

# The Pink Terror

## VII. Secret Diplomacy in the 4th A. D.

**A**FTER having "re-organized" the local to such an extent that the sale of dues stamps was barely sufficient to provide cigars for Executive Committee meetings, the semi-comrades who foregather at the People's House decided at a secret meeting, held in the furnace-room of that building, that the time for "re-organizations" has gone, at least as far as Local New York was concerned.

One of the leading Pink Terrorists from Kings, clutching a bomb in the shape of a sheaf of "re-organization" letters, reported that the work was not meeting with much success in Brooklyn. Branches steadfastly refusing to be "re-organized," expelled or suspended and even jeering at the divine right of the State Committee in the persons of the "committee of three." Reports from the seat of The Terror in the Bronx, which is sometimes called The Chamber of Horrors, also frowned on "re-organization" as an outworn tactic.

"But" said the High Chief Proletarian "something must be done." This weighty contribution to the discussion was received with much nodding of heads. Seeing which the speaker lost his temper and cried angrily: "Nodding your heads will accomplish nothing. The Left Wing is sweeping the State and unless we can cope with the situation, we will all have to go to work in future." Such a dread possibility startled the semi-comrades into activity. Suggestion after suggestion was made and rejected until an ex-Assemblyman, who on account of his political experience was listened to with great attention, suggested that all semblance of hostility be dropped towards the insurgents yet unre-organized, while the "loyal" members are approached secretly and when sufficient strength is mustered in any one branch, that branch carry out "re-organization" on its own initiative.

Semi-comrade Karlin immediately volunteered to try this plan in his Branch, the 4th A. D. It appears that Karlin has been very active in this Branch since the beginning of the year, having got himself elected to the Central Committee when it was found that the machine was ~~un-able~~ to hoggan. Plans were immediately laid and Karlin, after much hand-shaking hurried from the meeting. His first act was to send a letter to the financial secretary of the Branch asking him to call at his (Karlin's) law office. This the financial secretary refused to do, suspecting that Karlin was going to try and convince him that political democracy

was alright, by showing that under proletarian dictatorship lawyers would starve to death.

Nothing daunted by his first failure Karlin induced a young comrade, who incidentally was eleven months in arrears with his dues, to send out post-cards calling for a secret caucus at Karlin's office on May 23. Conscience-stricken at his act this youngster remained away from the meeting, but several semi-comrades attended. One such was Eva Glutt, who had been so broken-hearted by the defeat of both Karlin and London at the last elections that she had remained away from the Branch meetings since last November.

In the musty law office it was decided to expel two of the "most anarchistic" members of the Branch, one of whom was the organizer, and to "re-organize" the Branch at the coming Friday meeting. Lacking the pretext that the Branch had joined the Left Wing, another "illegality" was concocted: favoring the City Committee's call for a City Convention the City Committee's call for a City Convention.

Getting wind of what was happening the Branch officials sent out a call for attendance at the Branch meeting on the ground that "a few unscrupulous members are trying to disrupt the Branch." The Call also carried a notice to this effect, apparently mistaking it for semi-comrade Gerber's usual sophistry. The members of the secret caucus, however, were very much alarmed, nearly coming to blows. It is said, over who caused the "leak." At a hurried gathering before the meeting they decided to call off the "re-organization" and to bear with the "most anarchistic" members for a while longer.

When the meeting opened and the letter from the City Committee was read Karlin leaped to his feet and in his best legal manner warned the Branch members that acceptance of the City Committee's call was illegal, as the State Committee might at any moment declare the proposed convention illegal. Finding that the Branch was disposed to disregard the warning, the members of the secret caucus decided to "instruct" the delegates. So much for the illegality of the City Committee!

As the hour grew late, Karlin and the members of the secret caucus became openly elated: the secret was still theirs. But alas, under new business the financial secretary unfolded the details of the

plot, and moved a resolution condemning Karlin's actions.

Caught pink-handed, the plotters admitted the charge but tried to make it appear that the whole affair was merely a joke. Semi-comrade Glutt then arose to the defense. She said that she had received a letter signed "comrade" calling her to Karlin's office, and, thinking that ill had befallen their leader, hastened round to the financial secretary to ask his advice. He told her to go. She went and found a few comrades. They had an enjoyable time and discussed matters in general. Naturally she had enquired about the Branch and asked whether matters were "alright." She was told that the Branch was "all Left" and on hearing this distressing news was going to resign but Karlin advised her to wait as the Branch would eventually be "re-organized." But there was no caucus, and no plot to "re-organize" the Branch!

This naive recital threw the Branch members into roars of laughter. Karlin then arose and said the whole affair was a joke, but if the Branch was not disposed to regard it so, then let them go ahead and condemn his twenty long years of service: "Shoot if you will this old grey head . . ."

A motion was made, at the conclusion of his harangue, to withdraw all officers of the Branch who were involved in the secret caucus. This meant Karlin's removal as a delegate to the Central Committee. He rushed up to the maker of the motion, demanding to know "What crime have I committed?" So threatening was his attitude that the comrades rushed up to prevent him from breaking his well-known principles, which are opposed to violence. After about 15 minutes chaos, order was restored. In spite of the filibuster kept up by Karlin and other conspirators, the motion was finally carried. At a subsequent meeting Utrecht was elected delegate to the Central Committee, but when he attempted to attend the special Central Committee on June 11, he was refused admittance.

