

history of the Independent Socialist Party it can be seen how the German working class, from unpreparedness, filled with the illusions of November, 1918, struggled through to the Communist position. There was probably not one of us who had the feeling that the masses who struggled toward the same goal as we did, though differently, had eventually to find themselves again with us. That time has come and here unity should be consummated.

It is no accident that the path to this unity led through Moscow. Many will once more say that it is but the dictatorship of Moscow that has created our party. That is not true. That the revolutionary proletariat of Germany has achieved unity with the help of Moscow is but an expression of the fact that Soviet Russia today is the leader of the world proletariat. Every movement, every defeat, every victory of Soviet Russia reacts on the proletariat of the whole world.

Thus the example of the German working class movement is not without effect. Today we accomplish the unity of the German Communists. In eight days Switzerland, in fourteen days France, and five days later Italy will follow our example. The uniting of the German Communists is a link in a chain which surrounds the whole world; forged by the German proletariat, it will play its part in the world revolution. So we need not limit ourselves to contemplation of events in Germany from the viewpoint of the German proletariat. We must seek to evaluate the German unity from the viewpoint of international affairs.

When in November, the proletarian tide ebbed, many were of the opinion that if only we were again settled then the wheel of fortune would turn as in 1914. The restoration of pre-war conditions was perceived as salvation. As in Germany, so it was internationally. The proletariat on the other side of the trenches believed, as was told them, that they were victorious, and had defended democracy, had safeguarded the freedom of the world. They came home, after all the blood and dirt, longing to live as they had lived before. And it appeared that it was possible. But the scarcity of commodities was great; almost the whole world was famished, denuded of all the necessities of life. The machine could produce only so much and when the product was issued it was swallowed by the commodity hunger of the world.

One day there came an end to it. The economic crisis began. This crisis had a different character than the crises which capitalism formerly went through periodically. Those crises were brought about by the setting in motion of ever new means of production. An ever greater

mass of commodities was produced until the market was clogged. Now the crisis begins with a "buyers' strike." And why do the buyers stop buying? Have their wants become fewer? No, what we see is no conscious strike of buyers; it is the poverty of the masses which today prevents them from buying commodities which they imperatively need. From a buyers' strike the crisis rolls back. The buyer cannot buy, the merchant in consequence cannot draw upon commodity stocks, the manufacturer cannot produce any more. Factories close and the proletarians, who were unable to buy to the extent of their needs before the crisis, are thrown into the streets.

How does capitalism hope to extricate itself from this crisis? In Germany, as in all Europe, the idea prevails that the savior of the system in its dire distress is a rich uncle, and that uncle is America. This idea masters the bourgeoisie and adds to the followers of Breitscheid and Hilferding. Certainly, America has become a wealthy country. Hitherto the debtor, today it is the creditor of Europe. Before the war America owed Europe \$6,000,000,000; today Europe owes America in public loans alone, \$10,000,000,000. In addition to this, American demands upon Europe amount to \$5,700,000,000. How can these colossal loans be redeemed when one remembers that in the whole world there only exists \$6,000,000,000,000 in gold? Redemption of the debts can only be possible by the exportation of finished products to America.

Here, however, a basic transformation has taken place. America today is not the great exporter of raw materials and consumer of industrial products it was before the war. A report of the New York City bank shows that America today is an importer of raw materials and that half of its export duties are collected on finished manufactures. The war so enlarged the productive machinery of America that today it is the image of what the industrial countries of Europe were before the war. From this follows the impossibility of redeeming Europe's debt in commodity supplies. From this follows also, the impossibility of America's relieving European bankruptcy with credits.

America, too, is in the throes of a severe economic crisis. This is seen in the fall of the price of cotton. In six weeks the price fell from 40 cents to 15 cents on the English market, and even now no cotton is sold in the American market. We see in America the same industrial conditions as here, the so-called buyers' strike, unemployment, the complete image of the capitalist order as we have come to see it after the war.

America is economically separated from Europe and seeks other outlets for its products. From the report of the same New York bank it is shown further that an enlarged supply of industrial products goes from North America to Central and South America, to Asia, Africa and Australia. This supply is now four times greater than before the war. The gift of America, the gift of Wilson, the gift of Hilferding, which was to have saved the European economic situation, is dissolved in noise and smoke. Europe is thrown back upon itself.

Politically this was clearly expressed in the last American presidential election, the result of which was an emphatic protest against all interference on the part of America in European affairs. "America First" was the slogan with which both great parties went into the election campaign. Even the League of Nations must do without America's help and consequently be less influential.

In Europe there are two powers which, so to speak, seek to control European politics—France and England. When one compares the operations of practically victorious France in 1918 with the operations of victorious France in 1800 and after a remarkable similarity is apparent. The results of the victory of 1800 were seen in a ring of buffer states around France. Today, too, we see boundary states arise, though not Rhine league states; they extend from the Baltic Sea over Poland, Hungary and Roumania to the Black Sea, where Wrangel made his last stand.

England now defends India, the central point of her world empire, and for this purpose England, too, has created buffer states which stretch over Mesopotamia and India to the Himalayas. All these buffer states turn toward Soviet Russia. The purpose of this great girdle of English and French vassal states is to stifle Soviet Russia. Each great front, however, has its weak point and as Ludendorff in 1918 directed his March offensive against the point where the English and French fronts met, of necessity the greatest activity of Soviet Russia is directed against the point where the English and French spheres conflict, against the countries bordering on the Black Sea, the provinces of the former Turkish Empire.

With the fall of Wrangel the wall which the Entente built in the Balkans against Soviet Russia collapsed. How such an apparently trivial event could have a world political effect of the highest significance was shown by the last Greek parliamentary elections, which overthrew Venizelos, agent of the Entente in Greece, and gave an impetus to the collapse of the treaty

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