OUTLAWING SOCIALISM

FOREWORD

IN THESE days of bewildering events, the most amazing is this: The United States, after boasting of its love for freedom, of its deep-rooted Democracy, for more than three generations, has suddenly turned about, abhorring what it worshipped and worshipping what it has abhorred.

We have gone over to Europe and picked up the broken down political machinery of the Romanoffs, the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns in order to set it up among our own people.

We have imported the political secret service, the censorship of the press, criminal trials for the expression of opinion, the conferring of arbitrary power upon police agents, the raiding of suspected places, the wholesale arrest of persons, the seizure and often the destruction of books and papers without proper warrant, on mere suspicion or the say-so of spies and stool pigeons. Upon hundreds of men and women, long sentences have been imposed in political trials, far longer than the penal codes of the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs ever permitted. We are keeping hundreds of noble men and women in penal servitude like the lowest felons, allowing no distinction between political and sordid crimes.

Swift and far as we have traveled on the road to political disaster, there are powerful influences driving still onward—to where? Do they really believe that safety and peace lie beyond that mad drive?

Many years ago, while still living in the land of my birth, I went through just such an ill-considered political crusade. It was led by a man rated as a wonderful statesman by an
admiring multitude incapable of grasping the senselessness
of the cruel fight started by him. I was in that fight myself,
in the hottest of it, one of its victims in the end. And I lived
to see its outcome, one utterly different from what its instigators
expected.

Now the land of my adoption, where I have lived peace-
fully for more than a generation, is heading toward the road of
disaster traveled by Bismarck. The old story is blazing up in
my memory, the old wounds, long scarred, are burning afresh.
I would fain warn my adopted country. I would ask my fellow
citizens to remember that the law of cause and effect cannot be
suspended by a Washington Ukase.

For that reason, and in that spirit the following pages have
been written.

MOSES OPPENHEIMER

March, 1920
CHAPTER I

Early German Socialism and Bismarck

GERMANY is the classic soil of modern Socialism. How the movement grew there, how the ruling classes tried to check it and to stamp it out, and how they failed utterly in their long campaign of suppression is of no little interest to students of a movement now worldwide.

In the early sixties of the last century, Ferdinand Lassalle, a man of genius, "equipped with all the science of his time," roused the German workers to a realization of their social and political position as a class with interests distinct from all other classes. His political slogan was the demand for universal suffrage. In one of his masterly addresses he exclaimed, however: "Understand me, when I say universal suffrage I mean revolution, a complete change of our present system."

Lassalle died in 1864. But the seed sown by him took root and grew. When Bismarck, after the victorious war of 1866, called a German Parliament in 1867 based on universal suffrage, five Socialists were elected to that body. They represented constituencies in Saxony and Rhenish Prussia with a predominant working class electorate.

The movement was still in a state of ferment, split up in factions, without a clear-cut program. In 1869 Bebel and Liebknecht, at a conference held at Eisenach, formulated a program based more definitely on Marxian doctrines. For the six years following, the movement remained divided.

In the elections after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 a wave of victorious hysteria swept over the country. One solitary Socialist was elected to the post-war Reichstag.

Outside of Parliament the agitation went on with increasing vigor, both in the as yet feeble Socialist press and in numerous meetings.
Bismarck began to see danger in it. His essentially feudal mind met the spread of ideas with the weapon of physical force. The man of “blood and iron” believed that the police, the criminal courts and jails were the most efficient tools. His prosecutors received instructions to watch the Socialist propaganda and to drag it into court whenever possible.

Leipsic Trial for “High Treason”

The first great historical result of this campaign was the famous Leipsic trial for attempt at high treason in 1872. The defendants were August Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht and M. Hepner, the latter playing a subordinate part in the proceedings, as associate editor of the weekly party organ, “Volksstaat.”

German trial courts differ very much from those of America and England. The presiding judge leads in the hearings. He interrogates the defendants and they are given great latitude in answering questions. The Leipsic trial lasted ten days. It turned out to be a stage drama with all thinking Germans for an audience, as the proceedings were fully reported in all the leading newspapers.

Day after day Bebel and Liebknecht expounded in court every phase of Socialist thought and activity in answer to questions. They were fearless, even aggressive. Of course, the bourgeois judges—there was no jury—found all three defendants guilty. Bebel and Liebknecht were sentenced each to two years imprisonment in a fortress, which means honorable confinement only. Hepner was let off with one year.

This trial caused thousands to turn to Socialism. The proceedings were published in a pamphlet and used for effective propaganda. While serving his term in the fortress Hubertusburg, Bebel, guided by his older friend and comrade, Liebknecht, deepened his study of Socialism. It was during this prison term that he wrote his most famous book, “Woman in the Past, Present and Future.”

Failure of the Persecution

Meanwhile persecutions of Socialists increased. Editors and speakers were sent to prison, frequently on the most flimsy
pretexts. But instead of checking the propaganda, the persecution only added fuel to the flame. The elections of 1874 showed a marked increase of Socialist strength; and the following year the two wings of the movement united in Gotha.

Now the machinery of suppression was set to work all over Germany. It was particularly vindictive in Prussia and Saxony. The new penal code contained various sections designed as anti-Socialist weapons, pitfalls from which escape was well-nigh impossible.

A Socialist might be declared guilty of inciting class against class, of egging on to riot, of inciting to contempt for the government or its sub-agents, of inciting to disobedience of established laws, of libeling, or using offensive language against government officials; of hampering governmental activities; of treason, or attempt at treason; and finally, of lese majesty.

Within a few years scores upon scores of active Socialists were sent to jail under one or another provision of the penal code. None whimpered, none ever applied for a pardon. In the major part of the empire the trials were held before three judges without a jury. In some of the southern states they came before juries drawn exclusively from the propertied classes, who hated and feared Socialism.

It should be borne in mind that in the old empire the judges were appointed and promoted by the ruling princes. Their rise in the judicial hierarchy naturally depended upon the subservience shown by them. The history of the German judiciary dealing with that period will probably never be written with full access to all the material. It would present a page as black as that of the Star Chamber of infamous memory.

Jailing people for their opinion does not prevent other people from thinking. The Socialist press, struggling against all kinds of difficulties, kept on growing. An extensive propaganda, based on books and pamphlets, won new sympathizers and new converts. Some of the enemies' methods were turned into most effective weapons against them.
Libelings Bismarck

Here is a case in point. The penal code provided that prosecution for libel could be had only on motion in writing by the aggrieved party.

Now, one of the most frequent charges was that of having libeled Bismarck. It turned out that Bismarck was in the habit of signing a stack of forms for such motions in blank, and that prosecutors would get such a form from Bismarck’s office and fill out the blanks, each in his own way. The jokes and sneers at this mode of procedure were acrid and did not at all tend to promote admiration for the Iron Chancellor.

The wiser heads among the German bourgeois realized that a campaign of force was inadequate in dealing with the Socialist peril. So here and there they undertook to fight Socialism with intellectual weapons, in their press, in their meetings, in pamphlets, and in a most sinister way, by the use of their economic power against workers suspected of Socialist activities. Their intellectual feebleness never showed more glaringly than in their private campaign against Socialism. So-called men of learning meeting plain working men in joint debate invariably got the worst of the encounter.

