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EL RADICALISMO EN MEXICO

Por Isaac F. Marcossou.

El radicalismo en México es parte de la ola de ultranacionalismo que ha invadido al mundo. Apareció primero en -- Rusia y China se encuentra ahora en garras de la misma. La variedad mexicana, sin embargo, es diferente a la rusa o a la china. Principiando como una protesta en contra de la autocracia de Díaz, se ha convertido en un medio disfrazado para la perpetuación - o mejor dicho rotación - en los puestos públicos del pequeño grupo que domina al país. Aunque el nacionalismo es el principio fundamental, no existe una política definida o consecutiva. Es característico de la mentalidad mexicana que el llamamiento no sea social, sino político. No menos del 80% de los habitantes de los tres países que he mencionado son analfabetas, y la consecuencia natural es que unos cuantos gobiernen a la mayoría. Esto es especialmente cierto de Rusia, donde Stalin, en lugar de conservar la dictadura del proletariado, rápidamente se está él convirtiendo en el todo. Si se dijera la verdad se sabría que a Eugenio Chen, Jefe del Gobierno Nacionalista Cantonés, patrocinado -

por los soviets, le gustaría hacer lo mismo.

Cada uno de estos países es principalmente agrícola. Como la esperanza del comunismo descansa invariablemente en el trabajador industrial, cualquier dominio permanente es peligroso. De ahí que el bolchevismo esté sentenciado a morir -- con el tiempo donde quiera que se atrinchere. Este es un ligero consuelo para nosotros, porque en México especialmente -- se están haciendo estragos en nuestros intereses, que montan a cerca de \$1,500,000,000.

Analícense los comienzos del radicalismo mexicano y se -- encontrará que tienen su arraigo en los Trabajadores Indus--- triales del Mundo, conocidos en este país como los I.W.W. -- Los primeros jefes del radicalismo fueron Ricardo Flores Ma-- gón, su hermano Enrique Flores Magón, Antonio Villarreal, Li-- brado Rivera y Juan Sarabia, quienes en 1905 organizaron el -- Partido Liberal Mexicano para combatir al Gobierno de Porfi-- rio Díaz, estableciendo sus oficinas principales en San Luis-- Potosí. Uno de los maestros de los Magón fué el notable Bill Haywood, que en una ocasión estuvo al frente de los Trabajado-- res Industriales del Mundo, en los Estados Unidos, y ahora es un fugitivo de la justicia y se encuentra en Rusia, donde lo tiene empleado el Gobierno Soviet.

En aquéllos días no se permitían en México actividades -- radicales o políticas. La administración porfiriana les ha-- cía la guerra a los radicales por todos lados, y los cabeci-- llas, especialmente los hermanos Magón y Rivera, tuvieron que huir, refugiándose en los Estados Unidos, donde al principio vivieron como simples expatriados políticos. Más tarde "hi--

cieron su debut" como activos agitadores radicales y establecieron su primera base en Laredo.

UNIDOS BAJO UNA BANDERA.

Después se cambiaron a San Antonio y por fin a Los Angeles, donde se afiliaron estrechamente con los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo y con otros diversos grupos extremistas de este país. Los Magón fueron nombrados Jefes de la Sección Española de los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo y publicaban un semanario llamado "Regeneración", el que se adoptó como el órgano oficial de la organización radical que vino a ser conocida como la de los magonistas.

A pesar de que se encontraban expatriados en los Estados Unidos, los hermanos Magón iniciaron, en 1907, el primer movimiento revolucionario en contra de la administración de Díaz, cruzando la frontera y atacando el pequeño poblado de Las Vacas, en Coahuila. La expedición realmente fué el principio de la serie de levantamientos en contra de Díaz, porque la mayoría de los mexicanos que residían en los Estados Unidos, a lo largo del Río Grande, estaban estrechamente afiliados con la facción magonista. Fueron los Magón, de hecho, quienes realmente abrieron el camino para la insurrección encabezada por Francisco I. Madero en 1910, que puso fin al largo régimen de Díaz.

Me he referido a los Magón porque fueron los precursores del movimiento que ha alcanzado su fruición en la radicalización del México de hoy. Aunque los magonistas ayudaron a la revolución maderista, el rompimiento de costumbre tuvo lugar

después de que se obtuvo la victoria, siendo uno de los motivos el que Madero no fuera bastante radical. Los Magón y -- sus secuaces al retirarse se convirtieron en elementos organizadores de sucursales de los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo, en México, las que están todavía en acción. También aparecieron otros grupos de tendencias radicales, incluyendo las facciones encabezadas por los bandidos Zapata y Orozco y Antonio Soto y Gama.

Este último se halla ahora al frente del Partido Nacio--nal Agrarista y es uno de los principales consejeros de Luis Morones, Ministro de Industria, Comercio y Trabajo, que es -- el brazo derecho de Calles.

Cuando el General Victoriano Huerta derrocó al Gobierno de Madero, en 1913, y subió al poder, todos los grupos radi--cales se unieron en contra de su régimen reaccionario. Era natural que más tarde estos mismos grupos se aliaran a Ca---rranza, cuando éste inició la revolución en contra de Huer--ta.

Con Carranza y su revolución llegamos a la cristaliza--ción del sentimiento socialista. Por la primera vez estaban todos los radicales bajo una sola bandera, que proclamaba -- la Reforma Constitucional.

La revolución Carrancista se hizo notable por otro acontecimiento más. Entre los primeros adictos al Partido Li--beral Mexicano se encontraba Plutarco Elías Calles, cuyos -- actos entonces tenían como objetivo el dominio del Estado de Sonora, del cual fué más tarde Gobernador. El había contri--buído con palabras, hechos y dinero en pro de los dogmas de

los Magón. Calles sirvió como General bajo Carranza y de esta manera fué como obtuvo su primera experiencia militar. -- Es interesante agregar que jamás se ha desviado de las opi-- niones radicales que tuvo desde un principio, las que son -- tan evidentes en la legislación drástica que ha formulado -- desde que subió a la presidencia, como lo fueron cuando era él un simple espectador, en lo que respecta a participación en los asuntos públicos.

Los hermanos Magón rompieron sus relaciones con la facción de Carranza, cuando éste último rehusó darles fondos para su propaganda en los Estados Unidos, donde reanudaron su estrecha afiliación con los Trabajadores Industriales del -- Mundo y trataron de establecer una República comunista en la Baja California. El movimiento falló debido principalmente a la influencia ejercida por los Estados Unidos.

Entonces los Magón y Librado Rivera empezaron a trabajar con todo ahinco en este lado de la frontera. Se volvieron tan perniciosas sus actividades durante la guerra mundial que fueron arrestados por violación de la Ley de Espionaje y por obstruccionar el reclutamiento de selección, habiéndoseles sentenciado, a cada uno, a veinte años de prisión en la penitenciaría federal de Leavenworth. Ricardo -- Flores Magón murió en el presidio y sus despojos mortales -- fueron enviados a su patria; una gran demostración radical -- tuvo lugar durante el entierro. A petición urgente del Presidente Obregón, se perdonó a Enrique Flores Magón y también a Rivera, quienes fueron deportados a México. Apenas se hallaban de vuelta en su suelo nativo cuando asumieron sus an-

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tiguos papeles de agitadores radicales. Durante el tiempo - en que visité a México, estaban afiliados con organizaciones que tienen sus oficinas cerca de Tampico.

AYUDA EXTERNA.

Aunque el nombre de Magón ya no produce el efecto mágico de antaño, los principios que encerraba siguen avanzando. Ahora podemos recoger la hebra de la actuación de Carranza y seguirla hasta su conclusión lógica.

Una vez en el poder, Carranza procedió a dar salida a todas sus teorías socialistas.

La expresión principal de las teorías radicales de Carranza se encuentra en la Constitución de 1917, respecto a algunas de cuyas disposiciones se desata la actual controversia con los Estados Unidos.

No se piense por un momento que los mexicanos y especialmente Carranza y sus asociados radicales, fueron capaces de trazar una política extremista por sí mismos. Entonces, como ahora, el funcionario público mexicano que ocupa un puesto elevado, por lo general es un provinciano, y en la mayoría de los casos enteramente ignorante de los asuntos del mundo. El grupo de Carranza tenía consejeros entre los socialistas y regeneradores idealistas norteamericanos y entre diversos radicales europeos. Algunos todavía están con Calles y son de sus colegas de mayor confianza. Pero la ayuda y aliento principal llegaron de Moscou. Una vez que los bolcheviques habían asegurado su dominio en Rusia, pusieron en

acción sus baterías para la conquista de nuevos mundos en el exterior, y México fué escogido como la base lógica de operaciones en el hemisferio occidental, por dos razones: una porque contaba con una buena posición geográfica estratégica, - para la diseminación de propaganda tanto en la América del Norte como del Sur; y la otra porque el terreno era fértil y receptivo.

Sucedió, por lo tanto, que en 1919, la Tercera Internacional inició su campaña de propaganda en México, estableciendo una oficina en la Capital. Algunos de los trabajadores más expertos fueron enviados allí, entre los que se contaban rusos, japoneses y algunos norteamericanos. Estos propagandistas y sus sucesores no solo se hallan todavía activos en México, sino que usan al país como el centro de operaciones que se extienden en muchas direcciones.

LA ORGANIZACION EXTREMISTA.

El próximo paso fué la organización del Partido Comunista Mexicano, que se formó en 1920, unos cuantos meses después de que Obregón logró derrocar al Gobierno de Carranza. Se establecieron ramificaciones en Veracruz, Orizaba, Puebla, Morelia, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Tampico, Aguascalientes y otros centros industriales.

