

# THE SOVIET

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## Freedom of Speech and Assembly or Thug Rule

The petitions and resolutions demanding freedom of speech and assembly which have been sent from all parts of Canada to Ottawa have so far elicited but one reply—a more drastic application of thug rule.

Socialist meetings are not forbidden, but a few paid agents agitate amongst the returned soldiers and by insidious lies and gross misrepresentations incite a number of them to create disturbances, thereby making it extremely difficult to hold such meetings.

An instance of especially disgusting character was the attempt to precipitate a riot at a Socialist meeting held at the Orpheum Theatre, Edmonton, Sunday, February 9th. The individual responsible in this case was T. Dace, a member of the G. W. V. A., Edmonton—and I understand, a one time member of its executive committee, who now has a position on the land settlement commission. His actions suggest the thought that he is not in the Association to advance the interests of the returned men, but to divide them, and use those he can fool to accomplish the wishes of the despots to whom Dace looks for his meal ticket. A London Jew ready to do anything for thirty pieces of silver.

The returned boys in Edmonton are not easily led, this being well evidenced when a few weeks ago Dace did all in his power to disturb a meeting held in the Empire Theatre, at which Mr. George Paton, a well-known Albertan farmer, was speaking with Mr. Knight as chairman. Question after question was put and answered to the satisfaction of all but Dace, who tried by haranguing those around him to raise a racket; only desisting when it dawned upon him that he was alone, in fact the many veterans present highly enjoyed his discomfiture.

The attempt on the 9th inst. was more successful. Half an hour before the meeting started trouble was announced from three rows of young hoodlums from the University, who, as it later developed, were the advance guard. At 8 p.m. from the Veterans headquarters, where a special meeting had just concluded, many came trooping in, directed to their seats by the crooked finger of Chief Mobman Dace. Major Stafford was noticeable amongst them, who, of course displayed the manners of an officer and a gentleman. "I don't think."

Mrs. Knight was the speaker and she pluckily began her address, and only those present can appreciate the tact with which she handled an extremely delicate situation. At the conclusion of the address, the chairman called for the collection, stating that afterwards questions would be in order. Hardly had the chairman ceased speaking when up jumped the gallant Major Stafford and in pompous tones declared that it had been circulated around town that the Socialists were disloyal, and to prove that it was not so, would they conclude the meeting by singing "God Save the King." The chairman got up to explain that the meeting was not over, that there was yet questions and discussion, but while he was still speaking the gallants rose to their feet and started the singing. The audience with few exceptions rose to their feet, not mark you, in respect, but to leave the Agents Provoceur no possible excuse for their barbarian behavior. During the singing a red-headed but well-dressed ruffian was running up and down the aisles hunting out those who kept their seats; most of the offenders being women he got a much hotter reception than he bargained for. An incident which was rather significant took place quite near me. Dace seeing a man who looked very weak and ill sitting defiantly in his chair seized him and attempted to force him to his feet. With an ironic scowl the man turned the lapel of his coat and revealed a returned veteran's button. The cowardly Dace literally turned yellow. Directly the self-imposed choir had finished their dismal dirge, the audience seated themselves and a few questions were asked and

answered and the meeting closed. The splendid self-control of the audience alone saved the situation. The action of both Dace and Major Stafford indelibly stamp them as mean, contemptible Agents Provoceur.

The mists are clearing, however, and the time is not far distant when the workers, whether in uniform or in overalls, will know that their only hope lies in the Co-operative Commonwealth, and identical with that of the Socialists. Speed the day.

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Leaving the meeting I hid me to my lonely shack and to take my mind from the events of the evening, I commenced reading the eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon, but every line I read stamped the significance of what I had witnessed deeper into my mind. Page after page related how Louis Napoleon, when President in 1849, organized his notorious society of December 10th, and by their aid seized the Imperial throne of France. Over ten thousand of the dregs of society were secretly paid by him to applaud his very appearance and by their thug methods to break up every counter-demonstration, while the police looked on or when necessary assisted. While posing before the world as the Savior of Society; the Champion of Law and Order; of the rights of poverty, of family and religion, ten thousand thugs were paid by him to club their position into silence; to break up the club rooms and destroy the property of the working-class associations, and to disrupt their meetings.

