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Bombs!

SOME time ago a handful of impatient patriots, outraged at the "pacifist" and "pro-German" attitude of Senator Hardwick of Georgia—who, with La Follette, was one of the "willful twelve" in Congress opposed to the War—and also that of Frederic C. Howe, who wrote "Why War?" and denounced the dollar-patriots—sent bombs to these two gentlemen. One of the bombs exploded and blew off the hand of Senator Hardwick's colored maid. Other patriots saw an opportunity to turn public sentiment against the "Reds"—since the word "Bolshevism" seemed to have lost much of its terror; they therefore constructed a series of fake bombs just like those in the papers, addressed them to some prominent citizens, and deposited them in the Post Office, where they were duly discovered and did no harm.

This was on the eve of May Day, when the impatient workers were beginning to stir for a number of reasons—Debs, Mooney, unemployment, reduction of wages, and other manifest grievances. The ruling class of this country feared a general strike, or at least mass-demonstrations.

Now a second series of bombs are discovered, most of them planted to explode before the houses of the designated victims. There are no victims except one of the planters, a watchman, and some innocent passerby.

The country is up in arms. The capitalist papers are full of provocative statements concerning "anarchists" and "Bolsheviks," and the heavy artillery of capitalist publicity is screaming for the suppression of the Labor movement. The man-hunt is on, and anyone who is particularly active as a working-class champion is liable to be railroaded for a long prison term.

Is this second series of bombs also a "frame-up?" Certain facts point to this explanation.

In the first place there is the contemporary discovery, in the Grand Central Station, of alleged "credentials" issued by Lenin to one Harold Keyes, appointing him Bolshevik agent on a secret mission in the United States. This is characteristic; Harold Keyes has been notorious, during the War, for having been expelled from all radical organizations here as a Government spy; in one case we know of, he offered an imprisoned Comrade his freedom if he would spy upon a certain group of revolutionists in Philadelphia. In the second place, among other lesser lights, one bomb was exploded at the house of Attorney General Mitchell Palmer, who is on the eve of being investigated by Congress for his alleged misuse of Government funds while Alien Property Custodian. And in the third place, more important than all, there has been a strong and growing sentiment in Congress in favor of the repeal of the Espionage Act—which has been of such great value to the capitalists of this country, during the War, not to halt the activities of German agents here, but to crush the Labor and Socialist movement. Various "sedition" and "treason" laws are now up for consideration in Congress, but until the present series of dynamite explosions, there seemed to be little chance of passing them. The present "bomb outrages" are a Godsend to the ruling class of the United States.

Much is being made of the fact that a certain Western District Attorney prophesied the present bomb explosions several months ago. His name is not given in the papers, but we happen to know it. The prophet was Major A. Lowrey Humes, director of the provocative proceedings of the famous Overman Committee. Why is he not investigated by Chief Flynn? Perhaps he knows more about these bombs than he has told . . .

If these "bomb outrages" are a provocation, it would be in accordance with the best traditions of the American ruling class in its war upon the

workers. The Haymarket bombs of 1886 were such a provocation; William Wood, President of the American Woollen Company, "planted" dynamite during the Lawrence strike; and the San Francisco Frame-up is still recent.

If the bombs were not a "frame-up," then there are two comments to make. First, individual acts of terrorism are contrary to the ideas of all revolutionary Socialists. The death of individual capitalists does not harm the capitalist system; the system must be overthrown by the action of the workers organized as a class-conscious mass, for the purpose of inaugurating the Proletarian Dictatorship. The Bolsheviks in Russia have always opposed, and since they came into power, sternly suppressed such tactics. And secondly, organized bomb-throwing is the inevitable result of tyranny, and cannot be cured by more tyranny.

Finally, allow us to call attention to the front page of all capitalist newspapers for the tragic day. In the left hand column, a sensational story of eight bomb explosions, in which two or three people lost their lives, by "the criminal acts of anarchists." In the right hand column, an account of an explosion of powder in a mine, caused by the mining company's disobedience of the law—eighty-four workmen dead.

Watch the newspapers. Somebody will get punished for the bomb-explosions. Nobody will get punished for the mine disaster . . .

"The Call" Theorizes

AS a result of the Left Wing agitation, the association which owns *The New York Call* came to the conclusion that the paper must take a stand on the Party crisis and also devote itself in some measure to the consideration of Socialist theory and tactics. Since this decision *The Call* has made several attempts to criticize the Left Wing, but so far it has carefully kept away from the "dangerous" subject of Socialism.

The first attempt was a signed article by Comrade Oneal in which he attempts to justify the actions of the National Executive Committee. Beyond the fact that he charges us with keeping our imprisoned comrades behind the bars, Oneal adds nothing to the "apologia" spread broadcast by the N. E. C. It is therefore unnecessary to deal with it here, beyond to remark that most of our political prisoners are in jail for standing behind the St. Louis platform, which has been sabotaged by the Party officialdom ever since its adoption.

The latest indictment of the Left Wing is given much editorial prominence. It occupies the first column of *The Call's* editorial page, and is apparently considered to be very important by the editorial staff. It is headed "A 'Left Wing' Importation" and is a complete expose of how we came to use the term "Communist". It appears that the Left Wing imported it from Russia where it sprang into being owing to the life of the Russian villages.