Socialists Gain Strength in 1877

The invincible onrush of Socialism became manifest in the Reichstag elections of 1877, when the Socialists won 12 seats and polled about half a million votes. The bourgeoisie grew more and more uneasy and helpless. Like Micawber, they waited for “something to turn up,” The prosecutions multiplied and the jail sentences became more severe. In most of the courts a Socialist prosecuted was a defendant found guilty in advance.

The character of the evidence made little difference. Like Lessing’s celebrated fanatic they took the position: “It don’t matter. The Jew will be burned all the same.”

By this time the first and second edition of “Das Kapital” had been placed upon the market and found eager buyers and students among the workers. A formidable arsenal of facts and arguments, the book developed the latent talents of eager young
men and inspired them to become the voice of their class. Gifted speakers and writers developed, sneeringly styled by the spokesmen of capitalism as malicious "agitators."

Among the most active and popular of these were the men that rose from the rank and file, northern and southern Germany furnishing their quotas. To name only a few of these fiery apostles of the new salvation: Bebel, a turner; Johann Most, bookbinder; Fritzsche, cigar maker; Auer, saddler; Grillenberger and Ulrich, locksmiths; Capell, carpenter; Hasenclever, and Schumacher, tanners; Bock, shoemaker; Leyendecker, tailor; Weidemann, joiner.

The work of the organization into unions was pushed from below; strikes revealed to the workers their combined power.

The "Judenhetze"

The winter of 1877-78 was a high water mark of agitation. Bismarck in one of his Reichstag speeches had opened the floodgates of anti-semitism and Court Chaplain Stoecker had become its oratorical apostle. The intent was plain enough. The discontent of the workers was to be sidetracked. Instead of attacking capitalism as the enemy, the workers were to hold the Jews, and the Jewish capitalists only, responsible for all the ills of society.

Bebel countered with the crushing epigram: "Anti-semitism is the Socialism of the stupid." In Berlin, Johann Most, recently released from a prison term, addressed the largest meetings of workers ever held in the capital city. Fiery and eloquent, a master of popular invective, he showed up Stoecker's hypocritical pretenses and the pernicious use of the organized church against the toiling masses.
CHAPTER II

The Attack on the Emperor

IN THE spring something happened. A young fellow, Fritz Hoedel, fired a pistol at the old Emperor's carriage without hitting anybody or anything. It is even in doubt whether he used a real ball cartridge. No ball was ever found. Hoedel was arrested. Bismarck, from his distant country seat, wired to his subordinates in Berlin; "Exceptional law against the Socialists." Within one week such a law was drafted and submitted to the Reichstag.

Meanwhile, Hoedel was quietly tried, sentenced to death under the penal code which visited any, even unsuccessful, attacks upon the ruling prince with the death penalty. He was promptly executed.

His trial developed the fact that he was an unbalanced degenerate, that he had attended some Most meetings and later on had become an ardent follower of Court Chaplain Stoecker. In spite of these facts, Bismarck and the whole crew of militant capitalists used him as a club to beat Socialism.

Liberals Defeat Black Bill

But opposition to Bismarck's first crude anti-Socialist law developed in the Reichstag. Liebknecht styled it "Legislation under false pretenses." The more farsighted bourgeois liberals were reluctant to pass a measure contrary to all the principles they had professed heretofore. For decades they had been denouncing the "Polizeistaat" (the "police state") and advocating instead the government of equal laws for all. They felt reluctant to swallow in one gulp the bitter pill presented to them.

The bourgeois conscience found a way out of its dilemma. In the debate on the bill, Rudolph von Benningsen, the leader of the numerous National Liberals, an able and highly ambitious nobleman, solemnly told the government that instead
of enacting a special law it had better enforce the existing laws "to the utmost limit." He and his friends would gladly welcome and support such vigorous action.

The hint was fully understood. It meant, so far as the Liberals and their press was concerned, carte blanche in advance for anything the government might do under pretense of the law. And when the bill was rejected by the Reichstag, and police and courts were let loose upon the Socialists, the liberal bourgeoisie approved in contented silence.

Still there were some limits to the arbitrary actions of a subservient police. The courts could not abdicate altogether. Destiny came to the assistance of the reactionary forces. Early in June the old Emperor was fired upon again and this time severely wounded.

Within an hour after the news of the attack had been flashed over the wires, a telegram marked "official" was sent out that the assassin, Dr. Nobiling, who had turned his pistol on himself and inflicted a mortal wound in his head, had confessed in a hospital to the inquiring judge that he was an ardent Socialist and had shot the Emperor for that reason.

That telegram was a tissue of lies from beginning to end, as Bebel later proved from the tribune of the Reichstag. Dr. Nobiling never was a Socialist. He was a National Liberal, disappointed in seeking an office and at the end of his resources. His act was one of despair.

He meant to commit suicide and take some conspicuous person along with him. Furthermore, from the moment he entered the hospital he never regained consciousness, did not and could not confess anything. The truth about Nobiling, as stated by Bebel, was so overwhelming that nobody dared to offer any answer.

But meanwhile the official lies had been sent traveling all over the country. They served as a basis for mischief everywhere.

**Bismarck Gets to Work**

Bismarck dissolved the Reichstag and ordered a new election. At the same time he ordered a most drastic exceptional law against Socialists to be passed by the new Reichstag.
For organized Socialism was made the issue of the campaign. Patriotism, Law and Order, Security of Property Rights were the slogans against the "party of robbery and assassination."

The police were let loose like a pack of eager bloodhounds. Owners of meeting halls were ordered not to let them to Socialists. Campaign leaflets were seized and held, contrary to existing laws. Bourgeois mobs, armed with sticks, attacked Socialist gatherings, while the police looked on complacently.

The courts, most of them at least, joined in the drive to the best of their ability. All over the country Socialist speakers and editors were arrested under the flimsiest pretexts, the judges solemnly holding the prisoners as suspected lawbreakers.

Yet the spirit of the Socialist rank and file remained unbroken. I had occasion to learn that from personal experience. In Barmen-Elberfeld, a large industrial center, five editors of the Socialist daily had been arrested, one after the other, and held in prison pending trial. At the request of the party executive I went to that part of the firing line to take charge of the paper and the campaign work.

A Human Phalanx

There I found a surprising situation. The Comrades were glad to have me assume work, but were utterly unwilling to let me take any avoidable risk. Thirty young unmarried Comrades had arranged among themselves that one of them, if need be, one after another, should sign as responsible editor subject to arrest, so that the real editor could work behind a human phalanx.

Volunteers came forward for all kinds of activities. Surprise after surprise was sprung on the police. Leaflets were distributed in the midnight hours. Instead of large meetings, small ones were organized simultaneously. The factories and workshops became hotbeds of agitation.

In 1877 we had lost the Elberfeld district. In 1878 we lost everywhere on the first ballot, succeeding only in having a chance in the second ballot in our best strongholds. It so happened that Barmen-Elberfeld was the first district to vote in the second ballot. We won by a majority of more than 1,000. Our elected man was one of the five men in jail awaiting trial.
Our victory encouraged the Comrades all over the country. Telegrams of congratulation poured in like the following from Berlin:


The aftermath of the election resulted in my arrest, based on an address to voters which I had delivered and which had been taken down by a police stenographer.