Today the "powers that be" are more crafty than Louis Napoleon, and it is not necessary to pay ten thousand thugs. With the devilish cunning of a long experience in fooling and ruling the working-class, they raise a number of false issues upon which the workers divide and it is these fatal divisions that render the hosts of the working-class so impotent. The tremendous problem facing humanity today is the rapidly increasing army of unemployed, due to much improved productive machinery and the condition greatly accentuated by the demobilization of the army. Should the returned soldiers combine with their fellow-workers in overalls the doom of capitalism is sealed, consequently this contingency must be prevented at all costs. No, no, gentle reader, not by paying an army of ten thousand but by employing a few agents in each organization to play on the credulity of the members, to worm themselves into their confidence, to poison their minds against others of their own class, and in the end to betray them to their employers—the Master Class.

The irony of the past history of workers is that they only became aware of the traitors after the betrayal, but today events move in such rapid succession that the lie is discovered before it has time to do much damage, and woe to the traitor discovered.

Many thousands of the returned soldiers are today conscious that their only hope is the Co-operative Commonwealth. They are not to be purchased or led by such as Dace or the brave Major Stafford and tomorrow those that have been deceived and led will require an accounting. Then woe to Agents Provoceur and political pimps.

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In conclusion I would draw the attention of the working class to three thoughts:

First—A government job, without exception, compels allegiance to the political machine.

Second—The working class have nothing; therefore it is foolish to fight each other, as nothing can be gained, and

Third—If they would solidly combine, they can possess the world, as the owners of it are an insignificant few in comparison to their vast numbers.

## The Twentieth Century Spanish Inquisition

From an article written in the New Republic we take the following extracts:

"These poor fools of conscientious objectors, let them be fools. Let them be dogs. An officer is an officer and a gentleman. Does a gentleman take a dog and hold him under a drench of ice water till he faints and then take him outdoors and race him till he faints and then drag him back under the shower till he faints again? And does a gentleman take a dog and tie him down and pound him with water from a hydrant hose till he yelps into hysteria and then goes dumb into unconsciousness?"

But if you are a conscientious objector "never will you do any work under the order of Mr. Baker's department of blood and slaughter. You are court-martialed to forty years in jail."

"You are sent to serve it, perhaps to Fort Jay in New York. There you are ordered, militarily ordered, to work. You refuse. You are put into solitary confinement. There is a little hole for light in the roof. There is a little hole for light in the door. In the hole in the door there is a grating. You are chained to the grating. You stand. You stand in your underwear and bare feet. You get two slices of bread and a drink of water three times a day. You get no washing-water. At night, when you are loosed from your chains you are delivered to insects. You roll them off your body in little knotted lumps. For fourteen days you inhabit this cell. Then you are sent out-doors with an axe and with rations. You are to find your own firewood and make your own fire and cook your own food and live the life of the desert island, and not so bad. You do it for fourteen days. And then you go back to the solitary cell and the darkness and the starvation and the vermin and the chains. And, by the letter of our system, you may go on alternating between the desert and the cells for forty years. Mr. Baker has now abolished the chains but the rest remains."

Speaking of Camp Funston, he says: "Certain of those officers devised a combination of a sort of 'water cure' and wake cure. The idea was to break the consciences of the conscientious objectors by breaking their rest and by breaking their physical nervous systems. They march you round the guard house for a long time. They take you in and shower you. They march you again. They shower you again. You lie on your cot. They wake you and march you and shower you. You sleep. They wake you and make you march.

You begin to be weak. You lag. They throw you to the ground and beat you. They prick you with bayonets. You struggle on. You do not struggle fast enough! They step on your hands and sprain your ankle and still force you to march with each step a thrill of agony. You protest. You go on a hunger strike. They raise you from your cot and hurl you under the shower. You collapse under the shower. You lie in your cot in a coma. You are hurled outdoors in the cooler air and revived and hustled around the guard-house on your feet or on your hands, a rolling bundle of physical nervous wreckage. And again you are held under the cold water until the marrow of you is ice. And you are a baby now. You cry and shriek and blather and scream and cannot stop, and officers and gentlemen cause this sort of thing to be done to you for two whole weeks."

