

# Withdraw from Russia!

THE story of intervention in Russia is the story of an unjustifiable assault upon a nation, decided upon because the people of this nation determined to organize a new Socialist society.

The story of intervention is the story of the determination of international Capitalism to crush the Socialist Soviet Republic, by means of starvation and waging war upon its people, in order to crush international Socialism.

The war was a war between two rival groups of belligerents, determined to crush each other and secure all power. Each group plumed itself upon being superior to the other, each declared that the other was an enemy of humanity; yet both groups acted in precisely the same way against revolutionary Soviet Russia, waged war upon Soviet Russia, used the terrible suffering of the Russian people to accomplish reactionary purposes of their own. The form of expression varied, the fundamental purposes were identical: preserve Capitalism against Socialism.

Let us trace the story of intervention in Russia. In an address to Congress, January 4, 1918. President Woodrow Wilson said:

"The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinct from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

Golden words, and true. The character of each nation and of its "ideals" have been tested by revolutionary Russia: Each and every bourgeois nation has acted against revolutionary Russia. The ideals of bourgeois society are miserable, lying imposters.

Imperial Germany, the Germany of Capitalism and Imperialism, revealed its predatory character at the Brest-Litovsk Peace Conference. The Bolsheviks came to Brest-Litovsk to negotiate a general democratic peace; the Austro-German imperialistic delegates accepted, in words, the formula of no annexations and no indemnities, and then in act repudiated the formula, insisted upon an indemnity and the annexation of Galicia and the Baltic Provinces. The Bolsheviks refused to accept "this peace of robbers and slave-traders," abandoned the Conference without signing the treaty. Then—the troops of imperialistic Germany and Austria marched into undefended Russia "in the name of civilization;" and certain influential personages and newspapers representing Imperialism among the Allies declared that it was a good thing for Germany to invade Russia! Revolutionary Russia, alone, was compelled to accept a peace of violence and shameless robbery. Imperialistic Germany sated its ravenous appetite.

And the Allies? "In the name of civilization," they refused revolutionary Russia's appeal to enter general peace negotiations, compelled the Bolsheviks to hold a separate peace conference. The Bolsheviks all the time, however, insisted upon a peace basis for general peace. While Germany was wreaking her will upon prostrate Russia in "the name of civilization," the Allies did not lift a finger to help their "ally"—equally "in the name of civilization." In fact, the imperialistic press of the Allies violently and viciously attacked Russia, at a time when Russia, alone, was waging a desperate but glorious struggle against German Imperialism. While the Bolsheviks were waging this struggle, the representatives of the Allies in Russia intrigued against the Soviet Government, worked for a restoration of reaction and the bourgeois government. When Germany marched its troops into Russia, the Allies did not offer any help whatever. Indeed, at this time, the Soviet Government asked the governments of France, Great Britain and the United States whether, if Russia carried on the war, they would assist with munitions and food. The governments of the Allies *did not* answer. Russia made peace. International Imperialism chuckled: Socialism is conquered!

Germany directly and the Allies indirectly acted against the Soviet Republic, against Socialism. Touching unanimity! . . . It is the class struggle. . . .

But Soviet Russia in abandoning the military war against German Imperialism, immediately opened a new war—a war of revolutionary propaganda within Germany to awaken the proletariat for the revolutionary overthrow of the German government. When Soviet Russia made its offer of an armistice on all fronts, it developed a powerful propaganda among the Austro-German troops, millions of leaflets, pamphlets and daily newspapers, printed in German, Hungarian and other languages, being distributed, and revolutionary fraternizing among the troops being developed. After the ratification of peace, this propaganda was continued in Germany and Austria, Bolshevik agitators placing life and liberty in jeopardy for the cause of the Revolution.

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## The Story of Intervention

Immediately upon his arrival in Berlin, the Bolshevik ambassador, Joffe, became the centre of revolutionary propaganda against the Kaiser's government. Joffe refused to meet the Kaiser, as was the ambassadorial custom (repeatedly, after August 4, 1914, and before the United States entered the war, American Ambassador Gerard met the Kaiser), and instead gave a banquet in the Russian Embassy to German revolutionary Socialists. Rosa Luxemburg, just out of prison for agitation against the German government, was the guest of honor; Franz Mehring, Liebknecht Socialist, was toastmaster, while the Independent Socialist Haase acted as chairman. The German government was bitterly denounced, the German revolutionary Socialists speaking freely and fully, since the embassy was neutral soil and they could not be prosecuted. . . . And the next day the bourgeois press, in reporting the affair, wailed at the outrage of an ambassador associating thus with "the enemies of the Empire"! Peculiar fellows these "Bolshevik agents of the Kaiser"!

But in the meantime, the Allied press, and often government representatives, accused the Bolsheviks of being pro-German,—at a time when the Bolsheviks were waging a new war (and, as we see now, a victorious war) against German Imperialism. The Allies blockaded Russia, isolated her from the world, refused to allow Russia to purchase food and machinery in the markets of the world: the Allies consciously adopted the policy of starving the Russian people as a means of starving out the Soviet Government. Representatives of the Allies in Russia, moreover, plotted and engaged in counter-revolutionary moves against the Government. In the meantime, Bolshevik Ambassador Joffe brought, through diplomatic couriers, millions of revolutionary pamphlets into Germany, urging the people to make a revolution against Imperialism and the government. . . .

While the All-Russian Soviet Congress in March was in session at Moscow, President Wilson cabled a message of encouragement. . . . The campaign against the Soviet Republic flared up again. . . .

The Allies, it is clear, imagined that the Soviet Government could not last, that it was not representative of the Russian people, and that by starving Russia the process of the Bolshevik collapse would be accelerated. But the Russian people, in spite of counter-revolutionary plots from within and without, refused to overthrow their government. The Soviet Republic, instead of weakening, was strengthened by every single new day of its existence.

