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The militia: Friend or foe of liberty?

Walter Wilson

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THE MILITIA

FRIEND OR FOE OF LIBERTY?

by

WALTER WILSON

author of
Forced Labor in the United States

303 Fourth Avenue
New York City
1935
The following persons have read this pamphlet and are in sympathy with the protest against the misuse of troops during strikes.

Harry Elmer Barnes
Elmer Brown
Louis F. Budenz
Major-General Smedley D. Butler (retired)
Anna Damon
Robert W. Dunn
Mary Fox
Francis J. Gorman
Julius Hochman
John Haynes Holmes
Clarence Irwin
U.S. Representative Vito Marcantonio
U.S. Representative Maury Maverick, Military Affairs Committee
Francis J. McConnell
Lucille B. Milner
U.S. Representative Caroline O’Day
Frank L. Palmer
Paul Porter
John Nevin Sayre
Upton Sinclair
Mark Starr
Norman Thomas

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Composed, printed and bound by union labor in the U.S.A.
The Militia—Friend or Foe of Liberty?

"There is a growing feeling of resentment against American workmen—wearing the uniform of the National Guard—shooting down other American workmen striking for a fairer division of the profits their energy created."—Major-General Smedley D. Butler (retired), U. S. Marine Corps.

Many American Federation of Labor unions, including State Federations, have passed resolutions demanding that the government cease acting for the employers to drive workers back to their toil when they go on strike for a living wage. Many liberal and radical organizations have come out against present use of troops in labor-capital disputes. At the present time there is talk about a farmer-labor party and everyone interested in such a party agrees that one of its most important planks must be a demand to outlaw the use of the National Guard to break strikes.

Labor students, employers and strikebreaking agencies are agreed that the immediate future will see the longest picket lines of workers, farmers and the unemployed that this country has ever seen, with strikes which for size and militancy may even dwarf those of 1877, the 1890’s, 1919 and 1934.

What will be the role of the National Guard, formerly known as the State Militia, in the strikes and demonstrations which lie ahead? Unless labor mobilizes its full strength and utilizes every ally that it can find to compel the government to adopt a hands-off policy, it can safely be predicted that the armed forces of the nation will openly side with the employing class—as they have done in other years of the depression—and gas, bayonet and put into concentration camps the men, women and children who go out on picket lines. For the past two or three years the National Guard has jumped into prominence as labor’s public enemy No. 1. It has even nosed out the feared and hated injunction evil.
National Guard in Action Against Strikers, 1934-1935

The Guard has already been called out against strikers in dozens of instances this year. The latest case was that of the general strike at Terre Haute, Indiana (the home town of Eugene V. Debs). The workers in the Columbian Enameling & Stamping Company (located just outside the city limits in order to avoid taxation!) went out on strike for a minimum wage of $20 a week. The company promptly imported a squad of 58 gunmen from Chicago to break the strike by protecting scabs. At this, 48 labor unions in Terre Haute declared a "labor holiday," as they call a general sympathy strike. The local business men and officials countered this move by asking Governor Paul V. McNutt (who while National Commander of the American Legion made preparedness speeches with material furnished him by W. B. Shearer, wrecker of the Geneva Disarmament Conference) to send in the National Guard to preserve "law and order." Over a thousand soldiers were sent in and during the first week they were there over 200 strikers and sympathizers were arrested charged with violating "martial law" regulations. And during the first two days gases and rifle butts were generously used on four different picket lines and demonstrations of labor. One woman's hands were horribly cut with a bayonet held by a guardsman. (Later we shall point out that the National Guard instructions from the U. S. War Department are to stick women just as quickly as men.)

General Smedley D. Butler recently attacked the National Guard for maintaining a double standard of "law and order" for workers and for employers. Its standard was certainly double in Terre Haute. The New York Post says that the "Guardsmen enforced martial law regulations against assemblage by breaking up groups of strikers and sympathizers." The United Press reported that, "The soldiers closed eleven taverns in the area around the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Co. plant, charging they were gathering places for strikers." Thomas N. Taylor, American Federation of Labor organizer in Terre Haute, said that a radio speech he made in which he criticized city officials was censored by
Major Earl E. Weimar of the National Guard. Professor J. Raymond Shannon, of the Psychology Department of the Indiana State College for Teachers and W. O. David, a lecturer, were arrested by the Guardsmen when they stood their ground "as citizens and taxpayers." The provost marshal declared he would keep them in custody as long as martial law prevailed. General D. Wray Deprez gave away the real "law and order" purpose of the soldiers when he said: "The guardsmen will patrol the entire city to insure that those who wish to work may do so." And according to sworn affidavits Warren Thomas, a striker, was arrested and locked up in the mill "till he was willing to return to work." It is claimed that other employers of labor in Terre Haute took advantage of the presence of the troops to "fire all union help." The strike was "settled" within a few days after the arrival of the troops. "Arbitration" under the bayonet's point!

The fir lumber industry of the Northwest is now witnessing the most serious strike tie-up since 1917 and 1918 when the I.W.W. called big walkouts. The demands of the strikers include wage increases, union recognition and abolition of the company union, the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (which was organized, incidentally, by the Regular Army under Colonel Brice P. Disque, a frank union-hater.) Shortly after the current lumber workers' strike began the Governors of Oregon and Washington offered to call out the National Guard, in the words of a N.E.A. correspondent "to protect any mill that wants to operate with willing workers." Since then this offer has been taken advantage of by the employers. Troops have been out for several weeks in Oregon, Washington and northern California. What has been the function of these soldiers? The Associated Press reported on June 26 that "National Guardsmen, equipped with tear gas and bayonets" patrol Tacoma, Washington, streets, "as operators advertise for more workers. Approximately 700 men have gone to work in reopened Tacoma mills, all operating under protection of troops and State policemen." Several thousand soldiers are patrolling the lumber centers of the Northwest at this writing, preventing picket lines, mass meetings and even union meetings in private halls, although all other
life in the community goes on as usual. Martial law is for the workers only.

