

The Control of Government

By Nicholas I. Hourwich

EVERY action, whether in the press or in words, against the "constitutional order" and the "lawful authorities" of the United States is now-a-days severely punished. The prisons are filled with political prisoners, and new laws are being proposed to "preserve our government by law." Not satisfied with the number of political prisoners, the bourgeois press accuses the government of "leniency," almost of criminal favoritism, toward the "seditious elements" and demands more repressive measures and severer penalties. More than one organ of the press recommends that the "citizens" take "the law into their own hands," which, translated into ordinary human language, means: that instead of the court law there should be a resort to Lynch Law,—burnings, hangings and depredations by mob violence.

Bourgeois justice exists and is directed against the undesirable elements of our class society,—against worker-strikers, Socialists, revolutionary agitators, against all who rise in protest at the infamy of capitalist "order" and parasitism. Bourgeois justice is chiefly directed to preventing the liberation of the working masses from exploitation, misery and oppression.

But the indignant adherents of "severe and strict justice" cease indignating as soon as the role of violators of the "lawful institutions and authorities of the land" is usurped by Capitalism. The bourgeois press in this case, forgetting its duty as the vigilant eye of "law and order," becomes the apologist of the respectable violators of "government by law," and even greets these violations with the joy characteristic of a mercenary guard.

Consider, for instance, what such a "respectable" newspaper as the New York *World*, actually an organ of the Wilson Administration, says in its editorial of June 10:

"What difference will it make in the United States whether Germany refuses to sign the treaty or the Senate refuses to ratify it? In either case the technical state of war will continue. At the worst *Wall Street* has no more to fear from the protesting German Government than from the United States Senator who insist that there shall be no treaty of peace unless they write it."

Let us, first of all, explain the issue in question. In accordance with the Constitution of the United States, which at other times the *World* defends with foam frothing at the mouth, every treaty of the United States with a foreign power can come into force only after being ratified by the Senate. The Senate, having just opened its sessions and comprising a majority of Republicans, refuses, out of purely political considerations based upon opposition to the Democratic Party administration, to ratify the peace treaty as drafted and

submitted to Germany by the "Council of Four" of the Allies.

Whatever, in this instance, happen to be the motives of the Senate majority, the very fact of its refusal to

The Communist International to the Proletarians of the World

The Third Communist International on April 3 addressed the proletarians of the world in the following circular letter, entitled "The Latest Atrocity of the Socialist Government at Berlin:"

The German Social-Democratic Government has recently perpetrated a crime. The government of Scheidemann mercilessly caused Leon Tyshko to be executed. Comrade Tyshko had represented the Polish Social-Democratic Party in the Second International. For more than thirty years Tyshko fought in the ranks of the workers for the Social-Democratic Cause. He was at the head of the heroic Polish proletariat when the first barricade was erected at Warsaw and Lodz. He spent many years in prison because he had come out for the interests of the workers. In 1906 he was sentenced to eight years at hard labor; as soon as he succeeded in escaping from captivity, he resumed his share in the struggles of the Socialists.

The Ebert revolution found him in a German jail, into which the Government of Wilhelm II had consigned him. He was one of the most unselfish combatants and an important factor in the German revolution, standing in the same rank with Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. He was one of the chief leaders of the Spartacus group and later of the German Communist Party. International Socialism had no more unselfish, more energetic comrade than Tyshko, who has now been shot by order of Scheidemann and his cohorts, who yet still dare to call themselves Socialists. Comrade Tyshko was a faithful warrior in the interests of the working classes and of communist ideas. He was executed because he was a mortal enemy of the bourgeoisie. The Communist International is convinced that the day is approaching when the working class of Germany will mete out justice to the hangmen of the Communists, to Scheidemann, Ebert and Noske.

(Signed) The President of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Zinovieff

ratify the treaty should apparently prove sufficient to make the *World* declare the treaty null and void. A treaty is not a treaty unless ratified by the Senate, in accord with the Constitution. It would seem, therefore, that the *World* proposes making the Constitution a

scrap of paper,—certainly a defiance of "lawfully constituted authority;" and the *World*, moreover, attacks the Senate with ironic remarks to the effect *Wall Street* care very little whether or not the Senate ratifies the treaty!

This attitude of the *World* toward the Senate, of the highest institutions of the American state, in the final analysis, be explained on political considerations; the *World's* adherence to the Democratic Party and its campaign to discredit the Republican majority in the Senate. But, upon closer scrutiny, the *World's* position in this case discloses a much deeper and more significant social fact than party rivalry between the Democrats and the Republicans. It appears as another demonstration of the mockery of the bourgeois-parliamentary representative form of government, which is the object of praise as a manifestation of the "higher wisdom" and "eternal justice" by the journalistic and academic mercenary guard of Capitalism, when this praise promotes its purposes.

When a "disagreement" arises between Congress or the Senate and the Socialists,—let the rebels be punished by the law. But when such a disagreement arises between the legislative organ of the government and *Wall Street*,—the attitude changes, and the slogan becomes: "To hell with the Senate! Long live *Wall Street*!"

What does all this mean? It again confirms the correctness of the revolutionary Socialist concerning the substance of bourgeois parliamentarism,—as indicated by Marx and adhered to by the Communists of to-day.

In all so-called parliamentary states, affirms the revolutionary Socialist, the actual power of government is vested in big capital—the capitalists and the banks; parliament—Congress and the Senate—that is, the "law making bodies," exist only in order to deceive the people, to oppress and exploit the people, that is, the working class; and this oppression is carried on "in the name of the people," as it were.

And so long as a legislative body performs this function, inherent in the substance of the capitalist state, the will of this legislative body is heralded as sacred, and every person who violates it as a working class measure is a "seditious person" and "blasphemer." But, as soon as the legislative body becomes suddenly capricious, or its mechanism is out of gear and refuses to work normally in the direction indicated by the capitalists,—the impertinent parliament or Congress is dissolved, its decisions are vetoed or simply completely ignored.

Parliament, or Congress, is nothing but a marionette in the hands of *Wall Street*, that is of finance capital; and it is finance-capital that actually constitutes the "government." This is the Socialist conclusion derived from the utterances of the *World*.