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Red Week
Plans
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THE CANADIAN FORWARD

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"Forward" Editor Charged With Sedition

Attack Upon the Liberty of the Press

By J. McArthur Conner.

On Wednesday morning, April 18, the offices of the Canadian Forward were visited by Detective Mitchell of the Toronto Police Force with the result that the following morning our Dominion Secretary, Mr Isaac Bainbridge, was summoned to appear at the Police Court to answer to a charge of sedition.

The charge is based on the printing of the Defence Speech of Mr Fenner Brockway, which appeared in the "Labour Leader" Thursday, December 14, 1916, and sold throughout the United Kingdom. The case was widely commented upon in the British Press. The Christian Commonwealth, in its issue, of December 13, 1916, said:—

"Mr Fenner Brockway has been sentenced to 112 days' hard labor for refusing to obey a military order. . . . In his defence, Mr Brockway stated that he could have obtained exemption from all military service by undertaking work of national importance, but, believing "all war to be wrong," he refused to bargain with the military authorities. We sympathize with Mr Brockway's idealism, we admire his courage and consistency; it is painful to think of him undergoing hard labor in prison. . . . At the same time the fidelity to conviction and witness for what they believe to be the truth and right of fine spirits like Mr Brockway cannot fail of their effect."

Such is the opinion of one of the leading Christian papers in England, which is an ardent supporter of the War regarding the trial

A Reproduction and A News Item.

Towards the end of December the Labor Leader appeared in the Church Street Library and the defence could be read by all who visited the library. As Mr Brockway is well known among the English-speaking Socialists throughout the world, the editor reproduced the article in the Canadian Forward, January 27, 1917, and the demand for the issue was greater than anticipated, with the result the issue sold out. In order to meet the demand 5,000 leaflets were printed of the defence. Hence the trial of the Dominion Secretary.

This then is a case where the authorities in the United Kingdom did not think that any harm was done by publishing the defence in the Labor Leader, yet here we have the authorities trying to curtail in Toronto the liberties of speech and press. Surely the authorities have forgotten the liberties allowed our forefathers in the Toronto press. For on December 30, 1837, in the Toronto Daily Mirror, we find an article under the signature of William Lyon Mackenzie, which reads as follows:—

"They have bestowed millions of our lands on a company of Europeans for nominal consideration and left them to fleece and impoverish our country—they have spurned our petitions, involved us

in wars, excited feelings of national and sectional animosity in counties, town-



ISAAC BAINBRIDGE, Editor.

ships and neighborhoods, and ruled as Ireland has been ruled, to the advantage of persons in other lands and to the prostration of our energies and people." Mackenzie was allowed to write that, yet seventy-nine years later Mr Bainbridge is charged with sedition for reproducing the defence of Mr Brockway which happened in the British press. Surely we must be losing in Canada the freedom of the press

A defence Fund has been opened, and we appeal to the readers of the Canadian Forward for financial assistance to carry this case through and preserve for this country the liberty of the press, which is one of the foundations on which British Democracy rests.

Where We Stand

In the meantime the policy of the paper will continue to be the same which is based on the resolution on war adopted unanimously at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart, 1907, and reaffirmed unanimously at the Congress of Amsterdam, 1910, and at the Special Peace Congress, held at Basle, 1913, which is as follows:—

If war threatens to break out it is the duty of the working class in the countries concerned and of their Parliamentary representatives, with the help of the International Bureau, as a means of co-ordinating their action, to use every effort to prevent war by all means that seems to them most appropriate, having regard to the sharpness of the class struggle and the general political situation.

Should war none the less break out, their duty is to intervene to bring it promptly to an end, and with all their energies to use the political and economic crisis to rouse the populace from its slumbers and hasten the fall of capitalist dominion."

Let us rally under the Socialist Ban-

ner and hasten the dawn of Human Brotherhood.

Taken From Press Reports.

