

State Office Notes

(W. T. Webb, Sec., Class, Tex.)

George T. McLeister, one of the pioneer agitators, is shooting the wiles in Parker county, west of Austin, in order to watch for results.

The following letter received from Thos. Murphy, Jacksonville, Dear Comrade:—Please find enclosed check for \$50.00, one dollar on state deficit and balance for sale; there seems to be no interest being taken now or before. We have a good class conscious bunch.

A letter in the State office from A. C. Towley, head of the National Non-Parian League, states that the League will probably attempt to organize in Texas and other South-Western states.

The efficient and live wire Sec. R. H. Thompson, of Big Springs, was a pleasant caller in the State office and advised us that in the near future he would move to Reno.

The live wire organizer of the 11th Dist. A. R. Welch, is doing yeoman service in Coryell and Hamilton counties. He sends applications for new locals in these counties. Comrade Welch is a real up to the minute organizer should write him at Gatesville.

N. E. Varborough, of Thornton, sends application for charter for local Union School House in limestone county.

With the coming of spring it looks as if the reaction has set in for the State. The agitators of the State are getting busy, more and better reports are coming in to the Office. Applications for organizing material and inquiries as to how to organize the agitators are being received on every mail.

Successful encampment managers are already getting organized. The slow coaches, as usual, wait until they have to meet the difficulties of obtaining satisfactory speakers, dates, grounds, concessions and experienced managers. Get busy, organize your encampment association, don't wait until the last minute; let's pull off more and better encampments this year than ever before.

Are you a 1917 Socialist? If you receive your old mail, pay up your dues for big things are now on and you have no voice and no right to complain of your party unless you take an active part in the affairs of the party. There will be a new Constitution before the party and if you want your say get busy, do not wait until the active members who take an interest in work for the party and do things, set busy, do not wait and be a RED. If your local is behind, get them together, be active in bringing about the principles of co-operation.

Texas alone produces enough cotton to clothe 200,000,000 people. Just two states—Minnesota and North Dakota—produce enough wheat to feed 70,000,000 people. Yet four-fifths of the working people of these states as well as of all other states are on the ragged edge of starvation all the time. What shall we do about it? Let the people own the cotton and wheat mills and markets—and we might as well throw the banks into their collective pot for good measure.

The great industrial capitalists will soon begin to look like pick-ers in comparison with the bank-holder-trust that started this world war and is letting the working suckers finish it. The very richest parasites grow more adipose from day to day, until they are freed from off the earth.

TRYING TO THROTTLE FREE DOM

In Washington there is legislation now drafted, and ready in the Army War College, to clamp an outright military censorship on the press and on every publicity service of the United States the very minute that war or the threat of war may give a pretext for that action.

"The press, powerful in peace, may become more so in war," says an amazing pamphlet let issued by the Army War College. "By its editorials and presentation of news it may sway the people for or against the war and thus stimulate recruiting and hearten and encourage the fighting forces in their work or, by adverse opinion, may tend to destroy the efficiency of these agencies."

The pamphlet from which that paragraph is copied was prepared by the War College as long ago as 1915. It is no waning revelation for Congressional attention. This openly discloses the purpose to kill off all criticism of the absolutism which is trying to fasten itself on this republic. The spirit is rampant to destroy democracy and stage a regimented, class-controlled nation.

If that part of the press and of the means of publicity which is really for human rights and justice, property rights does not get busy in opposition there will be quickly in America a composite soldier, sheriff, policeman, private detective, armed guard, and a heavy on the safety valve of liberty.

—The free expression of opinion and the free statement of fact.

Whether nominal peace or actual war are still the order of the day, the fight is on in this nation between popular sovereignty and plutocratic militarism.

From the point of interest of the people the greatest enemy threatening United States commerce and industry today is not a German submarine or an English battleship, but it is that enemy, powerful element in American citizenship which is never ready to make American labor a beast of burden.

The very first acts projected in the Congress when the president announced the severance of diplomatic relations with the German Empire were acts aimed at the property workings and at the foundations of American democracy.

The workers were to be disorganized and made voiceless—every protest made crimes. Padgett of Tennessee put in bill authorizing the government to conscript and draft into the "naval establishment" every worker, a factory equipped with manufacture ships, naval guns, or naval war material. Padgett's bill forbade, with fine and imprisonment, a government factory or factory having a government contract. It proposed to break down the eight hour day for government work and to undo practically every benefit achieved in all the past years for labor. With the excuse of "commandeering factories and mobilizing industry" it converted every principle of justice and freedom.

The American Federation of Labor, the labor members of Congress and other democratic forces took up the fight for democracy.

