

MOTHER EARTH BULLETIN

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Eternal Values

The lights had gone out, and I lay on my iron cot. But I could not sleep. The words of the Indian lifer, my cellmate, kept ringing in my ears. "Are those fool people worth it," he had said, "that you should waste your life in prison? Ah, you don't know how sweet liberty is! Just let me get out once. You won't catch ME going to prison-hell for anyone else."

How often I had heard that! The refrain has rung its sharp scorn throughout the ascent of life. As a youth, I remember, my bourgeois uncle gloated over my helpless discomfiture as he thrust the eternal sword at me, "Why do you always butt in? Let those dar.: kids fight their own battles. You'll get nothing but blows for helping them."

At school, in the factory, in prison—everywhere sounded the old refrain. It followed me from Atlanta to the Tombs, as it followed the social protestant since Socrates emptied the cup of hemlock for his beloved Greece. With the prisoner's eagerness I tore open my first letter in jail, and I read: "Are those stupid workers really worth all your sacrifice?"

Dear friends, near and far—you, my comrades, known and unknown, you whose glorious devotion filled my dark cell with the brightest of sunshine; you, men and women, aye, and the children that worked so restlessly in my behalf; you who gave so heartily of the meager earnings of constant toil; to you all, and to the world at large and to all the disheartened ones I would fain shout in the ecstasy of the wonderful, glorious comradeship you have given me,

It is worth it! Worth it a thousand times, worth all the pain and the sacrifice of a dozen lives!

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

The Russian Revolution

Emma Goldman

Shortly after the European cataclysm swept over the world, American correspondents and magazine writers told glowing stories about the marvelous unity which existed in Russia between the people and the Tsar. They would have the world believe that the struggle of well-nigh one hundred years against Tsarism had ceased over night, to give way to perfect harmony between the Russian autocracy and the people. They told marvelous tales about the kindness and humanity of the Russian officers to soldiers who had hitherto known nothing but the knout from their superiors. They described in glowing colors how the persecuted, exploited workers, and the flogged, famished peasants, were as one with their government, imbued with one passion in the great war.

Barely three years after these shameful lies of the war unity in Russia, the Revolution swept Tsarism into the gutter, and dispelled the myth that the Russian people wanted the war, that they were eager to die in the trenches for their Batiushka. In one mighty voice the people thundered from every nook and corner of Russia for peace, for fraternization with the people of Germany and with all their oppressed and disinherited brothers. That

was their reply to the wilful misrepresentations which had been sent broadcast to Western Europe and America about the unity of the people with their governing class.

To understand the Revolution one must trace its beginnings to the heroic movement which had for nearly a hundred years carried on an incessant battle against the dark forces of Russian autocracy. During that period the blood of the Russian martyrs had nurtured the seed of idealism and rebellion in the womb of the Russian soil. The hosts that had been done to death in the Peter and Paul Fortress, in Schluesselburg, in Siberia, by the knout and the scaffold, have come to life in the Russian Revolution. The message of the men and women with the white hands—the intellectuals—the Petroshevskis and Tchernishevskis, the Sofia Perovskayas and Helfmans, the Alexander Herzens, Vera Figners, Spiridonovas, Babushkas, and thousands of others, had borne fruit. Their message was: Death to tyranny, and Life to the people. Human brotherhood and social well-being was their slogan.

Through a slow and painful process, and at the expense of the best and finest of the Russian generations, this message was carried to the hearts and minds of the people, the

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peasants, the workers. It became their hope, their dream, their psalm song. In the face of the great sacrifice the people often despaired of realizing their dream. Then new forces were sent into the villages to reassure the people, to strengthen their faith, to inspire them with new hope, for no message conceived in pain and nourished by blood and tears can ever be lost.

On the very eve of Russia's entry into the war, she was seething with revolution. The General Strike spread like wildfire in the industrial centers. Discontent and rebellion imbued the slow peasant and rejuvenated him to action. It is not at all unlikely that war was welcomed by autocracy as a check on the rising revolutionary tide.

Blind to the tendencies of the time, autocracy, even as all other governments, coerced the people into the war, but it was stupid to assume that they would submit very long: that they would so easily betray their martyrs who had died for universal peace and social brotherhood, that they would forget the tortures inflicted upon them, the sufferings and horrors endured at home, and rush off, bayonet in hand, to make Germany safe for democracy.