But perhaps the most ruthless instance of National Guard strike-breaking to occur thus far this year happened in Omaha, Nebraska, in connection with a street-car strike there. Following an attack by local police officers on a picket line, two strike sympathizers were killed and several score wounded. The troops were sent in by Governor R. L. Cochran. Immediately all civil government, as far as the workers were concerned, was suspended. The Governor, assuming powers that even Herr Hitler would not dare ask for, told General H. J. Paul of the National Guard, "Handle this in your own way." The Governor also announced that, "The strike is going to be settled immediately. If the disputing parties can't agree on a third member of an arbitration board, I'll name one myself. *And the troops will see that the board's decision is enforced.*"

(W.W. ital.) This is compulsory arbitration (always a sign of fascism) with a vengeance. Backed by the bayonet such "arbitration" is coercion. All union organizers were ordered out of town. No "outsiders" were allowed to remain. As we have seen in Terre Haute the "outsiders" were strikebreakers but they were allowed to stay by the National Guard! The troops repeatedly broke up picket lines and mass meetings of the strikers. The General warned the pickets that he would use real war gas against them and not merely tear gas. Women and children were ordered to quit the "riot zone"—that is, they were told not to picket. One hundred guardsmen at no expense to the operators were sent to replace 100 privately-paid guards around car barns. General Paul revealed his personal bias when he declared: "I don't mind a good fight, but I hate to see cowards line up behind women and children and throw brickbats from behind them." This was obviously an unfair dig at the strikers. What better evidence of a bully than a threat to bayonet and use real war gas on women and children unless they remained away from the sides of their men folks on the picket line, seeking only a living wage?

There have been hundreds of preliminary strike struggles thus far in 1935. Early this year members of the Full Fashioned Hosiery
Workers Union struck in Georgia and Tennessee. In Georgia the commander of the troops, General Pope, not only used the soldiers to break the strike but he went out of his way to openly advise the employers to go out and get strong-arm men to protect the scabs in their "God-given right to work." Of this action Heywood Broun said: "When a National Guard officer goes to the length of advising operators to bring in strikebreakers it can hardly be said that the militia, which should belong to the State as a whole, is playing a neutral role." It was revealed in connection with the Georgia strike that Governor Eugene Talmadge had a permanent fund set aside for the purpose of breaking strikes. He also came out with a statement that the martial law pronouncements he made during textile strikes in 1934 were still in effect. In fact he let it be known that wherever a National Guardsman showed himself, there martial law prevailed for workers.

This is only a partial list of instances where the National Guard has been used against workers in 1935. Let us cite one more instance. World War veterans are found in every picket line thrown out by workers and farmers. It is somewhat ironical to find these "heroes" of 1917 and 1918 being used as targets for gas bombs and dummies for bayonet practice. Recently several companies of guardsmen were used to help "settle" a walk-out of 425 World War veterans who struck while working on a F.E.R.A. road building at Key West, Florida. Governor Sholtz, who ordered out the soldiers against the veterans, is an ex-army officer and he has been a prominent leader in the American Legion.

But impressive as the 1935 record is it has to grow considerably to compare with that of 1934 when over 3,000,000 workers were on picket lines, the largest number in any single year in the history of the country with the exception of 1919 when around 5,000,000 were out. The greatest peace-time army, completely equipped with the latest death-dealing instruments, ever to march on American soil moved against these 3,000,000 workmen. Over 40,000 National Guardsmen in 19 states, according to figures supplied by the Labor Research Association, saw action in 22 big strikes and many minor ones. All over the country—in Toledo, Minneapolis, Koehler,
San Francisco, Macon, Pawtucket and many other centers—grim, khaki-clad figures with loaded, bayoneted rifles, machine guns, war gases...patrolled the highways and streets. That this was not intended as merely a display or bluff can be seen from the long casualty list—almost always involving workers—which included several score killed and hundreds wounded. Thousands were arrested, often without charges, under cover of martial law. *Habeas Corpus* was suspended in several instances. In Georgia huge concentration camps, a la Hitler, were set up and hundreds of men, women and children herded into them.

Thus we see that in 1934 and 1935 the National Guard openly functioned as a strikebreaking agency. It will continue to operate against the organized labor and farm movements and against the unemployed until these victims of military tyranny rise up and put a stop to the whole business.

**Origin and Traditions of the Militia**

Is the National Guard system today consistent with the ideas of the founding fathers? How did the militia system originate and why? In order to get at the views of the revolutionists of 1776 on this important subject one can hardly fail to study the period immediately following the establishment of independence. The American common people have always been a stiff-necked and perverse people to the militarists. If anything is an American tradition it is that military tyranny must not be. All the famous documents in the early period, including the Virginia Bill of Rights and others, have indicated the general feeling in that period against militarism.

Perhaps this attitude first arose because of the habit of King George in quartering his troops on the Americans and in using those troops to keep the people from opposing tyrants and tyranny. As one of their defenses against militarism in the early years of the republic there was evolved a citizen-soldiery called the militia which was to serve as a bulwark against local, state and federal tyranny. It was, of course, completely independent of the national government.

But even during those early days the militia was sometimes used
to suppress discontented citizens. Perhaps it would be more nearly
correct to say that the authorities attempted to use the militia for
such purposes. At any rate there are many cases when the militia-
men refused to turn out against their fellow-men. In 1783 the
first Bonus Army march in our history occurred, when 300 members
of the Pennsylvania Line (veterans of the Revolution) revolted,
because of long overdue back pay, and captured Philadelphia, where
Congress was then sitting. The members of Congress, in terror,
demanded that Pennsylvania call out its militia but the militiamen
openly refused to take up arms against the veterans and warned
the authorities if called out they would side with the rebels. Con-
gress escaped to Princeton, N. J., and Washington had to send 1,500
of his regulars from West Point to cope with the situation. Shortly
after this the North Carolina militia refused to march for their
governor to help him crush the lusty young State of Franklin (now
Tennessee.) In 1786 Shay’s Rebellion occurred in Massachusetts.
Veterans of the war, members of the militia and farmers made up
the insurgent movement. The revolt was finally crushed with
volunteer troops which, according to historians, were paid and
outfitted by wealthy citizens of Boston. In 1794, the militia
in western Pennsylvania and two counties of western Virginia re-
sisted Hamilton’s excise tax (this sort of tax had been a grievance
against the Red Coats) in what is now known as the Whiskey Re-
bellion. Whole companies of militia in and around Philadelphia
and other sections of Pennsylvania, refused to take up arms to war
on the “Whiskey Boys.” The forces which Alexander Hamilton,
Secretary of Treasury, finally led into the western country—long
after the insurgents had laid aside their arms on the government’s
promise of amnesty and redress—were made up in the main of
well-to-do volunteers and mercenaries, recruited by generous boun-
ties. Scharf and Westcott in their history of Philadelphia say that
all the members of the Philadelphia volunteers were Federalists,
the aristocrats of the day.

