

"sat in" when the American federation was formed. He told the same committee rather frankly that he and the other national Bureau leaders were attempting to lead the farmers away from the programs of some of the progressive older farmer organizations. He said he was being given credit by big men (he mentioned two governors, but not by name) for steering the Bureaus in a course which was "keeping down 'unrest' among farmers."

Just what does keeping down farmer "unrest" mean, in plain language? It means simply trying to defeat the fundamental political and economic reforms that farmers are seeking, and to offset the work of the older, progressive farmer organizations for these reforms.

Mr. Howard, following the suggestions of the monied and privileged groups who fear more than anything else co-operation between the farmers and working men, has kept the American Farm Bureau federation hostile to organized labor. He told a congressional committee that co-operation with labor would be a "socialistic affiliation." He showed his contempt for the farmers when he told this same committee that farmers were being infected with "Bolshevism," and would follow "almost any

leadership," if it wasn't for him and the Bureaus. His function, he said, was to keep the farmers out of "Bolshevism." He thus falls easily into the language of the big business propagandists.

#### ARE NOT AFTER BOLSHEVISM; USE THAT ONLY AS PRETEXT

The fight against farmers on the score of "Bolshevism," directed particularly against the Nonpartisan league, but often, too, against the Equity, some of the state Granges and the Farmers' union, has not really been a fight against Bolshevism. It has been a fight against fundamental economic reforms which various farmers' organizations have been trying to bring about by lawful and orderly processes for many years before Bolshevism was invented. When pressed by questions at the committee hearing as to what he meant by "Bolshevism," Mr. Howard let the cat out of the bag. He said the farmer unrest, which he had previously intimated was "Bolshevism," or would lead to "Bolshevism," was not a desire to overthrow the government by violent or other means, or a desire for a proletarian dictatorship.

"They (the farmers) rather go off into state

Socialism, or something like that," he said.

He used the pet phrase of those who oppose state-owned terminal elevators, cold storage plants and warehouses, and state or government banks to handle money and credit for farmers and the people in general. He thus, after charging farmers with a susceptibility for "Bolshevism," admitted that he didn't mean Bolshevism, but did mean some of the progressive and necessary reforms which millions of farmers are working for. He showed it was his aim to lead the Bureaus into opposition to these reforms.

How far can we get with such leaders?

These things show the mental attitude of Mr. Howard and the other high-priced national leaders of the Bureaus. What have been their acts? Their acts have been what this mental attitude would naturally lead to. I believe it was the Nonpartisan Leader which first exposed Howard's attempt to help big business by repealing the excess profits tax and putting taxes on articles consumed by the people. Howard was forced to back up, after his representatives had sat in conference with big business men to frame a taxation plan that would re-

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# Beware the Disarmament Conference!

## Danger of Administration Selling Out the People by Permitting Cancellation of European Debts, Without Forcing Adequate Peace Agreement

BY J. A. H. HOPKINS

Mr. Hopkins is a well-known publicist of liberal ideas, who has been active in various moves to promote a new, third party that will give the Republicans and Democrats a real fight.

**W** ARE familiar with the rules of war under which the allies are collecting a huge indemnity from beaten Germany. But do the American people realize that unless they take active steps to prevent it victorious America may soon be paying a similar tribute to the allies, whom she rescued from overwhelming disaster at the most critical period in their history?

The machinery designed to bring this about is already in motion, and it is high time to tell the truth about the coming disarmament conference, in which the people as a whole are vitally concerned, and to determine what instructions the American people desire given to Messrs. Lodge, Hughes, Root and Underwood, whom President Harding has appointed as the official representatives of the United States.

Called for the purpose of bringing about disarmament and world peace, and forced upon a reluctant and unsympathetic administration in response to popular sentiment, the conference is fast being transformed into a sordid effort to further the interests of the international banking syndicate at the expense of our already overburdened taxpayers.

#### FRANKLY ADMIT THEIR PURPOSE

How is this being accomplished? The situation is clear; the process is simple.

The European nations owe America billions of dollars extracted from American taxpayers under stress of war, on which they have never paid one dollar either of interest or principal.

The English, French, Belgian and Italian delegates frankly admit that they are seeking to utilize this occasion to obtain a release from their debts.

Realizing that the public discussion of this subject before the disarmament conference would arouse a whirlwind of indignation, President Harding announces that he is opposed to any such course, but demands that congress without

delay specifically confer upon Secretary Mellon full power to privately settle these obligations upon any terms he may deem advisable. And Secretary Mellon has personally appeared before the ways and means committee of the house demanding immediate action.

Coincident with this demand comes a suggestion from the banking group (to which Secretary Mellon formerly belonged) that a concurrent conference with the European delegates be held, while the disarmament conference is in session, to adjust the financial situation.

Every angle of the situation bristles with deceit and secret diplomacy; every indication points to a betrayal of the just demands of the American public who "paid until it hurt" to assist our allies in their extremity and are now in imminent danger of being told that the money they generously loaned to England, France, Italy and Belgium in good

faith will never be returned, and that for years to come they will be taxed to make up these vast sums, which the European nations with an almost unbelievable affrontery are now seeking to repudiate.

And it is proposed to bring this about through a separate secret conference, under carte blanche authority, in which the American people will have no voice and of whose decision they will know nothing until too late.

#### PEOPLE MUST UNDERSTAND QUESTION IF PLOT IS BALKED

Anticipating precisely the situation which has since developed, and foreseeing the necessity of forestalling the action of the European delegates, I suggested to President Harding under date of September 23 the desirability of ascertaining the wishes of the American people relative to submitting an ultimatum to the European delegates to the effect that we would neither cancel their indebtedness nor longer postpone the payment of the overdue interest thereon, but that if they would collectively agree to disarm—either entirely or gradually—we would conform to such an agreement and would remit their debts in precisely the same ratio.

It may well be that President Harding upon investigation will find that the American people are disinclined to consider the adjustment of our European loans upon any terms whatever short of actual payment.

It is even possible that our European friends will be constrained to answer such an ultimatum by disclaiming any desire to escape one jot or one title of their indebtedness. It would certainly be an agreeable evidence of their fine sense of honor should they do so.

But it is well for us to fully understand the question we will be called upon to answer, which is simply this:

Shall we discuss disarmament upon its own merits and insist upon Europe taxing their own people to pay their own debts, or shall we hand them receipted bills for what they owe us, and thus allow Europe to bleed the American taxpayer and pay their European debts with the American money so appropriated?

### THE CONGRESSIONAL "BLOCK" GAME



—Drawn expressly for the Leader by W. C. Morris. The Harding administration is attempting to break up the farmers' bloc in congress, composed of western and southern members from agricultural states, organized regardless of party lines. But other interests have their blocs. Baer shows the situation in this drawing. Big business can play with all the "blocks" he wants, but the farmers and workers are asked to give up their "block."