

The Humanity of Lawrence in Action

By Richard Hansen

THE working masses in the United States are awakening. In rapid succession events are passing before our eyes. While the spectacular general strike in Seattle was commanding the attention of the country big strikes broke out in Tacoma and Patterson. And then in Butte and Lawrence. Now while the Lawrence strike is in full blast New York Harbor is tied up by a strike which is characterized as a Bolshevik outbreak.

Each and everyone of these events are parts of the great labor unrest that is sweeping not only over America but over the world. They appear as separate and distinct events having no connection with each other, but in reality they are closely related, they are symptomatic of the whole situation and this is the reason they are receiving such wide attention in spite of the newspaper conspiracy of silence, this is the reason Secretary Baker dispatches troops to quell the uprising in Seattle, this is why the Textile Junkers of New England have mobilized the police force of all the cities of Massachusetts to put down the rebellion in Lawrence.

The situation is pregnant with tremendous possibilities. It commands the interest of the entire country, but especially is it interesting to those who witnessed or took an active part in the great Russian upheaval of 1905, who have seen the first "disconnected" local outbreaks become general, who have watched the slow gathering of clouds in the oppressive atmosphere and then beheld them bursting forth into the magnificent tempest that shook the whole rotten structure of monarchy and Capitalism to its foundations so that even the valiant efforts of the genial French and German bankers were unable to restore it.

The storm of social revolution is sweeping over the world and America has not escaped. The clouds are gathering here even though the workers themselves are unaware of the fact. And no force on earth can avert the coming storm. To those whose minds have been steeped in the fables of democracy the inevitability of social revolution is difficult to understand. They conceive revolution as a general riot, a sort of "free-for-all" brought about by the inflammatory speeches and writings of agitators, they are unable to visualize the revolution in action—the great mass movement of the proletariat, where even the greatest individuals are of but little moment.

The strikes that are even now sweeping over the country are largely the uprising of the masses themselves. Great leaders are little heard of in these recent struggles, the Department of Justice has seized them. Debs is under sentence and confined to the jurisdiction of the court district, Haywood and Mooney are in jail, while thousands of lesser stars have fallen victims to the same fate. The masses of the workers are without great leadership and are consequently thrown back upon themselves; they are becoming self-conscious and developing a consciousness of their class

interests. It is an easy matter to pluck out the leaders, to imprison, deport or execute them, but no power on earth can deport or exterminate the whole awakened working class.

Liebknicht and Rosa Luxemburg were brutally murdered by the German capitalists and their henchmen, the Majority Socialists, Radek has been deported and Ledebour thrown into prison, but the Spartacans are even now massing for the victorious assault on the citadel of power. The removal of the leaders did not lessen the revolutionary spirit of the masses but on the contrary urged them on to further effort. So the removal of Debs and Haywood only serves to swell the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat of America.

All movements that are built solely on the person-

An Appeal

The paramount need of the Lawrence Strikers is funds—without financial assistance the workers will be seriously handicapped in their fight. Though the spirit and morale of these workers is magnificent this alone is not sufficient, these men, women and children must be fed. Many of the more class conscious labor unions are rallying to their support but the expenses of this fight are enormous. If every reader of *The Revolutionary Age*, would contribute a dollar the workers would be enabled to start a reserve fund which would give them a sense of financial security.

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alities of great leaders are bound to fail, but when the mass itself moves into action it is invincible, then every victimized comrade is supplanted by a thousand others. And the dominant feature of the present sporadic struggles in America is their mass character.

The Textile strike in Lawrence, Mass. is a typical example.

Here is a human mass of 30,000 workers—unorganized, uneducated, speaking thirty-one different tongues, split into a number of antagonistic religions—rising as one man to the defense of themselves and their children. For five weeks they have defied the greedy industrial barons, backed by the power of the press, the pulpit and the mobilized police of the entire state. Carloads of trained Cossacks and other strike-breaking units have been rushed to Lawrence. Everything has been placed at the disposal of the master class, even the services of the so-called "labor" organizations have been utilized to crush the workers and drive them back to the mills at reduced wages.

The workers have been denounced as foreigners and have been treated as enemies and outlaws. The law is invariably invoked against them though they and their families constitute the majority of the population of Lawrence. The benefits of democracy are evidenced by the breaking up of peaceful picket lines, the prohibition of meetings and parades and the riding

down of women with babies in their arms by mounted police.

When the strike began on February 3, there was no organization of any strength among the textile workers. The I.W.W. group had been disbanded and the A. F. of L. mustered scarcely 150 members, the majority of these members subsequently turned strike-breakers. The only other organization consisted of a few branches of the Socialist Party, small uninfluential groups concerned chiefly in conducting peaceful educational work among their respective nationalities. In view of these facts this struggle has tremendous import, a struggle where Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, revolutionist and conservative are all united in splendid solidarity against their common enemy, the textile kaisers. The common class interest has proved to be stronger than all the ties of language, tradition, religion and race. And the Lawrence strikers are typical of industrial America, just as the textile capitalists are flesh and bone of American Capitalism.

The strikers were as patriotic as the average American worker, they gave their sons and brothers to the army, they bought liberty bonds, they were proud of being American born or naturalized citizens, they believed in American democracy and justice. That was five weeks ago.

Five weeks ago they were blind to the class struggle. Today they see. They are learning a great lesson and so they remain solid and unwavering. The mills are at a standstill, or if operating they produce only noise instead of cloth. All the sympathies of proletarian America are on the side of the strikers. Labor unions are sending funds in spite of the official attitude of the A. F. of L., and the cowardly stand of the Lawrence Central Labor Union. The Cigarmakers of Boston and Lowell have subscribed \$3,000 and all class conscious workers are rallying to the aid of the strikers.

