

# When Anarchy Reigns

THE ruling class of the U. S. is at present asserting its authority with particular venom. The industrial conditions, engendered by a century and a quarter of Capitalist production, make imperative the prescribing of drastic remedies. The codes and fiats promulgated in times past by Hammurabi, Pharoah, Pompey, Thiers, Castlereagh, Bismarck, and other masters of the gentle art of persuading workers to do their bidding, pales into insignificance compared to the recent ultimatums of American law-givers. The terms—Anarchists, Reds, Bolsheviks, pro-Germans, and Ingrates, and other endearing expletives, are being hurled at all and sundry who evince a desire to express opinions other than those made to order by the beneficent dispensers of law. Could Hancock, Jefferson, Washington, and the other smugglers, slave-drivers, and illicit traders of revolutionary days witness the results of their declarations and constitutions they would surely marvel at the peculiar manifestations of providential interference.

During the past few weeks several thousand members of various working class organizations have been arrested, jailed, and held for deportation for the atrocious crime of holding cards in political parties, and industrial unions, which advocate a modification of the social relationship existing today. Five members of the N. Y. State Assembly, and one member of the U. S. Congress, are refused their seats on account of not being able to view affairs in the same light as their brothers Solon. Lynch law is resorted to in cases where the established legal machinery is slow to act. Senators, representatives, occupants of university chairs, pulpit and press, work in unison to further the ends of the propertied class whether or not their methods coincide with legal enactments.

In every case where conflicts have taken place between labor and capital, grossly exaggerated reports of such affairs have been furnished to the public. The dissemination of those erroneous and biased reports is facilitated by the limited and associated presses, which have practically a complete monopoly in the distribution of news. When anything happens inimical to propertied interests, as in the Centralia affair, a colored version of the matter is immediately flashed to every corner of the country. Even when the coronor's inquest revealed the fact that these peace-loving paraders, instead of being violently assaulted by murderous bandits, were themselves the aggressors, still, the revised version never sees the light of publicity excepting through the medium of labor journals which are quickly suppressed for daring to tell the truth.

Again, in the recent coal miners' strike we were warned, in glaring headlines, to beware of those dangerous Bolsheviks who sought to reduce the period of production to the absurd, un-American standard of a six hour day and a five day week, when, in reality, what the miners were clamoring for was more work instead of less. They had not been able to average three days' work per week previous to the strike, and this violent and revolutionary action of laying down tools was resorted to in order to obtain a more generous measure of employment and, consequently, a wage that would enable them to exist. In this work of distorting facts to make them suit requirements no other institution in modern Capitalism adapts itself so readily as the press. The time has passed when reporters were chosen because of ability to get the news, as well as style and originality in its presentation. The reporter of today is usually a youth who has been fed on university slop sufficiently to 'phone some kind of account to the newspaper office, and here the real report is concocted in a manner satisfactory for consumption by persons skilled in the nefarious art.

What, then, are the reasons for this recent lavish application of the iron heel? Has the industrial problem suddenly assumed proportions that render obsolete all previous methods of solution? Can it be that the free and generous institutions of this great home of democracy, and other things, have nurtured the seeds of discontent and rebellion? Let us see.

Engels has stated that "the growing perception

that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place, with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping," and this is the situation today in modern capitalism. It is showing obvious signs of disintegration and decay. The problem of more markets, and the seizure of routes of trade, which precipitated the great war, has not been adequately solved. In fact, the situation is rapidly becoming worse than ever. Time was, in the early years of the present system, when a successful war meant grand opportunities for the victor. The world market was large and the machinery of production crude. A successful contender could manufacture commodities in abundance, and all could be absorbed by their eager customers. But gone are those days. The expansion of markets has failed to keep pace with industrial development and, now, most of the capitalist nations are face to face with bankruptcy and ruin. The recent exhibition of military prowess has hastened, rather than retarded, the growth of industry.

With such a situation confronting them, who can wonder that the tools of a dying system should endeavor to stay its downfall? It has been a very satisfactory system for them. They have not experienced the dining possibilities of the bread line, or the sleeping accommodations of the hovel. Plenty of life's necessities were theirs to consume so long as we submissively worked, starved, and obeyed. But our stomachs have interfered with our early lessons. Necessity has opened new vistas and, as we pause to analyze the world around us, and see the modern methods of our fellow workers in other lands, we are prompted to go into the highways and byways and tell our neighbors that it is possible for us to do likewise. This changing attitude is corroding the social structure. Our masters must do something, and do it quickly. Our methods must be frowned upon as they would shun the "seven plagues of Egypt." So when they display their power with such ruthless severity we can almost afford to condone their policy.