My trial was a judicial farce. The sentence and the findings of the court still more so. I was accused of eight different violations of the penal code. Five of the charges were easily demolished in open court. The three remaining ones—insulting the cabinet ministers, inciting class against class, inciting to contempt for the government—were of such elastic quality that the court stretched the law beyond the breaking point to hold me guilty. “Six months,” to be served in the Penitentiary of Cologne.

CURTAIN.
CHAPTER III

The Exception Laws

The official title of the proposed anti-Socialist law was: "Imperial Law Against the Excesses of the Social Democracy." To the very last, hypocrisy was added to brute suppression. For nobody really believed that only the "excesses" were to be combatted. The provisions of the law left not the least doubt as to that.

Socialism was to be ruthlessly stamped out as a product of wicked and malicious agitators. Those devilish fellows once silenced, peace and harmony between capital and labor would be restored.

Bismarck actually believed—just as some public men in America profess to believe—that agitators, and not conditions, were breeding unrest and discontent. "Force, force without stint, force to the uttermost," is to some politicians the sesame that opens every gate.

The main provisions of the law were:

Any book, periodical or other printed matter may be prohibited by decree of the district government (Regierung). Such decree to take effect at once upon publication in the official organ, Reichsanzeiger.

Any organization held to promote Socialist agitation might be outlawed by the same agency and its dissolution become effective in like manner. Any public meeting might be "verboten" the same way.

Money of organizations adjudged to be used for Socialist propaganda was to be confiscated.

Collection of money for Socialist propaganda was to be "verboten."

Appeal from the action of the authorities might be taken to the Leipsic Supreme Court, whose decision would be final.

Agitators for Socialism might be interned during the duration of the law.
No Citizen’s Liberty Safe

Whenever it seemed to the government that Socialist agitation in any city or district assumed a dangerous character, the local authorities, by proclamation, were given arbitrary power to expel persons deemed dangerous, such expulsion to take effect within 24 hours. Natives and lifelong residents with established businesses were made subject to such expulsion by decree of the police. This provision became known as the minor state of of siege, the partial establishment of martial law.

As soon as the law was promulgated district after district fell under its ban, Berlin and suburbs, Hamburg, Barmen-Elberfeld, Breslau, Leipsic, Frankfort-on-the-Main among them. Wholesale expulsions took place in all of these cities.

Any expelled person not getting out within the time limit, or returning without permission, became liable to imprisonment.

The circulation of prohibited literature was made a crime punishable by imprisonment up to five years.

This law was originally enacted for the term of three years, but was subsequently renewed from time to time until 1888.

“We Spit Upon Your Law”

Nine Socialists, among them Bebel and Liebknecht, had been elected by second ballot. They made a splendid fight against this law, knowing all the time that the cards were stacked against them. For three weeks the debate went on. Some of the incidents were of a highly dramatic character.

One of the government supporters during the third reading truculently turned to the Socialist corner: “You know that this law is going to be enacted. Will you obey it?”

It so happened that on that day, Wilhelm Bracke of Brunswick was to be the Socialist spokesman; a successful flour merchant who for years had been one of the most forceful exponents of Socialism, a man of iron backbone. With fire in his eye Bracke faced the reactionaries.

“You want to know what we are going to do with your law?” he said. “I will tell you; we are going to spit upon it.”
The word actually used was much stronger, hardly parliamentary. But Bracke's fearless reply expressed the sentiments of the rank and file.

Toward the end of the long debate, Georg von Vollmar, elected in Munich, delivered his maiden speech in a highly dramatic setting. The day's session had been long; everybody felt tired when the speaker granted Vollmar the floor.

Von Vollmar Picks Law Apart

Vollmar, tall, handsome, a war invalid, rose leaning on his crutches and began to speak in a rich, sonorous voice. He had proceeded only a few minutes when house and galleries were under an electric spell. Calm, incisive, with pitiless logic, he pointed out that the law would not and could not accomplish the end sought for.

Socialism was not produced by individuals, but by existing economic and political conditions. What this law would do would be cruel injustice to individuals and organizations alike. Instead of allaying discontent, it would increase it, creating bitter anger and resentment.

"You had the choice of weapons in the conflict." he declared. "Yours will be the responsibility for the wounds."

With that he sat down amid a burst of tremendous applause.

The law was eventually passed and promulgated under the title: "Law of the Empire against the Social Democracy, of October 21, 1878."

Immediately the government agencies got busy everywhere. Socialist periodicals were suppressed. Workers' organizations were declared dissolved, their funds confiscated. Day after day the columns of the Reichsanzeiger were filled with official decrees of suppression of every kind.

All Socialist literature came under the ban. In a few cases appeals to the Leipsic supreme court were taken. They were acted on in the same spirit in which appeals to the U. S. Supreme court were decided in such cases as those of Debs and Kate Richards O'Hare. Only the Leipsic court action was more speedy and free from all circumlocution.
Of all the rich and varied literature of German Socialism only three books escaped the ban: Marx's "Das Kapital," Albert Schaeffle's "Quintessence of Socialism," and Langes "Arbeiter Frage." For very shame they dared not prohibits "Das Kapital," a scientific treatise of the highest quality. Schaeffle, formerly professor and an Austrian cabinet minister, could not very well be branded as a malicious Socialist agitator. Nor could Lange, for many years a member of the faculty of the Marburg University.

The process of smashing went on with increasing fury. In the districts where the minor state of siege had been declared expulsions were decreed by the police from day to day. Homes were broken up, businesses ruined.

Among those expelled from Leipsic were Bebel and Liebknecht. Bebel's expulsion turned out to be of incalculable benefit to the movement in a way not foreseen by the authorities.

The Bebel Boomerang

As a young man Bebel had established himself in Leipsic as a master turner. As "Drechslermeister" Bebel figured for years in official documents. He married a bright and capable working girl, a seamstress.

When Bebel served his two years' term in Hubertusburg his young wife managed his little business so well that on his release he found it more prosperous than ever before. Now he formed a partnership and the new firm of Isslieb & Bebel, turning out goods in wood, ivory and metal, obtained trade in all the important cities of Germany.

Expelled from Leipsic, the seat of the firm, Bebel became traveling salesman for his house. He would visit city after city with his sample case, calling on his customers during the day and booking their orders. His evenings were usually spent with a group of the most active local Comrades, exchanging views, aiding and encouraging them. Like the apostles of early Christianity he cheered the faithful and inspired them with undying hope and confidence. His pre-eminence in the party was due largely to this activity.
The Party "Dissolved"

For some months after the promulgation of the law, blow upon blow rained down upon the party. It was officially dissolved, its press, its organization destroyed. Hundreds of individuals were ruthlessly ruined. The party's most active members, editors, writers, speakers, were suddenly bereft of the means of earning a living. The membership was kept busy facing the ruin and its consequences. Party life was suspended.

Yet the movement was not dead, only stunned. Soon one of our ablest journalists, Karl Hirsch, issued in Brussels a tiny periodical in red covers, the Lantern, in imitation of the famous French pamphleteer Henri Rochefort.

Johann Most emigrated to London. A German workingman's club in Tottenham Court Road received him with open arms and helped him to establish his weekly, the Freiheit, which quickly gained underground circulation in Germany. Of course, it was promptly "verboten." Now ensued a highly entertaining game of tag between Most and the German police.

