

in this fair Dominion of ours. And now Richard is to have his salary amputated. Let us hope that some day in the near future we will see honesty in public administration and economy in the expenditure of the people's money.

THE EMPIRE FARM

Men high in the councils of Empire have devised a scheme described elsewhere in this issue, by which, if it were worked, Canadian agriculture would be saddled with most of the imperial war debt. According to this proposal the undeveloped natural resources of the Empire are to be withheld from use or their title retained until a land hungry people is willing to pay off the war debt in order to gain possession of them. The most ambitious detail of this colossal proposition is the purchase from the Dominion government of 200,000,000 acres of agricultural land in Western Canada, chiefly, of course in the northern districts. The price to be paid is estimated at the modest sum of one dollar an acre, which the government would be required to expend in developing the territory. It is apparently the idea to promote settlement, but to retain the title until the presence of population has increased the value of the land to \$100 an acre, when it would be sold, the sum thus realized amounting on paper to some twenty billions of dollars with which the cost of the war would be liquidated.

This visionary and impractical scheme might be passed over in silence but for the high source from which it emanates. Canada's problem is not to extend the boundaries of her settlements, but to fill up the vacant sections in districts already partly settled and served with railways. It would be folly indeed for her to endeavor to serve her now unsettled hinterland with an expensive railway system, without which no settlement is possible. She has had enough of building railways over

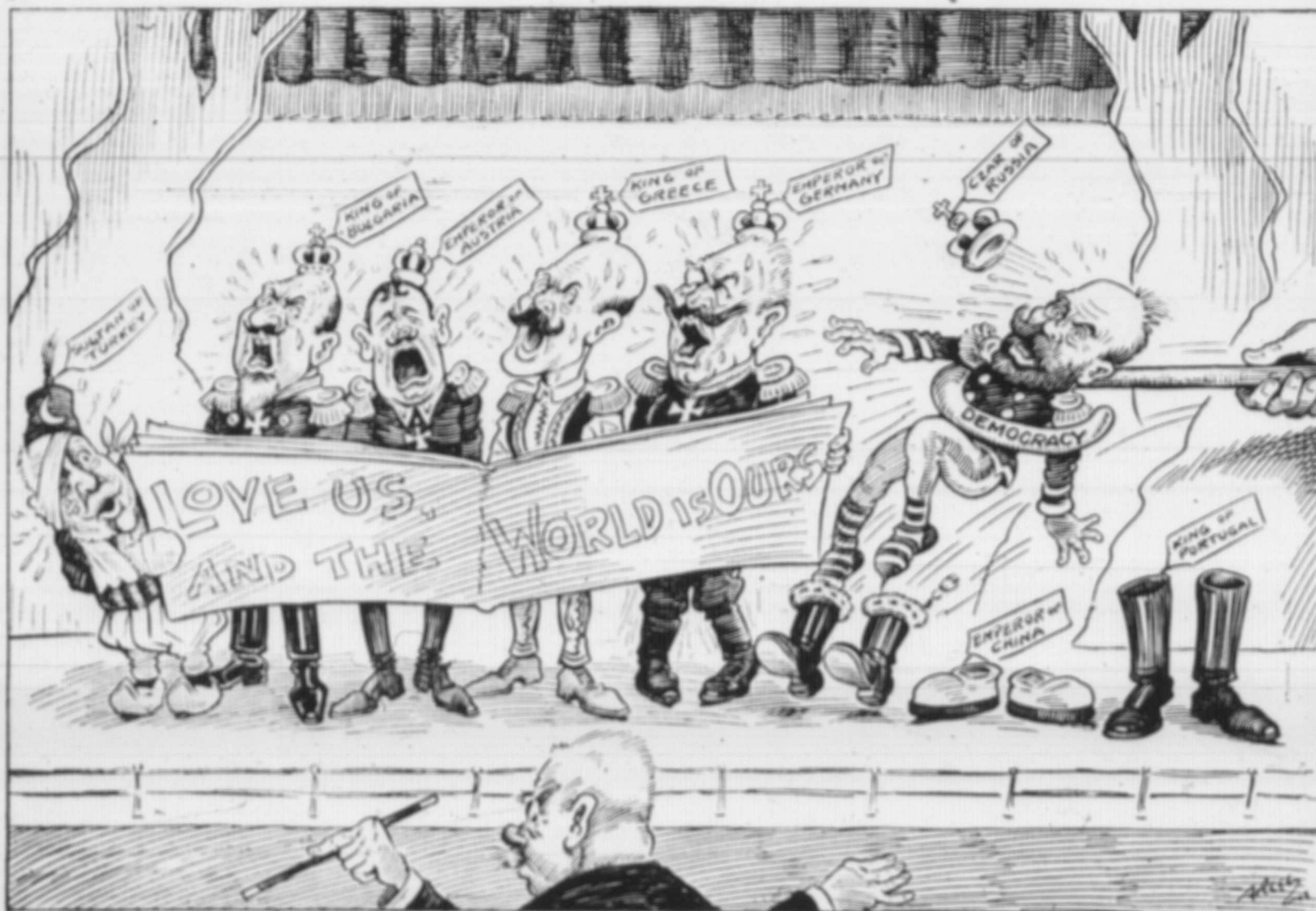
vacant lands to distant settlements. The Royal Commission states that it will take \$100,000,000 on top of the countless millions already spent to put the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern systems on a solid footing. The country is saddled with this enormous burden because she has built a railway system capable of serving 50,000,000 people, if properly distributed, for the accommodation of a scant 8,000,000. All the agricultural land available from these railroads has long since been alienated. The only land available is outside this system and much of it is of doubtful value for farming purposes. Canada has squandered her agricultural lands with such reckless prodigality that it is questionable if one quarter of the acreage could be found that would be satisfactory for agricultural purposes, and the dollar would have to decrease much further in value before each acre of such land would fetch 100 of them. Even if such prices could be realized it would only mean an increased burden to be carried by the farmers as it is pointed out by Mr. Buchanan elsewhere in this issue. By no method of reasoning, imperialistic or otherwise, can the fact be evaded that this scheme, if practicable, would succeed in unloading the British war debt on Canadian agriculture.

