

police court to ninety days in the workhouse. In his pleading Assistant District Attorney Hatting stated that the intent of the defendant in distributing this circular seemed to be to incite revolution. He insisted that, while the circular ostensibly contained only quotations from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the distributor had but used this document to cloak his own thoughts, but that his purpose had been to incite to treason and to revolution. That the sentence was later reversed does not rob the first trial of any of its beauty.

The news that Socialists all over the country, the Sadlers in Washington, Ruthenberg, Wagenknecht and others in Ohio, Coldwell in Rhode Island, Jaeger, Graubard, Nessin, Levine and many others in New York, Tom Hickey and fifty-two more Socialists in Texas, and National Secretary Germer, as well as a large number of comrades in Detroit, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Grand Rapids and elsewhere, have been arrested for agitation against conscription and agitation, shows that our comrades all over the country have been up and doing. And here, too, most of them have been arrested on trumped up charges, with false statements and lying witnesses.

This art of interpretation and false construction, as it is being practiced by the courts of justice with increasing frequency, has gradually assumed such alarming proportions that a number of more unprejudiced judges have been moved to object. So, for instance, Federal Judge Rose, of Baltimore, has rendered a decision that has been widely commented upon, in which he says, "Every man has a right, if he so chooses, to criticise adversely any system of society, or any law, so long as he obeys that law while it remains a law."

As was to be expected, our authorities did not content themselves with the inhibition of the rights of free speech and free assemblage. The attack upon the press that followed was a foregone conclusion. To be sure, our National Congress showed more backbone in this matter of press censorship than in any other war measure called for by the administration. It refused absolutely to pass the espionage bill with the censorship clause demanded by the President, and adopted the former

only after a free and untrammelled press had been assured. And yet! the *Socialist News* (Cleveland), the *Michigan Socialist*, *The Rebel* of Texas, *The International Socialist Review*, the *St. Louis Labor*, the *St. Louis Arbeiterzeitung*, and *The Social Revolution* (*Rip-Saw*) of St. Louis, *The Appeal to Reason*, *The Masses*, *The American Socialist*, the official Party paper, *The People's Press* (Philadelphia) and *The New International*, have been suppressed by the postal authorities. In a conference between a committee of the National Executive Committee of the Party and prominent officials of the Postal Department and the Department of Justice in Washington, the latter expressly stated that they were determined to pursue this policy of suppression with increased severity. According to Comrade Engdahl, the editor of *The American Socialist*, W. H. Lamar, solicitor of the Postal Department at Washington, is the real press censor of the country, and has power of life and death over all publications.

The blows that have already been struck against the anti-militarist and radical labor movement, heavy as they have been, are but a promise of what is to come. In West Virginia and Maryland the legislatures have already passed laws that put even Germany's civil conscription measure to shame. In Minnesota a commission of seven men, appointed by the governor, has been endowed with powers more autocratic and more far-reaching than those of the late lamented Czar of Russia, or of the more lamented German Kaiser. And it uses its immense powers more arbitrarily than either. In the State of New York the Stivers and the state registration laws pave the way for the same kind of despotism. Other state legislatures are preparing to follow in their footsteps.

What has been done for the states by the various legislatures, the food law will accomplish nationally—if possible, on a still greater scale. Section 4 of this bill, which at the time of writing has not yet been definitely adopted by Congress, reads:

"Section 4. That it is hereby made unlawful for any person . . . to conspire, combine, agree or arrange with any other