Other cases in early American history of the independence of
the militia of both state and federal control are furnished by the
War of 1812. In several instances serious mutinies occurred when
the American armies were ordered to invade Canada. They considered that they had been called out to defend their own, not to attack another country. They were successful in challenging the authority of the President of the United States to make them act contrary to their conscience. Even as late as the Spanish-American War we find militia units, for one reason or another, voting not to serve in the war—and they did not serve. And during early labor disputes in this country militiamen often refused to march out against their fellow workers.

The point is that the militiamen of those early days decided for themselves on the merits of each so-called “law and order” emergency. If they wanted to they participated in helping the government to put down the discontented citizens. Usually, however, they decided that when the discontented got so numerous that civil authorities could not cope with them, that there must be something rotten somewhere and that the government should remedy the grievances of the people involved.

This is particularly significant today—no efforts were ever made to punish the militiamen who refused to respond to orders to march against their fellow citizens. People were so touchy about liberty in those days. Today such disobedience would mean court-martial and long imprisonment or conceivably even execution.

We have come a long way from these early American traditions and today reactionaries are advocating an even more drastic departure. The employers expect the National Guard to always serve their interests and are trying to take precautions to ham-string workers and farmers who seek to prevent such a misuse of the armed forces of the country. Such employers and their puppets, the “Professional Patriots,” and certain politicians in Congress are now trying to railroad through the Tydings-McCormack Military Disobedience Bill which has already passed in the Senate and has been favorably reported by the House Military Affairs Committee. Of this proposed law the Nation says editorially: “It would become criminal merely to object to the presence of troops in a city where there was an industrial conflict. The aim of the bill is better understood, too, in knowing that it is sponsored chiefly by chambers of
commerce...by their agents in Washington, and by the business men's lobby advising the President.” Congressman Marcantonio of New York, says: “The bill is very dangerous because it can and will be used to break up strikes.” Congressman Maverick of Texas, says: “It sets up something we have never had in peace time in the United States, a military censorship over civilians.” Professor Charles A. Beard, the famous historian, calls it “a flagrant invasion of civil rights guaranteed under the Constitution.” Francis J. Gorman of the United Textile Workers Union (A. F. of L.), says the bill would give the forces of reaction “still more power to persecute union members and organizers.”

Under such a law as this it would be a penal offense for anyone, no matter what the provocation, to advise members of the National Guard not to shoot down their fellow workers—and the courts would be likely to hold that almost any union literature contained such advice. It would prevent even the slightest criticism of the army and navy. Such a law would permit the raiding of private homes to seek out evidence. Certainly it is one of the most autocratic proposals ever made in the history of the American nation, being more tyrannical than even the infamous “Alien and Sedition laws” which Thomas Jefferson so roundly condemned. Fortunately liberal and labor organizations are mobilizing wide public sentiment against the Tydings-McCormack Bill.

Another evidence that the employers expect to use the National Guard to break strikes in 1935 and 1936 is seen from a law which was quietly passed and signed by the President a few weeks ago. According to a well-known Washington newspaper woman this law empowers

“...the President to march vigilantes and business men, in the uniform of National Guard officers, across state lines to break strikes. This law authorizes the addition of an unlimited number of new junior officers of the National Guard. They may be sworn in by any Guard officer competent to recruit guardsmen. Then, when vigilantes and business men have been transformed into National Guard officers, the President may declare an 'emergency' which warrants ordering them across
state borders. This means that should native rank and file of the Guard prove unable or unwilling to break a strike, new Guard officers from another state could be called in to do the job."

_The Present “Militia” Is Federal, Not Local_

During the Constitutional Convention in 1787 Alexander Hamilton made a four-hour speech giving his ideas of the best kind of constitution. Among his autocratic proposals—which he was frank to admit were too drastic for the common people to accept—was a militia system controlled by the federal government. That wish by the man who called the common people a “great beast” has been the wish of militarists and autocrats who have since followed him on the American scene. Today the militarists have their desire. The “state militia” is now a part of the United States Army. The federal government furnishes all the equipment—uniforms, tents, field kitchens, rifles, machine guns, ammunition, war gases... The National Guard Bureau, which is controlled directly by the War Department, is the supreme head of the National Guard forces of all states. Five hundred regular army officers are assigned to the Guard as instructors, besides several hundred non-commissioned officers used for the same purpose; both the Regulars and the Guardsmen are trained together in the same camps (at the time this goes to press over 30,000 men from both arms of the service are training together in New York State, significantly near New York City where strike trouble is feared on a large scale). Guardsmen wear uniforms with the insignia “U.S.” on them; their trucks and guns bear the letters “U.S.”; their mounts are branded “U.S.”; the federal authorities set the professional, moral and physical standards for officers in the Guard, which correspond to the letter with those for the Regular Army. In case of war or any serious emergency the Guard can be called into federal service (under the “Dick Law” and various National Defense Acts and amendments) and will be alongside the Regular Army from the first start of hostilities. Court martial awaits the guardsmen who fail to respond to the call. For guardsmen are forced to take a dual oath—to the state and also the federal government. In short the National Guard is what its
name implies, a Federal service, and as such it bears not the slightest resemblance to the early state or local militia systems developed in America.

The authorities persist in the fiction of calling the system a state militia system only because they think through this fiction the people are less apt to revolt against it if they consider it their own local system of citizen-soldiery.

*The National Guard Stands Ready for Future "Emergencies"

Major-General George E. Leach, head of the National Guard Bureau (the connecting link between the War Department and the National Guard) recently reported to Secretary of War Den and that the National Guard "has become a force upon which the State and Nation realize that they may safely rely in any emergency." This reminds us that in January, 1934, Assistant Secretary of War, Harry Woodring, in his oft-quoted article in *Liberty* magazine, boasted that the Army, including the National Guard, stood ready for any emergency. The article was appropriately illustrated with pictures showing Guardsmen tossing tear gas among picket lines of workers and farmers. Obviously the "emergencies" he had in mind were strikes and demonstrations.