After devoting half the column to the various parties and religions that have made their appearance in American life, *The Call* comes to the Left Wing, and indicts us for foreign importation. "The same hazy mental status is displayed in importing the phrase 'Communist Socialism' from Russia. There are two reasons why the word 'Communist' has been recently employed by the Soviet Party. Just as in 1847 Socialists had to distinguish themselves from the various utopian groups that called themselves 'Socialists,' so the Russian Bolsheviks have reverted back to the word 'Communism' to distinguish themselves from the social-patriotic parties of Europe. The second reason is that the village communes of Russia always have been more or less communistic, and will be more so with the socialization of land and village services. But however much Communism may be fostered in the village life of Russia, it is certain that the Bolsheviks, by using the term, do not intend to communize all wealth, and in particular the wealth of the industrial centers."

Apparently *The Call* is unaware that Karl Marx invariably referred not to "Socialists" but "Communists." Doubtless he imported it from Russia while he was still under Russian influence and subsequently becoming de-Russianized, accepted the term "Socialism". We have always been under the impression that in the Socialist movement the terms "Socialism" and "Communism" were used interchangeably.

With the first reason given by *The Call* we are in entire agreement, except for the fact that it is not the revolutionary Socialists of Russia alone, who are now using the term to distinguish themselves from the reactionaries, who are disgracing the name of Socialism. The Spartans of Germany use the name Communist Labor Party, as does the revolutionary section of the Dutch Socialist movement, but doubtless they also use the term because of the primitive methods of production used in those countries. We use the term for exactly the same reason as our continental comrades are using it. To distinguish us from those who have dragged the name "Socialism" in the dust of petty bourgeois, social reform. All the traitors to Socialism are not in Europe, as the Bolsheviks recognized when they ignored the official Socialist Party in their call for a Communist Congress.

In its second reason for the use of the name "Communist" by the Bolsheviks, *The Call* gets into deep water and is forced to rescue itself by denying in the second sentence what it affirms in the first. After referring to Russian village life, *The Call* suddenly remembers that there are one or two industrial centers in Russia: "But, however much Communism may be fostered in the village life of Russia, it is certain that the Bolsheviks, by using the term, do not intend to communize all wealth, and in particular the wealth of the industrial centers." In other words the Russians use the term "Communism" because it suits the rural life of the country and also because it does not suit the life of the industrial centers!

It would be interesting to know where *The Call* gets its definition of Communist. Not in "The Communist Manifesto" surely? Of course we are not infallible, but in the copy we read we cannot find anything about the necessity of using the same tooth-brush as our next door neighbor. It would be also interesting to know where *The Call* gets its definition of Socialism. We hope it is not going to blame Karl Marx. Under Socialism *The Call* informs us "The wealth produced would go to those who participate in its production and would be the private possession of the producers. . . Communism permits of no private wealth whatever. Everything is owned in common."

We had hitherto been of the impression that under Socialism all things which were socially necessary would be owned and controlled socially, but we never thought it was intended that all the button-holes made by a particular young woman should become the private property of that young woman, and that she would be forced to go out and trade them with a baker in order to get the morning rolls. Socialism, according to *The Call* prescription, will be rather inconvenient, but Communism will be a thousand times worse. If Communism is anything like what *The Call* imagines, then we can share its indignation against the Left Wing. "Everything is owned in common." Surely *The Call* does not mean everything?

The Regular Party Channels

WHEN the ruling capitalist class in a modern political democratic nation finds itself threatened with defeat at the hands of the working class making use of its economic power, it screams: "Don't strike! Vote! Use the regular political machinery, which permits the righting of any wrong!"

When the Socialist Party officialdom finds its hegemony threatened by the concerted and organized power of the rank and file, it screams: "The Party constitution and by-laws provide opportunities to remedy any wrongs! Use the regular Party channels!"

Very well. Local Boston issues a call for a National Emergency Convention. The call is thrown out on a technicality. Other Locals join in the call, and it cannot be further denied. National Secretary Germer privately urges that the Party "leaders" discourage this convention. Nevertheless the demand grows.

There is a Party referendum vote for national and international officers. The candidates nominated and supported by the Left Wing are seen to have an enormous majority. In the meanwhile Local after Local joins the Left Wing, and State after State falls in line. The Party officialdom, through the use of the "regular Party channels", is apparently going to lose its jobs. And the National Emergency Convention is evidently going to be captured by the Left Wing.

What can be done, through the "regular Party channels"? The Party officialdom begins by expelling Left Wing Branches. Then it counts the votes; and those Branches whose votes are overwhelmingly "disloyal" are accused of having falsified their votes, or forged their ballots—and this accusation is given out to the capitalist newspapers.

Then all the foreign language Federations except the two Right Wing Federations—the Finnish and the Jewish—and doubtful ones—the German and the Italian—are expelled from the Party; more than 30,000 members, one-third of the Socialist Party of America, are thrown out of the Socialist movement. The German Federation, having adopted the Left Wing Manifesto, is the next slated to go; and the Italian Federation, which displays "Left Wing tendencies", is also threatened.

Michigan State organization is expelled. Locals Buffalo, Rochester, Queens and Kings follow. Locals Cleveland and Cook County (Chicago) are on the toboggan; and all other Locals and Branches are being "reorganized" in such a way as to leave most of their members on the outside.

In this way the votes of the majority of the Socialist Party are outlawed. In this way the Emergency National Convention is made "Safe for Social Democracy."

In this way "the regular Party channels" are made innocuous for all purposes except to support the Socialist bosses who have betrayed and wrecked the Socialist Party.