

# THE OHIO SOCIALIST

Official Organ of the Socialist Parties of Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia and New Mexico

NO. 80

Published at  
Cleveland, Ohio.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1919

Address all mail to  
5207 Clark Ave., Cleveland, O.

\$1.00 A YEAR

## AN OPEN LETTER TO YOU, MR. PRESIDENT--WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?.....

**By JOSEPH W. SHARTS**  
Who was one of counsel for Eugene V. Debs in his trial at Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. President: I do not put this in form of petition for two reasons. One is, I doubt if it will ever reach you on your golden throne in France as you administer democracy to a crouching world. The other is, I do not think there is anything within your gift great enough or small enough for me to accept, since you allowed your underlings to sentence Eugene V. Debs to ten years in a felon's cell.

You were born in Staunton, Virginia, in 1856, Mr. President. Two years later you moved with your family to Augusta, Ga. Your father, Rev. Joseph R. Wilson, became one of the most prominent preachers of the South. And to one who understands historical materialism, this is equivalent to saying, your father (although originally from Ohio) was a staunch advocate of chattel slavery;—he could not otherwise have retained his pulpit or popularity in the South at that particular time.

When the Slaveholders' Rebellion burst out, and armed rebels marched against the Stars and Stripes, your father, we are informed by your biographer, was a strong upholder of the Confederacy.

If this means anything it means your father, Mr. President, openly advocated and urged the overthrow of the government of the United States, openly encouraged men to take guns and shoot down American soldiers who were defending the Stars and Stripes.

What would that be under the present Espionage Act?

Debs never did that, Mr. President. I sat on the platform when he made that Canton speech and heard every word. He said nothing about the war; he scored the plutocrats and their politicians; the unjust conviction of Tom Mooney, Rose Pastor Stokes, and Kate Richards O'Hare; he dared to defend the I. W. W. from the infamous libels of the capitalist press, and

to express his sympathy for the Bolsheviks of Russia. It was for this—not for any incitement to defy the mandates of the government—that he was marked for punishment by your subordinates.

If Gene Debs deserved ten years in prison for what he said about the United States in wartime,—what should your own father have received, Mr. President?

If Mr. Haywood and his hundred I. W. W.'s deserved sentences at ten, fifteen and twenty years at Leavenworth,—where should your father have spent his declining years?

If Mollie Stimer and those other four children were justly given fifteen and twenty years in the slow poison of the penitentiary, for passing handbills in favor of peace—was it just that your father's old age should be spent under the blessed sun, breathing the sweet air of freedom, unscathed by prison stripes?

Speaking of children, Mr. President, you yourself were a boy nine years of age when the war closed. Often and often you must have tossed up your cap and yelled with delight when the soldiers of the Confederacy marched past. Yes, and very boylike, you must have breathed the wish that you, too, could shoulder a gun and march away to kill Yanks.

What sort of offense would that be now, under the Espionage Act? Ask Judge Clayton, or any of these other federal judges or district attorneys who have been so zealously executing upon radicals, what they believe to be your wish.

Among your boyhood recollections, I find, is one of seeing Jefferson Davis riding by, on his way to prison at Fortress Monroe, under guard of federal soldiers.

Jefferson Davis, once Secretary of War and late a U. S. Senator, had become the chief organizer of armed rebellion against the United States; he had labored night and day to put armies in the field to destroy the government of the United States, he and his co-conspirators had caused the death of hundreds

of thousands of loyal men.

Compared to the disloyalty of Jefferson Davis, what do you say of the "disloyal" remarks, of acts of Socialists, I. W. W.'s, or anarchists during the recent war?

What was the punishment of Jefferson Davis, this arch-traitor, this arch-rebel? He was confined a few months in Fortress Monroe—and then released. He was never indicted, he was never tried. He was set free!

Compare that magnanimous treatment with your administration's treatment of its critics! Are you not the equal in magnanimity of Andrew Johnson?

Has the government of the United States any reason to regret its magnanimity towards the traitors and rebels? You should know better than I—you lived your boyhood and youth among the Democratic beneficiaries of that magnanimity.

