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The Week

AT this writing it looks as if France, Great Britain and Italy had agreed upon a common policy in the Near East and as if their policy would avoid war. It consists in returning Eastern Thrace, including Adrianople and Constantinople, to the Turks on condition that they consent to the neutralization of the Straits—under the administration and the guarantee of the League of Nations. This is far from being an ideal solution and in the near future it will probably be revised, but if it prevents a war, which might easily spread and which would increase the prolonged and intolerable suffering of the people of that region, it may be welcomed with a sigh of relief if not of satisfaction. It is supposed to safeguard the essential international interest, which is that the Straits shall hereafter not be closed to the ships of any nation in peace or war except by international agreement; and it imposes upon the

League of Nations the most important specific responsibility which that body has had an opportunity to assume. That is all to the good; but for the present it would be optimistic to anticipate that the arrangement will work. If the Turks resume effective military control of Constantinople and both shores of the Straits, the League of Nations will have to become far more powerful than it is now in order to guarantee the neutrality of the Dardanelles and its accessibility to the warships of France or Britain during a war or a massacre in which the Turks were directly or indirectly engaged.

THE difficulty of administering the old rule concerning sauce for the goose and sauce for the gander is aptly illustrated in the question of the freedom of the Straits. Mr. Lloyd George is very plaintive about the action of the Turks in closing the Straits by entering the war—"an act of perfidy which cost us dearly." A little later, however, Mr. Lloyd George took the lead in closing the Straits to Russia during the great blockade of that country—an act of perfidy to humanity. Kemal Pasha complains that during the present war the Straits were closed to him while open to the Greeks. The Greeks complain that they were not allowed to interrupt the shipment of contraband of war by the Allies to Kemal. The question of freedom of the Straits cannot be separated from that of freedom of the seas, and although that was one of the most obvious points in making the world safe for democracy for which we went to war, it was the first to be excluded from the peace.

SINCE the Near Eastern crisis began there has been, we are glad to say, little or no effective demand for intervention by this country. A few people, such as Dr. James L. Barton, did proclaim the revival of the Holy War, and demand that the United States fight on the side of civilization against barbarism. A few newspapers were mildly

disturbed because there was some serious trouble in the world which was taking place or coming to an end without the active connivance of the great American nation. A few propagandists wished the American government to call a conference to arrange a settlement, instead of leaving the immediately interested European powers to find a way out of their well-deserved perplexities. But the prevailing assumption was that the United States was under no obligation to scald itself in this particular kettle of hot water; and the assumption was justified. The Near Eastern crisis is born of competing European imperialisms, and its settlement is a regional problem in which the United States cannot intervene without becoming implicated as a partisan in competition for power.

THE special grand jury of Williamson County on the Herrin massacre has rendered its final report, after indicting two hundred and fourteen persons for murder, conspiracy, assault and riot. It reflects severely on the provocative tactics of the Southern Illinois Coal Company in introducing strikebreakers and armed guards, and in doing various illegal acts such as closing public highways. It bears more heavily still on the state administration, which in spite of the demand of its own representative on the ground, refused to take measures for the preservation of law and order. There is nothing new in either circumstance. The Coal Company acted as such corporations always do, notably in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The state administration behaved as its predecessor behaved at East St. Louis. The actual outbreak which resulted in the horror of killing twenty-one men who had surrendered under safe conduct is brought home to the two hundred and fourteen individuals indicted.

THE special grand jury would seem to have done its duty in exceptionally difficult circumstances. One unfortunate aspect of the matter, however, is that the case for the people was financed by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. This is one example of the assumption of the functions of government by private interests, upon which the New Republic recently commented. There is no more reason why the state of Illinois should turn to the Chamber of Commerce to finance its department of justice, than to the coal companies for the protection of private property. Naturally the vindication of the people by the grand jury of Williamson County seems to labor merely another frame-up of its leaders, as the result of "private persecution by a labor hating organization." The counsel for the miners

declares that "no member of the miners' union shall be convicted except through orderly processes set for the establishment of the guilt or innocence of the men charged with crime." No fault can be found with this. At the risk of repetition, however, we cannot help pointing out that just as the Illinois Chamber of Commerce has a legitimate function in guarding against law breaking among its own members, so labor unions have a high responsibility for the preservation of law and order by theirs. This is particularly the case when, as in Herrin, the local government is in their hands and public sentiment is in their favor.