Entre los Jefes del movimiento comunista se encontraba Felipe Carrillo, quien fomentó un movimiento independiente - laborista y político en los Estados del Sureste: Yucatán, Tabasco y Campeche, y cuyas tendencias eran todas enteramente-

comunistas. También organizó la Liga Central de Resistencia, que se oponía a todo lo que tuviera sabor de capital. Esta Liga mantenía las relaciones más estrechas con la Tercera Internacional de Moscou.

Carrillo pagó el costo de sus excesos: durante la revolución Delahuertista, en 1923, le tocó la suerte a que él había condenado a otros tan inhumanamente. La obra póstuma -- del régimen de Carrillo existe hoy en Yucatán y es, quizás, -- el grupo más radical y dominante en todo México.

La Tercera Internacional se fué volviendo más poderosa en México a medida que transcurrieron los años. Se hacían -- toda clase de esfuerzos para mimar a los mexicanos; numerosos delegados fueron enviados de México a las reuniones anuales de la Internacional en Moscou, donde Zinoviev predicaba constantemente el Evangelio de la Revolución Mundial y la -- hostilidad para los Estados Unidos.

Apenas se había instalado el Partido Comunista cuando -- hubo el inevitable rompimiento entre los radicales. Aunque el Partido era tan "rojo" como podía ser, no satisfacía a -- los del elemento fanático, quienes, por lo tanto, se retiraron y organizaron la Confederación General de Trabajadores, -- a la que se le designa más frecuentemente como la C.G.T., o los "Obreros Rojos". Esta fué la primera organización extrema de trabajo, de mayores pretenciones, en la República y se dedicó a exterminar el capital, la iglesia y el ejército.

La influencia rusa en México recibió un verdadero ímpetu en 1924 con la llegada del Ministro Soviet, Stanislas -- Pestkowsky. La mayor parte del equipaje de los Embajadores--

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Soviets en todo el mundo, está atestado de propaganda. El -
Ministro se convirtió en Jefe del elemento ultra-radical. -
La Legación Soviet, como pasa en todas partes, fué y sigue -
siendo el manantial de las ideas comunistas. Pestkowsky se
asoció con los diversos grupos laboristas que se formaron --
después de la C.G.T.

Una actividad característica fué la ayuda prestada por
Pestkowsky y su Gobierno para la formación de la llamada --
Liga Anti-Imperialista de América, que en verdad es una aliaa
da de la Tercera Internacional. Su objeto es repartir propag
anda comunista en todos los países de la América Latina y --
fomentar la obra del Partido Comunista en Moscou en su campañ
a contra los Estados Unidos. Tiene sucursales en toda la -
América Central y del Sur, pero sus oficinas principales es-
tán en la Ciudad de México.

Uno de los amigos y asociados de Pestkowsky fué el Coron
el Adalberto Tejeda, Ministro de Gobernación en el Gabinete
de Calles. Durante el tiempo que éste fué Gobernador del Est
ado de Veracruz, puso en práctica un programa extremadamen-
te radical y favoreció la política confiscatoria del Gobiern
o Revolucionario.

Una prueba adicional de la asociación entre México y --
Moscou es el Club de Amigos de la Rusia Soviet en la Ciudad-
de México. Este es el centro oficial de la propaganda comu-
nista. El Club de Sión, que no tiene nada que ver con la org
anización judía de Palestina del mismo nombre, es el lugar-
de reunión de los agitadores profesionales, tanto nativos com
o extranjeros.

Puedo redondear esta parte acerca de la influencia rusa en México, refiriéndome a la bienvenida entusiasta que se -- dispensó a Madame Kollontay, quien sustituyó a Pestkowsky co-- mo Ministro Soviet. El hecho de que élla haya sido enviada a México demuestra la importancia que Moscou concede a nues-- tro vecino del Sur. Madame Kollontay es tal vez la propagan-- dista diplomática bolchevique más astuta y eficiente. Ca--- lles mandó a un miembro de su Gabinete para que la saludara a su llegada a Veracruz, y cuando presentó sus credenciales, él dijo un lisonjero discurso, asegurándola del sentimiento-- fraternal de México para Rusia.

Aunque los Trabajadores Internacionales del Mundo y los grupos comunistas siguieron manteniendo sus organizaciones -- en todo el país, su influencia, como entidades, decayó.

LO CONTRARIO DE RUSIA.

Luego salió al frente un nuevo órgano que usurpó las -- tendencias radicales de los grupos mencionados y les sacó un pié adelante en cuestión de dominio drástico. Fué el movi-- miento ultra-laborista. Con él tocamos la cuerda principal de la maquinaria política de Calles y la fuerza impulsora -- que se halla tras de gran parte de la agitación anti-extran-- jera. Aquí tenemos la primera divergencia con Rusia: En el fortín del sovietismo, el Partido Comunista es todopoderoso; su influencia es incontestable en todos los asuntos nacional-- mente administrativos, y las uniones se encuentran subordina-- das.

Lo contrario pasa en México: El trabajo organizado, y --

especialmente la C.R.O.M., constituye una dominante arma política e industrial. Es más fuerte, por lo tanto, en el Distrito Federal, donde tiene su asiento el capital, que en cualquier otro lugar.

Las organizaciones laboristas, en sí, no son instituciones comparativamente nuevas en México. Carranza, como se recordará, fomentó las primeras uniones y dió a los trabajadores su primera sanción gubernamental.

En 1916 fué establecida la llamada Casa del Obrero Mundial, por miembros de la antigua facción magonista y por agitadores de los Trabajadores Industriales del Mundo, que siendo refugiados políticos de México, habían hecho su aprendizaje en "desasosiego", en California y otras partes del Oeste de los Estados Unidos. Las oficinas principales estaban en Saltillo, en el Estado de Coahuila. Carranza impartió su bendición y la organización puso manos a la obra para radicalizar a todos los trabajadores industriales.

Los organizadores principales fueron Gustavo Espinosa - Mireles, Gobernador de Coahuila, Luis Morones, Celestino Gasca, José G. Gutiérrez y Ezequiel Salcedo. Me refiero a estos individuos porque todos ellos, especialmente Morones y Gasca, son personajes prominentes en la Administración de Calles. Es un hecho que donde quiera que se observa al Gobierno actual, se encuentran hombres que se han hecho notables en el movimiento radical, desde el día en que comenzó éste en México.

Ya se ha visto que la C.G.T. se formó como resultado de una trifulca habida en el antiguo Partido Comunista. Este -

grupo ha tratado siempre de mantener un monopolio sobre la palabra "rojo" y todo lo que élla significa. Sus promotores y miembros se enorgullecen de que se les designe como los -- "Obreros Rojos".

Durante algún tiempo la C.G.T. tuvo cogido del rabo al mundo laborista. Su autoridad no solo fué disputada, sino casi eliminada con la creación de la Confederación Regional-Obrera Mexicana, que no es otra que la "omnipresente"----- C.R.O.M. (Este nombre, que es la abreviatura que se le dá, -- está formado por la combinación de las primeras letras del -- título.)

La C.R.O.M. se estableció con motivo del acostumbrado -- rompimiento radical. Cuando se formó la C.G.T. muchos de -- los del antiguo grupo radical rehusaron adherirse porque la organización no se comprometía a tomar participación activa- en la política.

El ala insurgente deseaba influir en la elección de Go- bernadores, miembros del Congreso y hasta del Presidente de- la República. De allí que se organizara la C.R.O.M. como un órgano político más bien que como Unión enteramente laboris- ta.

Para adornarla con un rótulo que la distinguiera de la C.G.T., los miembros desde el principio han dado en llamarse los "Obreros Amarillos".

La C.R.O.M. fué fundada aparentemente para llevar a ca- bo la misma obra en México que desempeña la Federación Ame- ricana del Trabajo en los Estados Unidos. Uná de las jactan- cias más arrogantes que me hizo Morones fué la de que el fi-

nado Samuel Gompers era su amigo, su filósofo y su mentor. - A Morones le gusta, además, que se le llame "el Gompers de México".

En honor a la verdad, la C.R.O.M. tiene poco o nada de común con la Federación Americana del Trabajo, excepto que es un grupo de trabajadores organizados. Una prueba de su tendencia principal es que el Partido Laborista Mexicano es una agencia política de la C.R.O.M. y el eslabón que la une a cualquiera administración que suele estar en el Poder. -- Por medio del Partido Laborista, elige a los funcionarios públicos, especialmente a los miembros del Congreso.

LOS TRABAJADORES SINDICALIZADOS.

La C.R.O.M. logró obtener su primer prestigio debido a la ayuda que dió a la revolución obregonista en contra de Carranza, fortificando su posición durante la revolución delahuertista en contra de Obregón, pues apoyó a este último. - La C.R.O.M. también respaldó a Calles en su campaña para la Presidencia, en 1924.

La C.R.O.M. se halla dividida en grupos de obreros. Es trictamente hablando está compuesta de pocos gremios de oficios, como nosotros los conocemos; reúne a los trabajadores bajo diversos títulos de actividad. En algunos lugares todos los trabajadores organizados están en un grupo, lo que va de acuerdo con la idea de los Trabajadores Internacionales del Mundo, de una gran unión; en otros casos, principalmente con los empleados de las grandes empresas petroleras,-

los trabajadores de una compañía comprenden una sola unión.-- Por éso en Tampico y la región cercana existen las Uniones - de El Aguila, La Corona, Mexican Gulf y Transcontinental.

