

at once with your subordinate bureaus and to call their attention to the exceedingly critical conditions under which the urban population, and particularly the ammunition industry, are suffering at the present time. The food-commission must, through those of their members who are themselves farmers, and through others whom they may deem fit to undertake this work, explain the importance of this appeal to every farmer in their respective districts. Written instructions are of little value; neither will large meetings accomplish the desired result. Only by word of mouth can our message be carried. *Teachers and clergymen* particularly, must be pressed into service.

"Every farmer must be made to realize that every pound of corn that he consumes over and above the measure that is absolutely necessary for the management of his own estate, is a wrong done to the whole people, and aids the enemy. Every potato and every turnip that is fit for human consumption must be sent to the city. No healthy adult in the country should drink unskimmed milk. Milk is for children and for invalids and for the manufacture of butter. Calves shall be raised for breeding purposes only and shall receive full milk for not more than one week after birth."

* * *

Under such conditions bromides in the shape of election reform declarations cannot be particularly effective; the people are demanding more than promises, are insisting on actual reforms, are demanding deeds instead of words. Thus the Reichstag has been forced to take action by appointing a committee for the revision of the German Constitution, with special instructions to thoroughly revise the paragraphs concerning relations between government and parliament. This committee—with Philipp Scheidemann as its chairman—is already in action and has adopted a number of motions, proposing a certain curtailment of the powers of the Chancellor and State Secretaries, and increased responsibility of these officials to the Reichstag. According to the proposed revision all proclamations and official acts of the Emperor must be countersigned by the Chancellor, who then becomes directly

responsible to the Reichstag, and, together with the State Secretaries is held liable for all important government actions. Radical as these proposals may sound, even the liberal "*Berliner Tageblatt*" admits, however, that there is actually little gained so long as the Parliament has not the right to unseat a Chancellor who refuses to abide by its decisions, or, on the other hand, to keep in power an official who has incurred the displeasure of the Emperor, against his will. The above-mentioned newspaper regards the decisions of the Reichstag-Constitutional Reform Committee as purely decorative in effect and openly declares that "we are now, after the adoption of these decisions, as far removed from parliamentary form of government, and as deeply imbedded in a pseudo-constitutional regime as ever."

Still more important are a number of other decisions of the Commission, which, however, must also await the final ratification of the Reichstag as well as of the Bundesrat before they become effective. They provide for a reapportionment of the Reichstag election districts upon the basis of 200,000 inhabitants. This new division of Germany would have the identical political effect that awaits Prussia when once the three-class election system has gone forever—the power of the conservative Junker will be broken, the "liberal" capitalist class will step into his place. When, almost fifty years ago, the national constitution of Germany was drawn up, Germany possessed about one-half of its present population. At that time 100,000 inhabitants were apportioned into one election district, the industrial centers and large cities were treated somewhat niggardly and the agrarian districts a little more liberally, so that, in this way 397 election districts were organized, the great majority sending agrarian representatives to Parliament.

What at that time meant a direct advantage for the Junkers who controlled the great landed population, to-day represents a distinct balance of power in favor of the landholding class, during a time of unparalleled development in industry, a situation that must needs lead to unbearable political conditions. More than once this conflict between two mighty classes, wrestling with each other for political supremacy, has made the threatening clash in