

THE TRYING TIMES OF PEACE.

We Face a New World; What Are We Going To Do?

(By Samuel Gompers, President A. F. of L.)

The United States of America is the greatest democracy in the world. It is a vast, far-flung country composed of many races, many creeds, many opinions, many beliefs. It is a country that prides itself on the independence of thought and action of the individual. And because of that pride, it is a country that is free to argue, to struggle, to conflict.

This is not to be deplored. Quite the contrary. It is to be exulted in. It is the very life of the country. It is the very life of the world. In the harmonious reconciliation of varied opinions lies progress. And in the very effort of every citizen to improve himself, his fellows, and his country, lies the safety of democracy itself.

I am not of those who hold contentment to be the end of desire. Contentment, to my way of thinking, means stagnation. While a healthy discontent is a birth of aspiration for better things, and even though we are the greatest democracy that the world has ever seen, it would be a foolish act to be content to let our faults or our ignorance grow.

One of our greatest faults is that too many are extremists. Along the road we follow, many are prone to go too far. Like our gallant boys in France, we are sometimes not content to stop at our objectives. We dash on ahead, and are caught in our own barrage.

This is understandable. It is in a way forgivable. It is because we are a young nation, full of enthusiasm and strength and courage. But it is dangerous, and costly. And even before the war this fault had led us into grave trouble.

Business, organization, from reasonable limits, had grown too great and menacing. Trusts, combinations and corporations; they had gone beyond the legitimate field of development into the illegitimate field of manipulation, stock jobbing, and domination of our political and judicial life. The whole wealth of the land was being taken from the hands of the many and placed within the grip of the few. We were in danger of becoming, like the Mexico of a decade ago, a country of two classes; the vastly rich and the pitifully poor.

That such a condition is both wrong and fatal is beyond argument. There is neither justice nor common sense in a condition that allows one man to have a hundred million dollars and a hundred million men to have nothing at all.

A condition where the few possess much and the many possess little is not democracy. It is an oligarchy. Its further development could not and would not, have been tolerated. This condition was brought about by another extreme: the over-throwing of a single god of all races that a democracy must serve. We had come to spend too much time before our favored fetish, individualism.

Every man, each woman, had come to think too much of, and work too much for, himself and himself. It is the relation of each man and woman to all other men and women that makes a nation great. No matter how fine our soldiers were, they never could have defeated the Germans at Chateau-Thierry had they gone in one at a time.

This condition, in turn, had made for lack of interest in citizenry and in the country. When each citizen is thinking only of himself, their mutual affairs suffer. Their Government goes to ineffectualness, or worse. It is like a business with efficient clerks, but inefficient management. Such a business cannot survive if it is continued in such a way.

In all the affairs of our republic there was no element or group which expressed manifested and secured a larger thought and action for mutually as well as individualism than the much-misunderstood

and off-misrepresented organized labor movement—the American Federation of Labor.

That the war contributed much toward changing the whole phase of our individualism, none can truthfully gainsay. Of a sudden, one day we forgot all others. And it was then that democracy arose in all its magnificent might. All internal differences vanished in the face of an external danger. All national conflicts were subordinated to the exigency of an international war.

Almost as a result of this war, we have seen a new birth of mutualism, and as such members of, and partners in, a true democracy. And during our four months of war we remained true to democracy. Labor, capital, business, society, worked hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder for victory. Never has the democracy of the United States of America risen to such an exalted height. It was the final test of our national abilities and the last justification of our form of government.

We had shown what a democracy could do, and how it could do it. And now what?

We are once more at peace. Shall we prove ourselves to be less able, less noble, less courageous, less firm in time of peace than in time of war? Did we have to have a direct and dire menace hanging over our heads to make us do what we should have done just and sensibly? Shall we, once that menace is removed, flop supinely back to confusion, injustice, selfishness and the hyper-individualism that was once our bane?

I know the American people. And I know they will not be at once so lax and so misguided. But they must make no mistake. The fight before them lies long and bitter.

There is the immigration question. There are the trusts, the corporations, the railroads.

There is the problem of demobilization and the returned soldier. There is the reorganization of industries.

Business must be relieved and encouraged. There is an understanding to be gained between the employers and the workers.

There is the feeding and financing of the world, in which we must help to do our share.

There is justice as well as unwarranted unrest, the first of which must be met intelligently and sympathetically; the second must be met at every step.

It will be the work of all of us, and for years.

There have been those, perhaps, who still to this day have fondly and foolishly deemed that, at the signing of the peace, we could return at once to the soft and selfish days of before the war.

It is for these people, and for all the world, to know that those days are dead and buried. They lie as far behind us in fact as the Middle Ages. They are gone. And they will never return.

