

WARTIME METHODS IN GERMANY

(Continued from Last Issue)

Case of Editor Kluers.

Another signer of the manifesto, Editor Kluers, has been in preventive prison for eight months, and, despite all his efforts, cannot obtain his liberty; all sorts of charges have been invented against him. Thus he is said to have called a conference of young men on February 5 at Neukolln, but he has not been able to prove that he was not there at all; the spies had made a false accusation. But, even if he had been there, and had spoken, that would not have justified preventive imprisonment. If he had said anything punishable, he could have been proceeded against under the criminal code.

He was reproached besides, with desiring to publish a manifesto against the Social Democratic Party committee; that also rests on a false affirmation. His principal crime consists in having co-operated in the publication of the manifesto regarding the split in the Tel-tow-Beeskow faction, but on the next day after the police seized that manifesto they had to give it back, because the Military Government could not justify the confiscation; yet in spite of the imprisonment of Kluers was persisted in.

The treatment inflicted on Editor Kluers in prison cries to heaven for vengeance and is a mockery of all human sentiment. On August 22nd he received from his daughter the news that his wife, who was living at Kiel with the children, was seriously ill, had been taken to the hospital, and desired greatly to speak with him. He asked to be released, inclosing the telegram, but only after weeks of delay did he receive a negative reply. On September 10 Kluers was again informed that his wife, who was dying, begged to be allowed to speak to him; again the Military Government refused the request. On September 22 the attending physician certified that she was at the point of death. The next day this certificate was in the hands of the local commandant, but it was not sent to Kluers until six days later, on the 28th of September. Meanwhile, on the 25th, he had received a telegram from his daughter that his wife was dead and would be buried on the 27th. Immediately inclosing the telegram, he demanded to be allowed at least to attend the funeral. On the evening of the 26th he was still without a reply. He telegraphed to his lawyer, begging him to come immediately and confer with him; but this telegram was not allowed to be sent until the 30th, three days after the burial.

Having received no reply whatever, he had to give up taking any part in the funeral.

Finally, on October 2, he received a notice, dated September 30, that his request was denied, since the burial of his wife had already taken place.

Really, one wonders whether these are men of flesh and blood who are capable of giving such answers, or whether they are modern torturers, executioners who play with the moral agony of others and who martyrize the most sacred feelings of the human heart.

[In replying to these facts Mr. Helfferich contented himself with saying that Mr. and Mrs. Kluers were estranged. It was merely a matter, then, of the wife's desire to reconcile herself with her husband on her death-bed!]

There are other facts which prove that this was a deliberate and conscious torture of a defenseless man. In order to explain his absence at the funeral Kluers telegraphed to Kiel that he had not yet received a reply; this telegram was not sent until three days after the funeral. His son who is at the front, and who had received permission to attend the funeral, was painfully

impressed by his father's absence. He wrote to him on September 29 that he desired to speak to him, as his furlough extended to October 4. The letter reached the local authorities on September 30, but was not delivered to Kluers until October 4, the day when the furlough expired; that is the way they prevented an interview between father and son. Even before the death of the mother, when the son was leaving for the front on September 9, he tried in vain to be admitted to see his father. In all this, therefore, there is a method and a system.

There are other rascalities besides. On October 1 Kluers' lease expired, and on September 22 he asked for permission to rent a new apartment and make preparations for removal. On September 28 and 30, and again on October 2, he renewed his demand for a decision; the result was that they sent a police agent to him, who advised him to get a friend to look for a new house and take care of the moving. The landlord cited Kluers in court to have him evicted, but the permission asked by Kluers to attend the trial was refused.

Through these and similar persecutions the authorities are making this man's life a hell; yet there is nothing against him, except political ideas which are in disfavor, and for which, without any legal justification, he has been thrown into preventive prison. We are compelled to conclude that he is being pursued systematically with the purpose of destroying him.

Public "safety" has nothing whatever to do with all this. This system, which grows worse the longer it lasts, is purely a matter of arbitrary brutality.

Tyranny in the Province.

This system is applied to the provinces as well as to Berlin. At Dusseldorf six of our members were thrown into the so-called preventive prison at the end of July for having distributed leaflets. Among them were Schotte, an editor, and Kulich, Secretary of the syndicate. They have been in prison more than two months and a half, and up to the present moment none of them has been allowed to communicate with a lawyer.

Two of these imprisoned persons were shut up for weeks in the police station with criminals; in the cell there was no bed, and they had to sleep on wooden planks without undressing. It was impossible to bathe, the food was unfit to eat, and they were not permitted to exercise. Amid the most primitive and outrageous conditions these men had to remain without redress until, after repeated complaints, they succeeded in obtaining better quarters. One of these prisoners, having asked the reason of his arrest, received from the military authorities of Munster the reply that perhaps he would be heard as a witness before the Leipsic court and that is why this man has been three months in prison!

(To be Concluded.)

WHO IS TO BLAME?

"Not we," the rulers shout;
"And how the war has come about
We can't make out."

"Not we," statesmen protest.
"Our wish for peace we oft expressed;
We did our best."

"Not we," the nations cry."
Across the seas denials fly,
Incessantly.

And 'mid the Babel, still
The toilers ask in mine and mill:
"Who'll pay the bill?"

—The Public.

The working class never got more than a living. The standard of living of the working class may rise or fall, but the worker's share of the product of his labor remains the same—just a living.

