

Meyersdale's Old Reliable Newspaper Held Up By Democratic Postmaster On Independence Day

After our laboring diligently in order to get last week's issue of The Commercial out before the Fourth, which fell on Thursday, which resulted in the complete edition being off the big press Wednesday evening, said papers are still held at the Meyersdale postoffice at the time this is being written (Saturday afternoon). All the papers we could get ready for mailing before 7 o'clock Wednesday evening were deposited at the local postoffice, when we were notified that we could not deposit the balance on Thursday morning as that was a legal holiday. We were compelled to hold these other papers at the Commercial Office until Friday, when they were deposited in time to be delivered the same day at all nearby points. Notwithstanding the instructions which the Commercial's representative was given by the postmaster personally, the Meyersdale Republican was delivered to town patrons on Thursday, which was a legal holiday, and the Meyersdale route papers went out on Friday morning.

When The Commercial were not delivered yet on Saturday morning inquiry was made at the postoffice. We were informed by a clerk that all of our papers were still in the postoffice. We next asked the Assistant Postmaster about them and she referred us to Mr. Shipley, the Postmaster. Asked for his reason for delaying our papers, Mr. Shipley replied that "We have not had time to distribute them yet," and he walked away, absolutely refusing to discuss the matter or give us any satisfaction as to when the papers would be delivered, or anything.

Late Saturday afternoon we succeeded in wringing from Mr. Shipley the information that he was holding our issue of July 4th on account of objectionable matter which appeared in an article relating to the arrest of Comrade Debs at Cleveland, Ohio, on the previous Sunday. In speaking of the espionage law we used the term "infamous espionage act," the word "infamous" assumably being objectionable, and sufficient reason for the postmaster's discrimination against The Commercial. We use the word discrimination advisedly. If The Commercial is to be judged in contempt of the espionage law by using the word "infamous" to describe it then The Republican must be also judged in contempt of the same law. In last week's issue of our contemporary we find the President is criticised for an alleged policy of watchful waiting "more distasteful to the American spirit than the brand which was employed in Mexico." This is not the only criticism of the government's war conduct appearing in that issue of The Republican. But, as you will observe, we did not directly and deliberately criticize a law of the United States or the government of the United States, when we employed the term "infamous espionage act" in an article telling about the arrest of our venerable comrade. We referred to the law which he was charged with having violated. That was all. On the other hand, criticism of the government of the United States is an unlawful act under the provisions of that same espionage law, and, from an unbiased point of looking at the matter, The Republican containing such unlawful matter was unmailable, as well as The Commercial or even more so. Instead of holding up The Republican the postmaster accepted it either at a very late hour Wednesday night or on Thursday morning, and distributed it on Thursday, a legal holiday, after having personally instructed a representative of The Commercial that none of our papers could be deposited at the postoffice even, on the Fourth of July.

It is well known that The Commercial under its present management has won the disfavor of the ring of grafters who had for some time been having everything their own way and running the town to suit themselves, without regard for the interests of the public. It is also known that more than one effort has been made to induce the present management of The Commercial to seek other and more comfortable quarters. A disgraceful mud slinging campaign has been conducted against us by The Republican for quite a while. Secret work has also been resorted to. We are not so situated financially to employ the services of a detective agency to get the information but by a number of blunders made by our enemies and by other means we have been able to get wise to the drift of the thing and to secure enough information to substantiate our claims that there are "dirty deeds done in dark alleys" by parties who are interested in the destruction of The Commercial. The postmaster, by taking the action he has against The Commercial, places himself in the position of an ally of those grafters and wicked fellows we have just alluded to. Whether he does so wilfully and conscious of the fact, we can not assert, and we do not so charge. We have asked for an authorized investigator to determine that point.

In connection with the controversy which the postmaster's action has brought up it may not be amiss to quote at this time two letters which are on file in The Commercial Office, which are as follows:

"Editor Commercial,
Meyersdale, Pa.

Dear Sir:

I want you to know that I, personally, appreciate the splendid and generous manner in which you are handling liberty loan publicity—not only local publicity matter, but that which I have sent to you. There is no doubt that what you have done has been of material assistance in the sale of the third liberty loan bonds. My hope now is that you will continue your good work to the end of the campaign on May 4th.