The Russian Revolution was the culminating expression of all the accumulated longings of the Russian people. It was the breaking point of the hatred for the old regime, and the realization of the great dream, cherished by the people for so long. Coming from the very depths of the Russian soul and spirit, how could anything so deep-rooted, so overpowering content itself with the overthrow of the Tsar, and his replacement by some cheap liberal regime, embodied in a Milliukof, a Lvof, or even a Kerenski.

Kerenski's regime was a compromise between political Socialism and economic liberalism, both contrary to the revolution and its promise. It seems to have been Kerenski's dream to see "law and order" triumph, while leaving intact the social conditions which the revolution purported to change. Kerenski's regime played the same role as all provisional governments temporarily washed in by a revolutionary tide. From the very first day of their appearance, they proclaim the end of the revolution. They take possession of power; but power, like all gods, can tolerate no other god beside it. Starting from this autocratic premise, the provisional government in Russia inevitably became reactionary, a new despotism, ready to strangle the revolution before it had made a decisive step.

The powerful revolutionary consciousness of the Russian people could not be stayed by the command of a renegade. The revolution would not stop because the provisional government attempted to check its march. It only struck deeper and went on in its persistent demand. The revolution which managed to overcome the age-long despotic regime of the Tsar, was not likely to collapse because of the obstacles placed in its way by politicians a la Kerenski. The Russian Revolution has triumphed over prisons, Siberia, and scaffolds. Pogroms have failed to slay it. The knout, cutting deep into its flesh, has been unable to stifle its spirit. How, then, was it to be dominated by a few upstarts of the moment?

To the Russian people the Revolution means a fundamental change in the political and economic arrangements of life. Primarily it means the confiscation of the land and the sources of production from those who had grown rich upon them while keeping the people in poverty. The Russians have begun to realize that mere politics' liberties are not lasting; that nothing is gained unless a fundamental change has been brought about to sustain the newly achieved political advantages.

All preceding revolutions were in this respect a warning and instructive example for the Russian Revolution. They never went much beyond the change of government. The people shed their blood, but received as reward nothing save the old despotism hidden under a new mask of hypocritical liberalism. How easily such a mask can be worn, the Russian people had ample opportunity to learn from the modern bourgeois republics of Europe and America. Yes, even easier than under a monarchy has it proven in republics to enslave the people, mentally and physically.

The new phase, the Bolsheviki Revolution, lifts Russia out of the paralyzing position of a merely political machine into a virile, active economic force. Verily, this new phase shows how inexhaustible the Russian Revolution is. How many times she has already been buried, and yet how many times she has arisen! Nor is it the end, but rather the beginning of the real Social Revolution.

The very fact that such an extreme Marxian as Lenin, and revolutionists like Trotsky and Kollontay can work together with the vast number of Russians who will not continue to shed their blood and waste their lives for the perpetuation of the world war, proves that they are actuated, not by German money, but by the inner psychic necessity of the Russian Revolution to proclaim the ultimatum of "Universal Peace and the Land to the People" to the rest of the world. Great as the Lenins, the Trotskys and the others may be, they are but the pulse-beat of the people who, as Lincoln Steffens justly said, are the only heroes in Russia. They are worn and weary with everlasting strife and bloodshed. They want peace as a means of getting back to themselves, of getting back to their land, of reconstructing their beloved Matushka Rossiya.

In the midst of the confusion and horrors of war, the Russian Revolution raises in its mighty arm the torch to illumine the horizon for all the peoples of the world. What irony that the light of real liberty and justice should emanate from a people who until very recently were considered the most primitive, uneducated and uncultured, a half-Asiatic race. Yet it is well for the Russian Revolution that her people have remained primitive. That is why they can face life and life's problems in a simple, unspoiled and uncorrupted state of mind, with true feeling and sound judgment. After all, true intelligence is primitive because it originates within man. It is not brought about through external, mechanical methods of education. It is well for the Revolution that her people are uncultured, uneducated. That means not yet drilled into blind obedience, into automata, into cringing slaves. It were desirable that the peoples of other countries had remained as primitive and unedu-

cated. They would then have the courage for independent thinking, and the zeal of independent revolutionary action.