La C.R.O.M. también es responsable por la organización- de los llamados Sindicatos de Obreros. Aquí tenemos algo -- muy parecido a los sindicatos rusos del proletariado. De pa- so es interesante comparar estos sindicatos mexicanos con -- los Syndicati Fascisti; aunque cada uno se emplea con fines- políticos, fundamentalmente representan ambiciones opuestas. Mussolini organizó los Syndicati Fascisti para hacer desapa- recer a las Uniones de Trabajadores, y logró sanearlos. Los nuevos sindicatos han contribuido a ser una fuerza efectiva- para la reconstrucción del país. Los sindicatos mexicanos - por el contrario, fueron concebidos en el desorden y nacie-- ron en la agitación.

Debido al poder político que tiene, toda huelga que de- clara la C.R.O.M. se considera como ganada antes de que los hombres abandonen sus labores.

Con su organización, la C.R.O.M. estableció lo que se - llama "Junta Central de Conciliación y Arbitraje", que tiene ramificaciones en todos los centros industriales. Han sido- tan injustas sus decisiones, que los patrones siempre la de- signan con el nombre de "Junta de Expoliación y Ultraje". - Cuando la Junta de Arbitraje en Jalapa se ocupó de la huelga de El Aguila, rindió como de costumbre un fallo adverso para los patrones, quienes apelaron al Juzgado de Letras en Ve--- racruz y éste revocó la decisión de dicha Junta. Entonces - los trabajadores apelaron a la Suprema Corte en la Ciudad de México.

UNIONES INDEPENDIENTES

Como una protesta por los actos del Juzgado de Letras en Veracruz, la C.R.O.M. declaró un "boycott" en contra de los productos de El Aguila y dió orden a todas sus organizaciones afiliadas para que declararan una huelga de simpatía. Para hacer efectivo el "boycott", la C.R.O.M. colocó vigilantes y obreros en lugares donde se venden productos de El Aguila, como las gasolineras, y por fuerza obligaban a los automóviles para que no se detuvieran a comprar gasolina y aceite. La C.R.O.M. también dispuso que los vigilantes impidieran a los camiones de la Compañía de El Aguila que hicieran entrega de los productos de dicha empresa.

Se estacionaron vigilantes frente a los establecimientos de El Aguila, así como a bordo de los buques costeros de ésta, impidiendo a las tripulaciones que trabajaran. La C.R.O.M. además llamó la atención de Calles a los actos del Juzgado de Letras, de Veracruz, al revocar la decisión de la Junta Central. El Presidente entonces mandó que se destituyeran al Juez de Letras y al Agente del Ministerio Público.

El día 8 de Enero de 1926, cuando la Suprema Corte en la Ciudad de México iba a rendir su fallo en el caso, los jefes de la C.R.O.M. organizaron una manifestación monstruo frente al edificio de la Suprema Corte, para "pedir" (como candorosamente decían) que los Jueces decidieran en favor de los huelguistas. La Suprema Corte falló revocando la decisión del Juzgado de Letras en Veracruz y apoyando la de la Junta de Conciliación y Arbitraje en Jalapa. Según este último fallo, la

la Compañía de El Aguila tuvo que pagar a los trabajadores el equivalente de \$500,000 en salarios. (Con esto se cubrió todo el período de la huelga.) El fallo también ordenaba que se reinstalarán a los huelguistas en sus antiguos puestos.

La Confederación de Sociedades Ferrocarriles es estrictamente una confederación laborista y no tiene ninguna afiliación internacional. En principios y manera de obrar se asemeja más que ningún otro grupo laborista en México a la Federación Americana de Trabajo. Tiene dominio sobre casi todos los empleados de los Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México y está dividida en dos secciones: la Unión de Fogoneros y Maquinistas y la Unión de Conductores y Garroteros. Las uniones ferrocarrileras son objeto de especial aversión de parte de la C.R.O.M.- Esta ha estado tratando de hacer que las uniones ferrocarrileras declaren una huelga general para poner trabajadores de la C.R.O.M. y hasta individuos que no pertenezcan a ninguna unión con el fin de romper dicha huelga. (Esto de acuerdo con las actividades típicas de la C.R.O.M.) Ultimamente ha quedado probado lo que digo con la huelga declarada por los obreros de los Talleres de los Ferrocarriles Nacionales. Se ha dado protección militar a los Ferrocarriles y prácticamente casi todos los mecánicos han sido reemplazados con individuos que no son miembros de ninguna unión y con representantes de la C.R.O.M.-

Otro ejemplo de la manera como la C.R.O.M. combate al cuerpo laborista bien organizado y eficiente consiste en la campaña persistente en contra del Gremio Unido de Alijadores.- Hasta el año de 1921, la carga y descarga de las embarcaciones en Tampico era hecha por una compañía particular que poseía la

maquinaria necesaria para éлло.

Entre los Jefes de la Unión de Alijadores había hombres de más inteligencia que la que generalmente se encuentra en los líderes de trabajo en México, quienes decidieron encargarse éellos mismos de manejar el asunto. Por lo tanto pidieron al Gobernador del Estado de Tamaulipas que les prestara el capital suficiente y compraron la empresa a que me he referido. Se organizó y pertenece a la Unión una Sociedad Cooperativa que lleva por nombre Empresa de Obras Marítimas.

Todos los miembros de la Unión son accionistas y entre todos éellos se dividen las utilidades.

LA LEY LABORISTA.

A los cuatro meses de empezar sus operaciones, la Empresa de Obras Marítimas pudo pagar todas sus deudas. Actualmente cuenta con un buen depósito en efectivo, ha mejorado la maquinaria y el equipo y tiene en proyecto adquirir una zona de terreno cerca de Tampico para construir en élla residencias, una escuela y un parque para el uso exclusivo de los miembros de la Asociación. También se tiene pensado construir un edificio para Oficinas en la Ciudad.

El Gremio Unido de Alijadores es un grupo independiente y se opone con toda energía a las actividades de la C.R.O.M. y de la C.G.T. Hasta ahora ha podido resistir las irrupciones atentadas por la C.R.O.M., y como los Trabajadores están prosperando y naturalmente se encuentran contentos, es muy probable que puedan seguir sosteniéndose como lo han hecho hasta la fecha.

La C.R.O.M. se encuentra apoyada por las leyes de trabajo más drásticas que se han llegado a formular. Estas leyes son las reglamentarias del Artículo 123, de nuestra "antigua amiga" la Constitución de 1917. Este Artículo estipula un día de ocho horas, compensación de tres meses para los empleados a quienes se destituya, y especifica que el trabajador debe tener participación en las ganancias.

La nueva Ley del Trabajo es la última orden reglamentaria del Artículo 123. Fué aprobada por la Cámara de Diputados el año pasado, pero no llegó al Senado. Esto no importa en México porque Calles puede obligar a aceptarla, dándola en forma de Decreto.

La C.R.O.M. no necesitó de esta nueva Ley para obtener sanción de sus actos. Todos los Estados en la República tienen sus propias Leyes de Trabajo, basadas en el Artículo 123, las cuales han estado en vigor por algunos años. Con el fin de esclarecer la situación, voy a revelar los puntos principales del nuevo proyecto de Ley, porque casi todos se hallan ya en vigor en una forma u otra.

Según el Proyecto, las huelgas son legales cuando "la mayoría no comete actos de violencia". Esto quiere decir que una minoría puede destruir propiedades y perpetrar agresiones sin perjudicar la validez de la huelga. Después que se declaran las huelgas, todas las disputas deben someterse a las Juntas de Conciliación y Arbitraje, cuyas decisiones deben obedecer los patrones. El apelar a los tribunales es inútil porque casi invariablemente éstos se ponen de parte de los trabajadores.

Tan pronto como se declara una huelga, se prohíbe a los

empleados que trabajen y no se permite que intervengan ningunos rompe-huelgas. La policía se encarga de hacer cumplir esto; pero en casos en que no le es posible, el Gobierno manda tropas. No se permite al dueño que penetre a sus posesiones ni a su oficina, aunque esta última se halle situada lejos de la planta; por lo que los directores o gerentes no pueden recibir o contestar su correspondencia.

El contrato colectivo es obligatorio y sólo se pueden conseguir empleados por conducto de las Uniones. Con esto se obliga a los administradores de fábricas a que acepten gente incompetente, así como agitadores de profesión. Además, un patrón no puede dar por terminado un contrato sino justifica su caso en contra del obrero, y esto es imposible.

Una de las órdenes más drásticas es que los trabajadores deben recibir sus salarios íntegros durante todo el tiempo que haya huelga. Como con frecuencia las dificultades con los empleados duran largo tiempo, esto significa un serio trastorno.

Lo que se lleva la palma, sin embargo, es el Artículo 11 de la primera sección de la nueva ley. Doy en seguida una traducción exacta:

"Todas las dudas que ocurran en la interpretación de los contratos de trabajo, después de que se hayan agotado todos los demás recursos de evidencia, serán decididas en favor del trabajador."

Ahora se puede ver lo que quiero decir cuando manifiesto que el miembro de una liga mexicana de obreros no puede tener culpa, y naturalmente se pregunta uno cuál es el objeto de someter la cuestión a arbitraje.

Son iluminantes los puntos relacionados con la participación de utilidades, en las cuales les debe tocar el 8%, como mínimo, a los trabajadores. Las Uniones están autorizadas para inspeccionar los libros de la empresa y para ejercitar lo que equivale a intervención de los asuntos fiscales. Esta disposición es tan drástica que voy a reproducir el párrafo correspondiente:

"La participación de utilidades será determinada por Juntas Especiales. Para tener conocimiento de las ganancias, los obreros tendrán el derecho de nombrar una persona que investigue el manejo de los negocios, y a quien se autorizará para que haga todas las investigaciones que crea necesarias en la contabilidad y en la administración de la empresa. Los patrones que no quieran someterse a tales disposiciones, tendrán que cubrir, en todo caso, el equivalente del 10% de los salarios, efectuando el pago al mismo tiempo que el de los sueldos, en la forma que esta ley establece. Además, este 10% debe considerarse como los ahorros que forman parte del patrimonio de la familia del trabajador. Los patrones que elijan el sistema de pago del 10% de los salarios en cualquier caso, como participación de utilidades, quedarán obligados a cubrirlo siempre en la misma forma, sin recurrir a otros procedimientos, bajo ningunas circunstancias."

