

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of Events in Europe.

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## The Great Deception

A tremendous reception has been accorded President Wilson in France. Dignitaries of the Republic have wined and dined him, words of welcome have been bandied back and forth—a great historical moment, duly recorded by the press and the movies. But the distinguishing feature of the reception is that a large amount of popular feeling was evoked, the as yet unconscious masses picturing President Wilson as the personification of the new age and the new democracy. The intense longings of the masses for lasting peace, the inarticulate aspiration for a new world, are being expressed in a temporary acclamation of the President, whose generous use of the phraseology of idealism and democracy has captivated the American masses and a large section of the European masses. This is another great tragedy of history. The American and European masses, as yet, do not see the deeds of reaction that stalk behind the screen of the words of democracy. As the enthusiasm of the war has passed, the deception of it all is apparent; and apparent soon will become the deception of the words of democracy. The brutal tragedy of Capitalism is that it mobilizes the energy, the courage, the enthusiasm and idealism of the masses for the purposes of reaction; but already the masses are awakening to the recognition of this, and their energy and idealism is being transformed into the international struggle for Socialism.

## Waging the Class Struggle

THE press reports that a French "Socialist" delegation met the President, who answered with an address, declaring that "this has indeed been a people's war . . . waged against absolutism and militarism," and that "those who lead your own great nation" are for a new world and a League of Nations. Clemenceau and the Ministry of Reaction, the Ministry of Reaction and the French Bourgeois! The new world they create—it will be a world of capital and the tyranny of capital. The majority, "Socialists" in France are again nobly waging the class struggle, precisely as is the British Labor Party. The acceptance of the President's "14 points" by majority "Socialism" in France and England and by the British Labor Party has enormously complicated our task of awakening the American proletariat, as well as awakening the proletariat of France and Britain. The straight and sure tactic is—dependence alone upon the class struggle of the Socialist proletariat.

## A Challenge to a Liar

THE bourgeois press has never lied as often, as infamously, as it lies these days about revolutionary Socialist Russia. And it isn't simple the yellow gutter press that lies; the most preposterous lies are manufactured by the "respectable" and "intellectual" press: the gutter and the university, the intellectual and the roughneck, are a unity against Russia. The "Christian Science Monitor," in an editorial in its December 13, issue, lies stupidly and viciously.

Says the "Monitor:"

"She [Germany] called to her aid the two international Jews Ulianoff [Lenin] and Bronstein [Trotzky] conveyed them across her territory to the Russian frontier . . ."

Lie No. 1: Ulianoff-Lenin is not a Jew, but a pure Russian, of the Cossack petty nobility.

Lie No. 2: Bronstein-Trotsky was not transported

across Germany to Russia: he left New York, was seized by the British and interned at Halifax, released upon demand of the Russian government, and entered Russia by way of Sweden.

Says the moral, intellectual and clean "Monitor:"

"And so, with all restraints thrown aside, and the vodka shops once again thrown open, liberty in all directions quickly degenerated into license and anarchy." (Under the Soviet regime.)

Lie No. 3: The Soviets did not re-open the vodka shops; as a fact, the Soviets were the one great force against drink. Drink promotes the power of the Black Hundreds, not the power of Socialism.

Says the religious, God-fearing "Monitor:"

"In the German organization of Bolshevism in Russia . . ."

Lie No. 4: Bolshevism is not German; on the contrary, the conception of Socialism violently opposed by Bolshevism was typified in the dominant Socialism of Germany. Fact: It is Germany that is now importing from Russia, and not Russia that imported Bolshevism from Germany.

We do not challenge the editorial liar of the "Monitor" to retract these stupid lies. It is useless to ask this. Of course; they have no real case against the Bolsheviki, and must resort to lies; to retract these lies, might mean the awakening of the American proletariat; and that might mean—more Bolshevism!

## The Beam in Our Eye

THE psychology of the American ruling class, which necessarily filters down into the consciousness of the workers, is very peculiar. The American ruling class boasts of "the utmost in democracy," and deprives ten millions negroes of practically every right of democracy; it prates of "civilization" and "humanity," and tolerates lynching, found nowhere else in the world; it shouts about workers here being "most free," and treats strikers with a brutality that in any other country would almost provoke revolution; it first speaks about the war "to make the world safe for democracy," and then gags democracy and free speech more effectively than any other belligerent country, imposes sentences upon political offenders more savage than those that were imposed by the imperial German autocracy. It is a psychology compounded of conceit and hypocrisy, of savagery and unctuous morality—an effective instrument against the proletariat. One of its particular boasts was the very high level of education in the United States, coupled with sneers about other nations' illiteracy. Well, Secretary of the Interior Lane, in his annual report and an accompanying letter, shows facts that he considers "almost unbelievable" and "in themselves accusatory" about illiteracy in the United States. In 1918 there were 5,556,163 persons more than ten years old who could neither read nor write English or any other language—more than 20 per cent. of the population. According to the census of 1910, the percentage of native white illiterates born of native parents was 3.7; of native whites of foreign or mixed parentage, 1.1; of foreign-born white, 12.7; of negroes, 30. Most of the illiterate nations of Europe make a finer showing. These boasts are means of exception. But the awakening of the proletariat is coming.