We face a new world today, with a new set of problems; problems so involved, so complicated, so far-reaching, as to be today for the most part even unimaginable. The future lies in the lap of the gods; and into that lap not even the wisest men of earth have been able to look.

What will become of Russia? Who can tell? Into what country's breast will another year find the gaunt wolf of Bolshevism sinking its shining teeth and bloody claws?

No one knows. No one can know. We can only know that the one weapon that has been found to fight it is food. No matter what the ideas and aspirations of a country may be, it cannot get freedom, nor practice freedom, on an empty stomach. The hungry may tear down. But he cannot uphold. Hungry stomachs can never make reasoning brains. The discontent of hungry people leads nowhere except confusion, chaos and reaction. Today any Lenin may call their government what they will; but it is in point of fact as bloody a tyranny as the world has ever known.

It is the first hunger that we must fight. And we must fight the cause of hunger. These are first economic



PRESIDENT GOMPER'S.

must be based on mutual understanding, mutual faith, mutual endeavor, mutual patience and mutual trust. To that task no body of men will give more potential service than the organized labor movement of America.

Let us of America face these new labors, then, in the spirit of individualistic mutualism—the spirit of the real democracy.

A Period Of Drift.

By F. M. Draper, in Ottawa Labor Day Annual.

Sir John McLaren, president of the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, remarked recently that "We seem to have entered on a period of industrial drift," meaning thereby that now the war being over, the industrial world is drifting along in extraneous ways, and, regardless of the dangers it holds in store for the world, that this expression of a strike must either fail, or end in revolution. They are not against the capitalists, but against the community. It is not the capitalists who suffer, but the people. Against such strikes, the Government must protect the people or surrender its functions. The effect of such strikes is to decrease production and increase the price of all commodities.

"In view of the national situation and the possibility of a grave shortage, it is imperative that the trades unions face the facts. The outstanding ones are that the war is over, that competitive laws are being repealed, that food and raw materials required for the subsistence of Great Britain must be bought from countries over whose markets our Government has no control, and that commodities must be paid for with 'bills not paper'."

Looking nearer home, we find that the New York Review, an organ established for the avowed purpose of "resisting the unthinking drift towards revolutionary innovation," deals very hotly with this all-important question. It claims that the true organizers of Labor, in the future, will not advise sympathetic strikes, but will resort to the ballot to control the various situations that may arise. It says: "If organized labor can control the elections, a general strike, or anything like it, is a blow—and possibly a fatal blow—against themselves. If, on the other hand, they are a minority, and as in the case of the revolutionaries, a minority of a minority, an attack on industrial organization or any vital part of it will only cause the public to turn all its powers of science to defeat, and, if necessary, to crush the conspiracy. But—and this is the crux of the whole situation—the powers that be, ordained by the will of the people, must not abdicate."

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Actual Experience

The Ontario Temperance Act is Emptying Ontario's Jails

Jail Commitments Before and After Passage of the Act.

ALL CRIMES	DRUNKENNESS
1915—20,337	1915—6,235
1918—13,242	1918—2,595

From Annual Reports of Inspectors of Prisons 1915 and 1918, and Schedule H. Report of the Board of License Commissioners for Ontario for the year 1918.

ONTARIO'S experience with prohibition under the Ontario Temperance Act since September 16, 1916, has been all the argument any fair-minded man or woman wants, to prove that the Act should neither be repealed nor weakened by Amendments.

Jail Commitments for crimes and offences of all kinds have decreased more than one-third since 1915.

Jail Commitments for drunkenness alone decreased from 6,235 in 1915, the year preceding the Act, to 2,595 in 1918.

Jail Commitments for drunkenness decreased despite the fact that the Act makes drunkenness in public places a "prima facie" offence, punishable by fine or imprisonment, whether accompanied by "disorderliness" or not. A drunken man on the street has become a rare sight.

The number of commitments for drunkenness in Ontario in 1918 was the lowest in seventeen years, although the population of the Province increased by over 500,000.

Some jails received no drunkards in 1918 at all. Others show well nigh unbelievable decreases, notably in the cities and larger towns.

Do you want to see the taste for alcoholic beverages revived, and the population of Ontario's prisons, jails and lock-ups restored?

If you are convinced that drunkenness is undesirable in this Province mark X in the "No" column after each question.

"No!"—Four Times—"No!"

Each and every one of the four questions on the ballot paper in this Referendum must be answered or your ballot is "spoiled." And unless you mark X after each question in the "No" column, the Ontario Temperance Act will be spoiled, and years of Temperance progress lost.

Ontario Referendum Committee

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Vice Chairman and Secretary
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