The demand of the people for universal peace, as the only basis for the working out of the fulfillment of the revolution, is the greatest victory of modern times, a victory which will satisfy the yearning not only of the Russian people, but of the people of the rest of the world. Out of it we must drink new hope and strength for the overthrow of the tyranny and oppression which have ruled humanity so long. Out of it must come the new hope of a brotherhood which shall put an end to war and militarism, and give to the world freedom of mind and body, freedom of life, and the joys which come from social harmony and a mutual understanding of the peoples of the earth.

At Home and Abroad

Beneath the helpless rage against the Boylsheviki, shared by the dark forces everywhere, there is noticeable a hidden sense of respect. To think that the Lenins and Trotskys demand no less than—well, everything! And all for the people, nothing for themselves. Even that most unblushing reactionary and frank champion of capitalism, the New York Times, does not always succeed in masking its secret admiration for the daring genius of the Russian Revolution.

But the Boylsheviki must be destroyed, in spite of everything. They are a menace to privilege and exploitation, such as the world has never seen before. If the landlords are to be dispossessed and the common peasant permitted to till the soil for his own benefit, what will become of profits? And—worse yet—if capitalist paper titles should be declared mere scraps of waste, and the industrial producers given the use of their product, the very bulwarks of civilization would be destroyed.

Such things cannot be tolerated. No, not even in Russia, for the example set by those ignorant folk will inevitably have a powerful effect upon the workers of other countries.

Therefore, and quite suddenly, the editorial scribe of The Times resurrects the Internationale. He graciously admits that "that once renowned association was started from the meetings of French workmen visiting the London exhibition in 1862." But "Internationalism is now dead, save in the United States. It was killed by the French Communists playing directly into the hands of Germany in 1871."

As a piece of subtle assassination, this editorial prostitution of history has no rival. The Paris Communards, slaughtered by the perfidy of the French government, were the only true internationalists of their day. The government of France consented even to open the gates of Paris to the Prussian enemy without, in order to crush the demand for bread and liberty within. The Communards were the unsuccessful predecessors of the triumphant Boylsheviki. No wonder that the scribes of The Times, and the class they speak for, are foaming at the mouth at the very mention of the popular demand for liberty and peace, and of the victory of the INTERNATIONALE in Russia.

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The decision just handed down by the U. S. Supreme Court, in connection with the litigation of the United Mine Workers and the Virginia coal companies, will affect the American Federation of Labor in a most fundamental way.

In essence the decision says that, while unions are perfectly legal, the attempt to organize workers with the intent of a subsequent strike is "malicious and illegal," because calculated to interfere with the accustomed pursuit of business by the employer. In other words, unions are all right as long as they don't unionize.

The decision practically wipes out all organizing effort and paralyzes even defensive labor activities. For no union is of the least benefit to its members unless it can unionize the unorganized in its particular trade and thus protect itself, so far as possible, against the despotism of the employer, the reduction of wages, etc.

This is apparently the reward Mr. Gompers is receiving as the unofficial member of the President's official family. Gompers suspended the labor struggle during the war. But capital knows no armistice with labor. It rather takes full advantage of the opportunity, offered by the time-serving attitude of Gompers, to check and disorganize the labor forces to the point of complete ineffectiveness as a labor movement.

It is apparent that Gompers promises more than he can make good. He has pledged the whole labor movement, but he represents only a small part of it, and does not control even that. Strikes have multiplied since Gompers announced that the workers would not strike during the war. The explanation of it is that discontent is wide-spread among the workers with the conditions in general; besides, the whip of hunger is more compelling than the pleading or even the threats of Gompers & Co. Even drastic decisions of the highest courts are powerless to stay the rising tide.

* * *

The U. S. Supreme Court, we are informed, will not reach the appeal cases of Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Louis Kramer and Morris Fecker before the middle of December. A number of similar cases, involving the constitutionality of the draft law and kindred matters are on the calendar, to be heard in the same week. Our attorney, Mr. Harry Weinberger, is in Washington, D. C., ready to present his argument. We have read the brief prepared by him for the Court, and we think it a masterly presentation of the questions at issue. It contains a thorough analysis of the various legal phases, but what appeals most to us is the broad human view taken by Mr. Weinberger in his analysis of the social values, and the fine vision that is the keynote of his argument. Of course, we are only laymen, with minds untrained in legal finesse. Therefore we may be misled into giving undue importance to matters of purely human interest, such as justice and liberty, while perhaps underestimating the more essential need of strict compliance with legal forms and precedents venerable with age.