Most changed the title of his paper every week, and week after week the Reichsanzeiger, with owl-like solemnity, published the 'verboten' of the new issue, thus giving the paper a lot of free advertising. For, by the time of the taboo the paper had already reached its regular subscribers, while many outsiders were developing an eager curiosity about the forbidden fruit.
CHAPTER IV

Bebel Wakes Them Up

O N ONE of his business trips, August Bebel came to Stuttgart. Calling on me, he asked me to arrange for meeting some of the active Comrades in the evening. It occurred to me however, that his presence could be made more useful just then in another way.

For that very evening the bourgeois Democrats had arranged a public meeting in the neighboring city of Esslingen, a lively industrial center. Leopold Sonnemann, the owner and editor of the Frankfurter Zeitung, member of the Reichstag for Frankfort-am-Main, was to be chief speaker, rendering a report of his work in the Reichstag.

It was the practice in those days that after the main address, the floor was to be thrown open for discussion. Calling Bebel's attention to this fine opportunity, I suggested that the best way to utilize the evening would be to attend this meeting where we would spring a surprise by his participating in the discussion, which I felt could be managed by keeping his presence unknown to the managers until the psychological moment. Word could be sent quietly to our friends in Esslingen and in Stuttgart to come to the meeting, and secure moral support to our scheme.

Bebel readily assented. The tip went out in the most effective manner.

In the evening, Bebel with a small group of Comrades, appeared at the hall, carefully remaining in the rear, sheltered behind the broad back of a big six foot Comrade.

The large hall filled quickly. Here and there were quiet groups of Comrades from Esslingen and Stuttgart, apparently lost in the big crowd.

The chairman of the evening was Karl Mayer, member of the Wurttemberg Diet, and a typical bourgeois Democrat, and a popular speaker. Opening the proceedings with the praises
of his own party's valiant championship of freedom, he introduced the only representative of his party in the Reichstag to report on the work of that body.

Sonnemann took the floor amidst generous applause. For an hour and a half he held forth. Somehow, his long address missed fire. The exposition of bourgeois Democracy did not wake up the crowd.

**Bebel Appears**

When he finished, the chairman called for discussion. From the rear came an answer in a clear, penetrating voice. "I wish to speak; Bebel."

An electric shock went through the audience. The chairman was flabbergasted. He lost his head, "We are living under the anti-Socialist law," he managed to stammer, "and I cannot assume the responsibility of letting Bebel speak here. I rather resign as chairman." Without paying the slightest attention to the chairman's remarks, Bebel came forward, greeted with a storm of enthusiastic applause. He mounted the platform and began to point out the difference between the policies of the bourgeois Democracy and those of the Socialists.

The somnolent crowd sat up, drinking in every word. Nobody paid any attention to the chairman, who had vacated his seat. Soon, Carl Mayer, Sonnemann and four members of the committee were seen to make their way out of the hall. Nobody else followed. The large crowd stayed, deeply interested to hear Bebel's speech.

For fully half an hour, Bebel held his audience in his best, clear style.

In the rear the chief of police was highly nervous and uneasy. He was not certain as to his power and duty in such a case. The meeting had not been called by the Socialists. Was the fact that a Socialist took active part sufficient to make him dissolve the meeting? He was not sure. He hesitated.

By his side stood a prominent National Liberal, nudging the Chief from time to time, and urging him to close the meeting.

Still, the chief hesitated. Just then a fiery sentence of Bebel's called forth thunderous applause. Again the Chief was
urged by his neighbor to act, this time under threat to have him reported for neglect of duty.

"The Meeting Adjourns"

Reluctantly the chief now stepped forward, and declared the meeting dissolved under the anti-Socialist law.

Bebel, still on the platform, in dulcet tones sweetly said that the meeting had better come to an end; the Socialists did not intend to violate the law. But, he added, the law did not forbid people from having a social glass of beer together; political meetings, of course, were held in the beer gardens.

The hint was promptly taken by the whole audience. Nobody left. People sat in groups around the tables, quaffing the foaming brown beverage, and discussing the events of the evening.

Bebel was lionized. Sonnemann and his chairman were forgotten. Instead of one meeting, we had two, the informal second one lasting until after midnight. Everybody was pleased with the result.
CHAPTER V

The Party Outlawed

OFFICIALLY the Socialist party was outlawed. There was no legal way of electing a regular executive committee to speak and to act for the members. Under the circumstances the nine Socialist members of the Reichstag were tacitly constituted an executive committee.

As Most's Freiheit obtained circulation in Germany through the help and at the risk of party members, the Reichstag members suggested to Most that the representatives of the party should exercise some degree of influence over its policies. Most, supported by his London following, flatly rejected all proposals of that nature.

Now the executive committee faced the problem of acquiring an organ outside of Germany. A weekly paper, the Social Democrat, which was later to become famous, was established in Zurich, Switzerland. Its first editor was Georg von Vollmar. A Wurttemberg Socialist, Julius Motteler, organized the underground work of circulation, and soon became known as the Red Postmaster. A most ingenious system of code correspondence was devised, Stieber's "Verdruss," so complicated and so elaborate that it successfully baffled all efforts of the police to decipher any letters they were able to intercept.

The Social Democrat appeared with great regularity as a weekly. The bulk of the edition was smuggled into Germany from ever-varying points on the Swiss frontier. Some subscribers received their copies in sealed letters posted cleverly from unsuspected places.

Among those so served, strangely enough, was the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, whose subscriptions were renewed with great regularity. Every possible precaution was taken to protect the agents and their subscribers.
Most Turns Anarchist

Johann Most was furious because his Freiheit was not given the exclusive field. For thirteen issues his paper had in the main stood for Socialism. The appearance of the Social Democrat as the official organ of the party caused him to start a kind of Left Wing movement in which he was joined by Wilhelm Hasselmann, a Reichstag deputy who deserted his post and went to London without resigning his seat for Barmen-Elberfeld.

These two now proclaimed themselves as Anarchist-Communists of the Kropotkin type. Week after week the Freiheit attacked the leaders of the party as cowards and traitors to the working class. From his safe retreat in London, Most declared that the leaders should have called upon the workers to rise and fight on the barricades instead of submitting to the oppressive law.

As a by-product shameless lies against prominent Socialists were printed in the Freiheit week after week. Vollmar returned shot for shot. He pointed out that the Freiheit office in London had become a favorite place for police spies and agents provocateurs masking as ultra-revolutionaries.

The rank and file of the party became disgusted with the controversy. The prevailing view was to pay no attention to Most’s vicious attacks and to turn our guns on the official enemy. For that reason Eduard Bernstein was sent to Zurich as associate editor of the Social Democrat.

Secret Congress in Switzerland

It was felt, however, that a congress of the party should be held for the settlement of the Most-Hasselmann defection, and for the far more important task of reorganizing in spite of the anti-Socialist law.

After considerable preliminary work such a congress was called to convene in Switzerland in August, 1880. Most and Hasselmann were officially invited, but failed to appear. Fifty-six party members from all parts of Germany came. The police were kept in complete ignorance of time, place and personnel. The present writer was one of those attending, as was also the late beloved Herman Schlueter.
The place of meeting was the half-ruined castle of Wyden, situated on a steep hill near the prosperous village of Ossingen. Posted sentinels watched every path of access and kept us entirely protected against eavesdroppers. Nearly the whole Reichstag delegation attended, and most of the leading Comrades.