Además existe otra disposición que da a las Uniones el derecho de "recomendar y sugerir cambios" en los métodos financieros y de producción. No se necesita ningún diagrama para manifestar que estas indicaciones se convierten en mandatos.

POR DESTITUCION INJUSTIFICADA

La ley también estipula lo referente a alojamientos adecuados; así como a tratamiento médico, no sólo por lesiones que se reciban en el trabajo, sino por todas las enfermedades que se contraigan fuera. Las cláusulas de indemnización son típicas del resto. Por ejemplo, la vida de un maquinista de ferrocarril se valúa en \$21,000, aunque éste se mate por su propio descuido o por no prestar ninguna atención a las órdenes que reciba.

Desde el punto de vista del patrón, las leyes mexicanas de trabajo no solamente son injustas, sino que su ejecución es todavía más injusta. Una de las dificultades crónicas consiste en la interpretación de la parte de la Constitución que dice que en caso de destitución injustificada, tendrá que reinstalarse al trabajador o dársele tres meses de salario. La cruel experiencia ha demostrado que en la mayoría de los casos sometidos a las Juntas de Arbitraje o a los Tribunales, los fallos son que la destitución es injustificada. Podría demostrar esto con un sin fin de incidentes; pero dos serán suficientes.

Hace poco que una compañía de ferrocarril se dió cuenta de que estaba trabajando con pérdida y trató de reducir el personal; por lo tanto notificó a cincuenta individuos, con quince días de anticipación, que no se necesitarían más sus servicios; pero éstos rehusaron aceptar la notificación y apelaron al Inspector Federal de Trabajo para que los reinstalaran.

El Inspector dispuso que la compañía tenía que probar que

estaba perdiendo dinero para justificar la desocupación de los hombres. La compañía flaqueó y dió amplias pruebas que el Inspector no consideró suficientes. Por lo tanto ordenó que se reinstalaran a los trabajadores o que se les pagara tres meses de sueldo.

Otro episodio que no deja de tener su lado jocoso, le pasó a una empresa petrolera en Tampico. Según es la costumbre en esta región, donde no hay una vigilancia adecuada, las terminales y campamentos tienen guardias armadas particulares. En la terminal a que me refiero, se puso cierto velador para que cuidara la propiedad y se le dió un revólver para que se protegiera. El hombre en cuestión se quedó dormido tan profundamente que un ladrón penetró al lugar, robó algunas cosas de valor y hasta se escapó con la pistola del soñoliento guardia.

Al día siguiente el hombre fue cesado e inmediatamente apeló a la Junta Local de Conciliación y Arbitraje, basándose en que su desocupación no era justa! La Junta falló a su favor y pidió como de costumbre que dieran al individuo tres meses de sueldo. Como la Compañía pensó que el apelar a los Tribunales le resultaría desfavorable, decidió transar y dió al velador dos meses de sueldo.

El que impera en este orden de cosas es Luis Morones, Ministro de Industria, Comercio y Trabajo en el Gabinete de Calles. Después del Presidente, es el hombre más fuerte y de más influencia en el Gobierno.

Antes de estudiarlo de cerca, conviene saber algo de su pasado. Nació en el Estado de Hidalgo y su primer empleo fué el de Inspector de medidores en la Compañía de Luz y Fuerza, de la Ciudad de México; más tarde fué celador de línea.

Con la revolución Maderista, que empezó en 1910, Morones entró a la política. Fué miembro del antiguo Partido Liberal y un miembro privilegiado de la Casa del Obrero Mundial. Durante la administración de Carranza se distinguió como agitador laborista.

Para 1916 Morones había adquirido tal poder como líder obrero que dedicó todo su tiempo a organizar trabajadores, y se interesó especialmente en el Sindicato de Obreros Electricistas. Durante la huelga decretada por este gremio en contra de la Compañía Telefónica Mexicana, se le puso a cargo de la planta y la manejó para beneficio de los trabajadores.

En 1920 hizo un viaje a Europa con Clemente Idar, un organizador de la Federación Americana del Trabajo. Quiso entrar a la Rusia Soviet, pero debido a su asociación con Idar, los bolcheviques no lo dejaron, pues creyeron que era espía del grupo laborista norteamericano. A León le pasó algo parecido el año siguiente.

LA DOCTRINA DE CALLES.

Durante la revolución delahuertista en contra de Obregón, Morones fué uno de los principales organizadores del ejército reclutado de las filas de los trabajadores y campesinos. Un rasgo característico de su mentalidad hizo que sugiera el año pasado la reorganización del Ejército Mexicano, que actualmente está formado como el Ejército Francés, para convertirlo en un Ejército de Obreros y Campesinos, como el

que existe en Rusia. Su idea era formar un Estado Mayor de miembros de las organizaciones laboristas afiliadas con la C.R.O.M. que tuvieran el poder para designar a todos los oficiales del Ejército. También propuso la abolición de los Consejos de Guerra y presentó un proyecto para juzgar las faltas ante un Comité Ejecutivo, compuesto de radicales.

El plan no se llevó a cabo, debido en gran parte a la oposición del General Amaro, el Indio de Raza Pura, que es Ministro de Guerra y Marina.

Morones prestó todo su apoyo a Calles cuando éste era candidato para la Presidencia en 1924, poniendo toda la influencia del Partido Laborista a su favor. En pago de estos servicios, e incidentalmente para contar con el sostén del elemento laborista radical, Calles lo hizo Ministro de Industria, Comercio y Trabajo.

La llamada Liga de los Países Latino-Americanos tiene un poderoso paladín en Morones. Como está organizado para diseminar los principios radicales en toda la América Latina, tiene parecido con la Liga Anti-Imperialista de América, en algunos puntos, aunque no se inclina tan violentamente contra los Estados Unidos. En México, la Liga de los Países Latino-Americanos representa la doctrina de Calles, porque el Presidente es uno de sus principales respaldadores.

Ahora ya podemos ver cara a cara cual es el calibre de Morones. Fuí a verlo a su Oficina en la Secretaría de Industria, Comercio y Trabajo. La cita era para las dos de la tarde, pero me hizo esperar una hora. En lo que se refiere a citas, es tal vez el hombre más excéntrico en el Gobierno.

No es cosa rara para él tener conferencias a media noche o a las tres de la mañana; por lo tanto, su personal se atiene a una jornada de veinticuatro horas.

Morones habla solamente español y tuve que conversar -- con él por medio de un intérprete. Es corpulento, "untuoso", y terso facial y lingüísticamente. En toda la extensión de la palabra se parece a un Buda Latino. Como agente de ventas sin duda que tendría un magnífico éxito. Charla con la rapidez de una ametralladora en acción.

LOS TRES OBJETIVOS DE MORONES.

El Ministro portaba un elegante traje de mañana, y podía haber pasado en cualquier parte como un próspero banquero latino-americano.

Sin más, empezó la entrevista. Mi primera pregunta fué: "¿Es usted bolchevique?"

Y su contestación: "Los rusos no me dejaron entrar a su país porque creyeron que yo no era bolchevique, y ahora se me ataca porque lo soy. Mi lema político, en una palabra, es la franqueza. La nueva Ley del Trabajo aspira a que halle francas relaciones; no es destructora, sino que protege a todos los intereses afectados."

Cuando dije que se le consideraba demasiado drástica, respondió: "Al contrario, está basada en nuestra Constitución. El patrón siempre puede apelar al arbitraje. Lo que los trabajadores mexicanos hacen hoy es, más o menos, lo que la Federación Americana del Trabajo hace en el país de usted."

Samuel Gompers fué mi buen amigo; tuvimos muchas diferencias amistosas, pero nunca desagradables."

Le pregunté: "¿Y qué me dice usted de la C.R.O.M.?"

Morones repuso: "Al contrario de la creencia general, - la C.R.O.M. no es mi creación, sino el producto de muchos ce rebros, y está formada según la Federación Americana del Trabajo o cualquier otro grupo similar. La C.R.O.M. es una ins titución que se estableció para satisfacer las necesidades - nacionales y para fijar las responsabilidades de los jefes - laboristas. Es fraternal, benéfica y constructiva. La C.R. O.M. es verdaderamente parte del programa de Calles para el mejoramiento del país, y sirve al obrero al igual que las -- leyes agraristas al campesino."

Mi siguiente pregunta fué: "¿Cual es el futuro del pro letariado mexicano?"

"Tenemos tres objetivos," me respondió el Ministro, "El primero es resolver los problemas económicos, el segundo po- ner en práctica un programa educativo, y el tercero mejorar- el estado normal de vida. Cuando alcancemos estas tres co-- sas, el obrero mexicano estará en el mismo nivel que sus ca- maradas de otras partes."

Como se le acusa a Morones del cumplimiento de la Ley - del Petróleo, le pregunté por qué existía un antagonismo tan enconado, en contra del capital norteamericano, especialmente en vista del hecho de que el dinero extranjero ha contribuí- do grandemente a desarrollar las riquezas del país.