* * *

Every day almost our friends inquire about the outcome of the appeal in the Cleveland case of Ben Reitman. It was surely not lack of interest which has prevented our writing more often about the matter. It is only that anything connected with Birth Control now seems too insignificant compared with the world conflagration that is devouring human life and spreading disaster everywhere.

We had been assured by Ben's attorney that his appeal would not be heard before Spring. Two weeks ago the case was suddenly called in the Appellate Court of the State of Ohio. To quote from Ben's letter, written after the hearing:

"The hearing lasted forty-five minutes. My attorneys, Mr. Ewing and Mr. Eisler, had just started to go into the testimony when one of the Judges announced that 'time is up.' Hostility was apparent from the start."

In other words, our friend having looked into the faces of the judges, seems less hopeful than when he consented to the appeal. It is very likely that a new trial before a judge less antiquated than Judge Cull may result in an acquittal. But even if he were convicted, the sentence would not be so excessive as the present one of six months and one thousand dollars' fine. The attorneys are working very hard for a new trial, but nothing definite will be known until the middle of January.

Whatever the outcome, Ben Reitman will meet it bravely. With his usual Christian faith he writes: "Fate will not permit her chosen ones to reform. Those of us who had any inclination to leave the revolutionary movement know now that the Gods will not permit them."

Not being a Christian, I am not so sure of the intentions of Fate. But this I know: The Courts seem determined to hide from sight every disturbing element, especially in these truly democratic times.

* * *

Things in this country are really coming to a terrible pass. Not enough that the anti-militarists, anarchists, I. W. W. and other disloyalists are worrying the government with their inconsiderate and ill-timed talk of such petty matters as high profits, low wages, forced service, soap-boxing and similar stuff, not to speak of the stubborn strikers who hold up government work because, forsooth! their wives won't Hooverize on coal and cats—as if all that were not enough to try the patience of an angel—now come the cops of Philadelphia, and declare a strike!

Unheard of! The very men whose business it is to break up assemblies and club strikers into submission, themselves on a strike! When the very guardians of Law and Order begin to act like I. W. W., things may become very serious. Have they caught the spirit of the rabble and are they going to desert the masters? It is ominous. Perhaps, even, they may fraternize with strikers and pickets! Who knows? They may have been reading of those cursed Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in mad Russia. Perhaps the papers had better not write more about those terrible things. They are catching.

* * *

An illuminating sidelight on the alleged even-handedness of Justice is thrown by two incidents of recent occurrence.

A workman and strike leader, Frank Little, member of the I. W. W., is forcibly dragged from his bed at night and lynched by a patriotic mob. The press of the country comments cynically on the infamous deed, practically condones the outrage, and openly gloats over the salutary effect the murder will have on the friends and sympathizers of the strike leader.

No one is punished; indeed, no attempt is made by the authorities to discover the masked, but virtually known, vigilantes. Vice-President Marshall, returning from his Western trip, indulges in the cheap and atrocious pun that "a Little hanging goes a long way" in stabilizing industrial conditions.

Then a bomb, discovered by some passerby near a church in Milwaukee, and carelessly handled in the police station, suddenly explodes, claiming a number of police victims. Immediately every persona non grata to the police is arrested in the city, and a veritable man hunt for "Italian dynamiters and Anarchists" started throughout the country. Men by the score are thrown into jail, without rime or reason, and persons are arrested in other cities who by no stretch of the imagination could have any possible connection with the explosion. But the net is spread, the innocent and guilty look alike in police eyes, vengeance is a-thirst, and victims must be found, so the country will feel properly saved.

Indeed, Justice is blind. It neither sees nor seems to care, so long as the weak are the victims.

* * *

Thirteen Negro soldiers have been hanged by the military authorities in Texas. Not a word had been said about the trial, the evidence—not a line, until thirteen human bodies were stiff in death, dangling at the end of a rope, and forty-one others immured in prison for life.

This is the first time in this country, since the Mexican war of 1848, that such a thing has been possible—under cover of journalistic silence. Not even the terrible Civil War produced such horrors. One wonders what this universal birth of democracy is yet to produce.

