

R. A. Rigg, Socialist, on Anti-Registration

(Continued from Last Issue)

This, I think, will be conceded as obvious fact. But what is the popular attitude towards those two essential factors. The honorable Premier would conscript men, would conscript labor, both for industrial and for military purposes. But would he conscript capital? Has either he or any other recognized responsible authority suggested the conscription of capital? Labor must be conscripted, but, mark this, capital must be invited and protected by five per cent. interest. Labor must be compelled to give all that it has, life included, but capital must be permitted to acquire a mortgage stranglehold upon the producing capacity of the nation for hundreds of years to come.

Take the Victory Loan which is being raised in Great Britain at the present time. What is the attraction of the loan, the need of the nation? No, five per cent. interest. Likewise the Canadian War Loan. The Dominion Government debenture stock is offered to investors at par in sums of \$500 or multiples thereof, the principal repaid on October 1st, 1919, interest payable half-yearly at five per cent., the money to be applied for war purposes.

There you have the British and the Dominion Governments down on their knees supplicating capital to come to the aid of the Empire in its hour of extremity. The nation in the hour of its greatest need supplicated King Capital to generously come to its aid and promises to pay five per cent. interest.

Do you call that national service? It ought to be called exploiting the very lifeblood of the nation. I think that if Shakespeare had been alive today he would have discarded Shylock as the personification of insatiable greed and in his place he would have selected a five per cent. interest bearing war bond holding patriot.

The Winnipeg City Council, two weeks ago to-night, had before them a resolution seeking to approve of the national service registration scheme. An amendment was made that in addition to the registration of man power, and if there was to be any conscription of man power, that wealth should be registered and conscripted. Four Labor men voted for the amendment, all the rest of the members of the Council were in favor of the application of compulsion to man power, to conscript labor, and said "Keep your hands off the holy dollar."

If a Labor Government had been in power at this time and proceeded to conscript capital and offered special inducements to labor on a voluntary basis, what a howl of condemnation would be received from the ranks of the capitalists. My opinion, having looked in and out, all around and through this scheme, is that the national service registration scheme is a very subtle method, intended to manacle labor and to make labor more completely the abject slave of capital than it is now, in order that exploitation may be more efficient and complete.

WOULDN'T HAVE A CHANCE.

I heard of a very important official of one of our biggest employing corporations being at dinner the other day at the Fort Garry Hotel, and what I am going to say I say with the reservation of one who has been told, but with a considerable amount of confidence in the individual who gave me the information; that this important official of this big corporation in the

course of the conversation with his friends at the dinner table made reference to a demand that was being made upon his corporation to increase the wages of their employes, and he said: "The nerve of these men to come and ask for increased wages at this time.



If only we had this national service scheme in operation they wouldn't have a chance to do this." He evidently thinks that this bogus scheme of national service would help the capitalist class tremendously.

LABOR WON IN AUSTRALIA.

You know they submitted this question of conscription to a vote in Australia. You remember that in England registration preceded conscription, that in Australia registration preceded an attempt to foist conscription upon that country. In the Australian campaign every daily newspaper was on the side of conscription. Every newspaper of any character throughout the whole length and breadth of the continent, with the exception of a few Labor papers, were in favor of conscription, and yet in spite of these tremendous forces for controlling and forming public opinion, the vote went against conscription. But when it was seen that the majority opposed to conscription from the civilian vote was very small, the hopes of the conscriptionists rose strong in their breasts and they said, "Wait till we get the soldier vote," and when they got the soldier vote they found that it had gone more definitely against conscription than even the civilian vote had done.

GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND IS HEADED BY SOCIALIST.

If any nationality has reason to be glad about the downfall of Russian autocracy, the Finnish people certainly have. I am sure every Finlander, excluding those who were benefitted by the old regime, will feel a deep gratitude towards those who assisted the revolution.

According to the latest news despatches from Helsingfors, Finland also, it now has a new senate, which is Finland's supreme executive body. This was agreed on after prolonged negotiations by all political parties. The new senate consists of twelve members and is chosen according to party divisions in Parliament. Six of these twelve are Socialists, and the head of the government is a Socialist, Comrade M. Tokoi, some years past a miner in the United States and member of the Western Federation of Miners.

The Social-Democratic party is the largest party in Finland at present. It

now has a majority on the Diet and control of the senate. Other parties represented in the new government are: Old Finnish party, Young Finnish party, and Swedish Popular party. This cosmopolitan government has already organized a new judicial department, excluding the former reactionary officials, and appointing instead the country's best jurists in their place. And when we take in consideration that the new government in Russia has given constitutional autonomy to Finland, the new Finnish government will have a free hand to work. And they will work in the right direction, we can be sure of that.