Here in our little city of Dayton lived and flourished during the Civil War a distinguished member, like your father and yourself of the Democratic Party. His name was Clement L. Vallandigham. He, like thousands of other Democrats in the North, did not approve of the war. He particularly disapproved of the Draft Act. And when President Lincoln, in apprehension of armed invasion and an uprising of Northern Democrats of the South, suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, Mr. Vallandigham denounced it. He spoke at a Democratic rally at Mt. Vernon, Ohio—just as Gene Debs, 56 years later, spoke at a Socialist rally at Canton, Ohio. There was only this difference: Vallandigham openly denounced President Lincoln as a tyrant and usurper—whereas Debs did not criticize you or your war measures at all.

For this Vallandigham was arrested at his first street residence, one night, here at Dayton, and taken to Cincinnati. He was tried, found guilty—and sentenced to be confined during the war!

Compare that with your administration's handling of its present-day critics!

Later President Lincoln, calling him a "wily agitator," commuted this sentence to transportation into the Confederate lines.

Your administration has been trying its hand at deportation lately. We are informed you contemplate shipping away several thousand radicals, snatched suddenly and often secretly from their wives, little ones, and friends, to be sent penniless into other lands across the sea, where many of them will be hung.

Perhaps you feel that Lincoln was too "easy" in dealing with his public opponents.

But now, Mr. President, in calling your attention to these matters I have been stirred by the thought that you, as a student of history, yourself a writer of history, must know that the Iron Heel is an anachronism; is a clumsy makeshift generally discredited ever since Bismarck made his stupendous effort and stupendous failure to crush Socialism in Germany. For every radical you clap into jail you make twenty who feel that such martyrdom is indicative of a great and vital truth. For every radical you deport, you stir up a hundred who recognize in that the typical tactics of czars and despots of all ages and of all lands.

May I not suggest that, with the red wave rolling so tremendously westward from Russia, already inundating Austria, Roumania, Germany, breaking into Italy, into France, into England—and the Allied governments already breathless and bankrupt from the world-war, it might be more statesmanlike, more prudent, more conducive to the health and safety of the capitalist class and middle-class in the perilous days to come, if you were to throw wide open the prison doors and bid all these political prisoners and exiles to come forth where the warm sunlight and fresh breezes may cleanse from their minds the miasma of revenge and hatred.

### Crush Foreign Invasion then Unite All Workers is aim of Soviets, says Lenine

RUSSIA WILL PAY DEBTS IF REAL PEACE IS GUARANTEED. 1,000,000,000 FAVOR SOVIET CONSTITUTION.

**By EDWARD BING**

BUDAPEST.—Premier Lenine today gave his first bona fide interview. He replied by wireless to my questions wirelessed to Moscow from Budapest.

Following are the questions and answers as transmitted by wireless:

Question—What is your political attitude toward the United States and Japan?

Answer—With reference to the United States and Japan, our first political aims are to repel their shameless, criminal, bandit-like invasion of Russia that serves only to enrich their capitalists.

Many times we have offered peace to these states, but they have not even answered, and continue to war upon us, helping Denekin and Kolchak, plundering the Murman and Archangel regions and devastating especially in eastern Siberia, where the Russian peasants offer the most heroic resistance to the brigands of capitalistic Japan and America.

**Fear to Publish Bullitt Report**

Our further economic aim is a single fraternal union of workers and toilers of all countries, Japan and the United States included.

Question—Under what conditions would you conclude peace with Kolchak and Mannerheim?

Answer—They have been exposed many times. For example, William Bullitt conducted negotiations with us and with me personally in Moscow in the name of the United States government; also in our letter to Madison. It is not our fault if the United States and other governments fear to publish these documents and conceal the truth from the people.

I will remind you of one of our fundamental conditions—we are ready to pay all debts to France and other states, provided there will be real peace; namely, peace signed formally and confirmed by the governments of England, France, the United States, Japan and Italy, since Denekin, Kolchak, Mannerheim and others are simply in the hands of the Odessa governments.

**Soviet Program Unchanged.**

Question—Has the Soviet program undergone reforms or changes since the establishment of your government?

Answer—The Soviet government did not have a reformist governmental program, but a revolutionary one. Reforms are secured from the dominating class while the latter's domination continues; consequently, a reformist program consists generally of many points in detail.