The passage of Secretary of the Navy Daniels (to whom in that emergency credit was due) the authority to conscript the workers into the naval establishment, was not without the help of the bill. And the eight-hour principle was saved by compelling payment of time and one-half for overtime. The most vicious strike-breaking feature of the bill also was eliminated because labor's representatives and legislative

agents were on guard.

The American labor movement is performing an historic service not only to American free institutions, but to what is left of world democracy. That the struggle is a desperate one and is just in its beginning.

The perils of war are brought into even viler foreground the perils that press also hold for the plain people, the workers. The powerful few who have their reactionary servants in Congress in the state legislatures have the nerve to assume that the workers are apathetic and that they have to be compelled to work and that their freedom and personal liberty must be taken from them. Compulsory arbitration and state conscription (to shoot men in times of peace) are only being emphasized in the preparation for war.

The preparation in the mind of this class of special interest is not for war only but for an undemocratic, militaristic move for the nation where their personal or group interests are prevalent or war prevalent.

There was militarism in Europe before there was war.

Many in Congress of the United States would legislate for American citizens as if they were galley slaves to be scourged to "dungeons" coerced into the work and driven to the defense of their homes and country.

The insult to American workers and the injury to their liberties in such legislation has been the best fighting spirit in the workers' minds when they are free. The insult to American workers and the injury is proposed by those who make profit out of their work and whose property in special privilege, on special privilege, on special favors and laws and on the power to defraud the worker of his just wages. The insult is being refused and the injury is being fought against by representatives of the workers and by other genuinely patriotic defenders of American honor.

Washington is now a battle-ground for and against—no peace, but freedom.

THE TILLERS

By Covington Amt.

They plow and plow, and hoe and hoe, And mix on mile and row and row. They spread the fields of grain And yet, how little, Lord, they eat.

Great crops of cotton, snowy white, And tons of wool soft, warm and light. They grow and weave in clothes and flags—The families arrayed in rags.

They plant the hops and tend the vine, They brew the beer and make the wine; The honey, nectar, milk and cream—And banquet only in a dream.

Fat herds of cattle, hogs and sheep, And game and fowl and fish they keep. And great warehouses pack with meat, And yet, how little, Lord, they eat.

L'Envoi.

Somewhere, sometime, this system strange The starving race will rise and change. Somewhere, sometime, its hand and brain Destroy the blood-hungry rights of Cain.

We do not care what methods are used to hamstring and kill the Dictator. Just so the work is making head.

SIXTH CONTROL.

(By Dr. Frederick A. Bloomer.)

What is meant by 'birth control'? What is claimed for it and what are the objections raised against it?

These are the questions instantly in the public mind today. Amid the clamor and confusion of the present struggle, a dispassionate and comprehensive answer is needed.

Summed up in a word, by 'birth control' is meant the regulation of conception by harmless means, with a view to preventing the birth of undesired children. By no stretch of the wildest imagination can it be made to spell abortion or any form of infanticide; it is not 'race suicide' or any of the dire things conjured up by its overboarded and not always scrupulously accurate opponents.

The most palpable justification for the rational control of human fertility is found in the protection it would afford to the health and life of both mother and offspring. To subject a woman to the exhaustion of childbearing at the frequent intervals or at times when her general condition is not favorable, and thereby condemn children to be born into the world poorly equipped for the struggle of life, is neither humane nor intelligent.

Unregulated childbearing means a progressive decline in the moral and social accompanied by progressive debility in her offspring.

Ample proof of this statement—if it were needed for such a simple truth—is furnished by the statistics furnished by Dr. Alice Hamilton into the child mortality among 1,600 families in the Hull House district, Chicago. It was found that, as the number of children increase, the death rate goes up, so that in families having eight or more children, for example, the mortality among them is two and one-half times as high as in homes where the number of children does not exceed four.

Similarly, tables compiled by the Children's Bureau at Washington in its 'Johnson Survey' bring out graphically the great fact that the large families loaded with such weaknesses by the advocates of large armies on our soil, fill the ranks in our hospitals and the rows in our graveyards.

But these figures have a deeper significance than merely as mortality statistics. There is death in such abundance, there is death—nearly as abundant sickness and suffering, not only for the child, but also for the parent. A high rate of infant mortality is indicative of a high rate of infant morbidity, with concomitant ill health and death among the mothers.

Health control would give protection to women, enable them to give greater vitality in her offspring.

