

"EXCESSES" AND "DISORDER" IN RUSSIA

With the fall of the ancient governments which rested like an incubus upon the peoples of the central empires has come, not merely political change, but revolution; and revolution which seems as yet to assume no final and ordered form, but to run from one fluid change to another, until thoughtful men are forced to ask themselves with what governments, and of what sort, are we about to deal in the making of the covenants of peace?... Excesses accomplish nothing. Unhappy Russia has furnished abundant recent proof of that. Disorder immediately defeats itself. If excesses should occur, if disorder should for a time raise its head, a sober second thought will follow and a day of constructive action, if we help and do not hinder.—President Wilson, in his address to Congress, November 11.

Germany is in the midst of a developing proletarian revolution. The course of this revolution, if it definitely accomplishes its purpose is the conquest of power by the proletariat, will in large measure parallel the development and accomplishments of the proletarian revolution in Russia. An understanding of what's being done in Russia, accordingly, will assist in understanding the probable course of developments in Germany.

"Excesses" and "disorder" are simply the superficial appearance of revolutions, breaking loose in every revolution. We must penetrate beneath the surface of events, we must appreciate the real tendency and accomplishments of a revolution.

There has never been a revolution in history that was not stigmatized at the time as a process of "excesses" and "disorders;" but history has always reversed this judgment. And this is equally true of the proletarian revolution in Russia, the importance of which is international and will determine the destiny of the world in the years to come.

Russia is the biggest problem of the world. More than any other problem it affects your life, your interests, your aspirations as men and women who work for a living.

The newspapers damn Russia. They lie about Russia. They try to convince you that revolutionary Russia is your enemy. Revolutionary Russia is not your enemy. Revolutionary Russia is your friend, the friend of all men and women who work for a living. The workers and peasants of Russia are suffering, are fighting, are dying, not alone in their own cause, but in the cause of the workers of the world.

The newspapers lie, but in their very lies they show what a big thing is the Russian Revolution. They confess that the Russian Revolution is a danger, the greatest danger, to the tyrants of industry and capital everywhere; and by that fact the Russian Revolution is the comrade of the men and women everywhere who are the victims of the tyranny of industry and capital.

The Russian Revolution marks the end of the old world of Capitalism and the beginning of the new world of Socialism. It is the greatest departure in the world's history, greater than the French Revolution. For the first time in all history, the common people, the workers and peasants, are in absolute control of a nation, a nation of 160,000,000 people, using the government in the interest of the workers of Russia, and of the world.

This is why the newspapers, which represent the predatory interests of capital, lie about the Russian Revolution, about the Bolsheviks, about the Soviet Republic. This is why you should not believe these lies; for these lies are against your interests as much as against the interests of the workers of Russia.

Don't be deceived. The truth—the truth about the workers' revolution in Russia—shall make you free! The important thing to remember about Russia is that there have been two revolutions there since March 1917—and that these two revolutions are absolutely different in character, and are fighting for control.

The first revolution was a revolution against the Czar. The Czar and his blood-stained government was overthrown. A new government was established—a republican government, a bourgeois republic, in which the capitalists and employers of labor governed instead of the nobility.

The government was changed, but that was all. The peasants didn't yet control over the land. The

workers didn't get control over the factories. It was simply a political revolution, not an economic revolution; the rights of the Czar and the nobles had been destroyed, and in their place were established the rights of the capitalists. The workers had no industrial rights; they were still wage-slaves, still an oppressed class.

Then started a new revolution—an economic revolution against the capitalists and the employers of labor. The workers and peasants had organized into Soviets, Councils of Workers and Peasants, in which no capitalist or owner of property could be a member. These Soviets decided on November 7, 1917, that they would become the government of workers and peasants; and that the capitalists, the owners of industry, should have absolutely no share in the government. All men and women should become useful workers; if any person was not a useful worker, he was a parasite, and as such should have no share in the government. *The capitalist republic became a republic of the workers.*

The Soviet Republic represents full and fundamental democracy—democracy in government and democracy in industry.

The capitalist republic, such as in Russia under Kerensky, gives the people political democracy—that is, you have a right to vote in politics: *but you have no right to vote in industry, no right to vote in the shops where you work, you have no industrial democracy.* Industry is the most important thing in our lives—the world depends upon industry. If you have no democracy in industry, you are a slave, ruled by capital. Political democracy without industrial democracy is a fraud.