And just as the troops were ready for strikes in 1934 they are now ready for "emergencies" which are sure to come in 1935 and 1936. The National Guard has a personnel now of 185,000 and under President Roosevelt's careful nursing it is being rapidly increased to 210,000. New and huge appropriations are being made for new equipment. The New York *Herald Tribune* on August 4, 1935, carried this headline: "Haskell Urges City to Erect New Armories . . . Cost Put at $6,000,000." (General Haskell is Commander of the N. Y. National Guard.) The New York *Times* on April 12, of this year, carried this headline: "Asks Funds for Armories. New Jersey Requests $800,000 . . . from Ickes," with which to build and repair armories in New Jersey cities. Big armory building programs have always developed during strike waves in this country. Today the National Guard is better trained than it
has ever been in history. It is also better equipped. In it are represented virtually all branches of the most modern army: infantry, machine gun, field artillery, cavalry, air, tank, chemical, surgeon, engineer, military police, chaplain branches. New equipment of gas masks, airplanes, tanks, light machine guns—material useful in "riots"—is being added in huge quantities.

The National Guard also encourages big employers of labor to load up with "riot" equipment. The Nye Committee investigation revealed that General Leach, writing of E. C. Goss, Lieutenant-Colonel in the Reserve Army Corps and President of the Lake Erie Chemical Company, purveyors of gas and machine guns to the textile operators in 1934 strikes, said that "Goss and his products are the best insurance against social disorder that I know of." He wrote this recommendation on War Department stationery to the head of the National Guard of Wisconsin. Goss told the Senate munitions committee that sales increased from 5 to 10 per cent during the 1934 strikes. Another big corporation which furnishes gas bombs and machine guns to the various industrialists is the Federal Laboratories of Pittsburgh. In the Toledo strike in 1934 sales of one such company amounted to $8,000; in the San Francisco general strike, $30,000; in the Youngstown strike, $28,000; in Pittsburgh, $75,000. A single company had 60 agents in strike centers at one time in 1934 selling "riot equipment." Paul Young, president of the Federal Laboratories, according to testimony before the Nye Committee, said: "The crisis, while it has brought a shortage of funds, has created an acute demand for our products and put us in a preferred class. We must impress all public officials that they must buy our products even though they cannot pay salaries." The head of the National Guard endorses these companies!

Another hostile demonstration of the National Guard against labor like that of 1934 and it is likely that the last reason for calling the National Guard a "state" force will be gone. Once let the people become convinced that the Guard is a federal service, once let them become convinced that it is not their service and it is the same as the Regular Army, once let them be completely convinced that the National Guard can only be used to serve the employers
and then this military system might as well admit publicly what it is and where it stands. The masses will distrust it either way.

Proof in the Record

Is there proof to support labor’s charge of “military tyranny?” What about the record of the National Guard in 1934 and in other years of the great business crisis? Speaking of the textile strike the New York World-Telegram in an editorial, September 14, 1934, admitted: “State troops in the South and the North have tended to protect the mill’s property rights and violate the strikers’ civil rights.” Many of the news stories carried by this paper and others during the textile strike are revealing. On September 17, the World-Telegram carried this headline: “Georgia Arms on War Basis to Open Mills: 4,000 Troops on Duty in State...” The United Press news story which was under the above headlines read in part: “Many textile mill owners determined to reopen strike-closed mills today under National Guard protection... Four thousand militiamen were mustered in Georgia to break the strike” (my italics, W.W.) On September 18 we learn that “Under the protection of troops 25 Georgia mills reopened.” The active spirits among the strikers were eliminated by a simple method: “Guardsmen set up a barbed wire concentration camp at Fort McPherson on the site of a similar barricade where German spy suspects were held during the war. Members of the flying squadrons of union pickets were being arrested and guard commanders said they would be held in the camp for the duration of the strike... About 150 pickets, including 13 women, were imprisoned in the stockade.” Governor Eugene Talmadge asserted that where the National Guard went there martial law automatically prevailed.

The situation in Georgia during the 1934 textile strike wasn’t much different, except for the unique concentration camp, from those which developed in a dozen other states. In all of them the effect of the use of the Guard was to give aid and comfort to the employers and strikebreakers. The news reports sent out admitted this with amazing frankness.
The Regular Army

The Regular Army was not called out in 1934 but there is evidence that it was prepared to back up the National Guard if needed. On September 13, 1934, the Associated Press reported from Washington that "War Department maps today showed between 4,000 and 5,000 federal troops, including infantry, cavalry and artillery stationed within reach of the northern textile strike zone." The same service two days later reported that President Roosevelt "discussed the Rhode Island situation with Secretary of War George H. Dern and Major-General Fox Conner, commander of the First Corps Area, and then all sailed to see the first America's cup race." This talk of federal troops recalls the charges made early in the depression years of labor groups that the United States Army was being sent to strategic points to suppress potential jobless demonstrations. This charge was given dignity in December, 1932, by Senator Connally of Texas. He said that Secretary of War Hurley and Major-General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, had told him that their policy was to concentrate federal troops near the great centers of population in order to be able to handle labor trouble."

Certain conservative labor leaders are understood to have urged an amendment to the Tydings-McCormack Military Disobedience Bill referred to above so that it would prevent criticism of the Regular Army while doing strike police duty but would not prevent criticism of the National Guard. This distinction is not justified by the record. From 1877 to the eviction of the Bonus Army of World War veterans from Washington in 1932 the Federal Army has been used against working class groups. It was so used in dozens of cities during the great railway strikes of 1877; in 1886; in 1892 during the miners' strikes; in 1894 during the railroad strikes; in 1903 in miners' strikes; in Logan, West Virginia in 1921 against miners. General Leonard Wood and his Regulars were severely criticized for acting as strikebreakers in the great steel strike of 1919. Samuel Gompers knew what the role of the Regular Army was in strikes. In his report to the Twelfth Annual Convention of the A. F. of L. held in 1892 at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pa., he said in part: "At the bidding of the mine owners the United States troops
were brought to Coeur D'Alene. . . The commanding general of the United States forces issuing an order that any employer who would operate his mines with union men would not be allowed to continue work. . . .” In his report to the Fourteenth Convention of the A. F. of L. in 1895 Gompers again referred to the use of the Regular Army as a strikebreaking agency: “By order of the President of the United States the federal troops were sent into several states under the plea of preserving the Interstate Commerce uninterrupted, but in truth to overawe the men on strike.” We have already referred to the action of the Regular Army in 1917-1918 in organizing the most hated company union in America, The Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. Certainly the labor movement must oppose the use of the Regular Army in breaking strikes just as vigorously as it opposes such use of the National Guard.

