

On the Eve of Disaster

By N. I. Hourwich

MORE and more often, more and more insistent, the alarming question of what will be tomorrow presents itself to capitalist society, the question of social reconstruction when the glamour of the war has passed. And as the final peace settlement approaches, more and more does "society" discuss this question in the pages of the bourgeois press.

This is quite natural. The war itself, coming as a logical product of the contradictions of capitalist society, the anarchy of capitalist production, has shown with striking clearness, and at the same time has extremely sharpened, those contradictions and this anarchy. Showing, in its concrete form, the whole organic inability of capitalist society to manage its "economics," the war has also extremely increased the difficulties Capitalism is passing through by presenting new, unheard of and hitherto non-existent demands.

While millions of the best workers have been torn away from the benches and machines—torn away from participation in productive life, and sent to the battlefields for work the very antithesis of productive, the work of mutual killing and destruction,—the demand for productive labor has increased to gigantic proportions. While the number of productive workers has decreased, industry has been faced with the demand to produce, not only for the consumption of humanity, but also for the destruction of humanity, to produce tenfold, at the expense of the energy and productive capacity of future generations. This knowing-no-limit production for destruction, production for war, ammunition production, became the center of all production and all productive activity.

All this has compelled Capitalism to brace up, to mend some of the holes which so glaringly have appeared in the shabby clothes that cover its uninviting nakedness.

In the very heart of industry gigantic grouping has been introduced—the re-distribution of productive forces. A number of new branches of industry have been formed. The ordinary indus-

tries have been forced to limit, and in some cases to discontinue, their usual production, and substitute production more suited to the needs of war. Industry has drawn to itself elements which in the past had taken relatively little part in its process—women, children and old people. Even the people with infirmities that would in normal times disqualify them have been in one form or another "made useful for certain tasks"!

And, finally, to crown all this "transformation," capitalist society in its efforts to "make both ends meet" has been forced to introduce the principle of state control and accounting, which contradicts all its principles and "best traditions." Many branches of industry have come under the control of the state, or have been declared state monopolies, little by little the state guardianship has extended over the private life of the individual. The "citizen" has been told what to do and what not to do, what labors he shall pursue and what he shall leave alone; following his productive activity, his personal activity has also been placed under control—the "watchful eye" of the administration has even entered his kitchen, peeped into his soup bowl. . . .

Have all these "extra" measures lessened the difficulties from which Capitalism is trying to extricate itself? Of course not! For, all these measures, all this "control" and "accounting," naturally could not be introduced in any but the caricature form which does not violate the "sacred principle" of private property. As a result, the difficulties not only have not become less, but they have increased, complicated, changing the problem Capitalism was facing into something very much resembling the fable of the "trishkin" coat—cut off one part to mend another.

Now capitalist society nears the end of the war it produced, not voluntarily, but under pressure of iron necessity, under the pressure of new social forces, awakened to life by the very existence of Capitalism, and which are now arising to take

its place. And capitalist society faces the fatal questions: how to act, what to do? How return to peace without any risk of "upheavals," adapting itself, however, to the new conditions which have been created and provoked by the war?

Will Capitalism succeed in solving this all-absorbing question?

Even a superficial analysis forces a negative reply.

It must not be forgotten, immediately following the conclusion of peace, capitalist society will be forced to pass through a process diametrically opposed to that just described—the gradual process of "inserting itself into the war," adapting itself to the needs of the war. It will become necessary to adapt again to labor the millions of workers who will return from the battlefield, and, at the same time, come face to face with that inevitable and quite natural fact—that those who during four years have taken the places of the absent workers will refuse to return to a "primitive existence," that women, for instance, now being engaged in industry will refuse to "return to the kitchen." . . . On the other hand, a number of industries, whole industrial sections which have been busy with war production, will be thrown "out of work."

All this will create an industrial-economic crisis unparalleled in history. Unemployment, the eternal companion of Capitalism, will reach unheard of proportions. The seemingly big industrial and financial institutions will "burst in the air" as soap bubbles. . . .

War, this time, will be faithful to its task of being a "locomotive of history," as Marx phrased it. At lightning speed it drives the capitalist "train" against the barriers of class contradictions which stand threateningly ahead! There is no salvation! To move backward is impossible. The train is facing inevitable, unavoidable wreck.

Little wonder, then, that the "engineers" and "conductors" are alarmed, and that their hearts are shrinking with alarm.