☞

ANARCHISM—The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

* * *

ANARCHIST COMMUNISM—Voluntary economic co-operation of all towards the needs of each. A social arrangement based on the principle: To each according to his needs; from each according to his ability.

* * *

DIRECT ACTION—Conscious individual or collective effort to protest against, or remedy, social conditions through the systematic assertion of the economic power of the workers.

More of the Frame-Up

Alexander Berkman

The frightfulness and corruption involved in the San Francisco labor cases pass all belief. Every day, almost, brings new disclosures of the devilish plot to hang the militant labor men now on trial in California. The latest development is the sworn confession of Mrs. Allie Kidwell, now in the hands of the Federal Investigation Commission, that District Attorney Fickert forced her to perjure herself, with the threat of exposing her past life and that of her daughter, Estelle Smith, the chief witness of the prosecution. Mrs. Kidwell now reveals that her testimony before the Grand Jury was false in every particular; that she had never seen Mooney, Billings or Weinberg till they were pointed out to her in the jail; that her identification of them was staged by the police, and that she and her daughter were promised payment for their part in the conspiracy.

The "honest cattleman," Oxman, "Dopey" McDonald, the ex-crook Crowley, the two Edeau women, and Estelle Smith—all important witnesses in the frame-up—have long ago been exposed as bribed perjurers. The Kidwell confession merely completes the rotten circle, and stamps the whole case as the most stupendous conspiracy against labor men ever hatched in this country. Indeed, there are only two other instances, of international renown, besides the foul murder of the Chicago Anarchists, that are comparable to the San Francisco cabal: the case of Dreyfus in France, and that of Beiliss in Russia. Both of these men, victims of race prejudice and persecution, were ultimately exonerated by the power of awakened public sentiment. Is there a sufficient sense of justice in America, in these days of universal war," to liberate the victims of the industrial strife?

The acquittal of Israel Weinberg was a rude jolt to Prosecutor Fickert. The blow was the more painful because the jury, with the passionate demand of the prosecutor for the blood of Weinberg still ringing in their ears, unanimously agreed on the acquittal of Weinberg **WITHIN THREE MINUTES**. They congratulated each other, smoked a cigar, and announced their verdict to the Court in less than 25 minutes after they had retired to consider the "evidence."

As a matter of fact, the perjured witnesses of the Billings and Mooney trials having been discredited, no evidence was forthcoming against Weinberg. The whole case fell to pieces at the first touch of the critical hand. No wonder the prosecution spent all of its time in bitter invective and denunciation of the "enemies of the country," pleading with the jury to wreak their patriotism on Weinberg. But the citizens of San Francisco seem to be sick of this kind of camouflage: they refused to save the country of Fickert and of his Chamber of Commerce masters by sending an innocent man to the gallows.

The Fickert beast, however, shows no signs of letting up. Whomever the gods want to destroy, they first make mad. The labor crushers of San Francisco are going right

ahead with their program. They have announced that Ed Nolan is to be put on trial shortly. And Weinberg and Rena Mooney are still in jail, Judge Dunne refusing to permit them bail, in spite of their acquittal.

The backbone of the Frame-up is broken. But the claws of the vampire are tenacious, and it will require a stiff and long fight before the beast is forced to give up its prey. As the case stands now, Billings is in the penitentiary at Reppesa, Cal., serving a life sentence; Tom Mooney is sentenced to hang; Rena Mooney and Israel Weinberg have been acquitted, but the prosecution threatens to try them again, and again, if necessary, on nine charges of murder; the demand for extradition of Alexander Berkman has been withdrawn, but **ONLY TEMPORARILY** and subject to renewal; Ed Nolan is to be placed on trial in the near future.

This means that the fight is by no means won or ended. Eternal vigilance, continued agitation and efforts are necessary to save our friends from the Chamber of Commerce hangmen.

The fate of our San Francisco prisoners also depends, to a large degree, on the result of the recall movement instituted against Fickert.