Me contestó: "No existe ninguna hostilidad para el Ca- pital Extranjero. La dificultad consiste en que el extranje

ro tanto financiera como políticamente ha puesto demasiado -
énfasis en los intereses nacionales. Toda controversia que
aparece se convierte en una cuestión entre los Gobiernos. -
El dólar tiene y tendrá la misma garantía en México que el -
capital mexicano, siempre que se conserve dentro de la Ley.--
Recibiremos con gusto a todo el capital que viene con buenas
intenciones. La dificultad está en que el capital nunca se
satisface y a ésto se debe toda la confusión."

En la actualidad Morones está más bien parapetado que -
antes, por esta razón: Durante dos años existió un feudo --
violento entre él y Alberto J. Pani, antiguo Ministro de Ha-
cienda. Pani era el único miembro conservador del Gobierno-
y recomendaba prudencia. Esto irritaba a Morones, quien ---
trabajó muy empeñosamente para eliminarlo de los concejos na
cionales. En los primeros días de febrero, Pani renunció pa
ra seguir ocupando su antiguo puesto de Ministro en Francia.

Esto significa que de ahora en adelante Morones y el par
tido radical podrán darse vuelo en sus ambiciones.

Como último análisis se encontrará que en Morones, así -
como en todos los otros miembros extremistas del Gobierno, de
Calles para abajo, hay la misma "suave" evasión de los puntos
principales.

Si se escuchan sus trivialidades acerca de mejoramiento-
y justicia, se imagina uno que se trata de un grupo muy ultra
jado y muy mal comprendido.

El Gobierno Mexicano cree que la Legislación perentoria-
es la clave para el mejoramiento de la clase trabajadora. --
Concuerda con la política que trata de mejorar al peón dando-

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le tierras a fuerza. No se toma en cuenta que al patrón se --
le debe permitir que tenga alguna utilidad por su dinero o --
por sus esfuerzos. En todas partes, el Gobierno y el traba--
jador tratan de obtener dominio autocrático, sin tomar en con--
sideración los derechos privados de propiedad. Sencillamente
es una fase de un radicalismo mayor que señala el camino para
un desastre final económico y político.

(Nota del Editor: Este es el sexto de una serie de artículos
por el señor Marcossón sobre México. El próximo, que será el
último, será dedicado al futuro.)

RADICALISM IN MEXICO

By Isaac F. Marcossou

RADICALISM in Mexico is part of the wave of ultranationalism that has swept the world. It registered first in Russia. China is in the throes of it. The Mexican brand, however, is different from the Russian or Chinese variety. Beginning as a protest against the Diaz autocracy, it has become a camouflaged agency for the perpetuation—or rather rotation—in office of the small group that controls the country. Though nationalization is the keynote, there is no definite or consecutive policy. It is characteristic of the Mexican mentality that the appeal is not social but political. The three countries that I have mentioned have populations whose illiteracy is not less than 80 per cent. The natural consequence is that a few rule the many. This is particularly true of Russia, where Stalin, instead of conserving the dictatorship of the proletariat, is fast becoming the whole works himself. If the truth were known, Eugene Chen, head of the Soviet-sponsored Cantonese nationalistic government in China, would like to do the same.

Each of these is predominantly an agricultural country. Since the hope of communism invariably reposes in the industrial worker, any permanent hold is precarious. Hence Bolshevism is doomed eventually wherever it happens to be entrenched. This is small comfort to us, because in Mexico particularly havoc is being wrought with our interests, which aggregate nearly \$1,500,000,000.

Analyze the beginnings of Mexican radicalism and you find that they are really rooted in the Industrial Workers of the World, more commonly known as the I. W. W. The pioneers of radicalism were Ricardo Flores Magon, his brother Enrique Flores Magon, Angonio Villarreal, Librado Rivera and Juan Sarabia. In 1905 they organized the Mexican Liberal Party to oppose the administration of Porfirio Diaz. Headquarters were established at San Luis Potosí. One of the Magon preceptors was the notorious Bill Haywood, once head of the I. W. W. in the United States and now a fugitive from justice in Russia, where he is employed by the Soviet Government.

In those days no radical or political activities were permitted in Mexico. The Diaz government opposed the radicals at every turn, and the ringleaders, especially the Magon brothers and Rivera, had to fly. They escaped to the United States, where they first lived as ordinary political refugees. Subsequently they blossomed forth as active radical agitators. Their first base was at Laredo.

United Under One Banner

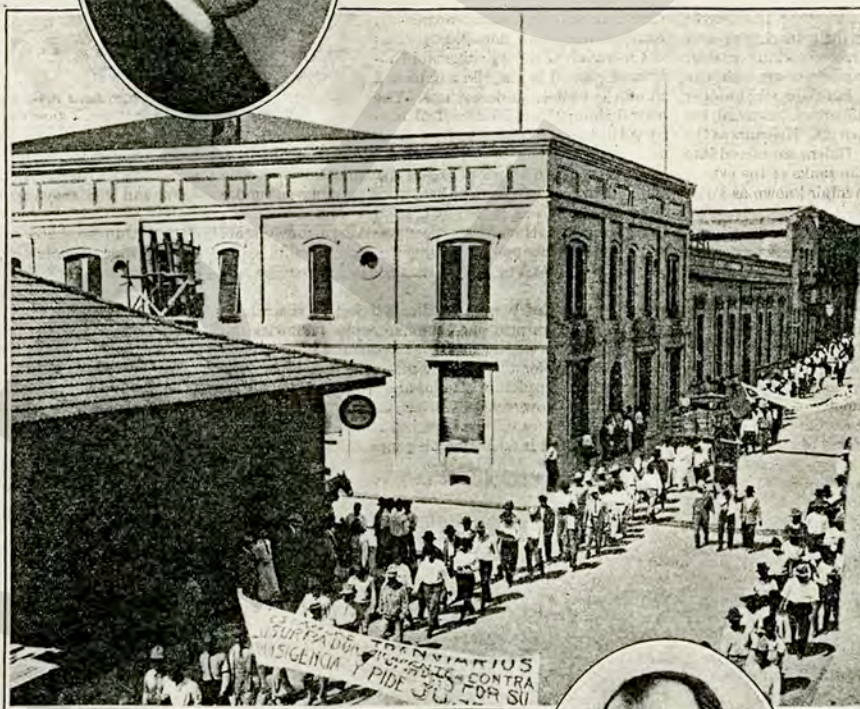
LATER they moved to San Antonio, and finally brought up at Los Angeles, where they became closely affiliated with the I. W. W. and other kindred extremist groups in this country. The Magons were made head of the Spanish section of the I. W. W. and published a weekly newspaper, *Regeneración*. This was adopted as the official organ of the radical organization which came to be known as the Magonistas.

Although exiled in the United States, the Magon brothers initiated the first revolutionary movement against the Diaz administration, in 1907, by crossing the border and attacking the small town of Las Vacas in Coahuila. The expedition really started the train of revolt against Diaz, because the majority of Mexicans residing in the

United States along the Rio Grande were closely affiliated with the Magonista faction. As a matter of fact, the Magons really paved the way for the insurrection headed by Francisco Madero in 1910, which ended the long Diaz régime.

I have dwelt upon the Magons because they were the forerunners of the movement which has reached its fruition in the radicalization of the Mexico of today. Although the Magonistas aided the Madero revolution, the usual split developed after victory had been won. One reason was that Madero was not radical enough.

The Magons and their henchmen withdrew and became instrumental in organizing branches of the I. W. W. in Mexico, which are still active. Various other radically inclined groups also sprang up, including factions headed by the bandits Zapata and Orozco and Antonio Soto y Gama.



A Strike Demonstration at Tampico. At Right—Luis Morones, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor. Above—Alberto J. Pani, Minister of Finance, Who Opposed the Radical Measures

This last-named individual is now head of the National Agrarian Party. He is also one of the principal advisers of Luis Morones, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor, who is Calles' right-hand man.

When Gen. Victoriano Huerta overthrew the Madero government in 1913 and became president, all the radical groups consolidated against his reactionary régime. Later on it was natural that they should align themselves with Carranza when he launched his revolution against Huerta.

With Carranza and his revolt we reach the crystallization of the socialistic sentiment. For the first time all the radicals were under one banner, which proclaimed constitutional reform.

The Carranza revolution was notable for still another event. Among the early adherents of the Mexican Liberal

Party was Plutarco Elias Calles, then moving toward mastery of the state of Sonora, of which he was later governor. He had subscribed by word, deed and purse to the Magon tenets. Calles served as general under Carranza and got his first military experience in that way. It is interesting to add that he has never deviated from his original radical views. They are as apparent in the drastic legislation that he has formulated since he became president as they were when he was an onlooker so far as participation in affairs was concerned.

The Magon brothers broke off relationship with the Carranza faction when the latter refused to finance their propaganda in the United States, whereupon they renewed their close affiliation with the I. W. W. and sought to establish a communist republic in Lower California. The movement failed largely because of the influence brought to bear against it in the United States.

The Magons and Librado Rivera then got busy on this side of the border. Their activities during the World War became so pernicious that they were arrested for violation of the Espionage Act and for obstructing the selective draft. They were sentenced to twenty years each in the Federal penitentiary at Leavenworth. Ricardo

Flores Magon died in prison. The body was sent home for burial and a great radical demonstration was staged at the funeral. Enrique Flores Magon and Rivera were pardoned at the urgent request of President Obregón and deported to Mexico. No sooner were they back on native soil than they assumed their former rôles as radical agitators. At the time of my visit to Mexico they were affiliated with organizations with headquarters near Tampico.

Outside Help

ALTHOUGH the name Magon no longer carries its one-time magic, the principles with which it was invested go marching on. We can now pick up the Carranza thread and carry it to its logical conclusion.

Once in office, Carranza proceeded to give full vent to all his socialistic theories.

The principal expression of Carranza's radical theories is in the constitution of 1917, around some of the provisions of which the present controversy with the United States rages.