So the Soviet government institutes a system of industrial democracy, in which the workers have control over industry, and not the employers, the owners, the capitalists. *The organized workers are the government.*

The Soviet government is a real democracy. The peasants get together in villages, the workers in their factories, and elect delegates to a local Soviet. Every three months these local Soviets elect delegates to an All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which meets in Moscow. This All-Russian Congress, *elects every three months*, is the supreme government authority in Russia. It elects the members of the Council of People's Commissaires, the executive organ of the government, and a Central Committee which sits permanently in Moscow during the period elapsing between sessions of the All-Russian Congress. Lenin and Trotzky and the others, including the Central Committee, make a report; *if their work has been satisfactory, they are re-elected, if not, they are thrown out, and new persons elected in their place.*

Is this despotism? It is real democracy, it is the workers themselves making the government. *By means of such a government the workers are able to realize freedom, industrial democracy and the control of their own lives in their own way.*

The Soviet Republic has given the land to the peasants, the factories to the workers—preparing the industrial democracy of Socialism.

Private ownership in land has been destroyed. The land belongs to all the peasants and any person fit and willing to work can secure land. But no person can own land, or employ hired labor. The peasants get together in their local Soviet, and elect a Land Committee. This Committee regulates the distribution and tilling of land in its district. It is the co-operative organ of the peasants, and all together work together to produce. All the land in Russia (including mines and forests, etc.), belongs to all the people in Russia, used to make the people prosperous and happy, and life worth living, instead of making profits and big fortunes for a few persons while the great mass of the people live in poverty and misery.

The Soviet government has introduced *worker's control of industry.* This means that the boss is no longer the boss, but that *the workers are in control of the means of life.*

This is the way this wonderful system works:

All the workers in a factory elect a Factory Committee. This Factory Committee is in charge of the factory—not the owner. Everything that is done must have the approval of this Factory Committee.

The various Factory Committees elect delegates a district Workmen's Organ of Control, which regulates industry in a particular district. Then the district Organs of Control are centralized in the All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control, which regulates and has charge of all the industries of Russia.

The Organs of Control decide what wages the workers are to receive, how long they shall work, what profits—if any—are to be secured by the owner—in other words, *the workers through their elected representatives control industry, regulate industry, decide under what conditions they shall work.* This is industrial democracy, the first in the history of the world.

No boss can tell a Russian worker, "You can't have a job, there's no work for you"—no work, while millions starve! No boss can tell a Russian worker—"If you don't like my hours and the wages I pay, get out; there's plenty more I can get." *The Russian worker is no longer an industrial slave: the Russian worker is free in every sense of the word. Have you an industrial vote? Have you a say in your factory?*

The Soviet government is the government of the workers; everything that is done is done in the interest of the workers. It is a workers' republic, not a republic of landlords and capitalists and the sweaters of labor. *And that is the kind of society that must be established in every nation, by means of Socialism—the world for the workers!*

And because there is Socialism in Russia, every brutal reactionary in the world is actively against the Soviet Republic.

That is why capitalist newspapers in this country demand military intervention in Russia—to crush the workers' republic.

That is why the workers of this country and the world must demand: "Let Russia alone! Withdraw from Russia!" If they put over reaction in Russia, they will put over reaction in every country.

AGAINST INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA

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staining their names forever with such a crime as suppressing the great Russian Revolution, which in spite of many blunders, is still an admirable force of idealism and progress.

We will not win the war by killing the Russian Revolution. By committing such a crime we shall not accomplish the task towards civilization which the Allies have set before them, and we shall not realize a democratic and just peace, the principles of which have been enunciated by our Socialist Party and so eloquently developed by Wilson.

The Ministers of the Entente, misinformed through the blindness of their Intelligence Service, were in a position to easily delude the masses of workingmen, and now direct them against the power of the Soviets. But the day will come when the lies will be swept aside and the truth proclaimed. What bitter reproaches will then be addressed to the guilty governments for not having known better, or not having wanted to know better.

What resentment, what hatred will accumulate, and what terrible and unnecessary fights are in store for the future! But the crime will be irreparable! New ruins will not make old ruins look less ugly.

Men like you who have helped so forcefully in the intellectual and moral development of my generation, have the power to prevent this. It is also their duty

Accept, Citizen Romain Rolland, my fraternal and devoted sentiments.

Capt. Jacques Sadoul,

French Military Mission, Moscow.

July 14, 1918.

A Council of Soldiers has been organized in the German army at the front, and is to submit its demands to Field-Marshal Hindenburg. Front and rear the Revolution is conquering.

The Socialists in Berlin have seized the capitalist newspapers and converted them into organs of the Revolution. This is perhaps the first dent in private property. Instead of defending tyranny and Imperialism, these newspapers will now promote revolutionary democracy and Socialism.