I carefully read the article and paused and carefully looked at the paper in my hands. Was I reading of the Spanish Inquisition or was I reading of the much talked of "Hun Atrocities?" No, I was reading the current issue of the New Republic. Then I remembered that we are making the world "Safe for Democracy" and I understood. I thought of the Bolsheviki and the so-called "reign of terror" and I remembered the words of Arthur Ransome in his concluding paragraph in "An Open Letter to America." Speaking of the Bolsheviki he said: "These men who have made the Soviet Government in Russia, if they must fail will fail with clean shields and clean hearts. . . . They will none the less have written a page in history more daring than any other which I can remember in the story of the human race. . . . and that page will be as white as the snows of Russia and the writing on it as bright as the gold domes that I used to see glittering in the sun when I looked from my windows in Petrograd." Will the page of history written on "Making the World Safe for Democracy" be in letters of gold or of blood? Let us away with cant and determinately take our stand for the immediate release of those men—not cowards—who adhered to principle in spite of the methods above described. If these are democratic methods then it is time that the working class shook themselves free from the chloroform that has dumbed their brains and realize that what they thought was democracy was in truth hypocrisy and it is for them to at once remove the mask and show capitalism in all its hideousness.

## More War or Socialism ?

In 1887 Frederick Engels wrote on the future prospects if capitalism continued and these are his words:

### Engel's Prophecy, 1887

"If it came to war again the Prussian-German army will undoubtedly have important advantages against opponents on account of its model organization; but never such advantages as in the last two wars—1866-1870. For instance, the unity of the chief command will hardly be as it was, thanks to fortunate circumstances at that time, and the corresponding absolute obedience of the seconds-in-command will not obtain. And the business relationship which now prevails between the agrarian and military nobility and stockjobbers may easily become fatal to the maintenance of the army on the field. Germany will have Allies, but they will leave one another in the lurch at the first opportunity.

"And, lastly, there is no other war possible for Prussia-Germany but a world's war, and that a world's war of such extension and violence as never has been witnessed before. From eight to ten millions of soldiers will be used to slaughter, and all Europe will be eaten bare.

"The devastation wrought during the Thirty Years' War will be compressed into a three of four years' war, spreading all over the continent famine, epidemic diseases, general demoralization of the armies and masses of the people, brought about through acute distress, irrecoverable confusion of the elaborate machinery of commerce, industry, and credit, ending in general bankruptcy, breakdown of the old States with their traditional State wisdom, so that dozens of royal crowns will be rolling on the pavement with nobody to be found to pick them up, absolutely impossible to foresee how all will end, and who will come out of the conflict as victor. But one result is certain—general exhaustion, and the creation of conditions for the eventual victory of the working class.

"This is the prospect which at last will bear its inevitable fruit if the system of competition in war preparedness is carried to breaking point. That is where you, my sovereigns and statesmen, with

your wisdom have brought the old Europe to.

"And if nothing is left for you but to begin the last great war dance—to us it will be all right.

"Perhaps the war may press us into the background for the moment, and we may lose some of our already gained positions, but when you have let loose the powers which you cannot subdue again, at the end of the tragedy you are ruined, and the victory of the proletariat will be won.—Frederich Engels, London, December 15, 1887.

Thus we have his predictions written 27 years before the outbreak of the war and who, today, will deny the fulfillment of same.

We feel that the social revolution is at present in travail and will shortly be born in a healthy condition and well fitted for the developing of the "New Social Order."

Needless to remark that the period of transition will be hard and bitter unless the whole of the exploited class awaken from their apathy and unite against the infinitesimal minority of the exploiters.

Should the great mass of the people fail to seize this opportunity and allow capitalism to continue on its blood-thirsty mission, the future will be appalling almost beyond description.