AMERICAN labor has every reason to be grateful to Judge Wilkerson for making permanent his original injunction without doing anything to mitigate its defiance of the declared will of Congress and the Constitution of the United States. It is of the utmost importance that the Supreme Court shall have an opportunity of passing on this attempt to substitute government by arbitrary judicial discretion for the law of the land. Judge Wilkerson might by modifying the terms of the injunction have evaded a final determination of the issue which he himself had raised, and left a way at some future time for a repetition of the offence. But no evasion seems possible now. The Supreme Court will have an opportunity of passing on the injunction just as it came hot from the Attorney General and the district court, and its decision will, we trust, render it impossible for any future combination of attorney general and district judge to abuse in just this way the equity jurisdiction of the federal courts.

MR. HARDING'S veto of the thoroughly unprincipled bonus legislation affords another illustration of the advantages under American conditions of presidential action as a check upon congressional government. An executive which was dependent upon Congress would, of course, have succumbed to the overwhelming disposition of its members to favor the bonus. Yet if the executive had yielded it would have yielded not to a popular majority but to an aggressive minority. The disposition of congressmen and senators to favor the bill merely meant that the voters who wanted the bonus would have voted against its opponents at the next election, whereas those who did not want it would not necessarily have voted against its declared advocates. The minority in each district or state which favored the gratuity could thus coerce its representative to work on behalf of the bill instead of against it. But the great majority in favor of the

bill never represented any corresponding majority among the voters. The President in vetoing it acted as the spokesman and the representative of the country as a whole; and this according to the theory of the Constitution is the way in which he is supposed to act. But sometimes he misses his step.

THE New Republic calls special attention to the communication in another column from Powers Hapgood with reference to the situation of the striking miners in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. These men joined the recent strike and organized for the first time. As a non-union field Somerset County has always been used by the operators to weaken the force of a general coal strike. To prevent its unionization was one of the chief reasons for their refusal of a national settlement. Companies which have accepted the Cleveland agreement for other properties have refused to settle with the newly organized workers of Somerset County mines. These men and their families have been evicted from their homes, and are living in tents, on rations contributed by those who understand the vital significance of their position. They are the victims of such illegal constraint as was reported in the New Republic for June 14th, and of such attack as is instanced in Mr. Hapgood's letter. Mr. Hapgood is a recent graduate of Harvard who has studied the coal situation throughout the country, working himself as a miner. On his young shoulders rests the chief burden of caring for these men and their families. The New Republic will be glad to act as his agent in collecting and forwarding at his call any sums contributed by its readers.

IN an editorial on September 19th, the New York Evening Post characterizes the criticism by the New Republic of the Railroad Labor Board as "undeserved." We are charged with overlooking decisions favorable to the unions that were from time to time made by the Board, and with misinterpreting others of its rulings. The facts do not support the Post's contention. It is true that the Board ruled on occasions in favor of the unions. But it is also true that the more important of such rulings were openly violated by many powerful railway executives and that none of these violations met with such prompt and effective denunciation as did the strike by the railroad workers last July. The Post must surely be able to distinguish between effective and ineffective decisions. Probably the most important single decision of the Board, designed to procure a fair election of the workers'

representatives on the Pennsylvania Railroad, was applauded in these columns last summer, but it was never enforced. It may be that the Post sees the solution of the problem of industrial relations in the organization of "company unions," after the Pennsylvania pattern. Such a solution the New Republic cannot regard with favor.

WHEN, further, the Post states that the shop crafts themselves applauded the abrogation of national agreements, it again fails to dig below the surface of things. The railway unions, like all unions, have everything to gain from the fair application of the principle of standardization. For this reason all of the transportation unions were very glad indeed to enter with the United States Railroad Administration into the so-called national agreements. And they continued to be glad as long as national agreements had the effect of preserving or raising standards. With the coming of the Labor Board, however, the national agreements became the means of depressing standards. Rather than expose themselves to a process of downward standardization, the unions preferred to take their chances with individual systems or with individual roads, and to save what they could from the wreck. Perhaps it is correct to describe this attitude, as the Post does, as one of opposition to national agreements. To us it seems no more than one element in the general protest against the deflation policy of the Board.