On Friday Karlin's heroic but futile attempt to capture the Branch for the Right Wing was rewarded by nominating him for the bench from the 6th A. D., without the knowledge of the 4th A. D. It is hoped that if sufficient Right Wing lawyers can be elected to judeships in the fall, they will be able to "soak" the prominent Left Wingers for sufficient "stretches" to enable the Party to be made safe for the Pink, and, in exceptional cases, the light Red semi-comrades.

## Why Political Democracy Must Go

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the Cleveland Aldermen, etc.) were deprived of their seats in the most cynical manner by the capitalists, and thus Socialist political action was completely nullified.

But all this is nothing to the indirect influence exerted upon the people by the capitalist control of the churches, the schools and the press. During the war we have seen very clearly the relation between the great capitalists and the churches and schools. The capitalists give the money which supports the church and pays the minister; which endows the largest universities and pays the professors. In some cases, during the war, the State Councils of Defense threatened ministers who dared to preach against the war; others lost their positions. The same thing is true, in a more glaring degree, of the teachers in schools and universities. The pressure of the capitalist endowments, the Boards of Directors of Churches and the Overseers of the Universities and Schools, forced teachers and ministers to keep silence, or drove them helpless into a hostile world, where for all practical purposes a complete black-list existed. And since the War has ended, this process of driving out economic and political heretics still goes on, though with increased vigor, under cover of the cry of "Bolshevism." In the public schools and the State Universities, also, the same action takes place, and with even more speed and brutality, owing to the capitalist control of the political machinery. This is supplemented, in cases where it is awkward or inadvisable to invoke the law, by lynchings and mob-violence provoked by Chambers of Commerce and National Security Leagues, and by deliberately falsified "investigations," whose object is to misrepresent the Labor Movement in such way as to set the Governmental machinery in motion.

The press is a still more powerful weapon. The role of newspapers, and especially of the popular magazines, has of late years been concentrated in the hands of the great capitalistic interests, who

are content even to lose money so long as they control the avenues of public expression. News is practically a monopoly of one great press association, which expresses clearly and faithfully the great capitalist point of view. Editors and reporters who do not conform to this view are discharged and boycotted; a black-list exists.

In this way news is practically denied to the labor press. The advertisers are leagued not to advertise in radical papers, so as to make it impossible for them to do more than exist. And to cap the climax, the Postmaster-General may exclude from the mails any publication which he sees fit, without giving any reason; thus entailing immense and often insupportable damage upon the publication and its backers, and preventing the discussion of political and economic questions.

There are those who say, "his is not the fault of political democracy. It is an abuse of democracy, which, if remedied, would permit the free exercise of the ballot to conquer political power." Let it be admitted that these conditions are unusual, and that in normal times there would be more freedom of expression to the Labor Movement. But that is just the point—in abnormal times political democracy breaks down, and it is always abnormal times when the capitalist class fears that the workers may conquer political power. The open suppression of the political power of the workers is simply an indication of what goes on successfully all the time.

Property is power. Property is political power. Only the abolition of property will ensure the working of real democracy, and only the dictatorship of the proletariat can abolish property.

A majority in Congress and the Supreme Court, without the dictatorship of the proletariat, will not give the workers power. The capitalist class does not control the State because it has a majority in Congress. It has a majority in Congress, because it controls the machinery of the State, under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The industrial era has brought with it a new kind of political action, the action of the masses on the economic field, strikes, demonstrations, insurrections. This form of action is well known to us, it is well-established, and even legal. When workers want a raise of wages or a decrease of hours, they

do not go to the ballot-box. They go on strike. The pity is that they do not see that this, too, is the way to gain control of the State—a political act—and that this is the only way.

The only power which the capitalist power cannot oppose is the organized and unified action of the proletarian mass.

## The Telescope

**T**HE Call has discovered that the Left Wing is composed of a bunch of bankers, trust magnates, and corporation directors masquerading in the overalls of the proletarian. Now we are getting at the real reason for the suspension of the seven federations—they are suspected of being capitalists!

Pathetic Figures, No. 3: Julius Gerber counting the proceeds from the sale of dues stamps.

The Society of the Commonwealth Center, an organization within the disorganization, which controls the so-called People's House, has accomplished another victory for the good old democratic principles, which we hear so much about in *The Call*, of free speech and free assemblage by refusing the auditorium to the City Convention.

"The Socialist is not stating Right Wing principles" says that organ in its last issue. But we don't blame it; the Right Wing has no principles, or for that matter principals either, consequently it would be hard for *The Socialist* to state nothing.

But we don't want to be hard on *The Socialist* and we will say that, outside of *The Call*, it comes as near stating nothing as is humanly possible.

"Let the dead past bury its dead" says *The Socialist*. We suppose this is not notice that the Right Wing office-holders are going into the funeral business.

We suggest that they make it a co-operative concern.