During the past four years we have been told that this was a war to end all wars; that this was the last war, and if the Allies were victorious we would have everlasting peace, as German militarism was the cause of war and when once it was defeated then we had nothing further to fear. The Allies are victorious and the war to end war is accomplished, but what is the result?

We read in the "New York Nation" November 30th, 1918, the following:

"Secretary Daniels asks appropriation from Congress of \$600,000,000 on top of the vast sums spent in the past eighteen months. He assures correspondents who assemble at his office that a great navy has never menaced the liberties of any nation. It is a large standing army which is to be feared. . . . The program which Mr Daniels presents, can have only one aim—the out-stripping of Brit-

ain. We are building for possible war with our chief Ally. There is no escape from the conclusion. The German naval power is broken, first by the surrender of its submarines and most powerful ships to the United States and Allies, and second by the rise of the German Socialist Republics. The Russian fleet is no longer a menace. A naval conflict with France is unthinkable—her fleet is negligible and Italy's even more so, while the Austrian fleet has disappeared. What navies remain save those of England and Japan? Japan is not to be feared, due to her geographical position. Plainly only England remains. Already her merchants and ship-owners are looking with dread upon the completion of our great merchant fleet. Naval rivalry will undoubtedly help to chill the new-born friendship. Is it any wonder that more men than ever before despair of Governments, that the Russian fleet with the Red Flag of internationalism at the fore has to many a more attractive appearance. At least the situation offers a wonderful opportunity for both Bolshevism and Socialism."

Did they lie, then, when they told us that this would be the last war?

Professor Paul Seippel of Zurich writing in the Journal of Geneva remarks "What distinguishes Japan from Prussia is its refined civilization and the fact that up to now it has made a point of respecting its international engagements. But the Japanese would still keep their plans of conquest even if the Europeans gave up theirs. In the European conflicts says M. Bellessort they see only the violent collusion of natural interests and distrust ideas of right and justice. If German Imperialism is overthrown and reduced to impotence there will still remain in the Far East another Imperialism which will be the greatest obstacle to the disarmament demanded by all the peoples of Europe as the sole means of escaping absolute ruin. To keep in awe this Ally of today, who may become the obstructive rival of to-morrow, the Anglo-Saxon nations will be obliged to retain, at the very least a sufficient naval armament."

That sounds like rumbling of a future war, but we have fought for four long weary years to end all war. We ask again have our ruling class been deceiving us? Further we are informed "New Republic" "It is a fact that France sponsored the Polish National Committee formed in Paris by Poles of undisguised imperialistic tendencies and gave it the support which led to its recognition by the Allies and United States as the provisional government of Poland. But what was it that made France adopt this course? The collapse of autocratic Russia, the interests of France, according to the conception of French diplomacy, required the presence of a powerful ally of France east of Germany."

Why an Ally we would like to know, if we are not to have any further wars?

We would like to know, if we are not to have any further wars.

The "New Republic" continues: "After the Russian debacle had taken place it was natural for the French Government to go in search of new Allies in the East. The Czecho-Slovaks and the Jugo-Slavs were, after many futile attempts on their part, suddenly raised to a position in relation to the Allies, which was beyond their own hopes. But Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia, with all their imperialistic aspirations, could each muster only a bare twelve million of population. It was altogether different with Poland, or at least with the Polish National Committee of Paris. The gentlemen of this committee had vision. Ethnographic Poland contained a population of 20,000,000 Poles, including 3,000,000 Jews, in 1914. The Poland of the quasi-radical Pilsudski and Daszynski embraced, in addition to Poland proper, only Lithuania and some sections of

Germany and Ukraine, making a total of 28,000,000 inhabitants. The Poland of Paderewski was somewhat better—it numbered 35,000,000 subjects. The Poland of another musical gentleman, Stokowski, numbered 38,000,000 people. But Poland of the leading spirit of the Paris Committee, Roman Dmowski, went even further. Numerically, Dmowski's Poland would constitute, in his own words "a new power representing between 35,000,000 and 40,000,000 people."