**The National Guard in Action 1929-1933**

All through the depression years the National Guard has been actively engaged in labor disputes and in putting down “rioting” farmers. In 1929 and 1930 a great strike wave was seen in the South, especially among the textile workers. Troops were called out in several states and labor charged that they were openly on the side of the employers at Danville, Gastonia, Marion, Elizabethton and many other strike points. At the latter place, for instance, a leading Tennessee labor official declared that the “use of Guardsmen makes the state a strikebreaking agency and reveals a definite partisan attitude.”

Before Governor Horton called out the troops at Elizabethton his legal advisers told him that the state constitution prevented the direct use of the state troops except in time of rebellion or invasion. So they were called out as “state police.” This clause made it nice for the soldier boys. Instead of receiving guard pay of $30 a month they got from $2.25 to $3 a day, all clear as they did not have to pay for food or bed. The huge Glantzstoff-Bemberg Rayon Company acted as hosts to the troops. The company restaurant was converted into a barracks; meals and refreshments were served at any hour of the day or night; ice cream, soft drinks and cigarettes were furnished by the
company without costs; a radio and piano were also provided. At night there was dancing in the cafeteria. Girls were even provided as dancing partners. There was no reveille or taps. But best of all the company itself paid the guardsmen their wages, though of course the state had to repay this.

In order to get around the state constitution the forces of "law and order" were practically turned over to the big rayon company. Labor protested to Secretary of War Good against the National Guardsmen, armed with U. S. Army rifles and wearing U. S. Army uniforms and using other Federal equipment, being used in this fashion as "policemen." Long after the strike was broken the Secretary of War found that the practice was unlawful and ordered Governor Horton not to let the same thing happen again. But he also wrote to the Governor that it was his opinion that the guardsmen could be used in strike policing without the subterfuge of calling them "policemen." And sure enough in 1933 during a Tennessee coal strike they were used like the Secretary of War suggested. While engaged in their unlawful service in the Elizabethton strike a National Guard officer ordered a strikebreaker to drive an automobile through a crowd of women pickets, one of whom was seriously injured. Obviously "law and order" was not being upheld but no one in authority even suggested that soldiers be sent in to curb the unlawful activities of the National Guard, itself. Nor was any effort ever made to punish the officer or the Governor for criminal acts. The failure to take action in this respect is another in a long list of cases where the forces of the employers and the state have been allowed to violate the law with impunity in labor disputes. This is one of labor's oldest complaints; when were soldiers ever sent in to make employers obey labor laws or to make them reopen their plants after arbitrary lockouts?

In 1932 the troops marched again. This time the action was on the "Western Front" where the farmers developed an effective and highly significant movement in resisting mortgage foreclosures by banks and big insurance companies. There were also strikes of farmers protesting over the low prices for their produce. The movement started in the mid-West but soon spread to other states, includ-
ing Pennsylvania and New York. Not since Shays' and the Whiskey Rebellions had so many soldiers been put into the field against farmers. Tear gas, airplanes and other modern war-making equipment were used to teach them respect for "orderly government."

*World War Veterans Get the Bayonet*

And it was in 1932 that the Federal troops went into action for the first time since President Harding sent them against the West Virginia miners in 1921. General Douglas MacArthur, son-in-law of a Morgan partner, in person led the Army, equipped with gas and tanks, against the Bonus Expeditionary Force. Several of the veterans were wounded and two or three of their babies died from being gassed. Of this great victory for the Regulars the American Civil Liberties Union said: "No single action so strikingly violative of civil rights had been chargeable in recent years to the Federal government." This arbitrary use of military power "marks vividly a change in policy toward petitioners."

Veterans were evidently on the receiving end of some bayonets during the strike of granite workers in Barre, Vermont, in May, 1933, judging from a resolution passed unanimously by the Barre Post No. 10 of the American Legion "for the purpose of informing the people of Vermont and the United States of the abominable acts and conduct of the officers of the National Guard in our city." The veterans charged in their resolution that commanders of the guardsmen ordered tear gas bombs thrown into a crowd of peaceful men, women and children without giving them warning and that immediately afterwards the soldiers charged with "fixed bayonets, cutting, wounding and tearing the clothing of men, women and children indiscriminately." The Legion post demanded that all those responsible be arrested and punished.

Veterans, of course, are in every strike or demonstration by workers’ and farmers’ organizations. During a textile strike in the Pawtucket Valley in 1922, 200 of them formed what they called the "Iron Battalion" of pickets. One of the first strikers killed in the San Francisco general strike of last year was Howard Sperry, a World War vet. And one of the first victims in the Minneapolis
strike last year was Henry Ness, also a veteran. But it is not often that one finds entire posts of the American Legion doing picket duty, as was seen in New York City late in 1934. At least two Manhattan posts were suspended by the reactionary state officials of the Legion for picketing theatres (most of them were members of the A. F. of L. Musicians Union) wearing their uniforms and insignia. The Herald-Tribune had this headline on Sept. 2, 1934: "31 Legionaires Held in Theater Picket Parade . . . Emergency Squad and Six Radio Cars Round Up Veterans . . . Men March in Uniforms Demanding Decent Wages."

We have in the above paragraphs described briefly the use of troops as strikebreaking forces in labor or farmers' strikes in the years of the depression 1929-1933. We have already summarized the use of troops for such purpose in 1934 and 1935. There are hundreds of other cases. The ones cited, however, do give a fairly typical picture of how the National Guard does the bidding of the big employers of labor and farm mortgage holders when strikes occur.

National Guard, 1877 to World War

The use of the National Guard as a strike-breaking agency is not a new grievance with labor, though it has grown more serious in recent years. During the great railroad strikes of 1877, which mark the real beginning of modern labor struggles in the United States, the labor movement was unanimous in its criticism of the national and state military forces for siding with the employers. Labor took this position even though several bodies of militia in different parts of the country, including the famous case of the entire 16th Regiment of Pennsylvania, refused to fire upon strikers or to coerce them in any way. In fact the 16th Regiment exchanged shots with an aristocratic body of militia from Philadelphia and drove the latter from the field. There have been many other instances of fraternization between strikers and the militia since 1877 but not enough to counter-balance the unfriendly acts to which they have been driven by their officers and the government. It was soon after the great 1877 strikes that most of the armories that one sees in the chief cities of the country were built.
The record of the troops during 1892 in the Buffalo switchmen's strike; in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, miners' strike; the Tennessee Coal Creek Rebellion (in which miners and farmers battled 7,000 soldiers for several months) and other strikes caused President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor to make the following report to the 12th Annual Convention of the A. F. of L.:

"It is plainly evident that the militia of our several states are now never utilized except for purposes of ostentatious show or as an element in labor struggles. There is not even a pretense that they should be what they were originally designed for, 'an arming of the people, a citizen soldiery!' 