The special election, which is to take place on the 18th inst., will decide whether the voters of San Francisco approve of his methods and want him to remain in office. If Fickert is recalled, the citizens will have voiced their protest against perjury, bribery and the framing of labor men. Some means will then have to be devised of liberating Mooney and Billings. The report of the Federal investigators, if it will expose the frame-up, will considerably help in this matter. But if the dark forces of San Francisco succeed in re-electing Fickert as District Attorney, the people will have to do more than pass resolutions if the lives of Mooney et al. are to be saved. The decent citizenship of San Francisco is opposed to Fickert and his infamous procedure. But the denizens of the underworld, including the Chamber of Commerce and Roosevelt, are very active. At Fickert's request, Roosevelt wired him "full support in his patriotic fight against disloyalists." As usual, patriotism is the last resort of the Fickerts. Roosevelt, when his own friends informed him of the true situation in San Francisco, and asked him to withdraw his misinformed statement and pledge to support Fickert, refused to do so.

The reactionary forces have pooled their strength in San Francisco as the allies of Fickert, filth and frame-ups. They are determined to crush labor on the Pacific Coast. But Labor will have the last word, ultimately.

A Woman Martyr

German frightfulness and a sincere desire to make the world safe for democracy have forced us into the European brawl. Washington says so, the press says so, the pulpit says so, and the man in the street is beginning to say so. Whether it is really true, no one can or dare discuss. No matter what people think, they

are obeying the law and are keeping their mouths shut.

The most astounding thing is how those who point to German frightfulness, and who sincerely feel called upon by Providence to make the world safe for democracy, can reconcile their high motives in the war with the frightfulness at home. To be sure, President Wilson in his Buffalo speech before his faithful brother workers did protest against the frightfulness of lynching, whipping, etc., but he had in mind lawless frightfulness. What about the perfectly lawful frightfulness occurring in every court and committed by numerous judges? What about them?

In Iowa a man who dared to exercise his democratic right to disagree, D. Wallace, was given twenty years in prison. And now comes a judge in Seattle who goes his Iowa colleague one better in loyalty. He has sentenced a woman to forty-five years for opposing conscription. The name of this judge is Neterer; that of his victim, Louise Oliverreau. We quote from a letter from our friend, Minnie Rimer, of Seattle:

"I have just come from the courtroom where I heard the judge pass the 'merciful' sentence upon Louise Oliverreau, sending her to the state prison at Canyon City, Colo. She was convicted on six counts. The judge gave her ten years on each of three counts, and five years each on the other three. Then he said he was being lenient and was passing sentence in the name of liberty and justice. He told her that she declared herself an Anarchist and that the Anarchist was against organized society, and therefore dangerous to the country and the flag, which stood for liberty and justice. He added, however, that Anarchism was not the issue.

"Louise conducted her own case and did it magnificently. She took her sentence bravely and quietly. I am trying to get enough money together to get the Court transcript of Louise's case. It is mighty good stuff."

What have the haters of German frightfulness and the lovers of democracy for the world to say to this barbarous frightfulness at home? And what have the radicals to say? Will they content themselves with lobbying in Washington while Louise Oliverreau wastes her young life in Canyon City prison? Or will they rally to her support, help with the appeal, arouse public interest to make a reversal of the "lenient" sentence possible? Write to Minnie Rimer, 516 Third Avenue, West Seattle, Wash., at once. Send money for the appeal.

The I. W. W.

The lack of understanding for fundamentals on the part of most American writers is quite amazing. It does not matter whether it is drama, fiction, or the ordinary newspaper article wherein social aspects are portrayed: always one is impressed with the superficiality of the approach, and with the inability to bring the matter to a logical conclusion. It must be that these writers feel in relation to the great problems of our social complex,

like the tired business man on a visit to Greenwich Village. They bring to it the spirit of slumming, the desire for some ticklish sensation. They go from cafe to cafe, but get no further than the stuffy air, the pretense, the gaudy display. The struggling, starving, aspiring artist and that which makes life tragic to him, the slummer never sees.

Our writers are in the same position. They touch the social problems only on the surface. Occasionally they may mean to dig deep into the very foundations of it all, but before very long they grow bewildered by the wealth of material—or is it that they dare not face it?

The New York Evening Post sent its representative, Mr. Robert W. Bruere, to Arizona to investigate the so-called I. W. W. troubles which resulted in the brutal deportation of hundreds of workers. Mr. Bruere, by the way, is a very able investigator and has written a series of brilliant reports which ought to be read by everyone. To those of us who have gone through the horrors of San Diego, in 1910, there is nothing very startling in the methods employed by the hirelings of the copper magnates in Arizona. Beating and deporting the I. W. W., or those suspected of being such, has been done so often, it has become almost a daily sport for the respectable mob all through the country.