This struggle is a test case, the outcome of this fight will affect the 700,000 textile workers of America, whose wages have been cut or are endangered. If the Lawrence workers win this strike it will be a mighty blow struck against the attempts of the capitalists to reduce wages all over the country. Victory in Lawrence spells inspiration and a brighter future for proletarian America.

The same great unrest is rampant in other textile centers. Lowell is entering the struggle with the increased demand for a 44 hour week and 25 per cent increase in wages and there is a growing tendency to make this a general demand for the whole textile industry. A general strike would make the textile junkers think the matter over and come to terms. The industry is capable of granting such a modest demand, even though there is a period of slackness. If not—there is the alternative that will eliminate unemployment and want for ever. The workers are learning what this alternative is, every strike furnishes further education.

How the Machine Works

THE following cutting throws as vivid light on the methods employed to keep control of the American Federation of Labor:

CHICAGO, Feb. 26.—Maurice "Mossey" Enright, labor agent and slayer of two men in gunmen's fights several years ago, wanted in connection with the shooting of three men Tuesday night in a factional quarrel of the Journeymen Plumbers' Union, was found yesterday in a hotel probably fatally wounded by bullet that had passed through the right lung. A police guard was stationed at his bed-side. Enright refused to say who wounded him.

Enright killed William (Dutch) Gentleman and Vincent Altman in barroom fights in 1911, when he was business agent for the Steamfitters' Union. He was convicted and sentenced to Joliet Penitentiary for life. Former Governor Dunne pardoned him in 1913.

Enright was accused of Tuesday night's shooting by J. H. Smythe, one of the leaders of a group in the Plumbers' Union, who, with Stephen Kelliher, a union organizer, seriously wounded.

It is interesting to know that one of the gang of professional murderers who have terrorized the rank and file of the Chicago Union movement for years has met the fate he and his kind have so often visited upon others. Outsiders always put the question, when we are engaged in criticizing the corrupt junta who dominate the A. F. of L.: "If all you say is true about the thuggery and corruption which permeate the A. F. of L. how is it the clean and honest men do not combine to purify their organization and smash the Gomperian machine?"

The above news item regarding the fate of "Mossey" Enright is the answer. This foul creature has been for years engaged as a professional thug to overawe the rank and file of various unions and intimidate them from attempting to overthrow the corrupt crim-

An Eyewitness on Russian Atrocities

THE one-sided and prejudiced information about Russia, which alone is permitted to reach this country, invariably speaks of the "atrocities" which the Bolsheviks commit upon members of the capitalist class. It studiously avoids even the mention of the barbarities which are perpetrated upon the masses of workers and peasants by the bourgeoisie whenever, as in the case of Samara, Simbirsk, Kazan, Ufa, and the Siberian towns, it succeeds for a time in capturing, with the aid of Czecho-Slovak hirelings, the local government machinery. Numerous instances could be quoted to illustrate the methods of "restoring law and order" practiced by the White Guards in such cases; but it will be sufficient to quote the latest which have come to hand. At one time the important Volga town Kazan was in the hands of the reactionaries, who had succeeded in wresting it from the local Soviet; however, they again lost it a short time afterwards. In the *Izvestiya* of October 2nd an eye-witness describes the rule of the Kazan bourgeoisie during the brief period of its power as follows:—

"One simply shivers at the recollection of the first days of the rule of the members of the so-called Constituent Assembly. . . . Ward and house committees became agents of the *okhrana* (secret police), and terrible was the fate of the class-conscious workers! The committees would denounce these men to the young White Guardsmen, who then went about the factories and the working class quarters. . . ."

The report goes on to describe the shameful part played throughout by the Mensheviks (Moderate So-

cial Democrats) and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the latter led by the notorious Boris Savinkoff, an extremist, a Minister of War under Kerensky, and an accomplice of General Korniloff. This renegade was now proclaiming publicly that the "salvation of the country lay not in the twaddle of the Mensheviks and even Socialist-Revolutionaries, but in the reinstatement of officers in their rights."

The report says: "The bourgeoisie has now armed itself. The ranks of the army began to be filled by volunteers from the Tchinovnik class and from students and schoolboys, sons of the well-to-do all of them, incensed at the working class, bent upon destroying the Social Revolution and restoring the good times of the old regime. The officers put on, not, indeed, the old shoulder straps, but sleeve shields with stars, and saluting was restored. An officer's casino made its appearance in the main street bearing the eloquent name of 'Old Times.' And everything went, indeed, as in the old times. Mobilised soldiers, workers, and peasants were beaten in the face as of old, and unbridled tyranny and licence became the order of the day. Workers continued to be arrested and shot, and even members of the Labor Conference, with Mensheviks at their head, were arrested. Orders were posted up in the streets of Kazan ordering the workers to give up all arms on pain of being shot, and threatening, in case they should again revolt, to destroy the working class quarter by artillery fire."

Such was the restored bourgeois regime in one of the largest towns in Russia, and such it was and still is in other places occupied at one time or another, with assistance of the Czecho-Slovaks and the political and financial encouragement of the diplomatic representatives of the Allies. It also shows what would happen in Russia on a national scale if Admiral Koltchak, the latest adventurer and favorite of the Allies, were to overthrow the Soviet regime.

JIM LARKIN.