The Siberian Soviets Protest Against Intervention

THE Central Executive Committee of the All-Siberian Soviets appeals to the toiling masses of the whole world and in the name of millions of the toilers of Siberia, in the name of all workers, peasants and Cossacks declares its indignation and resolute protest against the plan of seizure of Siberia which is the aim of the imperialistic governments of Japan, France, England and America. For some months there has been in those countries an agitation for intervention in the internal affairs of Siberia. The chief pretext for such intervention was the conclusion of peace between Russia and Germany, which peace was falsely proclaimed as strengthening German influence in Russia, the lying provocative reports concerning the arming of some hundred thousand of war prisoners in Siberia, and finally the seizure by the war prisoners of the government in Siberia. The reptile press shamelessly invented all sorts of lying reports about Russia in order to guarantee the success of the agitation. The counter-revolutionists banished from Russia came to the aid of the foreign imperialists. Being driven out of Russia by the mighty wave of the revolution, they abroad appealed to foreign Powers to intervene in Russia and Siberia for the purpose of crushing the Soviet Government and the establishment of their anti-people government.

Everything was done to realize intervention in a most convenient manner through the Czecho-Slovak troops that were passing through Siberia. A sufficient number of pretexts were found to set armed Czecho-Slovaks against the Soviet government. The Soviets' attempts to negotiate with the Czecho-Slovaks and satisfy their demands, and thus peacefully end the conflict at the beginning, were resolutely rejected by the army command of the Czecho-Slovaks. The Czecho-Slovaks in Vladivostok continued to remain there, and finally also arrayed themselves against the Soviet government in Siberia. It has become clear to us, workers, peasants and Cossacks of Siberia, that the Czecho-Slovaks instead of following their former purpose, to move toward France, had another task—to establish the domination of foreign powers in Siberia. We are in possession of documents which show definitely that the foreign powers utilize the Czecho-Slovaks as an element most suitable for purposes of occupation. We

Resolution adopted, shortly after the landing of Allied troops in Vladivostok, by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers, Peasants, Cossacks and Red Guard Delegates of All Siberia.

were forced to offer, armed resistance against these troops. But, evidently, the Czecho-Slovak forces were too weak for the carrying out of the task they had on hand; to their aid British, French and Japanese troops have been rushed, once more under the imaginary pretext of defending the Czecho-Slovaks against the Germans.

We declare that the reptile press of the imperialists will always be able to invent sufficient lying information to justify the actions of the imperialists, and we are not inclined to prove the absurdity of all these inventions. We repeat again that all the provocative information concerning the mass arming of the war prisoners, the seizure by the latter of Siberia, were at the time given the lie by the official representatives of America and England, and that at any moment the Czecho-Slovaks would be given permission to pass through Siberia, should they desire so. But we must emphatically protest against the intentions of Japan, France, England and America to occupy Siberia with their troops, and protest against the actions of Russian counter-revolutionists who appeal to the Allies to intervene in Siberian affairs.

We declare that Allied intervention in Siberia will inevitably result in the strengthening of German influence in Russia against the will of the toilers of Russia, and thus such an action would mean in fact a division of Russia and Siberia between the Allies and Germany.

We declare that the plotting of the Russian counter-revolutionists in appealing for Allied intervention provokes the wrath and indignation of the Russian workers and peasants—any government in Siberia and Russia that might be established with the aid of foreign bayonets is more repugnant to the masses of the Russian people than the absolutism of Nicholas Romanov destroyed by the Revolution, and therefore is doomed to the same fate as the absolutism of Nicholas Romanov. Let the governments of Japan, France, England and America not forget the armed struggle of workers and peasants in the Ukraine against

the government of Ukrainian land-owners, and their hatred of Austria, which has played the role of restorer of reaction and the gendarme of the Revolution; a role now threatened to be assumed by their governments. We remind them about the disgraceful role played by the German soldiers during the Paris Commune of 1871, and we demand of them that they refuse to carry out the role of hangmen of the Revolution now, in 1918, in Siberia and Russia.

The toiling masses of Japan, France, England and America ought to make clear to their imperialistic governments that they will not tolerate shooting, gallows and prisons for the Russian workers, peasants, Cossacks; that they will not allow the Russian revolution and freedom to be crushed. They must rise against the attempt by their governments to chain the Russian proletariat.

In the name of the workers, peasants and Cossacks, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets declares that the Russian masses will not stand for foreign domination in Siberia and will throw off the yoke which is being prepared for them by foreign imperialists in co-operation with the Russian counter-revolutionists. Russian workers, peasants and Cossacks will fight arms in hands to the last drop of their blood against armed foreign invasion in Russia and Siberia, in order to preserve their revolutionary conquests. Only over the corpses of the Russian people will foreign Imperialism march into Siberia, only by wading through the rivers of blood of Russian workers and peasants will the imperialistic counter-revolutionists be able to erect again the throne of reaction.

The story of intervention is a story that reveals the sinister character of Capitalism, reveals the fact that the class struggle develops into war and out of war develops the class struggle, on an international scale.

The story of intervention in Russia reveals the revolutionary integrity of the Soviet Republic and the shameless breaking of solemn pledges by the governments of the Allies waging a war to "make the world safe for democracy." It reveals a crime against civilization—the new civilization of Socialism—and the class unity of international Capitalism and Imperialism.