Do not think for a moment that the Mexicans, and especially Carranza and his radical associates, were able to project an extremist policy on their own. Then, as now, the average high-placed Mexican official is a provincial and, in the main, utterly ignorant of world affairs. For one thing, the Carranza crowd had advisers among socialistic Americans and idealistic uplifters from the United States and various European radicals. Some are still with Calles and are among his most trusted colleagues. But the chief aid and comfort came from Moscow.

Once the Bolsheviks had consolidated their power at home, they turned their batteries loose for the conquest of new worlds abroad. Mexico was selected as the logical base for operations in the Western Hemisphere for two reasons. One was that it had a good strategic geographical position for the dissemination of propaganda to both North and South America. The other lay in a fertile and receptive soil.

It followed, therefore, that in 1919 the Third International initiated its propaganda campaign in Mexico with



April 9, 1931



A Public Letter Writer, Mexico

the establishment of a bureau in Mexico City. Some of the most expert workers were sent into the field. They included Russians, Japanese and a few Americans. These propagandists and their successors are not only still active in Mexico but use Mexico as the center of operations which extend in many directions.

The Extremist Organization

THE next step was the organization of the Mexican Communist Party, which came into being in 1920, a few months after Obregón had succeeded in overthrowing the Carranza government. Locals sprang up at Vera Cruz, Orizaba, Puebla, Morelia, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Tampico, Aguas Calientes and other industrial centers.

Among the chiefs of the communist movement was Felipe Carrillo. He instigated an independent labor and political movement in the southeastern states of Yucatan, Tabasco, and Campeche. Its tendencies were all communistic. He also organized the Central League of Resistance, which was opposed to everything and everybody that savored of capital. This league maintained the closest relationship with the Third Internationale of Moscow.

Carrillo paid the price for his excesses. During the De la Huerta revolution of 1923 he met the fate that he had meted out so ruthlessly to others. The aftermath of the Carrillo régime exists today in

Yucatan in what is perhaps the most radical and domineering group in all Mexico.

The Third Internationale became stronger in Mexico with each succeeding year. Every effort was made to coddle the Mexican. Numerous delegates went from Mexico to the annual internationale gatherings at Moscow, where Zinoviev persistently preached the gospel of world revolution and hostility to the United States.

No sooner had the Communist Party established itself than the inevitable row among radicals broke loose. Although the party was as red as could be, it did not quite suit the rabid element. They accordingly withdrew and organized the Confederación General de Trabajadores, which means General Confederation of Workers. It is more frequently referred to as the C. G. T. or the Red Workers. This was the first pretentious extremist labor organization in the republic. It was dedicated to extermination of capital, the church and the army.

Russian influence in Mexico received a real impetus in 1924 with the arrival of the soviet minister, Stanislas Pestkowsky. Most soviet ambassadorial luggage the world over is full of propaganda. The minister became a leader among the ultra-radical element. The soviet legation, as elsewhere, was and remains the fountainhead of communistic ideas. Pestkowsky associated himself with the various labor bodies which had sprung up since the C. G. T.

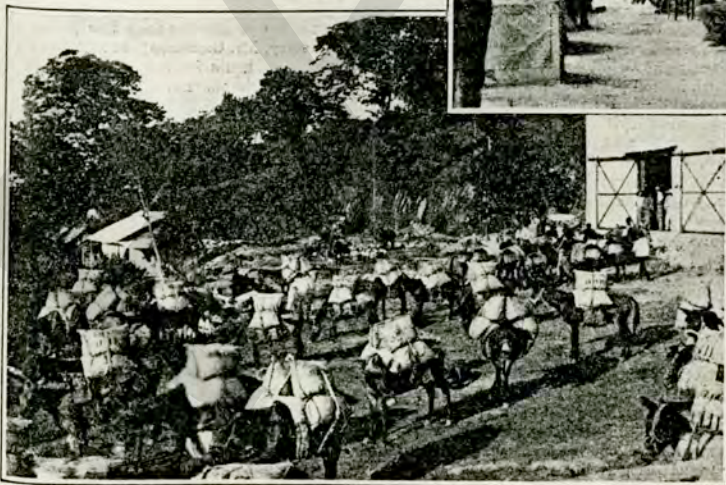
A characteristic activity was the assistance that Pestkowsky and his government gave to the launching of the so-called Anti-Imperialistic League of America, which is really an ally of the Third Internationale. Its object is to spread communist propaganda in all the Latin-American countries and to foster the work of the Communist Party in Moscow in its campaign against the United States. It has branches throughout Central and South America, but its main offices are in Mexico City.

One of Pestkowsky's friends and associates was Col. Adalberto Tejeda, Minister of the Interior in the Calles Cabinet. While governor of the state of Vera Cruz he carried out an extremely radical program and favored the confiscatory policy of the revolutionary government.

A further evidence of the association between Mexico and Moscow is the Club of Friends of Soviet Russia in Mexico City. This is the official center of communistic propaganda. The Zionist Club—it has nothing to do with the Jewish Palestine organization of the same name—is the rendezvous for the professional agitators both native and foreign.



A Market Place at Guadalajara in the State of Jalisco, Mexico



At Left—The Burro Pack Train, a Familiar Sight on Mexican Roads



Another Strike Demonstration at Tampico

I can best round out this section about the Russian influence in Mexico by referring to the enthusiastic welcome accorded Madame Kollantay, who succeeded Pestkowsky as soviet minister. The very fact that she was sent to Mexico shows the importance that Moscow attaches to our neighbor on the south. Madame Kollantay is perhaps the most astute and effective of the Bolshevik diplomatic propagandists. Calles sent a member of his cabinet to bid her welcome at Vera Cruz. When she presented her credentials he made a flattering speech, assuring her of Mexico's fraternal feeling for Russia.

Although the I. W. W. and communist groups continued to maintain their organizations throughout the country, their influence, as entities, waned.

Russia Reversed

A NEW agency which usurped their radical tendencies, and went them one better in the matter of drastic authority, now came to the fore. It was the ultra-labor movement. With it we reach the mainspring of the Calles political machine and the driving force behind much of the antiforeign agitation. Here you have the first divergence from Russia. In the stronghold of sovietism the Communist Party is all-powerful. Its influence is undisputed in all nationally administrative matters. The unions are subservient.

The reverse is true in Mexico. Organized labor, and especially the CROM, constitutes the dominant political as well as industrial weapon. It is stronger, therefore, in the federal district, where the capital is located, than in any other section.

Labor organizations, as such, are no comparatively new institution in Mexico. Carranza, as you will recall, fostered the first unions and gave labor its original governmental sanction.

In 1916 the so-called Casa del Obrero Mundial—House of the World Worker—was formed by members of the old Magonista faction and I. W. W. agitators, who, while political refugees from Mexico, had served their apprenticeship in unrest in California and other parts of the American West. The headquarters were at Saltillo, in the state of Coahuila. Carranza bestowed his benediction, and the organization set to work to radicalize all industrial operators.

(Continued on Page 229)

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RADICALISM IN MEXICO

(Continued from Page 27)

The principal organizers were Gustavo Espinoza Mireles, governor of Coahuila; Luis Morones, Celestino Gasca, José G. Gutierrez and Esequiel Salcedo. I refer to these men because all of them, particularly Morones and Gasca, are prominent figures in the Calles government. In fact, wherever you turn in the present administration you find men who have been conspicuous in the radical movement from the day of its inception in Mexico.

You have already seen how the C. G. T. came into being as a result of a row in the original Communist Party. This group has sought all along to maintain a monopoly on the word "red" and all it means. Its promoters and members take great pride in being referred to as the Red Workers.

For a time the C. G. T. had the Mexican labor world by the tail. Its authority was not only undisputed but almost eliminated with the creation of the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana—Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor—which is none other than the ubiquitous CROM. This name, by which it is always referred to for short, is the combination of the first letters of the title.

The CROM was founded as the result of the usual radical split. When the C. G. T. was formed many of the old radical guard refused to join because the organization had not committed itself to active participation in politics.

The insurgent wing wanted to influence the election of governors, congressmen, and even the president. Hence the CROM came into being primarily as a political agency rather than an out-and-out labor union.

In order to invest it with a label that would distinguish it from the C. G. T., the members from the start have called themselves the Yellow Workers.

The CROM was founded ostensibly to perform the same work in Mexico that the American Federation of Labor does in the United States. One of Morones' proudest boasts to me was that the late Samuel Gompers was his friend, philosopher and guide. Morones further likes to be called the Gompers of Mexico.

As a matter of fact, the CROM has little or nothing in common with the American Federation of Labor save that it is a body of organized workers. One evidence of its principal tendency is that the Mexican Labor Party is a political branch of the CROM and the link with whatever administration happens to be in power. Through the Labor Party it elects public officials, especially congressmen.

Syndicated Workers

The CROM owed its first prestige to the support it gave the Obregón revolt against Carranza. Its position was fortified during the De la Huerta revolution against Obregón, when it supported the latter. The CROM also backed Calles when he ran for president in 1924.

The CROM is divided into worker groups. Strictly speaking, it contains few craft unions as we know them, but masses the workers under different activity heads. In some places all the organized workers are in one body. This is in line with the I. W. W. idea of one big union. In other instances, principally with the employees of the great oil concerns, the employees of a company comprise a single union. Thus in the Tampico and adjacent district you have the Aguila, Corona, Mexican Gulf and Transcontinental unions.

The CROM is also responsible for the organization of so-called syndicates of workers. Here you have the exact parallel with the Russian syndicates of the proletariat. It is interesting, in passing, to compare these Mexican syndicates and the Syndicati Fascisti. Though each is employed for political purposes, fundamentally they represent opposite ambitions.