Renegades Are Expelled

There were no written credentials. So far as possible there was to be no tangible evidence which the police could utilize. No minutes in usual form were kept, but later on the Socialist Democrat published the substance of the proceedings.

A whole day, three sessions, the Most-Hasselmann affair was before the congress. A mass of documents was read and listened to with the closest attention. Finally the motion to expel Most and Hasselmann from the party was carried without a single dissenting vote.

The two delegates from Berlin abstained from voting. One of them Rudolf Tiedt, explained that they had been instructed not to vote for expulsion. But after hearing the merits of the case, they could not conscientiously vote against expulsion.

Many Surprises for Police

Then for two days the congress settled down to the work of reconstruction in spite of the law, but with the minimum danger to the membership. It may not be wise to state in detail how the work was to be done. Suffice it to state that it eventually was taken in hand by the returning delegates, everywhere adapted to local conditions.

Organizations were created in many forms. Only sober, alert, reliable and resourceful members were admitted. Small in numbers, they were highly successful in action. The underground work produced surprise after surprise for the police and the easily frightened bourgeois class.

Leaflets were carefully prepared, secretly printed in quantities, and distributed so quietly and so successfully that the work was all done before the police woke up. Some of the incidents of distribution furnished the Comrades no end of amusement. Out of many such incidents, one may be stated here.
Leaflets Scattered at Night

The Stuttgart Comrades organized repeated successful leaflet distributions in the neighboring villages. On the Sundays following little groups would take walks out there, sit down to a glass of beer in the most frequented beer gardens, and soon manage to turn the conversation with the amiable natives to the subject of the mysterious night visitors who had distributed the leaflets. As a rule, they found that their literature had struck a friendly and a fertile soil.

Once a prosperous and intelligent vintner told of his own experience. He had been in bed, sleepless, and had gone to the window for fresh air. Then he noticed two men going quietly from house to house and shoving something under the door or behind the window shutters.

When a white object was shoved under his own door his curiosity led him to go downstairs and investigate. He found a leaflet. Back in his room, he lighted a candle and sat down to read.

"By God," he added, "had I known what those fellows were doing I would have asked them in and fetched a jug of my best wine from the cellar for them."

When the Stuttgart authorities circularized the village heads, urging them to collect and confiscate the forbidden stuff, one burgomaster bluntly retorted:

"Your city officials are so smart! Why don't you stop your Socialists from coming out our way with their stuff? When our people once get hold of those papers they won't give them up."

The underground work assumed many other forms. One was a bloodless guerrilla warfare against the police. They were frequently set on wild goose chases, especially in bad weather. Mysterious tips as to secret meetings in stone quarries, woods or isolated inns were conveyed to headquarters, and platoons of police went out to make arrests, only to return empty-handed, bedraggled and highly disgusted.
Police Chase Wild Geese

One such tip reached the Barmen-Elberfeld police to the effect that on Pentecost the Socialists would distribute a leaflet entitled "The Red Flag." Steps were taken to fortify the police in the view that this was a straight tip. The result was an order for the whole force to report in civilian garb and patrol the district for 24 hours so as to catch any distributor of the Red Flag leaflet.

This force was recruited mainly from former non-commissioned officers accustomed for many years to wearing uniform. When these fellows appeared on the streets in uncomfortable mufti their awkward bearing betrayed them instantly to any observer. All that Sunday the local Comrades hugely enjoyed the police exhibition, sometimes teasing the hawkshaws good naturedly.

Only one arrest was the result, that of an inoffensive traveling journeyman with a knapsack on his back. Taken to headquarters, he was charged with having a supply of Red Flag leaflets for distribution. The knapsack was opened. It contained only some soiled shirts, underwear and socks. The dangerous prisoner was quickly released. The news of any such affair spread like wildfire, to the great enjoyment of the masses.

Workers' Flag on Hilltop

In the early morning of March 18, 1882—a revolutionary anniversary—a large red flag was flying from the flagpole of the warriors' monument in Barmen, situated on the highest hill overlooking the valley. Visible for many miles around, it attracted the attention of the workers going to their factories.

The police hurried to the monument to take down this symbol of revolution. Their job was by no means easy. The Comrade who had hoisted the flag in the night was a clever locksmith, not suspected by the police, since he was a non-commissioned officer of the reserve. He had ingeniously manipulated all the locks in the place so as to make the unlocking as slow and troublesome as possible.
On the winding stairs he had scattered a plentiful supply of suspicious looking black grains. On the walls was scrawled in big letters: "Look out!—Dynamite!" In truth, it was only harmless charcoal.

It took the police six hours to get to the roof and haul down the flag. A spirited investigation followed, but without result. For only three persons were in the plot and all of them close-mouthed; the originator of the scheme, the tailor who made the flag and the aforesaid locksmith. In following years red flags were raised in a similar manner in many places. The police failed to catch any of these tormentors. Every successful surprise party tended to encourage the comrades and to carry dismay into the ranks of the enemy.
CHAPTER VI

Campaigning for the Reichstag

IN THE Spring of 1881, the comrades everywhere made ready for the general election to the Reichstag due in the fall. At that time I was living in Stuttgart, editing a somewhat colorless paper maintained by the comrades in spite of handicaps of the Anti-Socialist Law. Quite unexpectedly a letter came to me from Barmen-Elberfeld asking me if I would accept the socialist nomination there; and outline my political position in reply.

In that district I had served my first jail term in 1878. That was the main reason for the offer.

There was another reason of a far more serious nature. It was that the member for that district, Wilhelm Hasselmann, who had deserted his post and joined Johann Most in London where Cotz had started a sort of a Left Wing movement in 1880. Hasselmann had still a rather large personal following in the district. Those people were sincere, if fanatical. They had declared against any candidate suspected of “moderate” views. It was that element that had suggested my name as a sort of compromise candidate.

My letter in reply was placed before an inner council, together with letters from other possible candidates, and I was made the first choice provided that at a meeting to be arranged, my political attitude proved satisfactory to both factions.

The meeting was arranged in characteristic fashion. On several Sundays, groups of the best known comrades ostentatiously walked out into the woods as if on very important business. Of course, they were followed by police agents. Nothing happened. Time after time the police reported failure, until they got tired and disgusted.
Oppenheimer Nominated

When that state of affairs had been reached, I was quietly summoned and quartered in the home of a trustworthy comrade over Saturday night.

The following morning my host took me out for a quiet walk of several miles, until we reached a lonely part of the wooded hills where we found about 30 trusted comrades waiting for us. I was asked to state my views. I did so, declaring that I would not be a candidate unless I was assured the loyal support of both factions.

That assurance was given, and I may add, faithfully lived up to in the entire campaign.

I was sent back to Stuttgart and came to my district for the campaign only about a month before the election day.

Needless to say, regular political headquarters were out of the question. Instead, I established a little cigar store where I could keep in some touch with the campaign work.

The district was in poor condition, partly from the effect of the Exception Law, partly because of the factional disturbance within the party. There was no money in the treasury. Everything had to be started afresh.

It was the police that furnished the main beverage for waking up the workers. From the moment my arrival became known, two policemen in uniform were ordered to watch me from early morning till I went to bed. They had to report for every hour of the day, where I went, with whom I spoke and what I did.

