

Red May Day in Prison

By Martha H. Foley

Who was arrested, convicted on perjured testimony, and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.

RED—on my hands, red on my clothes, red on my comrades and in their hearts.

Blood—drawn from helpless men, women and, yes, children, by the relentless clubs and cruel bullets of the thugs and police of Boston. . . .

Sitting in a close, dusty cell with seven cowering women I live the day over and over again. In the next cell a woman, who has seen her husband beaten unconscious, is moaning in the agony of premature child-birth. We plead for a doctor. Police officers—can they be men born of woman?—jeer: "If you don't like it you can go back to Russia." Outside a howling mob, made up of the very workers for whom we have and are giving our all, thirsts for our blood.

I go back twenty-four hours. It is May Day. The sun is shining in a clean blue sky, leaves and grass of young, vivid green stir in the warm breeze, the call of spring is in the air and one thrills to its challenge. A new world is in birth.

A joyous, living crowd fills to overflowing the Dudley Street Opera House. They are there to celebrate that most significant of all holidays—International Labor Day; and this year its significance has been increased a thousandfold. In Russia the workers have won; they are winning in Germany, in Hungary, in Austria; gaining all over Europe and awakening in America. Everyone in the hall wears a bit of red, a token of the red blood that courses through the veins of all men alike, of all races. Even the children, laughing and playing seem to have captured some of the spirit that animates us. There are speeches received with enthusiastic applause and singing. Tears come to my eyes as I listen to the many languages blending into the "International," and I hear the cry coming down through the ages of peoples pitted against people, slaying one another that the masters might fatten on their blood.

At the end of the meeting the chairman announces that the parade that had been planned cannot be held since a permit was denied. However, we are all invited to go to the Bazaar which marks the opening of the new Socialist home in Roxbury, at "New International Hall." Slowly we leave, and slowly in the street the various groups coalesce into a body of marchers bound for New International Hall, half a mile distant. Some of those in the vanguard are carrying red flags. We are all happy, we are all wishing that everyone else should be happy, but—trouble is brewing.

On the opposite side of the street a rapidly increasing gang of hoodlums is following us threateningly. A policeman steps into the street, speaks to one comrade at the front, and then retires. Soon patrol wagons dash past, turn and block the street. From it

descend police with clubs drawn. Without ado they strike right and left among the body of marchers. Men fall to the ground, stunned by the blows. The crowd of non-Socialists surge over toward us and strives to out-do the police in brutality. They are armed with large pieces of timber, with lead-pipe and heavy wire. Men prostrate on the street are kicked and beaten mercilessly. Women are attacked and children trampled upon.

A man carrying a club approaches an officer near me and complains that his crowd is not large enough to kill off those "damn Bolsheviks." The officer advises him to get together all his crowd, as they are too scattered. Amazed, I remonstrate with the officer for encouraging the mob to violence. "Oh, go to hell!" is the answer. I report him to the sergeant in charge, who asks me if I am with those foreigners. To his "You ought to be proud of your associates," I retort: "I am, thank God, I am!"

The police threaten to use their guns. One man tears open his coat bares his breast crying "Kill! Kill!" The sergeant takes deliberate aim at his heart. Confusion reigns supreme. We fly for refuge to door-ways whence we are dragged forth to be set upon once more by the mob. Stones are hurled, more shots fired, and more men beaten. The mob has grown amazingly. Several more patrol wagons have arrived and men and women are thrown headlong into them. Two officers drag me to a patrol and a dozen men, all bruised and bleeding, are crammed into it. They are too dazed to offer any resistance; and yet, while the wagon is jolting on its way to the station, they are coolly beaten over the head with the billies of the police. Will the sweetest music ever silence that sound of those clubs cracking against the skulls which still rings in my ears?

In the station we are pushed and shoved about. Already a large crowd has gathered outside and they rush up the stairs and almost through the entrance. After being listed we are closely herded into small cells and spend the night in cramped position. We listen to the obscene language of the mob outside and of the guardians of the law inside. The pregnant woman screams and the woman next me cries silently—her babies are being left uncared for all night.

Sleep refuses to come. It is a nightmare! It is not—it cannot be real. A revulsion towards all mankind seizes me. If some can be so cruel—then all can. Of

what use is it to try to change conditions? But—no, it is unreal. And yet on the other side of the bars a policeman is saying, "We'll show you that this isn't Russia, that you can't try such things in America."

The officer goes away. There is silence inside for a moment and then from the men's section comes, in Italian, the music of the "International." And we sing, sing with triumph and fervor—we are not yet conquered. After the "International" we sing the "Red Flag" and the Russian Hymn. Our songs give us fresh courage and new life.

In the morning we are thrust into closed vans and taken to cells in the courthouse there to await the administration of "justice." The pregnant woman, still without medical attendance, is taken with us. The courthouse like the station is surrounded by seething throngs including many children. Teaching the Hymn of Hate to German school children was no worse than the encouragement given the children of Roxbury in their attacks upon us. A Jewish woman whispers to me that she feels that she is losing something very precious, her love of children. And I understand too well. We sit on iron gratings in the cells in the courthouse basement and wait and wait.

Then a Russian saying: "I came to America away from the Czar because they told me it was the land of liberty. Now I am arrested for having been beaten up and what is my family going to do?" . . .

