

pre-war radicalism dealt with political machinery intended to make the mass power of the uninformed common man apply to problems which he was incompetent to decide. This program is no longer appealing. There is less interest in these so-called democratic methods of deciding public matters than ever before. The old program, for example, for the initiative, referendum and recall has lost practically all the enthusiasm which it originally had back of it. The results, where this program has been tried, have not been sufficiently alluring to keep the continued interest of the people in it.

3—The war has made a complete change in politics and in economics. New political issues have not yet crystalized but old political issues are very much in the discard. So far as pre-war radicals are concerned, many of them have, under the test of the war, lost both public confidence and their political following. Those who were bad Americans during the war, who, even after our entrance upon the war, continued to act rather as representatives of German groups in their own constituencies and who embarrassed the public authorities of the country to the best of their abilities during the war have largely lost their standing except among a very negligible group. Post-war tests applied to some of the pre-war radicals have still further discredited them. We are faced with great international problems and many of the pre-war radicals are showing today a provincialism and parochialism which brings into question their judgment on other matters as well. Witness, for example, the greatest of our provincials Borah, and Hiram Johnson whose public bad manners are only equal to his parochialism.

4—You cannot have a general lack of interest in politics and public questions and have a particularly vital radicalism. Moreover, the terms "radical" and "progressive" have been applied by the press to cover people who are in no sense radicals or progressive and who are simply demagogues, who contribute nothing but wild proposals which receive newspaper consideration only because they are extreme and whose main function is to keep alive a bone-headed conservatism, the so-called 100 per cent American proposition whose early demise will be exceedingly helpful.

GEORGE W. ALGER

"This motley 'radicalism' had neither coherence nor substance, neither program nor material foundation. . . . In the War it proved without conviction and courage."

Morris Hillquit

THE American pre-war radical was a peculiar species, very unlike his European namesake.

The "radicals" of all lands outside the United States are persons of tolerably well defined and homogeneous views and purpose. They are opponents of the prevailing economic order and proponents of a new order rooted in industrial democracy. They may vary in their conceptions of the "co-operative commonwealth" or disagree about the manner of its attainment, but they are in general accord on the need of a radical economic reconstruction. Broadly speaking, they are Socialists of one stripe or another.

The American "radical" is any person who does not conform to the accepted standards in any sphere of thought or conduct, and before the war there was an endless variety of him. Anti-graft crusaders in politics and settlement workers in social endeavor; "muck-rakers" in journalism and anti-fundamentalists in religion; devotees of free love and teachers of birth control; modernists in literature and art; pacifists, feminists and anti-vaccinationists; opponents of lynching and prison reformers; Irish sympathizers and politicians who had fallen out with the boss; men with flowing ties and pioneers of the female bob; iconoclasts, malcontents, sentimentalists and faddists of all imaginable and unimaginable hues, were equally listed as "radicals" by our discriminating press and enlightened officialdom on a par with the Socialist, the I. W. W. and the conservative union leader during a strike.

This motley "radicalism" had neither coherence nor substance, neither program nor material foundation. When it was put to the test in the soul-trying period of war, hysteria and terror it also proved itself without conviction and courage. Few of our "radicals" survived. The great majority dissolved into the thin and unsubstantial atmosphere to which they owed their ephemeral existences. *Requiescant in pace.*

"Who succeeds them and where?" Fred Howe, who has put us all under obligation by the delightful account of his tragi-comical odyssey as a pre-war radical, has also indicated the answer. After twenty-five years of honest experimental search of the elusive "social truth," he reached the conclusion that our radicals failed because "they wanted to cure corruption without getting rid of the cause of corruption." He discovered in Paris what was perfectly patent in New York, "that the world was ruled by an exploiting class that ruled in the interests of the things it owned" and that there was but one class of people who could change that order, "the workers—those who produce wealth by hand and brain." The radical world beyond the seas has made that discovery more than a generation ago and the experiences of the war have by no means detracted from its validity.

Future American radicalism, if it is to be anything more than the vague and impotent thing it has been in the past, must find a home in the labor movement, a broad and intelligent labor movement, organized politically as well as economically and inviting the active cooperation of radicals of other classes as does the Labour Party of Great Britain. Such a movement may be slow in coming here, but come it must eventually, and in the meantime the serious-minded radicals will find ample employment for their energies and talents in helping to pave the way for it.

MORRIS HILLQUIT

"I am afraid their successors are not radicals at all."

Lawson

THE pre-war radicals, such of them as are alive, are still working. I am afraid that their successors are not radicals at all as I would interpret the term. The radicals of my generation believed that a man has a right to do all he wills so long as he does not infringe the equal freedom

of others. They believed the tariff to be an iniquity. They were not pacifists and they did not believe in making gestures about the outlawry of war but did believe in removing the chief cause of war which is the tariff. Most of them believed in reducing the danger of another cause of war, to wit, armament.