The "Watchdogs"

I decided to use them as my chief advertising medium, since the news of their detail had spread through the district, I played all kinds of innocent tricks on them, taking them around on fools' errands and at times deliberately losing them and slipping away to meet my committee. Soon they became known all over as Oppenheimer's watchdogs. Sometimes after a successful "getaway" a placard would appear in my store window:

"Lost, Two Watch Dogs. The honest finder may keep them."
Every story about a new "getaway"—and there were many and varied—spread through the district like wildfire. The policemen apologetically owned to me that they did not like their job, but had to obey orders.

Things began to hum. A committee of substantial burghers called on the mayor and urged him to withdraw the uniformed men, else my election would be a certainty.

Instead of uniformed shadows, two men in mufti were put on my track.

Of a stormy afternoon, for instance, I would repair to a corner house occupied by a good socialist, well known as such to the police. There seemed to be urgent reason for watching me closely. Since that house had two doors, one in each street it fronted, my two shadows placed themselves in a manner to watch both exits. There they stood for over an hour, uncomfortable in the stiff breeze. Before long the rumor spread in the whole neighborhood that the socialist candidate was in that corner house. Rows of windows opened, heads popped out and voices were heard. "Look—down there are Oppenheimer's watchdogs!"

Meanwhile I had quietly slipped out through a back door and made my way through an alley into another street where I joined some members of the campaign committee for purposes of conference.

Another time, a Sunday morning when it was steadily drizzling, I started on a walk accompanied by a young friend, and, of course, by my two shadows. Up and down hill we went for nearly two hours until I stopped to enter a large restaurant much frequented by middle class people. My friend went along. We took off our overcoats and ordered coffee. I reached for the morning paper and began reading.

**A Good Steak Wasted**

My shadows had followed. Assuming that I would stay for a while, they ordered beer and a steak well done. I watched them out of a corner of my eye. After a while the waiter appeared with the steaming steak. At that very moment I reached for my overcoat, paid my bill and departed quickly. In dismay,
my shadows jumped up and followed before they could even take a bite of their order. My friend lingered behind explaining to the curious crowd why the two had left in such a hurry.

Similar scenes, varied according to circumstances, were enacted every once in a while. By the time election day drew near I was as well advertised as any ambitious prima donna could ever wish.

But such fun was only a part of the real campaign work. Leaflets stating the issues of the campaign were distributed by tens of thousands, some by volunteers at night, others by trusted comrades in workshops and factories. It was a still hunt, for we could hold no meetings.

Election day. One hundred and fourteen polling places. Each was manned by three picked comrades, volunteers all. Only the poorest of the poor accepted lunch—beer and sandwiches—at the expense of the party. Most of them scornfully declined such aid, because of the expense to the party.

Five candidates were running. The socialist vote was leading, but did not register a clear majority. Second balloting therefore had to take place between me and the nominee of the Progressives. The Catholic ("Centrum") party with a vote of about 3,000, half of them workingmen, solemnly proclaimed neutrality. This meant, as everybody understood, that the vote of the Catholic workers would be cast for the representative of their class. Under the circumstances my victory was a foregone conclusion.

The "Cow Trade"

Twenty-four hours before the date set for the second ballot the situation changed suddenly. Eugen Richter, the leader of the Progressives, and Dr. Windthorst, the leader of the Catholic party entered into a political deal under which the Catholics of Barmen-Elberfeld were to cast their whole strength for my opponent. In return, the Progressive minority in the neighboring district of Solingen were to cast their votes for the Catholic candidate who was to ballot against Moritz Rittinghausen, an old socialist.
The wires brought the news of the deal to the Catholic leaders in my district. Their perfect machinery was set in motion with fine effect, for the next day I was beaten by about a thousand votes.

It so happened however, that the Richter-Windthorst trick did not work as planned. The Progressive minority in the Solingen district was made up of dyed-in-the-wool Protestants who could not bear the idea that they should be represented in the Reichstag by a Black Cowl. They rose in their wrath, refused to obey orders and voted solidly for Rittinghausen, who was triumphantly elected in consequence. Thus I may say that I was vicariously an instrument of socialist victory.

Only one more thing ought to be stated; the whole expense of my campaign was a trifle below $250, including printing bills for leaflets and ballots. All the hard personal work was done by volunteers, including the manning of 114 polling places in the first and second ballots, according to the German election system.
CHAPTER VII

Squelching A Reactionary

THE work of the secret organization under the Exception Laws took many forms. As far as possible, we did not wish our forces to run needless risks. Our men were far more useful outside of jail than behind bars. Only those in the limelight must never show the white feather.

When opportunities, offered however, to show that Socialism had not been killed by the odious law, we seized upon them eagerly with careful preparation.

Such an opportunity came in the early Summer of 1881. One of the Reichstag members from Wurttemberg was a former Prime Minister, Baron von Varnbueler, a very foxy individual. Varnbueler had, of course, voted for the Anti-Socialist Law.

In the session of 1879, he had acted as the chief of the Protectionist interests, placing heavy burdens on the masses by indirect taxation, and supporting militarism's extravagant demands.

Varnbueler was eager for re-election. Early in 1881, he engaged in a quiet campaign to strengthen his political fences. Sunday after Sunday, he arranged meetings in the rural communities, supported by the whole governmental machinery. The district was chiefly agricultural, and for many weeks, the candidate had been making his campaign speeches without encountering any opposition.

Varnbueler's Meeting

Now he got ready for his master stroke. A meeting for Sunday afternoon at 5 o'clock was called to take place at Lanstatt the chief town of the district. Varnbueler was to make his report and receive his endorsement for re-election.

The faithful Comrades of Lanstatt called for our assistance in spoiling this program. Our plans were carefully laid and most
beautifully carried out, with the assistance of our well disciplined forces.

Groups of Comrades from Lanstatt and near-by Stuttgart proceeded quietly to the meeting hall, and occupied the front benches. By 4:45 p. m. every seat in the first six rows was occupied by a good Socialist. The rural element, largely dressed in quaint peasant costume, drifted in slowly, wondering at the large attendance in city dress. From time to time, a head bobbed out of the committee room, sizing up the meeting.

Promptly at 5 o’clock, the committee appeared, having in tow Varnbueler, easily recognizable by his long, forked gray whiskers.

The chairman of the committee, after calling the meeting to order, nominated the worthy burgomaster of Lanstatt for permanent chairman. Immediately one of the Comrades, by prearrangement, nominated Trevers, a journeyman cabinet maker from Stuttgart for that position. Objection was at once made that Trevers was not a resident and voter of that district.

**Deputy of all the People**

Thereupon I arose and pointed out that according to a specific section of the German constitution, a deputy, once elected, did represent the whole German people, not merely his district, and that this provision was perfectly logical, since the laws he voted for and the taxes he helped to impose concerned all the people. Hence all had legitimate reason to judge a Deputy’s actions from their own point of view and interest.

Greatly perplexed, the chairman now turned to Varnbueler, asking him about that constitutional point. Varnbueler had to admit reluctantly that I was stating a fact.

Once more arising, I stated, that all my friends wished to secure was free discussion. We had come, not merely to hear the Deputy’s report, but to discuss it. If the committee would pledge us such free discussion, we would accept their nominee for chairman.

Excited whispering at the committee table. Then the chairman pointed out the presence of the Chief of Police, who might object to any Socialists speaking.
To which I made answer that unless binding assurance of free discussion was given, we would endeavor to secure it through a chairman who would maintain that right to the limit. Therefore, the assembly must decide by vote.

