

spite of all the big talk of our secret service agents, remains a dark and horrible mystery? Doesn't it merely prove how dangerous these fellows have become?

So experts on radicalism like Hugh Frayne and Jim Holland were called upon the stand to cast slurs upon the fair record of the harmless ladies of the Woman's Trade Union League and to besmirch the spotless patriotic record of ex-Comrade Rose Schneiderman. The other witnesses were of a similar caliber. All reports on brutalities and barbarism in Russia were given from hearsay. The testimony of men who have just arrived from Siberia and Russia was pointedly ignored if they were suspected of sympathy for the Soviets. In short, the Lusk Committee has done its work thoroughly and well, with a brazenness and a bold disregard of even the outward semblance of decency that promises much for the things that are yet to come. L.

The Railroad Situation

Never before in the history of the labor movement of the United States has a strike caused such great confusion in governmental circles as the present impending Railroad strike.

President Wilson, his Cabinet, the Congress of the United States—all are seeking ways and means whereby to appease the anger of the Railroad workers, in order that a stand-still in transportation may be averted.

The complaint that life is becoming more and more unbearable—that the most essential necessities of life are rapidly reaching the class known as luxuries which a workingman or any man in ordinary circumstances cannot even hope to acquire; that the wages and salaries only afford a miserable existence at the very best—this complaint has been made a long time by people in various parts of this country and in various industries.

But the "Masters of Power" have eyes that see not and ears that hear not. So, of course, they have been ignorant of the ever increasing discontent—a discontent that is prevalent from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada to Mexico. Until now if any economical trouble occurred they always blamed those scoundrels, the "Bolsheviki," the vipers who spread the germs of revolution among the innocent, obedient, hard-working people.

People who are, sociologically speaking, short-sighted, who

neither see nor understand the needs of the masses, and who can neither read nor understand the language of the time—accept an excuse as that given above at its face value.

If a strike occurred, a raid on the Bolsheviki ensued, until quiet was restored and life was once more covered with the blanket of "law and order."

But the situation at present is entirely different. The complaint is now made by rather loyal people. The discontent is now made known and felt by people concerning whom there is not the slightest suspicion that they are "Red Card Men." And it is now that the "Masters of Power" have at last begun to fear the consequences.

The Powers that Be would, of course, try to apply the same methods to the Railroad industry as they do to the other branches of industry, if it were possible. But it is neither practical nor possible to do so. The Railroad industry is the most important industry. It is the very heart of the economic life of the country. And when anything affects the heart then playing the game of the deaf and blind man is not advisable—remedies must be sought so that the disease may be stopped from spreading and the heart cured.

The textile industry, the cloak-making industry, the building industry, etc., are only individual organs in our economic life. A strike in any or in all of the above mentioned industries affects only one particular part of our industrial organism. Such a strike is in truth not very pleasant but it is not of a dangerous character. The industry of transportation is the *heart* of our economic life. Just as the heart circulates the blood in a higher developed animal just so does the transportation system circulate the finished products. A stand-still in the transportation system means more than a stand-still in the iron or wood industries. A stand-still in the transportation system means that *all the wheels stop*. The entire economic life of the country receives a death blow. A chaos with unforeseen consequences is the result. It is, therefore, natural that the warning of the President of the Railroad workers has had the effect of compelling those in control to seek methods whereby to quiet down the discontent and extinguish the sparks of protest.

But a Railroad strike of this character is unlike any other strike *in that it contains the germs of a revolution . . .*

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The Socialists and labor leaders ought to learn a great lesson from the confusion in governmental circles caused by the