoners, the capitalists of the city have been making a desperate effort to destroy the revolutionary working class movement.

For this purpose they organized the Loyal American League. This organization is an outgrowth of the American Protective League. It is financed by the local capitalists and maintains offices, attorneys and a host of agents for no other purpose than to fight the revolutionary movement.

The immediate result of the May Day Demonstration, which was attacked by the capitalist thugs and the police, was the railroading of about a hundred comrades to prison on terms running from thirty days to a year and the indictment of C. E. Ruthenberg, Tom Clifford and Julius Fried for "assault with intent to kill", on two policemen injured during the struggle in the streets. It was charged that Fried committed one of the assaults and that Ruthenberg and Clifford inspired them through speeches they had made prior to the May Day Demonstration. In addition a general policy of suppression was adopted against the branches of the local movement, which had endorsed the Left Wing position.

When the bomb frame-up was staged (the house of the mayor of Cleveland was slightly damaged by one of the "bombs"), this was immediately used as a reason for a new attack upon the movement. Raids were conducted nightly and all the members found at branch meeting loaded into patrol wagons and locked up, sometimes for three or four days. The Russian branch was particularly under attack, three raids being made on its headquarters in one week. In one of these raids the members were found quietly studying the parts of an automobile. The machine parts were heralded the next morning as having some sinister significance, although the comrades arrested were merely a class in machine practice, studying to train themselves for greater service to Soviet Russia when they returned there.

When the local advertised that it would

tire press of the city at once began a campaign of provocation and intimidation. One day it was announced that the police had been furnished with new ammunition to prepare for the Bolsheviki on the Fourth, the next day two thousand clubs had been distributed to beat up the Bolsheviki, etc.

On Trial

Comrade C. E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary of the Communist Party, is now before the court in Cleveland. He will be tried successively on two charges of "assault with intent to kill" and two charges of violating the Criminal Syndicalism law. In all, the charges involve FIFTY YEARS in prison. This is one of the results of the "white terror" in Cleveland.

But the picnic was held, although every worker who attended had to run the gauntlet of two squads of police stationed at the end of the city car line and at the city limits, who searched every one going in the direction of the picnic grounds.

The fact that several thousand workers attended the picnic in spite of the campaign of provocation and intimidation aroused the Loyal American League to new action. A few days later the party headquarters were raided and all the literature found carted to police headquarters. C. E. Ruthenberg, then secretary, and his assistant Carl Hacker, were arrested and charged with violating the Criminal Syndicalism law through "displaying" literature on the bookstand at the headquarters. Among the literature cited as violating the law was the "Revolutionary Age", "The New York Communist", "The Liberator", "The Messenger" and thirty other pamphlets and publications.

On July 19, C. E. Ruthenberg was again arrested for violating the Criminal Syndicalism law, when an effort was made to break the ban against meetings and he delivered a speech in Royal Hall.

Comrades who were caught distributing literature were regularly arrested and held as "suspicious persons". On a single day five comrades were arrested on this charge.

The Criminal Syndicalism law was also brought into play to prevent the party branches from securing meeting places and

to frighten hall owners from renting their halls to the party for mass meetings. Two comrades of the Russian branch who held the lease of the hall in which this branch met were arrested under the provisions of the law making it punishable by a year in prison and \$1,000 fine to rent a hall for a meeting to teach or advocate Criminal Syndicalism.

John Dequer who spoke at a picnic held Labor Day was arrested under the same law and has since been indicted.

Since the local has affiliated with the Communist Party the terroristic campaign has been redoubled. Recently ten members of the Second Ward Branch met at the home of a comrade for some organization work, when the police marched in the front and back door with loaded revolvers in their hands and arrested all those present. Nothing was said or done at the meeting which violated any law, but the mere possession of a number of copies of the pamphlet containing the Manifesto, Program and Constitution of the Communist Party was sufficient to bind them over to the grand jury. A similar raid was conducted at Acme Hall in which a committee of the German Branch and the Executive Committee of the Russian Branch were arrested because they had Communist Party membership cards in their possession.

These raids are being linked up with the arrest of alleged bomb makers, for the purpose of arousing public sentiment against the Communists.

Twenty-six cases are now pending in the courts of Cleveland, four of them being charges of "assault with intent to kill" and twenty-two for violation of the Criminal Syndicalism law.

At the present time no Communist Branch can hold even a business meeting in Cleveland. In the eyes of the police and the paid spy organization of the capitalists the Communist Party is an illegal organization.

In spite of this oppression and white terrorism the Communist Party is distributing more of its propaganda leaflets in Cleveland than in any other city of the country. The party is adjusting itself to the circumstances and the capitalists will have to deal with an underground organization in the future. No matter what the action of the capitalists the work of building the Communist Movement in Cleveland will go on.

The Revolution and the Technicians

THORSTEIN VEBLEN, incomparable satirist of capitalist business enterprise, kicks up his heels at the state of "Red trepidation" which has seized upon the "Guardians of the Vested Interests". In a recent issue of the "Dial", he assures these Guardians that there is yet awhile during the Vested Interests shall remain secure "in their continued usufruct of the country's industry."

He points out that "a more genial policy of conciliatory promises and procrastination will be more to the purpose than any noisy recourse to the strong arm and the Star Chamber."... "All that is needed to keep the underlying population of America in a sweet temper is a degree of patient ambiguity and delay, something after the British pattern, and all will yet be well with the

vested rights of property and privilege, for some time to come."

Of course Professor Veblen is too good a student of history to believe that the lessons of history will be given effect by the Guardians of the Vested Interests. It is too natural to their rule to use the "bellicose gestures" and "desperate remedies." The British "gentlemanliness" consists in dispensing with the "bellicose gestures," not with the "desperate remedies."

The reassurance against imminent collapse of the Vested Interests—against the two year period allowed by some—is that there is not at hand "an organization which is competent to take over the country's productive industry as a whole, and to administer it from the start on a more efficient plan than that now pursued by the Vested Interests."

There is one place, however, where this

technical organization does undoubtedly exist, that is, within the business organizations as presently constituted. There is no inherent connection between the technical organization within industry as now constituted and the control of that industry by the Vested Interests. The class connection between some of the technicians and their employers might create measurable disruption at the moment of the passing of ownership and control of the "flotsam of industry." But not, perhaps, any more disruption than is now involved in the speculative interference with industrial management?

"The 'sanguine malcontents' need not be discouraged by the Professor's reassurances to the Vested Interests. They are sure enough 'riding for a fall.' Of course if it cannot be under two years' time, as Prof. Veblen thinks unlikely, we need not quibble about a few days.