The vote was taken by a showing of hands. At once vehement protests were made that a number of Varnbueler's supporters had raised both hands.

Great confusion in the hall. Finally the committee announced that the candidate would not speak this afternoon under the circumstances, and that the meeting would stand adjourned.

The Fortunate Outcome

The outcome was more than satisfactory to us. Varnbueler silenced in perfectly legal fashion, was a fact telegraphed to the press, and widely commented upon as evidence of Socialist activities.

Soon thereafter, we prepared a leaflet to be distributed in large numbers throughout the district. This leaflet pointed out that a Deputy, acting for the best interests of his constituencies would welcome free discussion. Varnbueler's side-stepping disclosed a bad political conscience. He did not dare to have the light of day thrown on his work in Berlin. There was no other explanation for his conduct.

The leaflet struck home. Next Fall, the district defeated Varnbueler in favor of his Democratic opponent. The Socialist vote, heretofore an almost negligible minority, showed a large increase. Thus, our work, in spite of the repressive laws, had scored again.
On many occasions the Social Democrat served as a powerful agent in punishing our enemies.

In Stuttgart the comrades were incensed at the behavior of city judge Gottlieb Kuehn known in our circles merely as "Gottlieb." This man on many occasions had proved himself a petty and malicious tyrant. He often issued warrants of arrest and search warrants on the flimsiest pretexts; he would hold prisoners in jail when every legal ground for such action was missing; as supervising authority of the city jail he treated Socialist prisoners with all the meanness of the venomous little pasha. When I was unfortunate enough to have to spend a month in that jail, I experienced the fellow's petty tyranny myself. When the comrades heard the story after my release, some of them proposed to give the fellow a good thrashing some dark night.

With some difficulty I dissuaded them from executing that plan which might land them in prison for long terms. There was a better way and a more effective one of squaring accounts with "Gottlieb."

I prepared a correspondence for the Social Democrat, a pen picture of Gottlieb, his acts, his character and the place he held in the esteem of his townsmen. It was a picture true to life, full of color. With the text I sent the request to mail a copy of the article to Gottlieb. In due course of time, this was done. Gottlieb well-nigh exploded. He sat down and wrote a long letter to the Social Democrat, denying my facts and asking that his denial be given publicity.

Gottlieb's letter caused immense amusement to Motteler, the Red Postmaster who knew the little man and his deeds.

In the next issue, the Social Democrat acknowledged receipt of Gottlieb's letter and went on to state that the paper had
every reason to believe in its correspondent's veracity; that it had been established at great sacrifice to defend our side, not that of cruel and heartless petty tyrants, and that therefore Gottlieb's letter would not be published. It was added, however, in very plain language, that there were courts in Zurich, courts of justice, at which Gottlieb might start and win a libel suit if he was able to disprove the charges against him. If he failed to take such action, he would stand convicted in the court of public opinion.

The blistering reply reached Gottlieb in a registered letter. Gottlieb did not sue. He did not dare. Excitement and suppressed helpless rage brought on a serious billious attack that kept the scoundrel in its grip for three weeks.

A Bribe-Taker Caught

Another case turned out even more seriously. A certain police captain in Elberfeld habitually went far beyond his legal power in persecuting Socialists. On one occasion when the victim was a poor widow, we deemed his measure full to overflowing and planned retribution. We had reliable information that the captain beside being a bully, was one of the lowest bribe extortioners and a regular frequenter of a certain dive masked as a wine restaurant. A letter in the Social Democrat told the story in full detail. A copy of the issue containing the story was mailed to a high government official known to be one of the captain's bitter enemies.

The result was a trap set for the unsuspecting bribe-taker. He was caught in the act and arrested under circumstances that meant disgrace and heavy punishment.

Next morning he was found hanging in his cell, a despairing suicide.

Copies of the Social Democrat that had been the villain's unmasking circulated for weeks thereafter pasted on pasteboard in order to make them last. A dollar apiece was freely offered for them.
CHAPTER IX

The Watchman of Bolander

AFTER a series of successful distributions of leaflets we had to record an adventure that furnished a great deal of amusement to the comrades when it was published in the Social Democrat of Zurich.

Among the comrades usually participating in our night expeditions were two chums physically as unlike as possible, one a tailor, tall and lean, the other a locksmith, short and stocky. These two always worked together on such trips.

On the occasion in question they were to cover the village of Bolander far out in the hills.

Now the head of that village—in Wuerttemberg vernacular the Shultheiss—had taken the admonition of his superiors to heart and had gone on the warpath against the leaflet distributors, a situation of which the rollicking pair of prowlers was unaware.

The Schultheiss had most impressively instructed the village night watchman to keep on the lookout for those pernicious Socialists and to arrest them at their next night's visit. To make sure that every avenue of escape was cut off, he was to wake up half a dozen neighbors to assist him.

So when the watchman noticed our two men at their work, he sneaked away and collected his posse, instructing the sleepy men to be ready in case of need.

Then he approached the busy couple and solemnly placed them under arrest, pointing out the hopelessness of resistance in the face of overwhelming odds.

Our men submitted and were marched toward the entrance of the house where the village monarch dwelt. The latter, awake by now, poked his head in his white nightcap out of the window and directed his henchmen to bring his prisoners in through the gate of the yard.
The watchman, opening the gate, ordered his visitors to enter. The locksmith slowly advanced, watched by his captor. At that moment the long tailor saw his opportunity and started away on the run, quickly followed by the watchman. Now the locksmith turned and walked quietly in the opposite direction, nobody stopping him.

After about ten minutes the watchman came back out of breath and minus any prisoner. The tailor's long and swift legs had been too much for him.

"Where are your prisoners?" angrily asked the Schultheiss. "They have run away," wailed his underling. "Didn't I tell you to get neighbors to help you? Where are they?" "There they stand on yonder corner laughing at me," was the explanation given in broadest country dialect and a tone of injured innocence.

This story came to me in two installments. In the morning, the locksmith showed up telling how he and his pal escaped from the clutches of the law in Bolander. In the afternoon a villager in peasant garb came to my office and introduced himself as one of the citizens of Bolander who were called upon to help the night watchman in his task of catching and holding the night visitors.

From his tale I got the best part of the adventure. It appeared that the villagers were none too eager to bring their visitors to grief. On the contrary, they were highly gratified to see them make good their escape.

After giving me his name and address he went on to say that it was not necessary to risk the freedom of our men by bringing reading stuff to Bolander. If such stuff was made ready hereafter he would willingly undertake the distribution.

And he was as good as his word.
CHAPTER X

The Collapse

In 1887 a young college professor, an ardent Socialist, known only to a limited circle as such, died in Stuttgart after a lingering illness. The funeral was set for Sunday afternoon. Orders went out from the secret executive committee. At the funeral three hundred comrades appeared, marching in orderly formation behind the hearse, each with a red carnation in his buttonhole. Thus they passed through the principal streets, past the royal palace to the cemetery, where our comrade, Dr. A. Dulk, standing by the open grave, delivered a fiery farewell address.

Socialists Survive All Blows

The police were taken completely by surprise. It was the first demonstration in the open. The capitalist press emitted howls of dismay. Everybody had thought, they said, that the Anti-Socialist Law had effectually destroyed the party. But now it was plain that those pests still existed, they had mobilized their forces in broad daylight, hurling their defiance at all good citizens. Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord!