Our revolutionary program consisted generally speaking, of one point—overthrow of the landowners' and capitalists' yoke, wresting the power from them and liberating the working

### "Guilty" with "Mercy"

The trial of Thos. Hammerschmitt, Lotta Burke, Chas. Thiemann, Alfred Welker, Walter Gregory, John Sahn, Frank Reis, Wm. Gruber, Fred Schneider, Philip Rothenbush, A. J. Feldhaus, Arthur Tiedtke and Jos. Geier, all Socialists of Cincinnati, on a charge of "conspiracy to defraud" the government by interfering with the draft act, culminated in the federal district court a compromise verdict of "guilty, with mercy."

The jury, with the characteristic carelessness of American juries in dealing out the cards of fate, decided to end a three-hour struggle in the jury-room by "passing the buck" to the judge.

There had been, it is rumored, an almost even decision of opinion at one time, at least upon certain of the defendants. The foreman, a Georgetown Republican editor named Remele, a man of dominating personality, had shown himself from the beginning of the trial prejudiced against the defendants; he had in fact admitted his unfavorable opinions of Socialism and Socialists when examined for jury service, but had insisted he would not let the prejudice interfere with an impartial verdict. Subsequent developments of the trial, however, led the defendants and their lawyers to believe that Remele was not going to keep his word. It was probably due more to Remele's aggressive attitude in the jury room than to any other one cause, that the resistance of the sticklers for a verdict of acquittal was finally broken down to where they agreed to leave it to the tender "mercy" of Judge Hollister.

They wanted to get home; it was near train time; and the jury room was hot.

So they made it "guilty with mercy," although convinced the 13 were not guilty.

It is thus the liberty of indicted Socialists can be lightly juggled with, when they face a jury of reactionaries, hide-bound Republicans and Democrats.

The jury was as good as one as could be picked from the 100 names and more on the three venire's issued. But the system is so constructed that under no circumstances could a jury favorably inclined towards Socialists be drawn for jury service, it is a mistake approximating a calamity. Two jury commissioners are appointed, one of whom is for a lower people to create their autonomous republic within Russia.

We help all independent free development of every nationality to increase and spread, for which we offer the most heroic resistance toward the brigands and capitalists of Japan and the United States.

Our further political aims are to promote knowledge regarding our own Soviet Constitution, which has the misfortune to please more than a billion inhabitants of the earth belonging to the colonial, subjected and oppressed western European or American constitutions of the bourgeoisie "democratic" states, which try to strengthen the yoke of the few "civilized" capitalist countries over the hundreds of millions of masses in Asiatic and African colonies.

When he returns, sometime in September, his "mercy" will be made evident by the sentences he imposes. An appeal will be taken and Attorney Sharts predicts that this case will be a live issue for another year. One thousand dollars are needed to further fight for the freedom of the 13 convicted comrades. Members of the Socialist Party are called upon to help up this amount. The state office will soon issue a special circular calling attention to the need for funds.

### Socialists Lose Street Fight

The fight of Bellaire, O. socialists for free speech on the streets struck a snag last week in the ruling of Atty. Gen. Price, who ruled the referendum petitions circulated against the city ordinance prohibiting public speaking, illegal, and therefore a vote upon the ordinance could not be held this fall.

Atty. Price held that the petitions were illegal because they were not submitted to the auditor as the law provides.

### AKRON PLANS MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN

The first step in planning its municipal campaign was taken by the Socialists of Akron when they rented the largest hall at 550 South Howard street for regular Sunday afternoon campaign meetings.

These meetings will begin in September and many state and out of state speakers will be engaged. The campaign committee also plans to distribute from 1,000 to 10,000 Ohio Socialists weekly.

### NEW PHONE FOR OHIO SOCIALIST AND STATE OFFICE

Comrades desiring to reach the state office of the Socialist Party by telephone are requested to call Harward 3639. This is the new phone number of the state office. It will appear regularly hereafter in the editorial column, above the editorials.

### THE DAWN

The dawn of Labor's day is now more a distant dream. The soviet world is being built within the old regime; And being born the golden age of which all thinkers dream.

The Rus has forged the radiant way; and Europe follows fast behind. When peace and freedom light the road, who fall to follow but the blind?