We must endeavor to bring the militia of our several states to again become the popular military organization of the masses, with the election of the officers by the men; or, failing that, our organizations will be compelled to declare that membership in a labor organization and the militia at one and the same time is inconsistent and incompatible..."

The literature dealing with the organized labor movement in the country during that period and afterwards is filled with similar sentiment. It is significant that the first issue of the *American Federationist*, official organ of the A. F. of L., which was issued in April, 1894, carried a long article on the use of militia as strikebreakers. For a long period after 1892 labor organizations did forbid their members from belonging to the National Guard. Finally, however, several states passed laws making it a criminal offense for anyone to endeavor to prevent any person by threats or otherwise from joining the militia. Wisconsin, for example, passed such a law as late as 1929. At present no labor unions openly forbid their members from belonging to the National Guard. However, the A. F. of L. is on record as being extremely critical of the Guard. Plank No. 22 of its "Labor Reconstruction Program" of February, 1919, attacked the evils of militarism and the evils of the militia and strikebreaking in particular.

*Theory Behind the Practice*

Is it by pure accident that the National Guard sides with the
employing class in labor and farmer struggles? Not at all, for there is a double standard of "law and order." Otherwise occasionally there would be instances of guardsmen being used against lawless employers and their thugs. As has been mentioned, General Smedley D. Butler recently came out with an excellent expose of the double standard of "law and order" enforced by the troops. He slashed into the kind of "law and order" that sent steel-helmeted National Guardsmen into Toledo, along the San Francisco waterfront, and into the mill towns and villages of the South and New England during the 1934 textile strike. "It must be considered just as much a violation of 'law and order'," he declared, "to starve employees and grind down human happiness with unlivable wages as it is to break a mill window. Industrialists hold that it is 'disorderly' and a violation of 'law and order' for the little fellow to protest against any treatment accorded by property." "Because of the double standard," the General points out, "for years the industrialists have depended upon the state militia . . . to break strikes for them. And they've always done it with the plea that 'law and order' must be preserved."

Late in 1931 the National Guard headquarters in Illinois (33rd Division) circulated what was called its "Emergency Plans for Domestic Disturbances." Extracts selected at random from this plan for strike duty are quoted below. "This winter at its many conferences the staff has been considering and studying plans for the suppression of radical disorders," is a prefacing statement to the instructions. "In time of disorder or disaster . . . Chambers of Commerce are of great value to local commanders." Which is supreme, the military or the civil authority? This 100-page book of instructions has the answer. "Officers of troops aiding civil authorities should not permit the latter to indicate how their duties should be performed . . . In case martial law has been declared, the civil authorities have no power whatever. The practice that frequently occurred in the past of civil authorities giving more or less detailed instructions to the troops as to how a particular task will be carried out, in other words, assuming command of the troops to all intents and purposes, will no longer be tolerated."
What Is Martial Law?

This is the kind of language that would sound appropriate coming from the lips of a Hitler or a Mussolini but it sounds badly out of place in a democracy. And according to traditions and the law it has no place in America. Leon Whipple in his excellent study, Civil Liberty in the United States, points out that so-called martial law is a fairly recent phenomenon in this country. “Before about 1892, the military was regarded as an extension of the civil power. They assisted the civil officers and the courts to preserve order and protect life and property.” Martial law did not mean then, “as it has come to mean since, the imprisonment of men by hundreds, a trial by military commissions, suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and a supplanting of the courts. At this time the soldiers had no more right than a chief of police to exercise such powers.”

During the past few years the military commanders have considered that under martial law they are kings. But it is a serious error for the labor movement to concede that these commanders have any legal right to assume such power. In a study prepared by the International Juridical Association in May, 1934, for the American Civil Liberties Union, we find that as commander-in-chief of the National Guard of his state a governor has the right to “determine whether an insurrection, tumult, riot, or other threat to orderly government exists which requires him to order the militia to any given area and to declare martial law.” It has been settled that he can legally order out the troops and declare martial law. But what is martial law? Does the mere declaration of martial law give a National Guard commander the right to suspend constitutional rights of citizens? Certainly not, though commanders have often assumed such powers in arbitrary fashion. Says the Juridical Association study: “When martial law is declared the proper function of the military authority is to aid the civil authorities, not to supplant them. The military should have no more power than police officers to arrest civilians, detain them or suspend any other civil liberties.” And though the governor’s decision to order out the troops and to declare martial law is not reviewable by the courts, “The conduct of the
military authorities in their relation to civilians when martial law exists, is, however, clothed with no such immunity from scrutiny by the courts."

If these lawyers—all of them special students of the law in relation to labor disputes—are correct, then the commanders of the National Guard in almost every strike situation that this country has seen in the past few years have laid themselves open to prosecution for illegal acts. For in almost all of them they have assumed arbitrary powers, suspended civil liberties and have acted generally with the arrogance of potentates. According to both American tradition and law the military forces should merely augment civil authority and not supplant it.

More on Theory and Practice

There should be no bluffing, says the book of instructions for the Illinois troops. "When troops of the Illinois National Guard are ordered on active duty to suppress disorders, under no circumstances will blank ammunition be issued to them. Never fire over the heads of the rioters. The aim should be low, with full-charge ammunition and the battle sight." Soldiers were promised complete immunity for their acts, including the killing of strikers. Special arms and ammunitions recommended were Thompson submachine guns, tear gas, hand and rifle grenades, buckshot shells for sawed-off shotguns . . . When laborites, liberals and others raised a cry of protest at these brutal and frank instructions of how to put down demonstrations of the unemployed and to break up strikes, General Roy D. Keehn, commander of the Illinois National Guard and head of the National Guard Association of the United States, and an endorser of the book of instructions, pointed out that the Illinois plan and in particular the items quoted above "are almost without exception copied from the manual of the War Department or are modified passages from the manual."

And it was true. The manual which Keehn referred to, "A Treatise on Riot Duty for the National Guard," which was prepared by Colonel Henry A. Bellows and issued by authority of the Secretary of War, also makes interesting reading for those who wish to understand the "impartial" stand the Guard takes in labor disputes.