For more than a hundred years Finland has been a part of the Russian empire, a grand duchy, so-called, and in the past twenty years the "Russianization" of Finland has proceeded relentlessly. And yet, in spite of this aggression, and especially during the most ruthless oppression Finland has taken her place as one of the most progressive nations in the whole world.

The world already knows that in Finland every man and woman has a voice, that they have proportional representation; women representation in the Diet, and many other radical measures. All these they got by fighting for them. They got them when conditions were most oppressive. What will they do now, when they have constitutional liberty?

During the Russian oppression, the working class in Finland had to fight against two enemies: the Finnish capitalist class and the Russian autocracy. Now when the latter is a thing of the past, they can concentrate their efforts more strongly against the capitalist class.

This revolution did not overthrow capitalism in Finland. No; capitalism is still there. But constitutional autonomy will give the working class freedom of speech, press and assemblage and to the nation as a whole wider self government. There is a world of difference, living in the constitutional state and in the autocratic state.

This newly gained freedom cost the blood, lives and liberties of hundreds and thousands of revolutionists in Russia and in Finland. Those daring souls began the agitation among the peasants and the working people, which resulted in the nation-wide revolutionary wave that swept the country like a prairie fire. Yorkers in these two countries worked hand in hand and dreamed of better days. Years ago the Socialists in Finland realized that the freedom of their country can only be gained by assisting the revolutionists in Russia to overthrow the tyrannical government. Now we see that they were correct.

Yes, indeed, we have a reason to be glad.—American Socialist.

Jingoism Up-to-Date.

(Old-Style, 19th Century.)

We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo! if we do,
We've got the men, we've got the ships,
we've got the money, too,
And the Russians shall not have Constantinople!

(New Style, 20th Century.)

You don't want to fight, but that's what you've got to do;
We'll take your sons, to fight the Huns,
we'll take your money, too!
For the Russians, they must have Constantinople!

POVERTY'S HANDICAP.

Prisoner (arrested for vagrancy)—
It's no crime to be poor.
Cell Mate—Maybe not; but you an' me can't afford to hire a lawyer to prove it ain't.

THE DEATH OF A PIONEER

James Lindala passed away, on March the 23rd, at his residence, 130 Peter Street, Toronto.

He had been in ill health for a considerable length of time, but his sudden collapse occasioned some surprise to his friends, as he had just recently recovered from an attack of "tumor of the stomach," which later resulted in his death.

Deceased had taken a prominent part in the movements that stood for the welfare of the workers (both industrial and political) and held a card in the Journeymen Tailors' Union, when he first landed in this country from Finland in 1887. The respect in which he was held was demonstrated by the large number of friends and sympathisers who followed the last remains to Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Comrade Lindala was not a spectacular individual, although he was sometimes called "The Finnish Lawyer," having seen the injustice meted out to his fellow-countrymen, who were sometimes imprisoned because of lack of legal defence, he made a study of the English language in order to better assist his fellow-workers by acting as their interpreter, in which capacity he figured in many Police Court proceedings.

He was better known to the English-speaking people by virtue of his prominence in the trade union of his craft, acting as their delegate to the A. F. of L. in 1910, and the part that he took in the formation of the Social Democratic Party of Canada. He became an active member of the Socialist party in Canada in 1905 and maintained his membership until such time as questions of policy became so pronounced that in the year 1911 he was elected one of the three delegates called to Port Arthur to consider the advisability of forming a new party. At a convention that was called later it was definitely decided that the Finnish Socialist Society and the Ontario Socialist Federation form a new party, the same to be called the Social Democratic Party of Canada, in which he took a deep interest and held many important positions in its administration.

The deceased was one of the first Finns to locate in Toronto, and with the exception of a brief time spent in the United States, he had resided in Toronto for 30 years, during the course of which he took a deep interest in civic government. He ran for Mayor in 1907, polling 8,277 votes. He also contested seats for alderman and Board of Education, but failed to make the grade.

The Finnish Socialist Band was in attendance, and the rendering of Finnish requiem music as the last remains of the warrior were being carried to the hearse, caused a deep impression on the vast crowd of onlookers. Many floral and oral tributes were presented by his kinsmen and comrades. The funeral was devoid of ostentation or ceremony, just a few plain simple words of commendation for a life of usefulness, and beneath the pain of parting words and the presence of sorrowing relatives, there was manifest a deep feeling of pride in the knowledge that he had kept the faith, and had fulfilled his obligations to his beloved wife and children, and proven true to himself and his class. The Finnish choir rendered the last chant in Finnish, and the fitting tribute of Comrade James Simpson, "He was a man," concludes to us the eventful career of one who during the whole course of his life demonstrated his oneness with a long suffering working class.

He leaves a widow and three children.

We tender to them our deepest sympathy.