Mussolini created the Syndicati Fascisti to put the old socialist trade unions out of business, and he succeeded in sterilizing them. The new syndicati have become an effective force for the upbuilding of the nation. The Mexican syndicates, on the other hand, were conceived in unrest and brought forth in agitation.

Because of the political power that it wields, every strike called by the CROM is practically won before the men go out.

With its organization, the CROM set up a so-called Central Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, with branches in all the industrial centers. So unfair have been its decisions that it is always alluded to by employers as the Board of Humiliation and Spoliation. When the Aguila strike came before the branch arbitration board at Jalapa it rendered the usual adverse decision to the employer. The Aguila Company appealed to the federal district court of Vera Cruz, which reversed the judgment rendered by the arbitrators. The workers then appealed to the supreme court in Mexico City.

Independent Unions

As a protest against the action of the federal district court of Vera Cruz the CROM declared a boycott against Aguila products and ordered all the organizations affiliated with it to declare a sympathetic strike against the Aguila Company. To enforce the boycott the CROM placed pickets and workers at places such as gasoline service stations where the Aguila products were being sold, and forcibly prevented cars from stopping there to purchase gasoline and oil. The CROM also ordered pickets to prevent the trucks of the Aguila Company from delivering Aguila products.

Pickets were stationed in front of the Aguila establishments. Pickets also went on board the Aguila ships doing coastwise service and kept the crews from moving them. The CROM further officially brought the action of the federal district court of Vera Cruz in reversing the decision of the central board to the notice of Calles. In consequence the president ordered the dismissal of both the district judge and the district attorney.

On January 8, 1926, when the supreme court of Mexico City was to render its decision on the case, the CROM leaders organized a huge demonstration in front of the Supreme Court Building, "to request," as they naively put it, the judges of the supreme court to render a decision favorable to the strikers. The supreme court handed down a decision reversing the Vera Cruz district court's opinion and upholding the decision rendered by the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration of Jalapa. Under this judgment the Aguila Company had to pay over to the workers the equivalent of \$500,000 in wages. This covered the entire period of the strike. The decision likewise provided for the reinstatement of the strikers to their former positions.

To record the succession of strikes instigated by the CROM would be to chronicle an almost continuous succession of flagrant abuses of organized union power.

The Confederación de Sociedades Ferro-carrileras—that is, the Confederation of Railroad Workers' Societies—is strictly a labor confederation and has no international affiliation. In principle and policy it more nearly resembles the American Federation of Labor than any other labor body in Mexico. It controls most of the workers employed by the National Railways of Mexico and is divided into sections such as the Union of Firemen and Engineers and Union of Conductors and Brakemen. The railroad unions are the particular aversion of the CROM. Typical of its activities, the CROM has been trying to get the railway unions to declare a general strike so that it could get CROM workers and even nonunion men to break

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it. This has been lately true of the strike inaugurated by the shopmen of the National Railways. Military protection has been given the railways and practically all the mechanics out have been supplanted by nonunion and CROM representatives.

Still another illustration of the way the CROM wars on a highly organized and efficient labor body is its persistent campaign against the Gremio Unido de Alijadores, which means United Group of Stevedores. Up to 1921 a private company owned and operated the machinery for the loading and unloading of ships at the government wharf at Tampico.

Among the leaders of the stevedores' union were men with intelligence above the average of that of ordinary labor heads in Mexico. They decided to run the show themselves. Accordingly they borrowed the capital from the then governor of the state of Tamaulipas, in which Tampico is located, and bought out the company. A cooperative society called the Empresa de Obras Maritimas—Maritime Operations Company—was formed and is owned by the union.

All members of the union are stockholders and the profits are divided.

The Labor Law

Within four months the Maritime Operations Company was able to pay off all its debts. It has built up a large cash surplus, has improved the machinery and equipment and has under consideration the purchase of a tract of land near Tampico to be used as a subdivision with residences, schoolhouse and park for the exclusive use of members of the association. An office building in the city is also projected.

The United Group of Stevedores is an independent labor body and is bitterly opposed to the activities of the CROM and the C. G. T. So far it has resisted the attempted inroads of the CROM. Since the workers are prosperous and therefore contented, they will probably be able to hold their own.

The CROM is backed up by the most drastic labor laws formulated anywhere. These laws are the regulatory statutes of Article 123 of our old friend the constitution of 1917. This article provides for an eight-hour day, three months' compensation for discharged employees, and specifies that the worker must have a share of the profits.

The new labor law is the latest regulatory mandate for Article 123. It passed the lower house of congress late last year, but did not get by the senate. This cuts no ice in Mexico, because Calles can at any time impose it in the shape of a decree.

The CROM did not need this new law to obtain sanction for its acts. Every state in the republic has its own labor law based on Article 123, and they have all been effective for years. For the purpose of clarifying the situation I will disclose the main features of the new labor bill, because most of them are already in force in one form or another.

Under it strikes are legalized where "the majority do not commit violence." This means that a minority may destroy property and commit assault without impairing the validity of the strike. After strikes are declared, all questions must be submitted to the boards of conciliation and arbitration, whose decisions must be obeyed by the employers. Appeals to the courts are useless, because almost invariably they take the side of labor.

As soon as a strike is declared, the employees are prohibited from working and no strike breakers are permitted to interfere. This rule is enforced by the police. If they prove futile, the government sends troops. The proprietor is prohibited from entering his own premises and his own office, even when the office happens to be located away from the plant. It follows that the managers cannot receive or answer their correspondence.

The collective contract is made compulsory. Employees can be hired only through

the unions. This means that incompetents as well as professional agitators are thrust upon factory managers. Moreover, an employer cannot terminate a contract unless he proves his case against the worker, and this is impossible.

One of the most drastic regulations is that the workmen must receive full pay for all the time they are on strike. Since labor troubles are frequently protracted over a considerable period, this invokes a serious hardship.

The prize section, however, is Article 11 of the first section of the new law. An exact translation reads like this:

All doubts which occur in the interpretation of the labor contracts, after all other means of proof have been exhausted, shall be decided in favor of the worker.

Now you can see what I mean when I say that the Mexican unionist can do no wrong. You naturally wonder why any dispute is ever referred to arbitration.

The profit-sharing features—the workers get a minimum of 5 per cent of the profits—are illuminating. They give the unions the right to inspect the books of the company and to exercise what amounts to a supervision of the fiscal affairs. This provision is so drastic that I reproduce the section. It follows:

The participation of profits shall be fixed by special boards. In order to be able to know the profits, the workmen shall have the right to name a person who may investigate the administration of the business, and who shall be empowered to make all the investigations which he thinks necessary in the accounting and in the administration of the enterprise. Employers who do not wish to submit themselves to the preceding regulation shall pay, in any case, the equivalent of 10 per cent of the wages, and shall make payment at the same time as the wages in the form which this law establishes. This 10 per cent is to be considered, moreover, as the savings which form part of the patrimony of the family of the laborer. Employers who choose the system of payment of 10 per cent of the wages in any case as the participation in profits shall be obliged to pay it always in the same form without, under any circumstances, recourse to other proceedings.

In line with this section is a further regulation which gives the unions the right to "recommend and suggest changes" in financial and production methods. You need no diagram to point out that these suggestions become commands.

For Unjustified Dismissal

The law also provides for adequate housing and also for medical treatment, not only for injuries received in the line of duty but for all diseases contracted outside. The indemnity clauses are typical of all the rest. A railway engineer's life, for example, is valued at \$21,000, even though he be killed through his own carelessness or utter disregard of orders.

From the employer's standpoint, the Mexican labor laws are not only unfair but the enforcement is even more unjust. One of the chronic troubles develops from the interpretation of the section of the constitution which states that in the event of unjustified dismissal the workmen shall be reinstated or given three months' wages. Bitter experience has shown that in the majority of cases submitted to the arbitration boards or the courts, the rulings are that the dismissal is unjustified. I could illustrate this with endless incidents. Two will suffice.

A railroad company recently found that it was operating at a loss and tried to cut down its forces, notifying fifty men, fifteen days in advance, that their services would no longer be needed. The workers refused to accept the notification and appealed to the federal labor inspector for reinstatement.

He ruled that the company had to prove that it was losing money in order to justify the discharge of the men. The company weakened sufficiently to furnish ample proof, which the inspector did not consider sufficient.

In consequence he ordered the men to be reinstated or to get three months' pay.
 (Continued on Page 233)



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(Continued from Page 230)

Another episode, not without its element of humor, occurred with an oil company at Tampico. As is the custom in this vicinity, where adequate police protection is lacking, the terminals and camps are under private armed guards. At the terminal in question a certain night watchman was provided with a revolver with which to protect himself and the property. He went to sleep so soundly that a thief was able to penetrate the place, steal some valuable materials, and even get away with the pistol of the somnolent guard.

The man was discharged the next day. At once he appealed to the local Board of Conciliation and Arbitration on the ground that his dismissal was unjustified! The board upheld him, making the usual demand that he receive three months' pay. The company decided that any appeal to the courts would be unfavorable, so it compromised by giving the watchman two months' wages.

Dominating this regulation is Luis Morones, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor in the Calles cabinet. After the president himself, he is the strongest and most influential man in the government.

Before you get a close-up of the man, it may be well to know something about his past. He was born in the state of Hidalgo and his first employment was as meter reader for the Mexico City Light and Power Company. Later he became a wire worker.

With the Madero revolution, which began in 1911, Morones became involved in politics. He was a member of the old Liberal Party and a charter member of the House of the World Worker. During the Carranza administration he came to the fore as a labor agitator.