And only where the workers rule, fair peace and freedom do we find.

### A CAPITALIST COURT

Ding-dong, ding-dong, 'tis the court-house bell; A bluff at fine justice and work done well; With solemn demeanor and a brief exhort, "God save the state and this honorable court."

The judge takes his bench and lawyers assemble, And this bold little farce to make people tremble Is grinding away from early till late Saving the nation for a vacation great.

### Belleville Miners Call for General Strike

DEMAND FREEDOM FOR ALL CLASS-WAR PRISONERS AND BUILD WAY FOR SOVIET CONTROL OF INDUSTRY.

A district mass meeting was called by the miners of Nigger Hollow Mines, 1 and 2, located near Belleville in St. Clair County, Ill., Sunday August 3, at Priester's Park, Belleville, Ill. History was made at this meeting for no more progressive unionists exist than those in this vicinity. Two thirds of them kept faith with Mooney and struck for the allotted number of days, beginning July 4th.

Due to the existing "penalty clause" they have now been fined for not going to work. The miners protest against this fine, claiming that their strike the United States constitution gave them the "right to petition congress for a redress of grievances." Any joint regulation prescribing penalties which conflicts with the right guaranteed by the United States constitution is null and void, the miners claim.

While this matter was under discussion by the immense mass meeting the labor fakir was given his just dues. One miner defined a labor fakir as one who is not willing to take the medicine he hands out. When the dis-

ussion reverted to the responsibility for the penalty clause as between the labor fakir and the mine owner one miner remarked: "I do not care in whose coop the egg was hatched. It was a rotten egg."

After a thorough discussion about four fifths voted to strike. It was then decided not to make this only a local strike but that all miners in the United States be called upon to come out on strike. Socialization of mines was demanded. A letter union was one of the essentials to greater success against the coal barons, so the meeting decided. Democratic control and ownership of the tools of production and distribution by the workers was voiced, thereby building the way for the soviet. And a resolution for the immediate freedom of all class war and industrial prisoners was passed.

F. J. Nebgen, county secretary of the Socialist Party, writes that the St. Clair County convention of the Socialist Party was held that same day and that after adjournment the members attended the district mass meeting of the miners, many of the Socialist Party members also being members of the miner's union.

### IN THE WEEK'S NEWS.

view granted the capitalist Christian Science Monitor, states that the Left Wing of the Socialist Party is losing ground. He claims that the reason the American working class is not ready for the soviet form of government is because it is too highly paid.

August 3rd dispatches stated that Liverpool, England, was in the grip of a mob. Stores were looted and soldiers called to the scene refused to shoot the rioters. Reading between the lines gives us to understand that this "mob" was composed of starving workers and their families, who even went so far in their desperation as to board American steamers and carry off provisions. Part of the dispatch reads: "After daylight dispersed most of the rioters, children carried on the work of pillage. The riotous about in the dismantled shops and carried off anything that had been overlooked. They climbed thru windows and cut clothes and bodies on jagged glass, but emerged with big parcels of sweetmeats. There was no one on guard and they reaped a rich harvest. They stuffed themselves with candy and even offered it for sale in the streets." To all of which we can only say—POOR KIDS.

Congressman Fell wants to revive the four-minute speakers plan in order to carry on effective propaganda against the growing tendency towards Bolshevism.

Haig claims the British army won the war. In Italy the Italian army won the war. In France the French army won the war. In this country our army won the great war. Shall we now have a scrap just to settle this important question of "who won the war?"

Thirty policemen sworn in for special duty resigned because of sympathy with the striking mill workers of Rome, N. Y.

Olaf Finstad, who was deported from Seattle on the "Red Special" last winter to Ellis Island and then sent to Norway at his own request, reports that he is busy in Socialist agitation work in the land of his birth.

The Kansas City Star is disappointed because the several regiments of soldiers sent to Leavenworth Military Prison to quell the strike of several thousand prisoners did not turn the machine guns upon those unarmed inmates and mow them down.

We are still busy, it seems, trying to stamp out the "red terror" in Russia. Why don't the sentimentalists stick their noses into the "black and white terror" in this country? Our race riots ought to keep them busy "doing good" at home.

Adolph Germer, in a special inter-