Dmowski's Poland undoubtedly looked tempting to France for his scheme termed "The Baltic League," is outlined as follows: "It called for a 'union' of Poland with Lithuania, Lettonia, Estonia, Finland, and even Denmark and Sweden. . . . Incidentally this would create an Ally of France in the East of some magnitude, stretching across Europe if Rumania be included from the Black Sea to the Arctic Ocean."

"To make Poland powerful France is clamoring for Allied military support of the new Polish puppet government, ostensibly as part of its campaign against Bolshevism in Lithuania, Ukraine, Lettonia, Estonia, and White Russia, but really in order to subject these territories to Poland. . . . In this manner it is possible to use Bolshevism as a cloak to hide the real objects of Imperialism."

"The Polish Imperialists, lacking support at home, went abroad to obtain the force necessary for the realization of their ambitions. French diplomacy gave them its support and is endeavoring to secure Allied aid for them, in order to build a new balance of power against Germany, which is treading new paths and groping towards a new light."

Thus a new world war, springing from the old Imperialistic game, will be the inevitable result.

"The new balance of power must be abandoned at its very inception. If it is allowed to develop, it will bring on another international disaster, league of nations or no league of nations."

Here we can distinctly see the seeds being sown for a future world-wide slaughter of the working-class. The diplomats are at their old game—balance of power with its concomitant WAR, whereby the wage-slaves of all countries are called upon to make the sacrifice while the diplomats stay at home wining and dining. Human lives are nought compared to territory and Imperialistic greed.

Mr. Asquith, ex-premier of Great Britain, stated "The enormous cost of keeping the world in arms, and the threat to civilization if war is to continue, is the extreme probability that this war, as terrible as it has been, will be only a pale image of the next if a few years more are given to the development of scientific methods and weapons."—Westminster Gazette, November 4th, 1918.

Workers of all lands are you now raising your sons for cannon-fodder? Are you prepared to acquiesce to another world butchery in the near future which will overwhelm the past four years into insignificance by its more scientific methods and means of extermination or are you going to adopt the only other alternative—SOCIALISM!

By taking over the means of wealth production, by owning the necessities of life collectively, for use instead of for profit, by embracing internationalism, whereby every man is our brother, irrespective of race, nationality or creed, you will thereby overthrow this dastardly system of capitalism which is the breeding ground for war and all other evils, which surround us today. Wake up before it is too late, and let us start at once to build up the new order of society, the Co-Operative Commonwealth.

#### ARTICLE FOUR OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATED SOVIET REPUBLIC

##### THE RIGHT TO VOTE

###### Chapter 13.

"64. The right to vote and to be elected to the Soviets is enjoyed by the following citizens, irrespective of religion, nationality, domicile, etc., of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, of both sexes, who shall have completed their eighteenth year by the day of election:

"(a) All who have acquired the means of living through labor that is productive and useful to society, and also persons engaged in housekeeping which enables the former to do productive work, i.e., laborers and employees of all classes who are employed in industry, trade, agriculture, etc., and peasant and Cossack agricultural laborers who employ no help for the purpose of making profits.

"(b) Soldiers of the army and navy of the Soviets.

"(c) Citizens of the two preceding categories who have to any degree lost their capacity to work.

"(d) Note 1—Local Soviets may, upon approval of the central power, lower the age standard mentioned herein.

"Note 2—Non-citizens mentioned in Paragraph 20 (Article 2,

Chapter 5) have the right to vote.

"65. The following persons who enjoy neither the right to vote nor the right to be voted for, even though they belong to one of the categories enumerated above, namely:

"(a) Persons who employ hired labor to obtain from it an increase in profits.

"(b) Persons who have an income without doing any work, such as interest from capital, receipts from property, etc.

"(c) Private merchants, trade and commercial brokers.

"(d) Monks and clergy of all denominations.

"(e) Employees and agents of the former police, the gendarme corps and the Okhrana (Czar's secret service), also members of the former reigning dynasty.

"(f) Persons who have in legal form been declared demented or mentally deficient, and also persons under guardianship.