Mr. Bruere may be forgiven for indulging in the commonplace error of calling the criminal practices of the propertied class "anarchy," but when he winds up his able report with the following superficial conclusion, he shows either lack of understanding or lack of courage to face fundamental social facts:

Thus are "Wobblies" made, and thus are their evangelists scattered, like the seed of the thistle, broadcast throughout the country. Victims of lawlessness, they disparage the law of collective agreements; their strikes broken by violence, they preach sabotage—the furtive strike on the job

No, Mr. Bruere, it is not lawlessness which brought the I. W. W. into being. It is the conservatism, the snobocracy, the ineffectiveness of the American Federation of Labor and the corrupt methods of its leaders, which made the I. W. W.—the conservatism which persists that there is something in common between the lamb and the wolf; the snobocracy, which looks down upon unskilled labor as something less than the poor dependent dabbler who makes \$2.50 a day; the inadequacy which automatically excludes large groups of workers because of its exorbitant initiation fees and dues; and finally, the corruption of the leaders who betray the workers for money, power, or because of cowardice, as the occasion may require.

That, and certain economic factors, foremost among them, the realization that craft unionism has outlived its time and purpose, have created the I. W. W. And what is more, they have come to stay, deportation, whipping, lynching and imprisonment notwithstanding.

We are not in agreement with the theoretic reasoning of the I. W. W., but we realize that these hounded, persecuted, outraged and misunderstood people represent the worth-while revolutionary spirit in the desert of the organized labor of America. That is why the I. W. W. are so hated and feared.

Crimes of Charity

A Book Review By Leonard D. Abbott

Even in time of war, stress, struggle and persecution, a careful perusal of Konrad Bercovici's "Crimes of Charity"* is worth while. The book indicts organized charity in New York. John Reed, in an introduction, calls it "a sort of epic of our City of Dreadful Day." It is warm, throbbing, and carries on every page evidences of the author's fierce indignation against oppressors of the poor and helpless. The stench of slums, the sordid life of tenements, the pitiful struggle of weak men and women to keep their heads above the waters of the industrial whirlpool, have all gone into the making of this remarkable book. Bercovici speaks with admiration of Marguerite Audoux's "Marie-Claire," and he quotes Charles Lamb's classic description of the blind beggars of London. His own writing has something of their sincerity and simplicity.

A "nutty scribbler" the children of the streets called Bercovici when they saw him making notes of his experiences. An "anarchist" is the accurate designation that some of his associates gave him. It seems that Bercovici was employed for a time as an investigator for a charitable institution in New York. He hoped, at the beginning, that he could really do some good. He was soon disillusioned. He saw the system from the inside. And he vowed that he would tell the world what he saw. The report that he makes is an appalling indictment of organizations that set out, ostensibly, to help the poor and that have ended by battenning on them.

Bercovici's arraignment is two-fold. He attacks, first of all, the administration of Organized Charity and declares that it is rotten through and through. He attacks, in the second place, the contributors to Organized Charity, and points out that capitalists affiliate themselves with charitable institutions because they recognize that Organized Charity gives them indispensable help as slave-drivers.

The charity organizations, as at present carried on, depend upon an elaborate system of "investigations." The "investigators" are all women, and their work consists in probing into the private lives of applicants for relief. Berco-

vici thinks it almost impossible for investigators to remain human beings. The milk of human kindness is squeezed out of them by their daily experiences. They have to make a living, like the poor wretches that come to them for assistance. The one unforgivable sin is to be "too tender-hearted."

Investigation, as it works out in practice, means a denial of all privacy. The sanctity of the home is destroyed. "It is," says Bercovici, "as though the family were living in some one else's—in the charities' — home. The investigator comes into the house unannounced any time of the day or night, questions anybody she finds in the house, criticizes the meals, the curtains; goes around to the grocery, to the neighbors, looking for a 'clue' that will give to the institution the right to cease helping the particular 'case,' to 'cut her' as they say." No wonder that this system has created a class of professional paupers who meet inhumanity from above by deception and wiles from below.

