

NOBLE "MOUNTIES" OF STATE POLICE STRONG FOR ROMANCE OF BREAKING WAGE STRIKES

ARTICLE V.
By MANUEL GOMEZ.

Facts and figures brought out in these articles prove conclusively that state police are not "rural police" but industrial police for use against the workers in industrial disputes.

But the police have their secondary rural purpose too—and in rural communities it is the poor farmers who suffer from their depredations. The bankers and big business elements are the ones who profit. That is why the La Salle street financial district is such a unit behind the Dunlap bill for a state constabulary in Illinois. It is why Wall Street is behind similar police bills in various states thruout the country.

The Romance of Strike Breaking

To see what a military police force will mean for the poor farmers and rural workers one need only study past experiences. In this article I propose to tell some of the history of the Royal Northwest Mounted police of Canada which is singularly not revealed in the magazine stories and movie reels dealing with these famous troopers which play such a role in the inspired "mammonart" dished out to American flappers and schoolboys.

The stories of romance and adventure which have been written around the Royal Northwest Mounted police have built up a legend among the unsuspecting that this force is an ideal organization established for the sole pupose of protecting the sanctity of home and fireside. The cold pages of history tell a different story.

It Runs Something Like This:

During the early sixties the Hudson Bay company, which then owned "by grant" a considerable slice of northern and western Canada, had become engaged in bitter competition with its rival, the Northwest company. Both concerns flagrantly violated the rights of the poor squatters scattered thru the region. In 1867 the Hudson Bay company sold great tracts of its land to the Dominion government. Less than two years afterward, the inhabitants of the northwest territory were actually forced into open rebellion, as a protest against the new land regulations which the prostitute politicians and landgrabbers at Ottawa sought to enforce upon them—regulations which meant nothing more nor less than the break-up of their homes. The rebellion was suppressed by the military forces of the crown.

Permanent Martial Law

The commanders of the troops advised that permanent military details be stationed in the territory. Sir John MacDonald, head of the Canadian government then conceived the idea of a military police force, and upon his recommendation, a law was enacted establishing the Royal Northwest

Mounted police, which began the performance of its unenviable duties in 1873—being sent immediately to the disaffected district of the northwest for use against the poor farmers.

But industry reaches out even into the farmlands and into the unploughed wilderness. Strikebreaking became a feature of the activities of the Northwest Mounted police from the very beginning.

In The Canadian Pacific Strike

At this time the work of surveying for the building of the Canadian Pacific railway was started. The workers were poorly paid and poorly treated in every respect. Their only protection—as is everywhere the case under capitalism—was in their own organized resistance. And the Northwest Mounted police was on hand to prevent that if it could. Strike after strike among the construction workers was broken by these mock heroes of story and screen, who acted as out-and-out agents of the profit-hungry railroad magnates.

Reporting to the inspector-in-chief, Captain R. B. Deane (appointed to command part of the force) wrote:

"I instructed the men in charge of the detachments to use the severest measures to prevent a cessation of the work of construction."

A year later, 1886, found the police active in suppressing another land law rebellion among the poor farmers. When it was all over Louis Riel, leader of the rebellion, was taken to a police barracks and executed there.

Since that time, the history of the Royal Northwest Mounted police has been replete with stories of strike-breaking activities at the behest of the big capitalists who hold Canada in their grasp. Every miner, lumberjack and railroad worker in the Dominion has learned to fear and hate the mounted police. And the farmers have learned this lesson too.

Workers and poor farmers are united against the oppressive power of capitalism. In the United States as in Canada, these two elements must be brought closer and closer together. Every extension of the police power, every attempt of the financial interests to get more clubs and more bayonets in their service, constitutes a new menace. Its purposes may be camouflaged by pretenses of "protection of life and liberty," "safety for rural communities," "road policing," etc., but the plain facts of history cannot be swept aside.

FOSTER'S CASE

voluntairily surrendered themselves to show that it was in the case of all the defendants involved primarily a matter of fight against the criminal syndicalist laws and the railroading of workers to prison, instead of the mere defense of individuals.