THE New Republic has received further correspondence relating to the case of John Yerob, deported from the United States under the Wilson administration and now seeking repatriation. A reader writing to Mr. E. J. Henning, Assistant Secretary of Labor, was informed that Yerob's marriage took place after his arrest, and while his deportation was pending. Mrs. Wieck, who first called attention to the case in an article in the New Republic of August 2nd informs us that the date of Yerob's marriage certificate is April 7, 1919. The arrest took place on March 31, 1920. Although the date of Yerob's marriage has no legal bearing on his case, yet the statement that his marriage occurred after the issuance of the deportation order naturally operates to diminish sympathy for him. It is an illustration of the way in which the government frames cases against inconvenient applicants for redress. President Harding was party to such a misleading of the public when he implied that certain of the I. W. W. war prisoners were proved guilty of advocating the overthrow of the government by force and violence.

America as the Promised Land

AMERICAN opinion and behavior of today betray some perplexing anomalies. What, for instance, is the clue to the political state of mind of the American people? The long procession of primary elections apparently indicates the existence in different states of curiously contradictory trends in American opinion. In Wisconsin an uncompromising radical, who during the war and after the one hundred percent patriots denounced as a traitor and who was nearly expelled from the Senate, won by an overwhelming majority the Republican nomination for senator. The Republicans of Maryland renominated another senator who has espoused unpopular causes, has specialized in the attempt to reopen trading relations with the Soviet Republic and rendered plausible the charge of his opponent that he is a Bolshevik sympathizer. In Iowa the Republicans also selected a candidate whose opponents classified him as a dangerous radical, but whose radicalism was chiefly concerned with domestic issues. On the other hand Michigan, Maine, Ohio and Massachusetts have all selected Republican candidates for senator to whom the mildest liberalism is abhorrent, while a former Progressive who was chosen by the Republicans of Indiana for the same office considered it necessary to earn his nomination by testifying in various ways to an impeccable conservatism. Contrasts such as these might seem to indicate the existence of a struggle between powerful opposing forces in American opinion and to prophesy an impending clash between conservatism and radicalism. But the appearance is deceptive. They are not born of any warm, vital and widespread popular political discussion. On the contrary their significance is local and personal. They are to be explained by the absence rather than the presence among the American people of confident and definite political conviction. There are no dominant tides running in public opinion—no impulses which carry many people along on a flood of revolt, of fear, of decision or of hopeful anticipation.

Yet we cannot attribute this want of positive conviction and of earnest discussion to any corresponding want of an occasion for it or the heed of it. The American nation is confronted on every side by troublesome economic and political problems which are pressing for some kind of sincere and intelligent treatment. The war has destroyed the old balance of social and economic forces both here and abroad; and it is a most serious question whether the modern industrial state can set up and adjust a new balance without a long interregnum of disorder and distress. American society is for

the time being more stable and prosperous than any European society, but its stability and prosperity are far from secure. It is pursued by the same unmanageable problems, and at present it is equally helpless in attempting to deal with them.

The fact is that the American nation is suffering from a mental and moral shock, which is temporarily paralyzing its ability to consider the realities of its situation and even to try intelligently to control its future. There is a profound maladjustment between the condition of the world today and the mental equipment of the American nation for dealing with it. This maladjustment had begun to show itself before the Great War, but the form and the amount of the existing discrepancy are the direct consequence of that catastrophe. The European peoples suffered far more severely and tangibly from the war than did the American people; but it dealt to the American people an indirect and intangible spiritual wound from whose consequences it may be as difficult to recover. What the war did was to confuse for the American people the meaning of their national ideal, and the confusion and hesitation have obscured their traditional landmarks and impaired their instinctive faiths.

Despite the changed map of Europe that the war brought about, despite its overthrow of empires, its substitution of new nations, its devastation of countries, its appalling destruction of human life and its intensification of class and national hatreds—despite all these things and the chaos that reigns throughout much of Europe today, the war nevertheless brought to Europe a kind of fulfillment—the fulfillment at least of an ancient foreboding. The European peoples knew from their own experience that the world was a place in which such tragedies happen. But for the American people it was a sudden and violent interruption, a distraction, an uprooting, a perversion. Intellectually and morally Europe was prepared for the war. The period of neutrality notwithstanding, the United States was not; and the violent and prodigious preparation which we made after we entered was spiritually abortive. The war demanded of Europeans the painful gathering of a harvest which they had planted and whose ripening they had dreaded for years. But it demanded of Americans an awakening to unimagined realities, a shedding of outworn illusions, a stupendous readjustment, a transformation of spirit—in short, the imagination and absorption of a revised political and social outlook.

The moral cohesion of the American nation is the product of a social and political faith as authentic as the flag and as distinctively national. The ordinary patriotic American has conceived his