

Where Do the Reds Come From?

Chiefly Imported, and so Are Their Red Theories

By W. L. WHITTLESEY



Under the Smith-Burnett Act of 1917 we can now keep out undesirable aliens, or ship back others who prove undesirable.

LINCOLN said that the losers in a law suit were always entitled to meet at the village store and cuss out the court, the jury and the verdict until they felt better. That is human nature. Every man has a right to try to improve the world he sees about him, as well as to enjoy it. That is the part of honest criticism. No American, however great, was ever elected to an office that amounted to anything but what a great many people opposed him and said his success was all wrong. That is citizenship and politics.

Unlike the citizen, the Red does not criticize the United States. He lies about it. He wants not to improve the existing order, but to overthrow it. His agitation is not based on love for our country, but upon supine adherence to false principles which in his mind are superior to those of which the fabric of the United States is made. The Red creed is not to have the people rule, but to have the Red gang rule the people. Lacking force and courage to seize authority by violence these people must persuade others who are susceptible to their suggestions to let them sneak it. Then they can turn around and run things with a high hand.

The first plank of the universal Red platform is to poison the minds of upholders of the law, including the police and military forces, to such an extent that they will not maintain order under the government which has been duly elected by the majority of the people. Then, elected officials can be thrown out, and the bosses of "the proletariat," as all the workers together are called by the soap-box orators, can seize power and distribute the spoils as they see fit.

*

Who are some of these Reds, anyhow? On December 18, last, Federal Judge John C. Pollock, at Kansas City, sentenced twenty-six of them to terms in the federal penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth varying from three to nine years. The jury had found these men guilty of conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States, of urging men not to register for the draft and not to enlist in the army and navy, of sabotage in working to cut down the high speed production of food and fuel upon which our success in the war depended. In plain terms, their proven crime was treason to the United States. One might have had some respect for them if they had taken up guns and gone out to fight for what they said they believed, but they worked only in the dark.

Where Do the Reds Come From?

If you noticed the names of these anarchists you were doubtless struck by the fact that ten of them, Anderson, Boyd, Barr, Drew, Eastman, Forbes, Hiscock, Higgins, Patton and Poe are just as American-sounding, U. S. A. names as that of the judge or those of any of the the jury. Some four or five others are doubtful, but their bearers may also be of American origin. That is one lot, but when the government started the new year right by rounding up 4,608 Reds, the published names of 201 of them, held at Ellis Island for deportation, began with Abramowitz and Anikowich and continued through Goeffez and Pfroffer to Vrzosky, Zaslowsky and Zaytzaff. Three of the 201 might possibly have been Americans, in name only, of course. If these are sample batches of our Reds, where did they come from and what condition of society are they a product of?

A LONG in the early eighties, the builders took to launching passenger steamships with large steerage space. It paid the ticket agents to fill that space, both going and coming. So, for one reason and another, the big new boats brought over whole villages of aliens, almost as units, from southern and central Europe. If these people scattered out, the results were not so bad—were usually good, in fact. The writer of this article was raised in Oregon among Americans from Ohio, New England, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Baltic countries, the Rhineland, France, England, Finland and Missouri! We all played ball together and got along. But if a man, not possessed of the pioneer spirit, can talk only a foreign tongue, he usually has to stick with those who can talk the same language; he must have a boss who can give orders in his own tongue. So these later comers made settlements by themselves on the prairie farmlands from Indiana to Nebraska and North Dakota, or crowded into their own sections of the big cities mill towns, packing towns, mining camps, and the like. They transplanted their habits of living from European villages, and did not care much for such American institutions as ballots, bath tubs, elections, and plumbing. Americans would not dwell among them and did not like to work with them, so the immigrant remained a stranger in the land of his new hope. They read the news only in their own language and so never got away from the errors, the meanness and the shortcomings of their former surroundings. What chance had they to know America or to become Americans?

FURTHERMORE, a late arrival is easy picking, and these people got a raw deal in far too many cases, often at the hands of sharpers and gold-brick experts of their own races. They paid high prices and got low wages; they were overworked and not promoted; they were skinned by cheating land companies, by shady banks and slick promoters of every sort.

That treatment makes men bitter. They keep even more to themselves and hesitate to take out citizenship papers. Since they do not vote, do not take a hand

Where Do the Reds Come From?



Two hundred of the 10,000 alleged New England Reds, including two women, arrested in the nationwide raid, went to the jail of Deer Harbor, Boston, where there are no soap-boxes.



in the work of government, our government, which must also be theirs, remains strange to them. Any demagogue can lie about it and they will believe him if only he lies dramatically enough. We got some of the results in the Haymarket bomb murder in Chicago in 1885 and in the riots that went with the great railroad strikes of '93. The fellow who shot President McKinley at Buffalo in 1901 was of foreign blood.