## They Are Still There

THE questions asked by Senator Hiram Johnson about American relations with Russia and about what American troops are doing in Russia have not yet been answered. The press reports that Allied troops may march into Russian territory evacuated by the German troops "to maintain order." French marines have occupied Odessa, where they have absolutely no business unless it is counter-revolutionary business. British Minister of Foreign Affairs Balfour declares that there is no responsible government in Russia that could be represented at the Peace Conference, and indicates that Russia is one of "the backward nations" that the League of Nations should be "trustee of, and help them along the steady path of progress." The American War Trade Board has made definite plans to reopen trade relations with Russia—that is, with those parts of Russia not controlled by

the Bolsheviki, which are inconsequential. The process of starving Russia is still in action. . . . And alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok.

## The Labor Party

THERE is a movement developing among the unions of the American Federation of Labor to organize a Labor Party. The movement seems acquiring definite character and strength, central labor councils in a number of cities having approved of the proposal.

This may, in a measure, be a reflex of the similar movement among the Canadian unions. It is, in still larger measures, an expression of the new currents that the war and events in Europe are developing among the world's working class,—expressed in immature and conservative form. It is, accordingly, a move that, while it should not meet enthusiastic uncritical acceptance, merits the serious study of the Socialist who does not flee from reality by means of phrases, nor accepts every "reality" as real, but who studies the social alignment as a means of developing appropriate Socialist tactics.

The organization of an American Labor Party may prove a step forward for the A. F. of L., but not necessarily a step forward for the American proletariat. The A. F. of L., which has insisted all along upon "no politics in the unions" while dickering and compromising with Democratic and Republican politicians, may develop a cleaner sense of independence by means of independent politics. It may, moreover, by showing the futility of A. F. of L. politics, hasten the day of real Socialist political action by the proletariat.

The New York "Call" wails that there is no necessity for a Labor Party since the Socialist Party has been in the field for twenty years. This is either an admission that the Socialist Party is no more than a Labor Party, or a Menshevik refusal to admit the fundamental differences between a Labor Party and a Socialist party. In either event it is counter-Socialism.

What is a Labor Party? The Labor Party, in England and in Australia, has been, from the standpoint of revolutionary Socialism, hopelessly reactionary and un-proletarian. The British Labor Party's policy is a petty bourgeois policy, a counter-revolutionary policy, as has been clearly apparent by its unity with imperialistic Capitalism in the British Cabinet, by its declaration that the war was a war of democracy, by accepting petty bourgeois liberalism instead of proletarian Socialism, by its petty bourgeois, nationalistic proposals concerning Ireland, by its virtual acquiescence in the expulsion of Maxim Litvinoff from England, by it accepting the resolution of the Inter-Allied Labor Conference favoring "democratic" intervention in Russia, by its bureaucracy through Arthur Henderson acting against every development of revolutionary energy and initiative in the British proletariat. The British Labor Party has been a typical party of laborism, in that it struggles for a place in the governing system of things, for petty advantages to the upper layers of the working class, instead of struggling for the overthrow of the governing bourgeois system. The British Labor Party has been and is a party of social-Imperialism, its policy in tendency the reactionary policy of majority Socialism and unionism in Germany,—except in the case of more radical, oppositional unions.

A characteristic of laborism is that it acts against the broad masses of the industrial proletariat, against the unorganized proletariat of unskilled labor. The "labor" government in Australia, once in power, used armed forces to break the strikes of unorganized, unskilled workers. Moreover, the "labor" government, instead of introducing "Socialism," as was expected by the gullible Socialist, strengthened Capitalism, became the unifying centre of bourgeois reaction camouflaged in "liberal" colors. When the war broke, "labor" Australia was even more patriotic and imperialistic than bourgeois Canada, "labor" Premier William Morris Hughes becoming the particular pet of the ultra-imperialistic forces of British Capitalism. There has been a revolt against the "excesses"