Even if your community and county have 'gone over the top,' your influence in other communities and counties make it exceedingly important that you continue your good work.

I am especially anxious to have you read the matter that I send you and use all of it that you can. As you know much of it is written by writers of national reputation.

If you have any suggestions to make, I shall be more than glad to have them.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) M. H. LAUNDON,
Publicity Secretary.

Cleveland, O., April 15, 1918."

"Editor, Commercial,
Meyersdale, Pa.

Dear Sir:

I was very much pleased to note your patriotic contribution of Liberty Loan advertising in the Meyersdale Commercial. I know you do not care to be thanked, but I do want you to know that I keenly appreciate your generosity. I think you may be sure that what you did materially aided the sale of Liberty Bonds in your community.

With best wishes, I am

Your very truly,

(Signed) M. H. LAUNDON,
Publicity Secretary.

Cleveland, O., May 18, 1918."

DETERMINING THE ISSUE FOR THE PRESENT ASSEMBLY CAMPAIGN

DRY LEADERS WHO ENDORSED WET CANDIDATE
FEAR POLITICAL POWER OF THE PLAIN PEOPLE
MORE THAN THEY DO THE LIQUOR INTERESTS

LIVENGOOD AND STOTLER, PROMINENT IN PRESENT CAMPAIGN, ARE
NOT THE ONLY "SAD MISTAKES" TO BE WRITTEN INTO HISTORY
OF THE DRY MOVEMENT IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

JOKER IN PROHIBITION AMENDMENT.

The Commercial charges the so-called Dry Leaders with being insincere in the present campaign. We believe that we have in our possession evidence sufficient to convince any honest man or woman that this charge is true and correct, and we submit the evidence to the public in this article for proper consideration, believing that the man and the woman who is consistent as well as sincere in advocating temperance legislation will repudiate "fake" leaders and condemn the questionable tactics which have been and which are now being practiced by those self appointed "leaders."

Before entering into details it is perfectly proper to state that neither Mr. Cockley nor Mr. Lepley can be truthfully said to be the allies of the liquor interests. Both of the now famous bolsheviki editors are total abstainers, who never touch, taste nor handle intoxicating drink. However, they have not allied themselves politically with the dry organization in this campaign, although formally invited to do so. But, if Mr. Cockley and Mr. Lepley do not cast their votes with the dries in Pennsylvania's next Legislature, nobody will be to blame but the temperance people of Somerset County. Get this matter clear in your minds, people. The Socialist Party has taken no position officially on the liquor question, leaving its Assemblymen free to vote on any side, or to refrain from voting, when the question is put to them. Furthermore, in Somerset County the voter at the general election will either have to cast his ballot for the Dry Federation or for the Socialist Party's candidates for the Assembly and Senate. From a political standpoint the Socialists have everything to gain by taking the wet side of the liquor question in Somerset County, in opposition to the Dry slate, and nothing to lose. But, not being professional politicians, they hesitate to take the step. Clean men do not align themselves with a gang such as the booze crowd except when there is something very important to gain by such an alignment, and if the support of the liquor interests should become essential and a fact in the campaign against "fake" Dry Leaders this year, it would be purely of a negative, not a positive, character. Mr. Cockley and Mr. Lepley could not and would not support class legislation at Harrisburg, whether it be framed by the booze crowd, the contractor crowd, the railroad lobbies, or other big business interests. Both gentlemen are interested in labor legislation, and are intensely sincere about it. That is the reason, and the only reason, why the so-called Dry Leader would much prefer a wet Assemblyman to a practical representative of the plain people.

Now then. We are speaking about Somerset County. Here is the situation, get it straight. Accept no substitutes—even though the war is not yet over. The voter steps into the voting booth on the Fifth of November, 1918. For Assembly and Senate he will vote for the Dry Federation or for the Socialist Party's candidates. The Dry slate is the same on all tickets, excepting the Socialist ticket. The candidates on the Socialist ticket believe in progressive labor legislation, the Dries do not. The Socialist may be for temperance legislation, or against it, or non-committal—that is a matter which you, not they, are to decide. The Dries say they are for it. But whatever position Mr. Cockley and Mr. Lepley do take as a policy in the campaign will be zealously maintained, the main issue being regarded, however, as a labor issue and not the temperance issue. Notwithstanding this, the side they prefer to take on the liquor question can be readily seen by a careful glance at what follows.