By 1916 Morones had become so powerful as a labor leader that he devoted all his time to organization. He was especially interested in the Syndicate of Electrical Workers. During the strike declared by this union against the Mexican telephone company he was given charge of the plant and operated it for the benefit of the workers.

In 1920 he made a tour of Europe with Clemente Idar, an organizer of the American Federation of Labor. He tried to get into Soviet Russia, but because of his association with Idar the Bolsheviks kept him out. They thought he was a spy for the American labor group. León had a similar experience the following year.

The Calles Doctrine

During the De la Huerta revolt against Obregón, Morones was one of the principal organizers of the army recruited from the ranks of the workers and peasants. Characteristic of his state of mind was his suggestion last year for the reorganization of the Mexican Army, which is at present modeled along French army lines, into an army of workers and peasants such as exists in Russia. His idea was to form a general staff from members of the worker organizations affiliated with the CROM which would have the power to designate all army officers. He also proposed the abolition of courts-martial and presented a scheme to try military offenses before an executive committee composed of radicals. The plan did not materialize, largely because of the opposition of General Amaro, the full-blooded Indian, who is Minister of War and Marine.

Morones ardently supported Calles when he ran for president in 1924, placing all the influence of the Labor Party behind him. In appreciation of this service, and incidentally to link up the support of the radical labor element, Calles made him Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor.

The so-called League of Latin-American Countries has a stout supporter in Morones. Organized to disseminate radical principles throughout Latin America, it parallels the work of the Anti-Imperialistic League of America in some respects, although it is not so violently anti-United States. In Mexico,

the League of Latin-American Countries is known as the Calles Doctrine, because the president is one of its chief sponsors.

We can now see how Morones sizes up face to face. I went to see him at his office at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor. The appointment was fixed for two o'clock, but he kept me waiting an hour. So far as engagements are concerned, he is perhaps the most erratic man in the government. It is no infrequent occurrence for him to call conferences at midnight or at three o'clock in the morning. His staff therefore maintains a twenty-four-hour shift.

Morones speaks only Spanish. I therefore had to converse with him through an interpreter. He is stout, unctuous, and smooth of face and speech. He looks for all the world like a Latin Buddha. As a salesman, he would undoubtedly be a success. He rattles off speech with the rapidity of a machine gun in action.

Morones' Three Objectives

The minister was smartly turned out in a well-tailored morning coat, and might have passed anywhere for a prosperous Latin-American banker.

Without any preliminaries, we launched into the interview. My first question was, "Are you a Bolshevik?"

His answer was: "The Russians kept me out because they thought I was anti-Bolshevik. Now I am abused for being one. My political motto, in a word, is frankness. The new labor law aims at frank relations. It is not destructive, but protective of all interests involved."

When I said that it was regarded as too drastic, he retorted: "On the contrary. It is based on our constitution. The employer can always resort to arbitration. What Mexican labor is doing today is nothing more or less than what the American Federation of Labor is doing in your country. Samuel Gompers was my good friend. We had many friendly differences, but they were never bitter."

"What about the CROM?" I now asked. Morones made this reply: "Contrary to the general belief, the CROM is not my creation. It is the product of many minds. It is not based upon the American Federation of Labor or any other similar body. The CROM is an institution to meet national needs and to fix the responsibilities of labor leaders. It is fraternal, beneficial and constructive. The CROM is really part of the Calles national uplift program. It does for the worker what the agrarian laws do for the farmer."

My next query was, "What is the future of the Mexican proletariat?"

"We have three objectives," responded the minister. "The first is to solve economic problems, the second is to work out an educational program, the third is to improve the standard of living. When we achieve these three things, the Mexican worker will be on a par with his comrades elsewhere."

Since Morones is charged with the enforcement of the petroleum law, I asked him why such bitter antagonism existed against American capital, especially in view of the fact that alien money has built up the country.

He said: "There is no hostility toward foreign capital. The trouble has been that financially and politically the alien has laid too much emphasis on national interests. Every controversy that comes up is made an issue between governments. The dollar has and will have the same guaranty of security in Mexico as Mexican capital so long as it remains within the law. We shall always welcome capital that comes with good intentions. The difficulty is that capital is never satisfied and this leads to all the confusion."

At the moment Morones is more strongly intrenched than ever before, and for this reason: For two years a violent feud existed between him and Alberto J. Pani, the former Minister of Finance. Pani was the only conservative member of the government and urged restraint. This angered



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Morones and he labored hard to eliminate him from the national councils. Early in February Pani resigned to resume his old post as minister to France.

It means that henceforth Morones and the radical wing will have full sweep for their ambitions.

In the last analysis, you find that with Morones, as with all the other extremist members of the government, from Calles down, there is the same suave evasion of the essential issues.

Listen to their platitudes about uplift and justice and you would imagine that they were a sorely abused lot, and thoroughly misunderstood.

The Mexican Government believes that peremptory legislation is the key to the uplift of the worker class. It is in line with the policy of attempting to advance the peon by forcing land upon him. All sight is lost of the fact that the employer must be afforded some kind of run for his money and effort. Everywhere the government and the worker seek autocratic control without regard for private property rights. It is merely one phase of a larger radicalism that points the way to ultimate economic and political disaster.

Editor's Note—This is the sixth of a series of articles by Mr. Marcossion dealing with Mexico. The next and last will be devoted to the future.

Getting On in the World

On Being a Reporter

I BEGAN as a reporter with a serious handicap. I was not a mixer. It was in a town of something more than twenty thousand people and I constituted the whole local staff. The other paper had two reporters. It was a brisk, growing town with plenty of factories and a large foreign element. To get word of everything that happened a reporter had always needed a network of friends in all parts of town. He had to be on affable, back-slapping terms with policemen, hotel clerks, barbers, bartenders, town sports, station agents. I was fresh from high school, a gangling, bookish specimen, so diffident that I dreaded speaking to strangers. I was quite incapable of establishing any degree of camaraderie with the men about town. To overcome my drawbacks, I had to devise my own system.

Each afternoon, when the rush of getting the paper to press was over, I would make up a list of men who were not regarded ordinarily as news sources—a few small merchants, a minister or two, some school-teachers, some of the more obscure aldermen, a factory foreman or two—and would go around to see them. None of these people were likely to have any news for me on their own, except perhaps some personals, so I would go over in my mind, in advance, what interests they had and would have a list of specific questions to ask. What had been heard from the choir singer who had gone to Philadelphia to study? What word had been received by the group of local Armenians who had subscribed the money to bring out some victims of the last massacre? Why had the price of sugar gone up? Had the committee decided on the plans for the new tower on the First Baptist Church? What support had the petitions for the paving of certain residential streets received? How were the Oriental students at night school doing? Everyone I saw, more or less, would have something interesting to tell when approached on this basis. I found that behind the casual daily happenings—the fires, the accidents, the deaths and weddings—there was a great mass of news which had to do with the continuous activities of the town and which had always been neglected. And it was good stuff. I began to get a great variety of local news, more than the paper had ever had before. Although much of it appeared to be trivial, it had real circulation value. It brought names into the paper which had never figured in type before. That, to my notion, is the primary basis of small-town circulation—names, names, names.

Applying the same principle of preparedness to my cultivation of the usual news sources, it gradually solved my difficulties there. I could not drop into Bill Finlayson's cigar store and chat casually with the group that gathered there every evening—the sergeant of police, the manager of the local baseball team, the ticket agent and the chairman of the Board of Works—and pick up items in the free and easy way of my competitors. But I could seek out each one of the group separately with a list of questions ready, and more often than not

I extracted stories that the other paper did not get. I suppose I was what might be termed a synthetic reporter. But I am fully convinced my system is the only one for the small-town reporter who has the whole life of the community to reflect. Few people have any conception of what constitutes news and it is useless to approach them with, "What news have you for me?" You must have definite questions to fire.

After I graduated to larger papers I continued to work along the same lines. I covered city hall for a big afternoon daily and night police for a morning paper and found my method worked out equally well in the wider fields. A new element entered here. Almost anything can occur in a large city. Part of my preliminary work now consisted of figuring out things that might have happened, and asking about it. It was surprising how often stories would be brought to light. One of the best exclusive yarns I ever secured came as a result of saying to a police captain: "Every kind of crime has been tried in this district of yours recently but blackmail. Isn't it time you had something of the sort?" Something of the sort had occurred a few days before, but had not gone down on the police blotter. He gave me enough of a lead to make the uncovering of the story a simple matter.

It came home to me early that behind most news there is another and perhaps greater story waiting for the careful and resourceful fact prober. Time and again, after printing the surface facts about some happening, I would learn in some belated and offhand manner that back of it there had been a sequence of events much more dramatic and interesting. The night watchman, whose legs had been cut off in a level-crossing accident, had been on his way to the plow works to look for a more remunerative job because his wife had presented him with twins. It was mortifying to find that the real thing so often was completely overlooked, and I fell into the custom of looking always for the story behind the story. I believed firmly—I still do—that it was there in every case if I could only find the clew. It was a case of scouting around the outskirts of the incident and directing questions as to motive, cause and effect. Often enough it was waste effort and no amount of cross-examination would elicit anything to add to the main happening. But the story behind the story showed itself frequently enough to more than justify my failures. The ideal reporter would get it every time.

Early I discovered that a notebook was a thing to be used sparingly. You can't keep tongues wagging freely if you start to jot down what they are saying. It becomes necessary, therefore, to cultivate a very special kind of memory. I trained mine on a system of my own. Starting out in the mornings, I would take two sheets of copy paper, fold them over twice and put them in a coat pocket. I never produced them when talking to anyone unless it was necessary to make a note of names or addresses. I would always say, "I must get this accurately" before producing the paper and I

(Continued on Page 238)