How the outlawed party thrived under persecution is a matter of history. In the elections of 1881 they increased their Reichstag delegation from nine to twelve. In 1884 they doubled that number, growing steadily.

By 1888 the futility of a system of ruthless persecution had become so evident that the evil law was abolished, even its former most ardent supporters admitting its utter failure.

Driving Socialism underground did not work well in Germany, nor in Russia, nor in Austro-Hungary.

National Security League, American Defense Society, American Legion, Thaddeus C. Sweet, Washington Bourbons, please take notice of this lesson of history!
EPILOGUE

DRIFTING WITH WILSON

(Editors in N. Y. Call, April 2, 1914, written by Moses Oppenheimer)

NOTE: This editorial now six years old, can be read with profit today in connection with the tendencies observable in Washington and elsewhere.

WOODOO WILSON has now been in power for over a year as chief political guide of the greatest nation on our globe. For, all things considered, the United States is greater really than either China, the British Empire or Russia. Those three countries, it is true, surpass us in population. But as to wealth and variety of national resources, compactness of organization, inventiveness, tremendous push and energy, we leave them all behind. We could and should be the vanguard of progress under the right kind of guidance, of progress toward the happiness of the whole people.

Are we today such a vanguard? Is our chief guide leading us on skillfully, vigorously, unerringly toward that great goal?

Or, to put the question in another form: Could President Wilson play the part of such a guide? And if not, why not?

The President of the United States is not a figurehead, like some so-called constitutional monarchs. Our political fabric was planned to give him great power. He selects his chief political aids himself. Once confirmed by the Senate, they hold their positions at his pleasure. They become his clerks, not shaken by adverse votes in either House of Congress. In that respect our Cabinet resembles the Napoleonic idea of responsibility to the ruler, and to him solely.

In the course of time, the power of our President has been steadily increasing, partly by artful interpretation of our basic law, partly by sheer usurpation. To be sure, there is the check of impeachment. It was invoked once against Andrew Johnson, and invoked in vain. The concentration of power in the White
House has been going on since. It reached a tremendous height under Theodore Roosevelt. We have made of our Presidents Men of Destiny. We see in them either the Strong Man on Horseback, or the great and wise Schoolmaster.

Woodrow Wilson is hailed in the latter role. Now let us see how he has played his part thus far, what he has accomplished.

We were passing through a painful economic crisis under Roosevelt, the Strong Man on Horseback. We are now in the grip of another crisis under the wise Schoolmaster. The signs of suffering and discontent are everywhere. Unemployment, Kelly’s Army, Coxey’s Army, Tannenbaum’s Army are symptoms, stormbirds that indicate the gathering of heavy clouds. There are other signs, like the great strikes in West Virginia, in Colorado, in Michigan. Statesmanship of the highest order, courageous and far-sighted, should have grappled with these facts.

What has our officialdom done? It has copied Russian Cossack tactics in the various States concerned. Our bourgeois reformers of the Seth Low type call shrilly for more Cossacks. And our President sits in the White House, unperturbed and serene like a Buddha or a Dalai Lama. He has eyes and does not see, ears and does not hear. He looks on and lets things drift.

But no, let us be fair to him. He has been reforming our currency, engineered a set of laws to regulate and curb the trusts. He wants to restore competition, to galvanize back into life an economic corpse. He misreads his time. His political wisdom is that of a century ago. His eyes turn longingly to the past.

Restoring competition! The ideal of a dreamer. He might as well plan to make the Mississippi River flow backwards. The methods of the Schoolmaster are as vain and sterile as the methods of Roosevelt's Big Stick.

The power of the trusts cannot be destroyed by bluster. Speaking of swollen fortunes, of malefactors of great wealth, of undesirable citizens will not avail. Neither will the passing of a raft of puny regulative laws that become dead letters as soon as enacted. For you cannot reach the economic power along such roads.

Woodrow Wilson, in particular, is in no position to achieve anything worth while. The creature cannot rise above its creators.
Wilson in the White House does not represent the majority of the American people. Not even the majority of the actual voters. He is the choice of a minority only. The backbone of that minority is the Solid South.

The South is not a democracy in any real sense. It is an oligarchy made up of the former plantation and slave owners and the mining and manufacturing magnates largely financed by Northern capital.

Its colored population, native American citizens, is practically disfranchised. Then there are the poorer whites, the so-called “white trash,” well meaning perhaps, but largely ignorant, desperately struggling for mere existence, mentally dominated either by sectional pride and prejudice or by blind envy and race hatred of their colored neighbors, their passions artfully stirred and nurtured by political demagogues like Tillman and Vardaman.

The South still suffers from the results of long maintained slavery. It looks upon hard labor as something degrading. Peonage, thinly disguised, still flourishes. Prison camps linger on, chain gangs, the hiring out of convicts to blood-sucking pirate contractors. Protection to wage workers by effective legislation is in its infancy only. Southern child labor is one of the foulest blots on our escutcheon.

The South, as a whole, is a century behind modern civilization. It is that South, a broken reed, upon which Wilson is doomed to lean for his main political support in both Houses of Congress. And he himself, by birth a Southerner, is unable to free his mind from Southern influences, as his behavior toward the colored people has amply shown. Also unable to grasp the modern labor movement except in so far as to fool Sam Gompers by appointing a few A. F. of L. men to office.

Aside from the Solid South and the scattered Northern Democracy, Wilson also enjoys the backing of a section of high finance. That section keeps in the background. It furnished the sinews of war during the Presidential campaign and such journalistic auxiliaries as were needed.

In our political Punch and Judy show, run by the Wilson firm, the puppets dance and squirm and fight, falling down and
bobbing up again, to the delight or chagrin of the multitude that knows not who pulls the strings.

Some wiseacres imagine that Wilson represents the middle class, that his policy means the return to power of that class.

They fail to see what a tremendous change has taken place in the feature and status of the middle class.

Once upon a time, in the infancy of capitalism, the middle class was a great power. It carried on handicrafts, industry and commerce. It was proud of its strength and independence. It defeated the armies of kings and nobles on many bloody battlefields. It boldly attacked and destroyed feudalism.

The middle class of today is of a jellyfish type. It no longer controls industry and commerce. It is replaced by Big Business, the trusts. It now furnishes selling agents, managers, retainers of every kind to the lords of trustified resources. It has become dependent, timid and spineless. Its vision is blurred. It

"Believes to be pushing
   Whilst itself being pushed."

It looks upon Wilson as its political Messiah. Wilson plays the part with such skill and force as the situation permits. He finds himself between the devil of powerful high finance and the deep sea of growing discontent of the masses. He stands at the helm of our Ship of State unable to steer a course that will land the vessel in the harbor of safety and plenty.

Upon the storm-tossed waves we are drifting, drifting. Drifting whither? We answer with Taft: "God knows."
This Department is maintained by the workers of America for the sole purpose of enlightening the masses. Co-operation in education and organization will bring complete industrial and political freedom.

The important phases of the struggle of the workers throughout the world for supremacy will be covered by this Department through leaflets and pamphlets. Understanding necessarily precedes intelligent action. The literature of the National office is selected for the prime purpose of educating and organizing the workers of America up to the point where they will intelligently end the vicious system of exploitation that has plunged seventy-five per cent of the American people into a bitter struggle for mere existence.

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