"(g) Persons who have been deprived by a Soviet of their rights of citizenship because of selfish or dishonorable offenses, for the period fixed by the sentence."

That is what Bolshevism is. It is a transfer of sovereignty to the working-class, leaving every sane man and woman free to renounce his capitalistic privilege, join the working-class, and become a partner in the sovereignty if he wants to.

## How Much Can Germany Pay?

(By Stephen Leacock, in the Montreal Daily Star)

Mr. Lloyd George has said that Germany shall pay for the cost of the war to the utmost limit of her capacity. And forthwith there arises one of the most peculiar and interesting economic problems that ever perplexed the world's finance. How much can Germany pay, in what form can she pay it, and what will be the consequences of the payment—not to Germany herself, nobody will worry about that—but to the nations who receive it?

There is a Latin quotation that every school-boy knows which runs, "Timeo Danaos et dona feretes," and which being interpreted means, "I distrust the Greeks even when they bring presents." Many shrewd people are beginning to feel that even a war indemnity, coming from the Germans, is likely to have something wrong with it.

The point in the case is the enormous total of the bills to be presented. Twenty-three separate nations are to send in their accounts. Serbia, Russia (or the remains of it), France, Belgium, Great Britain, Montenegro and Japan have claims that extend over four years and a half; Italy since 1915; Portugal and Roumania, since 1916; the United States has a war account from April, 1917, and with it are claims of Greece, Cuba, Brazil, China, Panama, San Salvador, Siam and Liberia. When all these are finished there will still remain Guatemala, Costa Rica, Haiti and Honduras, which went into the war in 1918.

Some of these claims may not be large or not as large as could be wished. Unfortunately for the Siamese, the Germans couldn't get at them. But they are said to be working on their bill just the same. It is quite possible, also that Bolivia, Peru, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Santo Domingo, which broke off relations with Germany, may charge something for doing so.

Moreover, whatever payment is made must come almost entirely from Germany, not from her Allies. The Sultan of Turkey has already announced, with tears in his eyes, that he is bankrupt. This was suspected fifty years ago: but now he says it himself. Bulgaria has turned its fur coat inside-out, talks French in the streets of Sofia, and swears it was always pro-Ally. In any case, Bulgaria has the position of the criminal who turned King's evidence and is entitled to whatever leniency and whatever contempt is coming to her in that capacity. As to Austria, it has vanished off the map. We can hardly collect war damages from our good friends the Italians of Trieste and the Trentino, or from our proteges the Jugo-Slavs, or our unpronounceable Allies the Czecho-Slovaks, or the rescued Transylvanians and the persecuted Galicians and Bukovinians.

There remains only Germany. What can she, with a little contribution from Vienna, contrive to pay?

The chief cost of the war was the four million lives that were laid down in the cause. Nothing in or from Germany can ever make this good—a fact that it is well never to forget.

The material cost, reckoned in property destroyed, in sunken ships, in labor wasted on the armament and munitions of war, is practically uncalculable. Any attempt to express it in terms of money runs into a dozen fallacies at once. The money computation leaves out a million and one costs of an individual kind that do not appear in the war accounts of the belligerent governments. But if we take, for lack of any other basis, the figures given out by the British Government the sum total of the Allied war expenditure runs to one hundred and twenty billion dollars (\$120,000,000,000). We may realize something of the size of this amount by making a few comparisons. The whole of the coined money in the world before the

war was estimated at \$7,000,000,000 in gold and \$2,000,000,000 in silver. If Germany could get hold of all the gold money in the world it would hardly more than pay the interest for one year.

Before the war the public revenue of all the countries in all the world, from Argentine at the one end of the alphabet, to Venezuela at the other, was only twelve and a half billion dollars. Hence all the public revenue of all the world, when it was prosperous, will represent what Germany, now that it is ruined, will have to pay meet the interest of the debt, with enough extra to wipe out the principal in about twenty years. The annual exports of Germany before the war were valued at two billion dollars. If she gave them all away free, they would only pay one-third of the interest of the debt. Before the war the whole wealth of Germany—land, houses, farms, fields, forests, mines, ships, factories and palaces and all the rest—was estimated in figures at eighty billion dollars. If the Allies carried away the entire country and left only a hole in the ground nearly half the debt would be still outstanding.

