

Editorial Page of The Communist

LENIN-TROTSKY-ZINOVIEV INTER-VIEWS

THE series of interviews granted to Lincoln Eyre of the New York "World" by Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev are of the highest international importance. We go to press as the second of the interviews, that of Trotsky, appears.

Lack of space compels us to postpone comment on these momentous statements until our next issue, at which time the whole series and the press comment upon these interviews will be before us.

Meanwhile it is obvious that the affairs of Soviet Russia—thanks to the valor of the Red Army—have passed into a new stage. The Communist International is rapidly becoming a formidable opponent to the League of Crippled Capitalist Nations.

THE CATHOLIC MANIFESTO

ON Sunday, February 22nd, was read in all the Catholic churches a ten-page pastoral letter, signed by Cardinal Gibbons and "coming from all the Archbishops and Bishops of this country"—the first issued for 35 years. This letter is most significant of the assertive character of reaction in the United States of 1920.

There was a considerable period when the Catholic Church was a mighty power against capitalism itself, and the survival of this is the bourgeois-democratic tradition of non-interference by the Church in the affairs of the State. But now the Church is a bulwark, perhaps the chief bulwark, of capitalism, and Church and State are reunited. The Church now serves capitalism as before it served feudalism and absolute monarchy.

This pastoral letter seems to pass by without editorial comment, by contrast with the liberalistic acceptance given to the

against the speech" and "right of representation." This protest is part of the weakest "liberalism" which exists in any of the great nations, excepting perhaps Japan. Our American "liberalism" is weak because the very rapidity of our imperialistic progress easily sweeps aside all middle-of-the-road timidities of the less aggressive and more humane capitalists and the "respectable" proletariat, compelling the decisive conflict between Imperialism and Communism. But this pastoral letter is the organization voice of fully ten per cent of the American people. It is not the vague flourish of supine "liberalism." It is an item revealing the studied propaganda of reactionism, a propaganda backed by the most powerful educational organization in the world, an organization which rallies to the purposes of reaction its profound traditions and experience of nineteen centuries.

In the United States of 1920, with Palmer as Attorney General, it hardly seems strange to read a church pronouncement thundering condemnation upon those who "slander" State or Church. Since the French Revolution, it is safe to say, no such text has issued outside of Russia, though China and Japan have identified sovereignty with deity. And of these only Japan is now to be compared with "free" America!

The Catholic ban against divorce is restated, thus staunchly holding inviolate the contract and property character of "holy" matrimony, thrusting the human aspects of marriage aside as mere "individual pleasure or whim." No divorce, "the one safeguard of decency and purity in the sex relation!" . . . "If the obligations assumed through marriage can be so lightly cancelled, it is hard to see what value shall attach to other covenants when these are not enforceable by law." Divorce does not ignore "the obligations assumed through marriage." But what is aimed at by the Church is a compulsion of submissiveness more pervasive than all power of law.

There is a caution against lavish display

of riches, lest the envy of the less fortunate classes be aroused. At least the Catholic hierarchy is not so stupid as to insist on the non-existence of classes, only it urges universal acquiescence with things as they are.

On the subject of capital and labor the document is particularly interesting. "The failure to reach an agreement is due, in a large measure, to the supposition that class is naturally hostile to class. In truth, each needs the other. Capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. This is obvious; but the more important point is that capital and labor are bound by mutual obligations, not simply by mutual needs or interests."

Labor needs the tools of labor, the mines, the earth, the factories, the mills—it does not need the capitalist. The financier must give way to the technician of industrial management and parliaments must yield place to the congresses of workers' spokesmen. Capital cannot do without labor; nor can capitalists exploit labor without the consent of the workers as a class. Therefore is urged "the right of capital to a fair day's work" in exchange for "a living wage." No animosity, no mistrust—the slaves must be kept alive, on the one hand, and in turn must with "good will" and "justice" give unto capital its customary tolls.

In this issue we print one of Babson's Reports dealing with "Churches." It is a fitting accompaniment to the Catholic pastoral letter.

THE YELLOWS AT ALBANY

IN the name of Socialism! The genius of the Yellows, the "authority" Morris Hillquit takes the stand and delivers himself thusly:

"The Third International is scarcely more than an idea or a name."

"I should say that the Socialists of the United States would have no hesitancy whatever in joining forces with the rest of their countrymen to repel the Bolsheviki who would try to invade our country and force a form of government upon our people which our people are not ready for and do not desire."

Well, Mr. Hillquit, how do you determine what "our people" desire? And oh! those pages upon pages of your writing and talking about the class struggle!

Socialists would do anything rather than break a capitalist law, so declares the "authority." What about Debs? Ah, indeed, Debs broke no law. How comforting to our comrade behind the steel bars at Atlanta!

And so on, ad nauseum. The American Socialist Party has become a stench in the nostrils of all who accept with seriousness the fact and tragedy and revolutionary promise of the class struggle. At least, Scheidemann and Ebert and Noske were face to face with grim realities of social conflict. The treason at Albany is to save five insignificant legislative jobs and to keep open this Hillquit-Lee-Stedman-Gerber-Berger game of playing working-class politics. To what end? So that here, too, the junker class shall not be without friends who can disport themselves and work havoc with the profound phrases of the proletarian revolution.

Fortunately our American Yellows are the puniest of all the Yellows. We have here no Adler, Longuet, Vaudervelde, Branting, Macdonald, Henderson, Huysman, Turati, Martov, Kautsky, etc., etc. The American Yellows are merely "shyster" politicians and they never can become a power in the proletarian movement in this country.