Magistrate Colonel Denison committed Isaac Bainbridge to trial on a charge of issuing seditious literature. Bainbridge, who is editor of the Canadian Forward, official organ of the Social Democratic Party in Canada, and secretary of the party, pleaded not guilty to the charge. It is charged that he is responsible for the appearance and circulation of a pamphlet setting forth the defence speech of one Fenner Brockway, an English Labor man and editor of the Labor Leader, the British Socialist paper, courtmartialled at Chester Castle and sentenced to serve two months for refusing to obey a military order. Five thousand copies of this pamphlet were printed and put into circulation, according to the evidence of the police. The defence criticized English Tribunals, claiming that they did not administer the law and called war "murder," qualifying this, however, by stating that every soldier was not a murderer. The British Government was not alone responsible for the war, and he condemned Great Britain's alliance with Russia.

Inspector of Detectives Kennedy was the only witness called. He said the circular had been sent to his office and that he had deputed Detective Mitchell to call on Bainbridge, who admitted he authorized the circulation of the pamphlet.

"I asked him," added the inspector, "if these were his views, but he would neither deny nor confirm them."

The magistrate carefully read the pamphlet.

"This is certainly against the interests of the country, and its circulation is calculated to do harm," announced His Worship.

"Pooh!" exclaimed Mr O'Donoghue, laughingly, "You could read as bad as that in Jack Canuck or the Catholic Register."

"Why don't you include the Orange Sentinel?" asked Crown Attorney Corley.

"I think this man should be sent to a Reception Hospital for a month," said Magistrate Denison, committing Bainbridge for trial.

"I don't agree with all that published, but I think people should be allowed to express their views, even if they are opposed to the Government," said Mr O'Donoghue.

Mr Bainbridge was represented by Mr O'Donoghue, solicitor for the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, and elected to be tried by jury. Bail was allowed on one surety of \$1,000. The accused is well known among the Trade Unionists of Toronto, being a former officer of the International Union of Stonecutters. He has been a candidate at municipal elections.

HAIL! "RUSSIAN REVOLT!"
Eugene Debs.

Out of Russia, the land of despotism and dungeons, of exile and death, to political agitators flashes the red flame of revolution in the night of Capitalism's war.

Democracy has seized the throne where yesterday sat the spawn of Ivan the Terrible.

The chains of Russian autocracy have snapped, and the people are free to govern themselves.

What they will immediately do with this freedom, what the significance and goal of the revolution, we do not as yet know. Much is doubtless hidden in the capitalist press reports. The outside world will probably be in the dark until the war is over.

But this we do know: that Socialists, and revolters against social injustice, representing the most radical elements in Russia—rebels who for years have risked the wrath of Czarism by their love for humanity—led the revolution; we know that a proclamation has been issued that decrees "an immediate general amnesty for all political and religious offenses, including terrorist acts and military and agrarian offenses; liberty of speech and of the press; freedom for alliances, unions, and strikes; abolition of all social, religious and national restrictions. . . . communal election to be based on universal suffrage."

The press despatches further tell us that the Socialists are rapidly forming themselves into a political party. We know that Paul Miliukoff, who, when visiting this country a few years ago, was denied an audience by Theodore Roosevelt, then President, because he was a revolutionist and an "undesirable citizen" of Russia, has been made Foreign Minister of the new Russian Government; we know that the exiled Socialists and political offenders are home by this time from the hell of Siberia; that, according to press despatches, the glorious "grandmother of the Russian revolution," Catherine Breshkovskaya, 43 years in prison or exile, arrived in Petrograd, from the Siberian tomb to which Czarism had driven her, on Mar. 23; and that to-day the Red Flag of Universal Brotherhood floats over the Winter Palace of the Czars; and knowing these things, and with eyes looking forward fearlessly and hopefully to the triumphant International Revolution of the Workers, we can lift our voices in fraternal greetings, over continents and seas, with "All hail the Russian Revolt! Long live the Social Revolution!—Social Revolution."

SOCIALISM.

You came like one out of the night
To fill this earth with gladness and light;
You've opened a heaven before our eyes
Wherewith to see through the centuries
The reign of justice and the rule of light.

I have listened to the call of thy sweet music,
And the vibration of it has fired my soul;
Onward, onward, to thy destined goal,
For you are the hope of the world,
The redeemer of all mankind.

SAMUEL BLAUNER,
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