And the foreigners, believing, or pretending to believe, that our form of government is as repressive and oppressive as any of the old systems in central Europe, urge these crazy Bolshevist schemes of class war, class robbery, and class slavery. The voters of the United States can change the administration at any election. Nobody can prevent the election, and nobody can stop the change. Soviet Russia can no more shake off Lenin than a patient can shake off a cancer. But the new settlers do not, and often will not, see that. They make a creed of their bitterness and ignorance and insist on believing it in the face of all the facts. Some Americans are foolish enough to chime in, as did Anderson, Forbes and others of the group Judge Pollock sentenced at Kansas City.

The fact is that immigration came faster than we could handle it and work it into good citizenship. Almost anyone could enter this country at will unless absolutely loathsome from disease or unless under the cloud of a notorious criminal record. The politicians were still talking about our country as a refuge for the oppressed and did not, or would not, see that we were dotting our continent with little non-American communities where poverty, ignorance and wrong were just so much raw dynamite kicking around under the feet of any noisy demagogue who could talk the immigrants' dialect. That criminal carelessness must stop.

We learned something from all these troubles, and Roosevelt did a good deal during his administration as President to clean up the immigration problem. But it took the war to bring the whole matter into its true importance in the public mind. The war practically cut off immigration, put a high scarcity value on the sorts of work the newcomers were likely to do, and increased enormously the

Where Do the Reds Come From?

chances the criminal alien had for hurting the rest of us. Not that that hurt really amounts to much; it does not. Fifteen hundred people are killed and four thousand injured every year at railroad-crossing accidents, mostly by the carelessness of fool drivers of automobiles. The United States spends about a half-million dollars every day on preventable fires. The aliens, anarchists, lunatics and all do no such harm as that to life and property. But they do enough to make it worth while stopping it. The Smith-Burnett act of 1917 goes a long way in the right direction. We can now keep out the bad ones; or ship them back if they prove bad after being here for a good while. We are now equipped to reject nearly ten per cent of the arrivals if they deserve it, instead of a shade over two per cent, as it used to be. We can punish steamship companies and others if they try to make money by running undesirables into this country.

WE need better teamwork on this job with the new authorities in Europe, and that is hard to get when governments over there are as shaky and changeable as they are now. Congress is not disposed to spend enough money enforcing the new immigration laws and must be made to see the light more clearly. We ought to be able to check up better on the moves and activities of aliens who get in America for some shady purpose of their own and do not become citizens in the length of time required for naturalization.

The old transport *Buford* sailed the other day as a sort of Red Noah's Ark with a whole menagerie of human misfits on board, nearly all bound for Russia. Some of them seem to have been sent here recently to spread insidious creeds of Lenine and Trotzky. Others had been living in our country twenty or thirty years (a good part of it in jail) and apparently had never dreamed of becoming Americans. Such people should never have been admitted.

Get this straight for it is the nub of the whole problem. Very few immigrants can get into our country unless they come through the big seaports. Put none but true Americans on guard there. Make sure that the newcomer is right before we let him in; prevention is cheaper than cure. If he wants to land, he should be willing to say why, and prove it, first by showing in enough detail his record in the old country; second, by reporting from time to time what he is up to in our country and, third, by becoming as soon as possible an active citizen of the United States, as the desirable aliens are always eager to do.

Certain countries where anarchy and lunacy are the fashion must be quarantined against. We have no room for imported criminals, no matter whether exiled by their home governments or sent here as Red-gospelers to preach rebellion and bloodshed among the ignorant of their own race who have preceded them. All these little Bohemias, Slovakias, Hungaries and Russias, so-called, must be annexed to the United States and their members absorbed into our free nation as citizens.

Where Do the Reds Come From?

FINALLY, it takes time and costs money to train a worker. If he wants to come to our great new country and bear a hand in building and developing it, we want him. Hardship may make out of a man something of a Lincoln or it may make out of him something of a criminal, depending upon his innate soundness of mind, sense of justice and fair play and strength of purpose. Our country is big enough and powerful enough to take a bit of a chance on the immigrant, if, in the long run, it will benefit the average American to do so. Moreover, we can turn that chance into almost a sure thing if we but suppress all fanatic European propaganda destined to breed class hatred and class war, by speeding up the melting pot and by steering the new-comers to the places where they can thrive best and where their talents will count for the most.

No Reds should be made here; no Reds need apply here; but we will have a square deal for all foreigners who are here. In immigration, as in every other national matter, eternal vigilance is the price that must be paid for liberty, just as it was in the days of Patrick Henry.

The **AMERICAN**
LEGION *Weekly*