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“Since the troops are on duty only because the police have been unable to handle the situation (this is not always true as there are many instances of troops being sent in over the protests of civil authorities, W.W.) it follows that the military commander should have the final voice . . .” The colonel is stern in duty even when it involves a subject upon which most Americans are particularly sensitive. Anything which smacks of brutality toward women and children is resented by all decent people. Yet the War Department’s instructions to all National Guard forces in the United States on this point are: “. . . nearly every disorderly crowd includes a considerable number of women, and often children as well . . . The situation is exceedingly unpleasant, but there is absolutely no help for it. Women who join such crowds know that they have no business there; the presence of troops is enough to warn them that violence may be expected (My italics—W. W.) . . . But they must never be permitted to prevent the troops from accomplishing their purpose.”

What does the War Department advise the National Guard to recognize as a riot? Anything may be a riot at the discretion of the commanders of the troops. “Much has been written regarding what legally constitutes a riot, but this need not greatly trouble the soldier, for the reason that the legal definition of a riot is much broader than the tactical definition . . . the mere presence of armed troops is generally regarded as sufficient warning that a state of riot exists, and that it is the duty of all law-abiding citizens to keep out of harm’s way,” (My italics—W. W.)

Here again we see the enormous influence of the Federal authorities on “state” National Guard organizations. Not only does it pay and equip them but it tells them how and when to act in curbing the democratic aspirations of the lower classes. Undoubtedly responsibility for most of the brutality of the National Guard rests in Washington.

The actual training given to guardsmen for strikebreaking is more expressive than mere words as to the “impartial” position the soldiers are expected and forced to take in “emergencies.” The following news item from the New York Times, August 6, 1932, is a good example of what I mean (Seagirt, N. J., August 5):
"Governor and Mrs. Moore shed a tear or two here today in their Summer home at the Little White House, when ‘rioting’ broke out on the Camp Moore parade ground and an infantry platoon from the New Jersey National Guard encampment threw tear gas candles to disperse the crowd of hooting ‘strikers.’"

In their war games the enemy is not the banker, the employer or the privately-paid thug; it is a striker. We learn from this account that:

"The Little White House stands at the edge of the parade ground. Clad in blue dungarees, 200 guardsmen posing as rioters, supposed to have been inflamed to ‘direct action’ by soap-box oratory, advanced upon the Governor’s cottage, howling for higher wages.

"From the opposite direction appeared the infantry platoon with gas bombs and shining bayonets. The ‘forces of law and order’ and the ‘strikers’ clashed. There was a considerable fuss. ‘Cossacks,’ shouted the ‘strikers,’ and their opponents tossed the tear gas bombs . . .”

There are other examples of this. On August 21, 1934, a member of the Ohio National Guard told *Federated Press* that the “Ohio National Guard during its recent encampment was trained in methods of breaking picket lines, demonstrations and other labor activities.” Probably having in mind the strikes in New England last year the Connecticut National Guard in June, 1935, gave its first “specific instructions and demonstrations along these lines for special use in civil disturbances.” Such training, in which strikers are considered as the natural enemies of ‘law and order,’ shows an obvious bias against the working and farming classes on the part of the National Guard authorities.

Mr. Edwin E. Witte in his book, *The Government in Labor Disputes*, points out that “Militia officers . . . are likely to be unsympathetic toward the strikers . . . Some of the militia officers have assumed their function to be the suppression of the strike.” In the National Guard just as in the Regular Army the officers are apt to be from the middle or even upper classes. This is true partly because of the educational and social requirements for an officer
There is an impassable social gap between the officer and the private and naturally the officer has to have the proper social background to add prestige to the service as an "officer and a gentleman." Discipline in the Guard approaches that of the regular army in severity. The men have to give unquestioning obedience to all orders. Colonel Bellows says that "The enlisted man, whether in the Army or the National Guard, is going to be just about the sort of soldier his officers make of him." Precisely! And this being true, it is highly dangerous to liberty to have practically the higher officers from those classes whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of strikers and discontented farmers.

Examples like the following are inevitable under such circumstances. During the Ludlow, Colorado, miners' strike in 1914 a National Guard officer exclaimed impatiently: "I am Jesus Christ, and my men on horseback are Jesus Christs, and we have got to be obeyed." Shortly afterwards the most serious crime ever perpetrated on strikers in this country occurred when his troops fired into and afterwards set fire to a tent colony of sleeping men, women and children, killing thirteen sleeping women and children and six men. Another example of officer arrogance occurred in Alabama shortly after the World War. An officer was criticized for giving orders obviously contrary to federal laws and the Constitution. "The Constitution be damned," he exclaimed, "I am taking orders from General Steiner."

Colonel Bellows in the War Department Manual suggests to employers that they should not stop the pay of employees called out for National Guard duty. "A good working arrangement," he said, "is for firms to pay their employees while on active duty the difference between their regular wages and their pay as soldiers." It is generally thought illegal to "fire" employees on such duty. This is in recognition of the principle that hungry and discontented militiamen can't be relied upon to have the proper interest in their work. Late in the winter of 1933 the 182nd Field Artillery of the Michigan National Guard organized an employment service and sent out the following letter to Detroit business men:

"This association was formed for the purpose of obtaining
employment for National Guardsmen in this regiment . . . All these men are American citizens and as you know are ready and willing to be called out at any time for the protection of life and property.

"A hungry guardsman is of no use to quell a riot or for any other purpose that they may be called out on, so we are appealing to a large number of concerns to help us place these men."

A New Wrinkle in Training Troops

How, it may be asked, do the Guard officials and the War Department regard the duty of keeping "law and order" in strikes and demonstrations of farmers and the unemployed? At first guess one would say they regard it as highly onerous. Wrong! That may have been true years ago; but in recent years there has been observed a more cheerful attitude toward such service as strikebreaking. This is because, it has been charged by recent observers, a new technique of training armies is being evolved as a result of such duty. Here is how it works out.

In ancient Sparta, it is said, the young would-be-warriors got an important part of their training in a highly unique though entirely practical fashion. It was by a method which approximated as nearly as possible the actual experiences of battle, even to the carnage. During one period in Spartan history there was a large class of slaves called helots. Sometimes the helots were chased out into the fields, the woods and the hills where they were then hunted down by the Spartan youth. In this way the young men learned to be swift in order to catch up with their fleeing and terrified victims and they learned to be alert in order to seek them out in their hiding places among the trees, caves and other places of refuge. They learned to cast their spears with strong arms and unerring aim in order to prevent a desperate helot, armed, perhaps, with a stone or rude club, from coming to close quarters. We may be sure that prizes were given to those who speared the most helots. Probably the spitting of a young, healthy male was more to one's credit than a job done on an old man, a woman or a child.

