

The Pink Terror

VI. Unrestricted Submarine Warfare in the 1st A. D.

"And lo it came to pass that the bellies of the transgressors were pinched with hunger."

THE Plunderbund of Local New York Executive Committee stared at one another in consternation. What had they done? True, they had accomplished their ambition, the Socialist Party in Local New York was purged—nine-tenths of the members had been expelled or suspended, and almost every Branch had been reorganized out of existence.

But, they suddenly discovered, they had killed the goose that laid the golden eggs! No more members—no more dues stamps! No more dues stamps—no more soft jobs! No more Branches—no more well-paid lectures for the Inner Circle! No more membership—and the Party "leaders" would have to make a living out of the Labor Party! Of course the Semi-Comrades didn't mind *that*; but after all, the Labor Party was a bird in the bush, and there would be competition for the jobs. . . .

A gloomy silence fell, broken only by an occasional clicking sound as some Semi-Comrade tightening his belt another hole.

The Chief High Proletarian turned the pages of his Branch Directory. "They've all been reorganized," he muttered, dolefully. "Or at least we've sent out letters inviting them to a reorganization meeting."

"But how about the Party property?" asked Meyer London's lieutenant, with a spark of hope.

"The Left Wingers kept most of it," responded the Chief High Proletarian. Silence again fell.

The Professor of Household Economy at the Rand School cleared his throat.

"Er—didn't we—that is to say, some of us—remove the furniture from the 17th A. D.?" he asked hesitantly. The—er—proceeds—"

The Congressman's lieutenant answered harshly, "We deposited the cash in the same bank with Meyer London's Campaign Fund." He flicked a dust-mote from his new trousers.

"Well," said the Professor of Household Economy, "we've got to raise funds from somewhere." There was a general growl of assent.

"Aren't there any Branches with good furniture not yet re-organized?" asked someone.

The Chief High Proletarian turned the pages of his book. "There is the 1st A. D.," he said. "But I've already sent letters out calling for a re-organization meeting tomorrow, Thursday, May 29th. We can't take action until we see how the Branch behaves. I have hopes that most of the members will be with us. . . ."

"O pooh!" responded the Congressman's henchman. "Don't get sentimental. The rank and file is all Left Wing, and must be expelled, if we're going to have a decent Party. Don't worry about them."

Now up spake Alderman Calman, who, as the Pioneer Furniture-Snatcher of the Socialist Party, was listened to with great respect upon this subject.

"The police force is very busy gathering evidence against the Left Wingers for the District Attorney," he said. "And I would prefer that we do not disturb them."

"It is not necessary," remarked the Professor of Household Economy. "The same results can be obtained if we give interviews to the reporters of the capitalist press. Perhaps you are afraid?"

The eyes of the revolutionary Alderman flashed. "By my Victory Arch," he cried. "By the War Saving Stamps and two Victory Loans I swear that I am afraid of nothing—that is, almost nothing. But I think that someone else should do the job this time. . . . I'll give you the telephone number of a Tammany truck-driver who used to drive Scheidemann's carriage when he visited New York. . . ."

"What's the market-price on second-hand furniture down in your ward, Alderman?" asked the Chief High Proletarian. The Socialist legislator did some rapid figuring. "I estimate that the 1st A. D. furniture ought to bring in enough for crullers and coffee all around in the Cafeteria downstairs," he replied.

The next morning a little group of Semi-Comrades, led by Mitchell Loeb, filed down through the East Side. Great self-control was needed to prevent the sturdy little band from disrupting as they passed each bakery, but conscious of their revolutionary mission, they achieved it.

About 8 A. M. the conspirators gathered in the Forward office to plan out their campaign. There

were present Mitchell Loeb, leader of the raid; Leventhal, Miller and Needleman—the only three Right Wingers in the 1st A. D.—and two utter strangers, who came along because they knew how to use brass knuckles. An Alderman being necessary, Charney Vladek was called in for advice.

About 8 A. M. they approached number 180 Henry Street, and making deaf-and-dumb signals to Scheidemann's former coachman, who was present with a moving van, they stole up the steps of the 1st A. D. headquarters.

At a concerted signal they burst in at the side door. The House Chairman, Comrade Furman, who happened to be in the hall, manifested a mild objection to the proceedings. Mitchell Loeb seized him by the throat, and said that if he made any objection, he would be black-jacked. Loeb still further intimidated the House Chairman by threatening to "call the cops and have him locked up." Then they began to carry off the furniture.

They took everything, including the piano, cut down the chandeliers and broke the electric wires, and then broke up or tore in pieces all objects which they did not think worth while taking.

The furniture belonging to the Y. P. S. L. circle they left—because, after all, Semi-Comrade Spectator is trying to soft-soap the Yipsels, and it wouldn't do to offend them at this stage of the game.

They also left two other objects—one a picture of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and the other a placard inscribed, "Free All Political Prisoners!" When asked why they had overlooked these things, one of the bandits replied, "Aw, we only took Socialist property. . . ."

