

measure a most oppressive provision for the arbitrary curtailment and chicanery of the public press and the freedom of the press. It not only forces upon publications printed in a foreign language disagreeable duties that, in most cases, patently fail to strike the real offender—if by this term is understood the press with real pro-Kaiser leanings and love of the very autocracy that this country has set out to destroy—but provides that it shall be unlawful to transport, carry, or otherwise publish or distribute any matter which is made unmailable by the espionage act. That means, of course, the absolute suppression of all printed and written matter that is objectionable to the Government as represented by Mr. Burleson, Postmaster-General, in whatever language it may be printed.

This law provides penalties as exorbitant, so out of all proportion to the "crime," that the rulers of Prussia might well feel inclined to adopt the American brand of democracy, as superior to their own bungling autocracy. And no one who knows German conditions will deny that our war legislation is, in certain respects, more severe and more reactionary than are the laws of Germany in their present application. This is proven by the whole spirit that dominates our public life at the present time, and is evidenced by the expulsion proceedings against Senator La Follette in the U. S. Senate. Karl Liebknecht used much stronger and more direct language than did Senator La Follette. Yet it did not occur to his worst opponents to demand his expulsion from the Reichstag.

We are far from being apologists for German militarism and autocracy. It, therefore, makes the hurt only more poignant to state the simple truth—that the United States, today, stands under the iron heel of a capitalism as reactionary, under the domination of a bureaucracy as arrogant, as was ever suffered or tolerated by Germany or any other European nation.

Political Parties in Russia

By N. LENIN.

(Aids to an understanding of the proposed platform drawn up by N. Lenin for discussion at Bolshevik meetings. The printing of the proposed platform has thus far been held up only by the insufficient typographical resources at Petrograd.)

The following is an attempt to formulate, first, the more important, and second, the less important, of the questions and answers characteristic of the present situation in Russia, and of the attitude the various parties take to the present state of affairs.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the chief groupings of political parties in Russia?

ANSWERS

A (more to the *right* than the Cadets). Parties and groups more *right* than the Constitutional Democrats.

B (Cadets). Constitutional Democratic Party (Cadets, the National Liberty Party) and the groups closely attached to them.

C (Social Democrats and Social Revolutionists). The S. D.'s, S. R.'s and the groups closely attached to them.

D (Bolsheviks). The party which ought properly to be called the *Communist Party*, and which is at present termed "The Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party, united with the Central Committee; or, in popular language, the "Bolsheviks."

2. What classes do these parties represent? What class standpoints do they express?

A. The feudal landholders and the more backward sections of the bourgeoisie.

B. The mass of the bourgeoisie, that is, the capitalists, and those landholders who have the industrial, bourgeois ideology.