War can't be studied in a vacuum. Obviously such training as our future cannon fodder gets in gassing and machine-gunning
labor pickets, in subduing farmers who fight against mortgage foreclosures, in putting down demonstrations of the unemployed, in evicting a bonus army—this is practical experience. George Bernard Shaw has described the life of a soldier of many years ago. “He has no real work to keep him from going mad, except housemaid’s work; all the rest is forced exercise, in the form of endless rehearsals for a destructive and terrifying performance . . . which, if it does come off, is not like the rehearsals . . .” The time-worn war maneuvers or games between imaginary foes are a boring sport. No one, except, perhaps, the soldiers’ immediate friends or relatives, notice them. But today the training many soldiers get, which in many respects resembles the old Spartan method, in “riot” duty takes care of the problem posed by Shaw. Training becomes real and motivated when on such duty. The actions of the soldiers becomes front page and radio news; there is always a chance to be on a picture in the great daily newspapers or even a movie news reel. But even more important the young warriors learn the new instruments of warfare—the machine guns, gases, tanks, liquid fire throwers . . . They observe the death and destruction which they can deal out with such weapons; this gives them confidence, for they know what they can do in a pinch. And not only the combat but also the auxiliary services stand to learn much from the new war maneuvers, in which strikers and farmers are used as “helots” for training purposes.

And just as prizes were given to the young warriors in Sparta for spitting a large number of helots, so today National Guardsmen are given prizes for great deeds. Shortly after the San Francisco general strike last year, for instance, a committee was organized composed of the leading bankers, clubmen and army officers in San Francisco to collect funds to give little “remembrances” to the individual guardsmen who saw action in the strike. The New Republic, commenting on this unselfish generosity, said: “We are almost prepared to assure these gentlemen that any gift to the California National Guard can be entered on their income tax as an operating expense necessarily incident to their business.” It suggested “artistically modeled swastikas” as being highly appropriate for the “little remembrances” to the faithful guardsmen.
This whole idea of training soldiers on the bodies of men, women and children on picket lines is not as fantastic as it seems. Colonel Bellows—and we must be pardoned for quoting him so often, but his manual is a sort of Bible for the National Guard—has this to say: “It has been generally assumed that one could fight a battle only with an organized enemy, his forces composed of armed combatants. In the true sense of the word, however, a battle takes place whenever troops face the duty of dispersing a disorderly crowd or a riotous mob.” (W. W., italics.) On page 11 of his important book we read: “Riot duty presents almost limitless opportunities for the exercise of tactical ability. In no form of action is a keen perception of the exact nature of the problem more essential, or a shrewd comprehension of the spirit, plans and potentialities of the hostile forces. Those who doubt the tactical possibilities of riot duty may recall that it was because of his signal success on such a tour of duty that Napoleon received his first general command. A riot threatened the government, and Napoleon, a young and obscure artillery officer, quelled the riot.”

This isn’t the only hint to officers that effective work in putting down “riots” and strikes would be highly appreciated by the powers that be and would bring them promotions and honors. The Illinois National Guard Plan which was made to guide the troops in putting down workingclass movements says, “An ambitious officer may in decisive action acquire fame.”

_Private Gunmen and Thugs Outdated_

For the above and other reasons we may expect to see the complete eclipse of the old and inefficient methods of strike policing which are still adhered to in some instances. The old method was to use privately paid armies of gunmen and detectives (as at Homestead and hundreds of other places), which has cost employers many millions of dollars and which has given many of them highly unsavory reputations in the years since the Civil War. Modern employers can trust implicitly the National Guard to do an effective job of strikebreaking. Mark Hanna and his ill-natured criticism of the “meddlesome militia” is definitely outdated. From now on the
privately-paid strike police are going to be replaced by government-paid National Guardsmen. It is not impossible but what the famous state constabulary, which is used to a great extent in Pennsylvania and a few other states in almost the same way that the National Guard is now being used, will soon find that their jobs have been taken by the National Guard.

Bearing out this observation is a report on civil liberty under the "New Deal" by the American Civil Liberties Union. It says that as the American Government turns more and more toward state capitalism it will tend to take over the job of policing industrial disputes. "With the enormous extension of power and control by the federal government . . . open attacks by employers on working-class rights are likely to be far less." Obviously any efforts to change the policies of the National Guard and outlaw its use as a strike-breaking force must be directed to its real control at Washington.

Conclusion

And we may expect labor to make strenuous efforts to change that policy from now on. Labor is up in arms. Along with the efforts to educate labor to the dangers which it faces from the National Guard—a danger greater by far than the old injunction evil—the labor and farm organizations must bend every effort to make the members of the National Guard realize that the "soldier class" and the working-class is the same and that therefore there is no sense in them fighting one another. There have been hundreds of cases in the past where strikers and members of the National Guard have fraternized. The most famous instance is that of the 16th Pennsylvania Regiment which in 1877 made common cause with the strikers and refused to fire upon them. There will be such instances in the future. For as General Smedley D. Butler says: "There is a growing feeling of resentment against American workmen—wearing the uniform of the National Guard—shooting other American workmen striking for a fairer division of the profits their energy created." The Chambers of Commerce, the "professional patriots" who are subsidized by Wall Street and the militarists know this. This explains why they are so desperately trying to push
through such legislation as the Tydings-McCormack Military Disobedience Bill which would imprison anyone who encouraged fraternization between strikers and soldiers. Such legislation has not been effected as yet, but reactionary groups are working night and day through powerful lobbies, the yellow press, the radio and the movies to put their fascist designs over at the next session of Congress.

* * * As this pamphlet goes to press, Powers Hapgood, Socialist, is arrested in Terre Haute, Indiana, for criticizing the misuse of the troops during recent strikes there. Norman Thomas goes to the scene, holds a free speech test meeting and is not molested in spite of martial law existing. Governor McNutt is enforcing martial law with civil officials, without troops being present at all. Says Norman Thomas in The Nation of this: “When martial law prevails in counties where no troops are needed to enforce it, its ostensible justification has obviously disappeared. But if the forerunners of fascism in America find that Governor McNutt can get away with this sort of thing its use will spread like wildfire. Hitler never thought of anything better. Acquiescence in it is acquiescence in tyranny.”

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