But visionary as the scheme is it contains an important principle. It recognizes that community values should be taken for governmental purposes. But if this principle is applicable at the extreme confines of the Empire, it is also applicable at the heart. The method of taking over these values would have to be somewhat different from that suggested. Instead of taking over the full capital value of the land at some future date, it would be necessary to take only the annual rental value. Doubtless however, the aristocratic landlords who sponsor the scheme would lose much of their enthusiasm for it if it were to include taking, for the payment of war or other public debt, the value of the land of which their

ancestors robbed the British people.

Sir Adam Beck, that doughty champion of public ownership, is making things warm for the MacKenzie and Mann interests. Recently in the Ontario legislature he charged them openly with stealing power at the Falls. He also arraigned them for their questionable lobbying methods. Sir William MacKenzie in a letter to Premier Hearst, assumes the role of martyr, stating that he has reached the age when reputation is everything to him, and that he is going to defend it. Reputation is the place a man holds in the opinion of the people. The coterie who have engineered the C.N.R. deals may rest assured that the place they occupy in public opinion isn't worth defending.

Russian working men have appealed to the working men of the central powers to throw off the yoke of autocratic rule. It is reported that the tendency is no longer to regard the war as a struggle between nations, but as one between the new spirit of democracy and the old spirit of imperialism. The Russians believe that their success will mean a revolution in Germany. The effect on the Germans is made evident by the fact that reforms which the Kaiser and his military advisors have hitherto refused to discuss are now being introduced by the government. The socialistic element of the Reichstag makes demands that are far reaching. One of these is that the Reichstag have control over the formation and breaking off of alliances, and over the making of peace and war. Another is that the Chancellor, who has hitherto been the channel thru which the imperial will was transmitted to the Reichstag, be dismissed if that body so demands. This would make him not the servant of the Kaiser, but of the people. Democracy is the antidote for war. The progress of events strengthens the hope that the war will result in the spread of that democracy under which war would be no more.



WHO'S NEXT?