Out of the ferment of great strikes, and out of intense study and factional conflict among the groups of the Left, will

come the real revolutionary leadership of America. It will not be of the wordy, spineless Hillquit type. There will be men and women with the genius of straightforward thinking and unflinching action—and perhaps it will require a considerable schooling such as our capitalists are now giving the "reds" in the courts and in the prisons to develop this leadership.

We have witnessed the Socialists at Albany. We have yet to witness the Communist Laborites, the Communists and the I. W. W.'s at Chicago and elsewhere.

And we must not forget the men and women who have been in prison since 1917 in spite of the perfect "lawfulness" of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. Only a craven Hillquit could degrade Debs as a "patriot," when everyone knows the servility of that name as used by Hillquit.

We still claim Debs as a prisoner of the class war, and we do not disavow his guilt as declared by the capitalist courts. We do not relish the imprisonment of Debs, nor of anyone else, but we would not want Debs free at the Hillquit price.

Legal defense by revolutionaries is made as a challenge of the ruling class process in the particular case. It is never an admission that there will be conformity to the laws by which capitalism maintains its domination.

The Socialists will be perfectly lawful until they have won a majority! Mark the ferocity thereafter, as if there were repression for just such a day only to break forth in a terrific rage!

The Communists will be lawful only so long as the capitalists stand by while Communism is agitated and its forces of action developed. It is for the enemy to say when Communism is unlawful. It is for us to insist that we shall none the less remain Communists and that Communism will continue to mean what the class struggle, not the capitalist laws, shall determine.

RADIO

October 28.

To the French Government
To all the workers
To the French Communists
To the Confederation General du Travail
To the Socialist Party
To all

THE French Communist Group declares to the unclean government of France that Comrade Sadoul, accused of desertion, incitement to mutiny, disobedience, communication with the enemy, is no more to blame for these crimes than the other members of the French Communist Group. Many like him are former members of the French Military Mission in Russia, and all of them call the French workers and soldiers to revolt. Like him, they all do their best to serve the Russian Soviet Republic, against which the government at Paris has never dared to officially declare war. Comrade Sadoul is a member of the French Communist Group, but he did not found it, he was not the only one to bring it together, nor was he the most active contributor to its paper. He has not been the only one to preach Communism to the soldiers and prisoners of France who joined the army or the French Communist Group at Odessa or Moscow. If, then, as the English, American, and German radios state, the French government suddenly decides to condemn Sadoul alone, and not the comrades with whom he worked, and against whom evidence has already been found, it is because it has placed once more its pretended military justice at the service of the policy of the moment. The French Communist Group warns the workers against this manoeuvre: they pretend, in condemning a man, to kill an idea. Organized workers, the French Communist Group invites you to demonstrate your dis-

gust for the deceivers who govern you, for the renegades who have betrayed you, for the cowards who nurse you with hopes, for the Clemenceaus, the Thomas's, the Longuets. The process of Communism is going on: take these men, with all your strength get rid of the bourgeois capitalist regime. Send us a radio by the 7th of November. Send us from France a message of hope and triumph, for the Soviet Congress on the 3rd of December. Forward for Communism!

The Bureau of the Moscow French Communist Group.

CHURCHES

Babson's Reports—Special Letter

Wellesley Hills, Mass., Jan. 27, 1920.

WHAT is our real security for the stocks, bonds, mortgages, deed and other investments which we own? . . .

You may have a mortgage on my house. Your mortgage is of value only as everyone connected with it—the lawyer who drew it—the notary who acknowledged it—and the little stenographer who copied it, up to the jury which enforced it, is honest. Yes, and even then you cannot get me out of my house unless the majority of the entire community is honest. With the community sympathizing with me, the officers would not and could not put me out. Under such circumstances what would your mortgage be worth? Absolutely nothing. Moreover, if this is true regarding a local mortgage, it is much more serious in connection with our investments in railroads, in industries and other properties outside the city where we live.

What does all this mean? It means the real security for the stocks, mortgages, deeds and other investments which we own is the integrity of the community. The steel boxes, the legal papers and other things which we look upon so important are the mere shells of eggs. The value of our investments depends not on the strength of our banks, but rather upon the strength of our churches. The underpaid preachers of the nation are the men upon whom we are really depending rather than the well-paid lawyers, bankers and brokers. The religion of the community is really the bulwark of our investments. And when we consider that only 15 per cent of the people hold securities of any kind and less than 3 per cent hold enough to pay an income tax, the importance of the churches becomes even more evident.

For our own sakes, for our children's sakes, for the nation's sake, let us business men get behind the churches and their preachers! Never mind if they are not perfect, never mind if their theology is out of date. This only means that were they efficient they would do very much more. The safety of all we have is due to the churches, even in their present inefficient and inactive state. By all that we hold dear, let us from this very day give more time, money and thought to the churches of our city, for upon these the value of all we own ultimately depends!

ROGER W. BABSON.

An advertisement in the New York "Call" reads: "Victor L. Berger knows Socialism as few men in the international socialistic movement know it." Now that is something to be thankful for. Let us hope it is very few.

And Victor is going to show that Communism is "a retrogression to a very primitive and low stage of human society!"

Between Victor Berger, Harold Lord Varney, Morris Hillquit and John Spargo poor feeble Bolshevism is just about done for! But it does seem persistent. . . . Notice how many new parties are joining the Communist International, that thing "scarcely more than a name?"