That evening at six a convivial party of "prominent Socialist leaders" was seen making merry at a table in the Rand School Cafeteria. The board groaned with piles of shredded wheat, and foaming flagons of Postum. . . .

But at the re-organization meeting of the 1st A. D. only three members showed up, looking extremely nervous; one of these had never attended a meeting of his Branch since Morris Hillquit was a small boy. And meanwhile, in their empty headquarters, one hundred and fifty members of the 1st A. D., who refused to be re-organized, met in regular session.

The Communist Party of Lettonia

By O. Preedin

THE first Lettish Party was organized at a secret meeting in Riga on June 7, 1904. The delegates to this meeting were sent by different Socialist groups and represented about 2,500 secretly organized members in different parts of the Baltic Provinces. The new party was named the Lettish Social Democratic Labor Party.

As is expressed in the name Lettish, the Party was organized on a national basis. At that time the question of national organization was one of the most debated questions among the Socialists of Russia. The Jewish Socialist Party, "Bund", split away from the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia because its "national principle" was not respected by all the other groups. The Bolsheviki as well as the Mensheviki recognized only the territorial basis of organization. Although our Party was organized as a national (language) organization, we did not accept the so-called "national principle of organization," but were led to this decision by merely practical considerations.

In all centers of Lettonia comparatively strong groups of other nationalities were already in the field. The Bund was very active among the Jewish workers, Bolsheviki and Mensheviki were active among the scattered Russians. It was impossible to unite all these groups in one territorial organization, and as a result there grew up disunited and rival factions all over Russia. Our new Party had at the beginning only a few able workers to tackle the gigantic task of converting the Lettish proletariat to Socialism, and this virgin field consumed all our energy; and it was chiefly for this reason that we remained for the time being as a national organization. The Party did not connect itself officially with any other Socialist groups, but the local organizations were allowed to co-operate with all Social Democratic groups working in their territory.

After a short time, by energetic education and organization work our Party gained the confidence of the working masses, and thus it was easy to form the "Federation Committees"—local representative bodies from all Social Democratic groups. In the "Unity Congress" in Stockholm in the early spring of 1906 all factions of the Social Democratic groups

in Russia formed one united party. The Lettish Social Democratic Party accepted the invitation to send fraternal delegates with instructions to work out plans for joining the Social Democratic Party of Russia.

At the third congress of the Lettish Social Democratic Labor Party it was unanimously decided to join the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia. Immediately afterwards all the other Social Democratic groups working in Lettonia joined our Party and we re-formed it on a territorial basis under the new name of The Social Democracy of Lettonia.

In its program the Social Democracy of Lettonia differed from the general party only in one important point—the so-called agrarian program which our Party refused to accept. After this refusal we were granted full autonomy on this question, in view of the different developments in the agrarian

situation in our provinces. At present the Social Democracy of Lettonia is an integral party of the Communist Party of Russia and is now called the Communist Party of Lettonia.

During its fifteen years of existence the Communist Party of Lettonia has passed through two revolutions. In the first revolution of 1905, although the Party was only a year old, we were more successful in the actual revolutionary fight than any other organization.

The strong mass movement was in full control in our provinces under the undivided leadership of the Party. We did not organize Soviets at that time as was done in Petrograd, Moscow and many other cities in Russia because our Party was already the revolutionary Soviet, recognized by all the workers in the Baltic Provinces. In the country townships (volosts) revolutionary "Executive Committees" were organized by the Party to take the place of the local institutions of the Czar and the German junkers, who were the main landowners in our provinces.

After the failure of the revolution the Czar's armies smashed everything we had built up. Every roadside ran with the blood of executed revolutionists, hundreds of Lettish peasants' homes were burned to the ground and every repressive measure that Czarist brains could conceive was instituted. But even then our secret party organization was maintained. Even in the darkest days of reaction, during the wildest orgies of execution our Party continued with its work. Leaflets headed "The revolution is killed—Long live the revolution!" covered the posts on every pathway.

In the early morning, when the executions of arrested revolutionists usually took place, all over the land could be heard the cries of our Comrades as they were shot down: "Long live the Revolution! Long live Socialism!" And these last messages from our dying Comrades were not forgotten by those who remained on the job.

If Soviet Russia has now left one open road to the Baltic Sea, one opening in the long line from the Black Sea to the far north, then she and the world revolution must thank the uncompromising, insistent work of the Communist Party of Lettonia.

Exiled

By LOUISE BRYANT

*All day I walk
In a dream.
All night I toss
In bitter safety.*

*I die when each brave comrade dies,
Retreat when they retreat.
I stare into the dark
In unrelieved agony.
The hours drag on*

*Oh, for the sweet relief
To play with death again—
On the barricades!*

*What curse is on me
That I lie
Secure
When Petrograd is burning
And my heart is there?*