The motives of those who contribute to the support of Organized Charity tend to become equally inhuman and machine-like. Bercovici tells of manufacturers who affix to the outside of their office-doors signs carrying the words, "Members of the Organized Charities," simply because it saves them trouble and serves to drive away the hungry and needy. In many cases, Bercovici charges, the employment bureau of a charity institution is little better than a strike-breaking agency. When he protested against the sending of men to a factory in time of strike, he was told, quite frankly, that charitable institutions were supported by the rich and not by the poor.

Bercovici finally became almost frantic at the injustices and inhumanities that he saw about him. He says that they drove him to drink. Where the finest discrimination and delicacy, the warmest sympathy, were called for, he found the dullest stupidity and cruelty. He saw the office boy in the charity office spit in the face of applicants for relief and he determined to get even with him. "I got hold of him, boxed his ears soundly, and before any one had time to interfere I had turned up his head and spat upon him full in the face. It was a disgusting act, but a sweet revenge. I did it, then called out, 'Feel how it tastes—you do it to every one.'" Needless to say, Bercovici himself was soon expelled from the office.

*Published by Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.50. Can be had through "Mother Earth."

The note of indignation is what gives the book its tone. Bercovici feels as a humane, warm-hearted man ought to feel in presence of frailty and suffering. He sets before us picture after picture. We recognize the quality of different nationalities. We see what Poverty actually means to helpless women and to little children.

In the eyes of Organized Charity, Poverty is a crime, to be punished; but after reading this book it is easy to understand that the real crime is not Poverty, but Organized Charity.

A Letter

Maurice Frucht

This letter was refused publication by the *Ann Arbor Times News*. It was written after the school board adopted the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, That in view of the fact that certain of the Ann Arbor high school students are now in jail for refusal to obey the registration laws of the United States that the board of education direct that all credits and recommendations be withheld in their respective classes, until all disability is removed and the laws of the land are complied with by said students,"

which was aimed against Mr. Elwood B. Moore, a student of the Ann Arbor High School, who refused to register on June 5th for the selective draft because he felt that this was the most vigorous method of voicing his objections to conscription.

Editor the *Ann Arbor Times News*

DEAR SIR:

The action of the school board, at its last meeting, in adopting the resolution "to withhold all credits and recommendations" of Mr. Moore "until all disability is removed," reminded me of an incident that occurred to me when I was but a boy. Of course, it did not happen in America. It happened while I was still in "darkest Russia."

I was brought up in a little town near the border of Russia and Germany, where no person, according to law, was allowed to leave his house without carrying with him his "border passport." Otherwise he was subject to arrest.

So it happened that one Sunday afternoon, as I was strolling along the border, and not having my passport with me for identification, I was arrested and brought to the Shtab (*i. e.*, the Captain). The Captain, on discovering my nationality, decided to inflict upon me the most horrible punishment he could inflict upon a Jew, *i. e.*, to force a piece of pork into my mouth. I was but nine years old then. Of course I resisted, but he nevertheless succeeded in his idiotic aim. I cried. I thought the

world would come to an end because I had committed such an outrageous crime as *eating pork*. My tears, I imagine, irritated the Captain, and suddenly he burst out: "If you don't eat pork, get out of this land!" I was quite dumbfounded for a minute or so. For indirectly he revealed to me a new idea, that perhaps there was some place in the world where people were not forced to eat pork against their will. Of course I obeyed him and got out of the land. But if I shall ever return to Russia I shall certainly look up that Captain and treat him with a good pork dinner, so as to show him my gratitude for sending me out into the wide, wide world. That Captain, I must confess, though unintentionally, did me a great deal of good. He opened my eyes to life.

As time went on, America became the object of my dreams. I pictured it to myself as the embodiment, the symbol of justice and equality. Very well do I remember the keen feeling that pervaded my being before I left Europe, and the expression I gave to it in a letter to one of my friends before departure, in which I said, ". . . there I go to build my future, to work and to learn. There, on the American soil, on the soil where mobs do not butcher women and infants because of religious differences, where they do not degrade human beings to the level of animals, where they do not oppress and persecute, where the gates of knowledge and truth are open to everyone, where a person may think for himself and follow his own conscience . . . there I want to build my future, there I want to spend my years and energies, there I want to live and help the world move on."

To be concluded.

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