It so happened that in the campaign two years ago Mr. Cockley and Mr. Lepley were nominated for Assembly on the Socialist ticket. But before their nomination at the Primary Election, both gentlemen had pledged themselves to the support of temperance legislation, which is a matter of record and cannot be disputed. Prior to the Primary seven candidates had announced themselves as contestants for the republican nomination. Five of those seven pledged themselves to the support of temperance legislation, although one of the five, who was elected in the general election, voted for the notorious "Dick" Baldwin for Speaker of the House, and sided with the booze crowd on other important questions of public policy. But, of course, that is another story. Those five particular candidates for the nomination, prior to Primary Election Day, held a conference at the county seat at which three of them withdrew, assumably for the purpose of keeping the temperance vote from being scattered too much, as it was feared that would result in the two other candidates, who were termed "wets," carrying the nomination away from the "dries." Then came the Primary Election, in which Mr. Speicher, a so-called "wet," and Mr. Lohr, a so-called "dry," were nominated. Had the Dry Leaders been really sincere they would have favored a candidate who was pledged to support temperance legislation, instead of endorsing the "wet" candidate on the republican ticket. Did they do it? Yes, they did not. Probably it was not good policy for a dry politician to endorse any but the republican candidates. You know, the republicans are in the majority in Somerset County, and no candidate could expect to be elected to public office except as a candidate on the republican ticket. All right. Mr. Ruppel was elected Judge several years previously, and he was not a candidate on the republican ticket. Mr. Ruppel was supported by the temperance workers, and he was elected. This is another matter of public record which no person will dispute. All right. Then the matter of policy is settled. The fact is that it was not a matter of policy so much in the last Assembly campaign as it was a matter of principle—or lack of principle. That is perfectly clear.

When the result of the Primary Election was made public, showing Mr. Speicher and Mr. Lohr as the republican candidates, Mr. Cockley, who in addition to being one of the Socialist candidates for Assemblyman was County Chairman of the Socialist Party, promptly communicated with the state and the county headquarters of the temperance organizations which had charge of the campaign, and which are now combined in the Dry Federation, requesting them to consider the endorsement of one of the Socialist Party's candidates in the general election, to conduct a campaign against the wet nominee on the republican ticket. The precedent established by the election of Mr. Ruppel previously, was referred to, and the situation was thoroughly understood by state dry headquarters, as admitted in the reply to Mr. Cockley's letter. The Dry Leaders went so far as to request Mr. Cockley to personally recommend

EUGENE VICTOR DEBS THE MAN AND HIS WORKS AS OTHERS SEE HIM

JOHN SWINTON

The great New York editor who heard Lincoln in Cooper Union, New York, in 1860, wrote as follows after hearing Debs from the same platform in 1894: "I recalled the appearance, the manner, the voice and the speech of Lincoln as Debs stood before me thirty-four years afterwards. It seemed to me that both men were imbued with the same spirit. Both seemed to me as men of judgment, reason, earnestness and power. Both seemed to me as men of free, high, genuine and generous manhood. I 'took' to Lincoln in my early life as I took to Debs a third of a century later. In the speeches of both westerners there was cogent argument; there were apt illustrations; there were especially emphatic passages; there were moments of lightning; there were touches of humor; and there were other qualities which produce conviction or impel to action." "I confess that I was as much impressed with the closing words of Debs' speech as I was with those of Lincoln. Lincoln spoke for man; so spoke Debs. Lincoln spoke for right and progress; so spoke Debs. Lincoln spoke for the freedom of labor; so spoke Debs. Lincoln was the foe of human slavery; so is Debs."