The Allies realized this fact, and the campaign for armed intervention in Russia assumed enormous proportions—intervention to rescue the Russian people from starvation and from the allies of Germany, the Bolsheviks! The ideals of Capitalism and Imperialism, in the test, are revealed as maggots. . . .

The Czecho-Slovak adventure provided the opportunity. Czecho-Slovak prisoners from Austria had, under Kerensky, been formed into independent units to fight Germany and Austria for the independence of Bohemia. Reactionary officers of the old regime were put in command. When peace was signed with Germany, arrangements were made for the Czecho-Slovaks to leave Russia for the western front by way of Vladivostok. On the march, the counter-revolutionary Russian officers and other counter-revolutionary elements instigated the Czecho-Slovaks against the Russian people, against the Soviets; and fighting developed. In order to stop this counter-revolutionary activity, which was demoralizing the railways and food transportation, Trotsky demanded that the Czecho-Slovaks yield up their arms. This met with a refusal, and the Czechs began a regular war against the Soviets and the Russian people—a brutal war, a counter-revolutionary war, upon the instigation of reactionary elements.

Then the imperialistic press of the Allies yelled in unison, "Armed Austrian and German prisoners in Russia are massacring the Czecho-Slovaks." The fact that, upon Trotsky's request, an Allied military mission had investigated the charge of "arming Austro-German prisoners" and found it false, did not daunt the imperialistic press in its lying campaign. The fact that the only massacres were massacres of the Russian people by the Czecho-Slovaks did not daunt the imperialistic press in its lying campaign.

After much diplomatic palaver, armed intervention in Russia was decided upon. British and French troops were already in Archangel, British and French and Japanese troops in Vladivostok. The American government decided to join. But in announcing the

American government's intention to send troops to Vladivostok, the American State Department on August 3 issued a statement, which said:

"Military intervention in Russia would be more likely to add to the present sad confusion there than to cure it and would injure Russia rather than help her out of her distress. Such military intervention as has been most frequently proposed, even supposing it to be efficacious in its immediate object of delivering an attack upon Germany from the east, would in its [the American government's] judgment be more likely to turn out to be merely a method of making use of Russia than to be a method of serving her."

This was an excellent evaluation of the situation, and true. President Wilson is a master of words. . . .

But in the same statement it was declared that the purpose of landing American troops in Vladivostok was to assist "the westward moving Czecho-Slovaks." Westward moving Czecho-Slovaks—but this was away from Vladivostok, back into the heart of Russia! Surely this was not assisting the Czecho-Slovaks to get out of Russia—and it was interpreted by the press as a declaration of war against the Soviet government. State Department officials have privately declared that "westward" was a misprint for "eastward"; then why was a public correction never made?

The offensive against the Soviet Government was on,—to crush the revolution! At Vladivostok British and Japanese troops had dispersed the Soviet and arrested its officials, making the world safe for democracy! A new election was held, and the municipal officials elected were overwhelmingly Bolshevik—but the Allies refused to allow these officials to take power, and placed a counter-revolutionary administration in power.—the right of peoples to self-government!

Intervention, the Allies declared, was invited by the Russian people. But why did the people of Vladivostok, after seeing the beneficence of intervention in their own city, overwhelmingly elect Bolsheviks to office? The counter-revolution invited the troops of the Allies, not the Russian people.

Allied troops from Archangel and Vladivostok marched into Russia, the Czecho-Slovaks assumed the offensive. On August 6, 1918, Soviet Commissaire of Foreign Affairs Tchicherin issued the following statement, in the form of a note to the American Government through Consul-General Poole:

"We request you to inform your Government and people abroad that a completely unjustifiable attack and a pronounced act of violence is being committed against us. Our people want nothing but to live in peace and friendship with the masses and workers of all nations. Despite the existing state of peace, Anglo-French armed forces have invaded our territory, taken our towns and villages by force, dissolved our workers' organizations, imprisoned their members, and driven them from their homes without any reason possibly warranting these predatory acts. Without a declaration of war and without the existence of a state of war, hostilities are opened against us and our national property pillaged. Toward us no justice is observed and no laws acknowledged by those who sent these invading troops against us, for we are the first to establish a Government for the oppressed poor. Barefaced robbery is held permissible against us.

We, who represent the poor, are no barbarians like these invaders. Our retaliation against those who shoot the members of our Soviets does not take the shape of similar acts against the representatives of these governments. . . . We intern the nationals of invading powers in concentration camps. We apply these precautionary measures only against the members of the property classes, who are our opponents. No such measures are taken against our natural allies, the workmen of these same countries, who happen to be here. The working classes of the whole world are our friends. Precisely at this moment we say this to the countries whose armies proceed with open violence against us, and we call out to their people: "Peace be to the homes of the poor."

This impassioned and just protest met with no official answer, and was reviled by the bourgeois press. The Soviets asked the Allies to state their grievances, and negotiate, saying they would be only too glad to get the Czecho-Slovaks out of Russia, but the Allies did not answer.

Why? Solemn promises and pledges had been made not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Russian people; but the British Government stated, through Lloyd-George, that the purpose of intervention was to create "a centre for the elements opposed to Bolshevism." Solemn promises and pledges! They are the camouflage of Capitalism, means for the deception of the proletariat.

It was war upon the Russian people, it was war against Socialism, it was Capitalism against Socialism.

The Russian people did not rise in revolt against the Bolsheviks, instead they rose in revolt against the invading troops. . . .

The futility and counter-revolutionary character of intervention is now clear; it is clear that the Allies are starving the Russian people. . . . But alien troops are still at Archangel and Vladivostok! The intervention of the proletariat is necessary: Withdraw from Russia!