Closely interwoven with these physiological considerations is the economic issue of birth control. With the steadily increasing cost of practically all the necessities of existence and the more rapid stratifying of our industrial system, the pressure of the large family is making itself keenly felt both among the working class and in our so-called learned professions. Faced with the blank wall of insufficient income, parents are finding themselves more and more under the stern necessity of keeping down the number of their children.

It is in this more than anything else, which, coupled with the official repression of contraceptive knowledge, is responsible for the widespread and steadily growing practice of abortion, and for more prevalent among the working class and the poor than among the rich, who today are very generally instructed in birth control and fortunately shielded, there-

fore, from the intensity of resorting to harmful methods of family limitation.

The blame for these 'economic abortions,' it cannot be too often repeated, rests, not on the women who, unwilling to bring into the world children that cannot be properly provided for, whose survival would cut down the already scarce wages, but on the means known to them to avert such a calamity, but upon those forces of church and state which insist that these women be kept in ignorance of how to prevent pregnancy and thereby forestall any means of abortion.

With the improvement in physical and economic conditions is dictated above, will necessarily come similar progress along less material lines. Intelligent limitation of offspring will mean better social power schooling for the children, closer companionship with their parents, full, normal comradeship—'joyous and unforced'—between husband and wife, a richer home life and a sounder citizenship. The advance agents to society cannot be calculated.

It is needless to say that a movement to restrict, designed to protect the mother's health and protect her home and her children, appeals with peculiar force to those who are striving for womanhood to recognize as a human being, with the freedom of action and control over her own person that which implies Voluntary motherhood is an essential part of woman's program today. It is the initial step in her forward progress the foundation stone of her new liberty.

As in every struggle between the distant and known, and the command to obey, the truth for birth control has enlisted also the sturdy defenders of free speech and an unhampered printing press. Because 'birth control' involves the fundamental question of the untrammelled communication of knowledge, it necessarily receives the active support of every friend of liberty who stands true to his philosophy.

There are many arguments in favor of birth control but the one great underlying principle is the right of the individual to know all scientific truth and to use it in shaping his destiny as he sees fit and conscience may dictate.

—(In a later issue: The Objections to Birth Control.)

The foregoing article is taken from the new *Quarterly Birth Control Review*, 104 Fifth Ave., New York City, of which Margaret Sanger is editor and G. Biosse managing editor. The magazine is published monthly at a subscription price of \$1 per year.—Ed.

Everywhere the people are getting sick and tired of the economic game that is being worked on them by the land, money and industrial trusts. The job for them is to get away from the 'cash-to-cash' way of means of crying talking that protest.

NORTH DAKOTA'S EXPERIENCE.

When North Dakota voters elected last fall the ticket of the Farmers' Nonpartisan League, they made clear their approval of the League's legislative program. To put this program in effect required a number of constitutional changes, and consequently, at the quickest method, an entirely new constitution was drawn to be submitted to the voters at a special election in June. The submission of the constitution to the voters was held in the Senate where block-over members control.

The Senate offered instead to adopt a resolution for a constitutional convention, which would have involved a needless delay of three years. So the project has failed. The Legislature is concerned. But fortunately the State adopted two years ago the Initiative and Referendum, and an opportunity is afforded to submit the constitutional resolution passed the House to the voters. The State, although it will be delayed more than a year. The requirements of one of the Initiative are: Twenty-five per cent of the voters in a majority of counties must sign the petition. But the League is well enough organized to make possible what would ordinarily be a prohibitive cost.

A description of the proposed new Constitution by a hostile correspondent for *The Oregon Voter* appears in the issue of February 10. He says:

The new constitution confers the broadest powers. It permits land to be classified for taxation purposes, so that in enforcing the proposed compulsory school tax on lands in section subject to sale, no tax may be heavier than in sections not similarly to be visited.

It permits farm improvements to be exempt from taxation.

It gives the broader legislative and supervisory powers of insurance, public utilities, etc.

It provides that, 'The right of the state or any political subdivision thereof to engage in any enterprise or business shall not be denied or prohibited.'

From which it seems that the new Constitution empowers the people of any time to manage their affairs as they see fit regardless even of what the framers of the Constitution may think about it. That is the kind of Constitution which every state should have. The North Dakota Farmers deserve encouragement in the brave effort they are making for better conditions. And the value of the initiative has received an other demonstration.

—The Public.

Morgan made a billion dollar bet that England would win. Now it is up to some 18,000,000 'cash-to-cash' way of means of crying talking that protest.

SOUTHERN SELECT BEER

Alcohol less than four per cent. Contents, twelve ounces. The very essence of nature itself. Made in the state. The beer that builds you up by every step with no reaction. Pure wholesome and palatable and a beverage which mildly stimulates the entire system.

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