Can we wonder that the Sultan of Turkey, when he looked at these figures, said that for his part, he was bankrupt?

But the most peculiar part of the puzzle still remains. Suppose Germany begins to pay in instalments, the economic tangle apparently gets worse. Suppose, first, that a huge payment is made in actual money. What is the effect of this? Money is of no use to eat. It's only use is as a medium of exchange. If to the existing stock you add a huge further quantity, the first visible effect is a further rise in our already swollen prices and a further increase in the cost of living. The ultimate effects are no doubt more intricate, but most people would cry halt at the first one.

Suppose, in the second place, that Germany pays a huge annual tribute in goods. Then what are the goods to be? If Germany hands us over a billion dollars of free coal, our coal miners are ruined; a billion dollars worth of cotton goods and our cotton industry goes to the wall; a billion dollars worth of structural steel and our steel industry collapses in a heap; a billion dollars worth of paintings, statuettes, and works of art, and our artists die like flies.

Or suppose that Germany pays in labor. The annual interest of the debt is, let us say, six billion dollars. Even if the Allies consent to value a German at such a high rate as \$2.00 a day over his feed, and to keep him working 300 days in the year, each German only works out \$600 of interest. It would take 10,000,000 Germans to pay the interest alone, and at that rate they would have to work for ever. To provide at the same time a sinking fund to wipe out the principal of the debt in one generation (thirty-three years) it would take a further billion dollars a year, that is a labor gang of a million and a half Germans or a total in all of 11,500,000 men. For this last calculation, which must be accepted on faith, I am indebted to my gifted colleague, Professor Ridler Davies of McGill. Whether he worked it correctly or not, it is at least clear that there are not enough Germans left for the job.

But even if the Germans attempt a payment of labor, the same difficulty arises as before. If the indemnity laborers build ships, our shipping people rise in revolt; if they dig in the mines, our miners will want to go and kill them; if they play the flute and the trombone in an indemnity orchestra, some one in the audience will shoot them.

Such is the economic problem of the indemnity. I regret that I cannot offer a solution. I can only repeat that when the Sultan of Turkey says he is bankrupt he knows what he is talking about.

### JOHN McLEAN, SCOTCH LABORITE, DEMANDS RELEASE OF AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

Edinburgh, Scotland.—John McLean, who has been elected by the Clyde workers as one of the delegates to the International Socialist Conference, has addressed a letter to the American peace commissioners in Paris, demanding that all the class war prisoners in America be released. McLean received a sentence of five years under the Defense of the Realm Act, which corresponds to the American Espionage law, but, owing to the insistent demand of the workers of England, was released at the end of nine months. Speaking of the International Socialist Conference, he states in the letter to the peace commissioners, "Inside or outside the conference hall I shall challenge your U. S. A. delegates if my friends are not released. Afterwards, I shall tour America until you do justice to the real American champions of democracy."

Harrisburg, Pa.—Sickness is the chief cause of poverty among the working people of Pennsylvania, according to the report just issued by the Pennsylvania Health Insurance Commission. The commission, which was created by the legislature in 1917 to investigate sickness and various plans for health insurance, discovered that more than 120,000 workers in Pennsylvania are ill every day in the year. This makes an average of six days per year for each wage worker. The annual loss of wages due to this sickness is more than \$35,000,000.

Paris, France.—A dispatch published in Le Populaire for January 9th, contains a report that Prince Kropotkin, together with Maxim Gorky, Martof, Spiridonova and others, have joined hands with the Soviet Government in the interests of a free Russia.

The death of Kropotkin has been announced a dozen times. He was arrested because of the publication over his signature of an appeal inviting the Russians to assist the English and French army of invasion. On the day of the first anniversary of the Soviet, a general amnesty was voted, under the promise of which Prince Kropotkin was released.