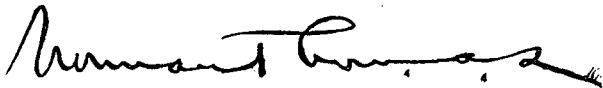
Most of those whom I knew as radicals believed that a man has a right to speak or print his opinions on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. They did not break up meetings on other people's premises under the false name of freedom of speech. They rarely abused freedom to speak and print by uttering libels as has been too common of late years.

Unfortunately I think the students of history and the physical sciences have laid so much weight on differences in the native ability of man that they have come to an almost universal denial of natural rights except when their own toes have been trodden on and they have been forced to appeal to the conscience of mankind. The old radicals believed in the Declaration of Independence concerning the equality of rights and were not guilty of the assumption that that Declaration meant that all men are the same height or have the same brain power. They had mighty little confidence in the value of statutory restrictions upon men's freedom to bargain as they please. They had immense confidence in the ability of men to work out their own salvation in freedom, and that means freedom from restrictions upon their movements and upon their conduct, and it means, further, economic freedom which involves the abolition of artificial privileges.

The modern radical appears to be willing to impose any kind of restraints upon people and any kind of burdens on them but he does not appear to be willing to take away the privileges they enjoy.

LAWSON PURDY

"The sons and daughters of the Tired Radical have no illusions but one . . . that they can live like Babbitt and think like Mencken."



THE reforming spirit of the pre-war brand led most of its paladins to Versailles. After that debacle of superficial moral zeal, destitute of adequate social intelligence, why should we ask "where are the pre-war reformers or their successors?" The pre-war reformer generally held to a beautiful, romantic and uncritical faith in the wisdom of political democracy and the power of moral sentiments. He saw superficial abuses which he fought vigorously and often successfully; very rarely did he even dimly envisage the inevitability of injustice, poverty and war under our economico-political system. If he was a Socialist—which rarely happened in America—he saw farther into the cause of war and misery but put his faith in certain slogans or formulae which while generally true in themselves are not automatically operative for the saving of the world. In consequence the last seven or eight years have spelled disillusionment. The old reformer has become the Tired Radical and his sons and daughters drink at the fountain of the American Mercury. They have no illusions but one. And that is that they can live like Babbitt and think like

Mencken. It will take time for a new crusading zeal to grow up, older and soberer in its expectations, with greater grip on reality, and yet unable to rest so long as there is any hope at all that man who has conquered nature may yet come nearer to conquering the problems of social organization.

It is this generation which rather than a few individuals is most at fault. We have replaced creation with introspection and laugh at the Victorians upon whose stock of ideas we still draw without as yet having added one great new organizing principle or basic concept of our own.

How long this will last, I do not know. Of this I am fairly confident. We shall not see any considerable group of social reformers—new style—unless and until they are accompanied or soon followed by an awakened labor movement. They cannot depend on an undifferentiated democracy or exist merely as voices in the wilderness. From the workers, for obvious social and economic reasons—and not because they are superior clay—must come the solid support for any hopeful economic or political movement. And for the moment the workers in America are "drunk with prosperity," as a labor leader recently put it. (God knows it takes very little to make some people drunk!) I who have lived through many sorts of hopes still have hope in the awakening of labor and in the growth of a keener social insight. I think that our present doubts and disillusionments may be a very useful schooling for this newer radicalism. But merely to doubt is not enough. We can spare the sentimentalism of the older reformers, but we must have more, not less, of a wiser and truer idealism.

NORMAN THOMAS

"The Uplift as a religion is comatose if not completely ossified . . . but it left its enduring mark on the mores."



THEM was the days! When the muckrakers were best sellers, when trust busters were swinging their lariats over every state capitol, when "privilege" shook in its shoes, when God was behind the initiative, the referendum and the recall—and the devil shrieked when he saw the short ballot, when the Masses was at the height of its glory, and Utopia was just around the corner.

. . . Now look at the damned thing. You could put the avowed Socialists into a roomy new house, the muckrakers have joined the breadlines, Mr. Coolidge is compared favorably to Lincoln, the short ballot is as defunct as Mah Jong, Mr. Eastman writes triolets in France, Mr. Steffens has bought him a castle in Italy, and Mr. Howe digs turnips in Nantucket.

Shall we lay a wreath on the Uplift Movement in America? I suppose we might as well. For the Uplift as a crusading spirit, as a dedication, as a religion, is comatose if not completely ossified—strangled both by the war and its own ineptitude. It was inept because its moral judgments took the place of sound analysis. It dealt in blacks and whites; it deified a muzzy and mystical conception of democracy, and found horns underneath every plug hat; it was too logical and not sufficiently psychological; it was cursed with political-mindedness.

But it was a gallant spiritual adventure, and before its