FRANKLIN McPHILLIPS

The correspondent wrote as follows in the Detroit News after hearing Debs in that city: "The public is beginning to understand Eugene V. Debs, the poet, orator, wit, epigrammatist and lover of humanity. Debs is no ordinary man. In ten thousand he would be conspicuous. Debs has a great heart and a great soul and his countenance mirrors both."

REV. FRANK DEWITT TALMAGE

The following tribute was paid by the preacher to Mr. Debs: "Among all the speakers I have ever heard there has not been one who came nearer to my idea of Abraham Lincoln than Eugene Debs."

ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE

The famous scientist, writing from Parkstone, Dorset, England, said: "Eugene V. Debs is a great man. With a few more such to teach and organize the people the cause of justice must prevail."

EUGENE FIELD

The poet said: "If Debs were a priest the world would listen to his eloquence, and that gentle, musical voice and sad, sweet smile of his would soften the hardest heart."

FREDERIC AUGUSTE BARTHOLDI

The great sculptor who modeled the colossal statue, "Liberty Enlightening the World," in New York harbor, wrote of Debs: "He is endowed with the most precious faculty to which one can aspire—the gift of language, and he uses it for the proclamation of the most beautiful and generous thoughts. His beautiful language is that of an apostle."

HORACE TRAUBEL

Editor of the Conservator, and literary executor of Walt Whitman, writes: "The four letters that spell Debs have added a new word to the vocabulary of the race." "Debs is not so much size as quality. He has ten hopes to your one hope. He has ten loves to your one love. You think he is a preacher of hate. He is only a preacher of man. If man is hate then Debs is a hater. When Debs speaks a harsh word it is wet with tears."

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

The world-famed "Hoosier Poet" said: "God was feeling mighty good when he created 'Gene' Debs and he didn't have anything else to do all day." The poet and Mr. Debs had long been personal friends. When Mr. Riley was ill and confined to his room Mr. Debs sent him a bouquet of his favorite flowers and it was this incident that inspired one of Riley's sweetest and tenderest dialect poems, herewith reproduced:

Them Flowers

(To My Good Friend, Eugene V. Debs)

Take a feller 'ats sick, and laid up on the shelf,
All shaky, and ga'nted and pore,
And all so knocked out he can't handle hisself
With a stiff upper-lip any more;
Shet him up all alone in the gloom of a room,
As dark as the tomb, and as grim,
And then take and send him some roses in bloom,
And you kin have fun out o' him!

Continued on last page.

a candidate for endorsement, and the request was complied with. Mr. Lepley was recommended. Then followed delay after delay, until the general election was at hand—with the Dry Leaders silently endorsing, or at any rate not opposing, the wet candidate, Mr. Speicher. And by so doing they emphasized, and subsequent political events determined, the issue for the 1918 Assembly Campaign, the "wets" being defeated in the Primary Election this year on all other tickets, leaving only the Socialists in the field as opponents of these self-appointed Dry Leaders, who are now facing defeat in the general election without an issue—unless it is the opinion of conscientious temperance people that the Socialist Party's candidates ought to espouse the "wet" cause and give them something to fight in the present campaign. The cause of the plain people is the only real issue, and is the dominant issue from the Socialist point of view, and it will receive the most consideration by the candidates of that party. The Dry Leader is without an issue, however, when he has no "wet" opponent, and it would naturally be a splendid thing for Mr. Cockley and Mr. Lepley to take the wet side of the liquor question, from his point of view. Do you agree with him or do you think and act for yourself?

Let us remind the temperance workers that with Mr. Livengood and Mr. Stotler occupying prominent positions in the leadership of the Dry Federation in Somerset County the support of labor cannot be counted on in the general election. Mr. Livengood is known to labor in the southern section of this county and Mr. Stotler is known to labor in the northern section. With labor in the southern and the northern sections united against a common enemy, defeat is imminent. Consider the fact. Decide at your leisure upon the action you consider proper. Remember how "fake" leaders deserted you in past campaigns. Then repent quickly.

Remember this also: There is a joker in the Prohibition amendment.

Had your Dry Leaders fully informed you of all this?

Where will the old reliable Commercial be when the fourth Liberty Loan campaign opens if its mailing rights are permanently taken away by the postoffice department?