Down the corridor a young boy is sobbing. In answer to my question he tells me that he was arrested for stealing. He was physically unable to work, having just undergone an operation, and temptation proved too strong for him. He seems to be a manly little chap and his heart almost bursts with each sob. Only a boy who should be in school with his books or in the sunshine playing ball and instead he is here. But such things cannot go on forever, some day an eruption must come and then let the masters beware. As they sow, shall they reap.

At last I secure from the next cell a newspaper—never was I so anxious for one and I am asked to read. I read slowly and clearly to the other comrades. With what a thrill we learn of the demonstrations in Cleveland, in Detroit, in Chicago, in New York and in Paris. Each account is received with cheers. We are not alone! There are others, many, many others and we triumph!

Again we sing the Red Flag and the International. Outside the crowd shouts and presses against the barred windows. They think they are free and us imprisoned. But we know better, and to their cries of "Down with the Bolsheviks! Kill the dirty Bolsheviks!" our song answers "Arise ye prisoners of starvation, Arise ye wretched of the earth."

"A Poor Peace Better Than Proletarian Revolution"

By Nicholas I. Hourwich

THE development of capitalistic society was characterized by Karl Marx as a development that produces "its own grave-diggers." This characterization proves more than correct as concerns the Peace Conference in Paris; for this Conference, more than anything else, perhaps even more than revolutionary Socialist propaganda and agitation, has contributed to breaking down the illusions of "liberal, peaceful reconstruction" and to developing a revolutionary Socialist conception of the fundamental nature of Capitalism among the proletarian masses of all countries.

And, thanks to the "successful activity" of the Peace Conference, that which formerly was understood and prophesied by revolutionary Socialists alone is now becoming obvious to all.

The "Fourteen Points" of President Wilson, it is now clear, have been in the hands of the Allies (regardless of the particular aspirations of Wilson in this or that matter) nothing but bait with which to catch German fish.

These "Fourteen Points" at the time lulled the vigilance of the revolutionary masses of the German proletariat; these "Fourteen Points" provided a plausible excuse for the German diplomats to sign the armistice agreement dictated by the Allies and in obvious contradiction to the "points;" and now, when the conditions of the armistice have been complied with, when the Rhine provinces are occupied by Allied troops and Germany lies prostrate and almost helpless at the feet of the Allied imperialists,—these "Fourteen Points" are declared as rubbish, as a useless scrap of paper. Terms of peace are imposed upon Germany in comparison with which the infamous Brest-Litovsk conditions of peace imposed upon Soviet Russia by Germany appear as innocent, kind and meek.

The "Fourteen Points," we repeat, lulled the vigil-

ance of the revolutionary masses of the German proletariat and provided a plausible excuse for the German diplomats to sign the armistice. . . . It was simply an excuse. For we did not think at the time and we do not think now that these "points," for a single moment, lulled the vigilance of the experienced

Deporting Democracy

Letter from Herman Shuster, U. S. Immigration Station, Boston, Mass.

Circumstances compel me to appeal for your assistance. I am detained at the above mentioned station, and was arrested in Cleveland, Ohio, in December 1917, for failing to register. But as the U. S. authorities were unable to prove my right age they preferred to switch the charge to entering the U. S. illegally. Therefore, my deportation to Russia has been ordered by the Department of Labor, Washington, D. C. in May 1918, but up to date this order has not been carried out. They simply keep me in detention without giving me the opportunity to leave on parole or upon bonds until the deportation can be effected.

In the winter of 1917 I received, while at the county-jail, Cleveland, a letter from the Industrial Workers of the World, 1001 West Madison St., Chicago, Ill., (holding card No. 204,122 Industrial Union 200 M. T. W.) to the effect that a lawyer was ordered to see all members detained there. However, I have never seen the gentleman.

On February 4th inst. I mailed a registered letter to Mr. Louis Ratnosky, No. 27—4th St., New York City. (Labor Defender), but in spite of the fact that I have the return receipt at hand, I never heard of him.

Therefore I beg of you the favor to take this matter up and let me know whatever you might learn by inquiring into my case.

and alert German diplomats and generals, and their aids, the social-patriots; they never really and sincerely placed any confidence in the "points." The act of signing the armistice, under conditions of martial law and the revolutionary situation in Germany; allowing the Allies, in conformity with the armistice terms, to occupy the Rhine provinces, unparalleled in military annals; surrendering with conscious alacrity the revolutionary fleet to the Allies, the sailors of which had been the first to raise the banner of the Revolution,—all this we consider acts of deliberate treason and betrayal of the Revolution by the bourgeois diplomats and bourgeois "Socialists." It was an attempt to betray and disarm the German Revolution with the aid of foreign bayonets, an attempt which finds its analogy in the project of General Ivanov proposed to the Czar in the early days of the March Revolution, a project involving opening the Russian frontiers to the Germans and the surrender of Riga by General Kornilov.

The German "Socialist" traitors of the Ebert-Scheidemann persuasion and the ordinary bourgeois traitors knew and felt sure that the Allied knife thrust at the heart of Germany would descend, and with their connivance, since they were a party to the plot. And this knife was to descend, no so much in order to damage bourgeois Germany, but to devour and crush the German proletarian revolution.

And now it has come. The knife hanging over Germany has descended. The peace conditions imposed by the Allies will transform Germany into a vassal of the Allies. But we have no doubt that the German bourgeoisie and the Ebert-Scheidemann Government will, while protesting, pay this price and a still higher price if necessary, in order to secure in the Allies a guardian and defender against the proletarian revolution that is still threatening.

Better to save something than to lose everything!