DISGUSTED WITH WAR

Editor's note.—The following statement was brought to America by "underground" means and published first in the New York Call. The statement is by a French Socialist sufficiently prominent to give sensational value to his statement if the name could be used. The American Socialist is, however, unable to publish the name of the author or to give any other details concerning it or the means by which it was brought to America:—

By a Prominent French Socialist.

Briand, Lloyd George and others recognize the seriousness of the military situation. The changes of government in England and France are manifestations of general discontent at the failure of military operations.

Military blunders have been mounting for two and one-half years. Every one in France is now anti-militarist. Peasants, clerks, workmen, Parisians, Bretons, soldiers from the invaded regions, men from central and southern France—all.

In France 98 per cent. of the soldiers and civilians want peace—a lasting peace. From 25 to 30 per cent. want peace at any price, upon any terms, or no terms. Every one is sick of the whole thing.

It will astonish me if there is no revolt at the front if the army is forced to spend the winter of 1917-18 in the trenches.

There are no volunteers for the gaps in the firing line. There are numerous deserters and insubordinate soldiers, not a few of them being men previously decorated with the Croix de Guerre for heroism under fire.

Such deserters are no longer shot, for the authorities are afraid. Neither are there courts-martial, for such offenses, insubordinates being merely sent back to the front.

Many Police Are Hanged.

The gendarmes are loathed and are not infrequently killed by hanging. The matter is hushed up. Men exposed to the conditions that obtain at the front laugh at the death penalty.

In my opinion, peace must be made soon. The Socialist Congress was obsessed by the idea of peace. France is terrified with the extent of its losses—1,250,000 dead and missing—the "missing" are mostly dead.

There are from 700,000 to 800,000 men suffering from major mutilations. Rennes is like a Fifteenth century court desmiracles. Nothing but one-legged and one-armed men, soldiers blind in one eye or in both, with ghastly face wounds, etc.

Briand is well aware of Socialist feeling, and since his government can retain power only through Socialist support, the premier does his best to be conciliatory. Briand wanted a unanimous motion from the chamber on President Wilson's note, desiring to rely on public opinion favorable to Wilson. To a number of Socialist deputies Briand said:—

"At the first serious overtures for peace, I shall fling myself on them as misery has now flung itself on our distraught world."

Appealed to Editor.

The French press was against Wilson at first, but Briand summoned the principal editors and begged them to take a line favorable to the president. It is certain that when peace comes Wilson will be the arbiter. Hence will follow disarmament. There will be no attempt to crush any defeated belligerent. The formation of small nationalities will be encouraged. It will be a triumph of democracy.

Americans must know that it was on account of various treasonable acts in relation to negotiations for a separate peace in relation to Roumania that

Sturmer was forced to resign, the prime mover in the Sturmer treachery having been the czarina.

Points at Russian Treachery.

Trepoff's public announcement about Constantinople, and that of the czar, which followed it, were probably made to tie the hands of the allies and to hamper the entente. I imagine, however, that these pledges about Constantinople will come to nothing, owing to the way in which Russia has carried out various acts of treachery against her allies.

The ill feeling in France about the agreement to give Russia Constantinople was widespread and deep. Russia may be offered Alexandretta in exchange.

The spring push will be made in the direction of Syria, an attempt to break the German thrust toward Bagdad. Egypt has fully a million English soldiers; with Russians on the other side, the Turks will be between two fires.

France Simply Worn Out.

There will be no great movement on the Western front. France is simply incapable of an offensive on a grand scale, being worn out and in a state of complete nervous exhaustion.

What does it matter if the Germans get nearer to Odessa? It would be a good thing for democracy. Russia, when peace comes, would be compelled to adopt a Western political system, to imitate France, England, and the United States.

You will see that the territorial losses resulting from the war will be sustained by Russia, Turkey, and Austria. This is all in the interest of progress.

The effect of the struggle will be revolutionary.

The finances of France are managed from hand-to-mouth loans and indirect taxes—which will fall on an exhausted people.

To-day, if it were not for the moratorium for rents and for the allowances to the dependents of soldiers, the war would soon come to an end, for there would be a general revolution.

Frenchmen at the front make the best of the situation because their families are not yet starving. But in central France letters are being received from peasants on the firing lines directing their relatives not to produce anything more from the land than they need for their own use, that the war may the sooner be brought to a close.

Russ Socialists Oppose

(Continued from page one.)

ing a crisis extremely grave. The international shambles continues, and the crisis is reaching its culmination. At such a moment it is more than ever our duty to speak frankly and to declare explicitly to the working classes that we shall have nothing to do with the traitors and that we have nothing in common to discuss with Renaudel, Pletchanoff and Vandervelde or with Scheidemann, Leusch or Sudekum. Our allies, our friends, are Liebknecht, MacLean, Hogland and the workers of Germany, England, Sweden, Russia, etc., who are fighting against their own respective Governments.

"These are the motives governing our refusal to participate in the Conference of the Entente Socialists."

"At the same time we turn to the International Socialist Commission of Berne with the proposal that a conference be convened by the Zimmerwaldian (International) organization invited to the conference of the Entente in order that such Zimmerwaldian organizations may adopt a common action in opposition to the Congress of the Entente."

The Central Committee of the Russian Socialist Party

The above manifesto appeared in full in Avanti (the Italian official organ, and has been translated for the Labor Leader. We are pleased to reproduce it for the Canadian Forward readers.