But what immediate effect will their hysterical actions produce? Will their efforts to stifle speech and press have the desired results? We think not. We have long been taught fairy stories about the beauty and sanctity of our laws, and the urgent necessity of obeying them in letter and spirit. But now this sacredness is shattered and a precedent established. When occasion demanded they have broken their own enactments with impunity. Representatives of the people cannot enter legislative assemblies, even when elected in conformity with every law that covers the subject. If they don't want them sent by the ballot route how, pray, would they like them sent? Would they welcome their despatch under the auspices of a machine gun? The anarchistic attitude they have attributed to us seems to be monopolized by themselves. They believe in nothing legal unless their interests are recognized and enhanced. "No taxation without representation," was an old battle cry of a revolutionary period, but will not some such slogan be adaptable to conditions today? It is difficult to see how they are going to harmonize their teachings with their actions.

We, of the Marxian school, have long advocated the need of explaining capitalist production to the members of our class, showing them the slave position we occupy, and the means that must be taken to accomplish our freedom. We have been subjected to much criticism by the advocates of "something now, who seem to think that something is attainable through the instrumentality of mass action and nebulous phrases. But the necessity for our policy was never more apparent than today. The short cuts to emancipation are beset with dangers and difficulties that defy penetration. Only by means of an educated working class who understand the conditions in which they live, and the nature of the forces arrayed against them, can we expect to step from slavery to freedom.

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# The Last Barrier

Confusion reigns in the labor movement today. The cause of this is the lack of understanding of the functions of the State by the huge mass of working men. Before we can have a clear movement it is vitally necessary for all class conscious workers to understand the origin and function of the State.

Before we can understand the true nature of any social institution it is important that we fully understand the social conditions from which it emerged.

"Through history the State has slightly changed its form, but its role as the weapon of despotism in the hands of the economically and politically dominant class has remained unchanged. It is able to enforce its will upon those who oppose it because behind its demands it has the organized armed force of society." (Wm. Paul, "The State"). "The modern state is but an executive committee for administering the affairs of the whole capitalist class." (Communist Manifesto).

In the days preceding the birth of private property the State was unknown. It is only present when you have classes in society, when the property owning class is compelled to use some force to protect its economic interests. Thus we see in the days of primitive communism the State as we know it conspicuous by its absence. This social system was not based on force. There were no policemen, no crimes against property, no secret spies, none of the weapons of coercion upon which the modern civilized states depend to keep their citizens in order. The savage is so bound up with the tribe of which he is a member that he would not dare to disobey the prescriptions of the common law or tribal customs. His common law is his religion; it is his very habit of living. If the savage has infringed one of the smaller tribal rules, he is prosecuted by the mockeries of the women. If the infringement is grave, he is tortured day and night by the fear of having called a calamity upon his tribe.

With the birth of private property, society was divided into two great classes, a property holding class and a propertyless class. These two classes confronted each other. The one a revolutionary class; the other basing its demands on rights handed down from the past. The tribal organization could not settle class disputes and conflicting interests. A new method had to be devised. The wealthy class thereupon organized a new social institution by which it was possible to crush out any section that challenged its power or revolted against its authority. That institution arose to maintain order within the community. By the power conferred upon it, that institution would defend the wealth of the community against foreign invaders, and would also defend the privileges of the master class against rebels within the community. Private property wrenched itself from tribal administration and founded its own institution of government—the State.

"Through history, we see the State in action. Civilization began with the crack of the slave-driver's whip" (Patterson). We see it in action in the slave states of Egypt, Rome, Greece. When the chattel slave system fell to give way to a different form of slavery, Feudalism, the State again makes its appearance, covered with different clothes. Feudalism disappears from the world stage and Capitalism takes its place. Today we see the State used as a weapon by the capitalist-class to keep the workers in subjection. The many industrial conflicts of the day furnish good examples. Recently we have seen the U. S. government step in and tell the coal strikers where they belong.

It is therefore essential for every working man to understand that it is imperative for the workers to disarm the capitalist class by removing its power over the State and use it to emancipate itself from wage slavery. The capitalist class realize that if the working-class learn this their power is ended, hence their desperate efforts to keep the workers in ignorance by using the press, school, pulpit and other means of "information." On the ignorance of the working class rests their masters' power. Remove that ignorance and you automatically remove the capitalist class from power.

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