

# Japan and Siberian Intervention

By Sen Katayama

**S**IBERIAN intervention was first undertaken by the Terauchi Ministry, the predecessor of the present Hara government. It was this intervention that was one of the causes of the great food riots that occurred all over the country just at the time of the departure of General Otani for Siberia to command the Allied Army. The unpopularity of the Siberian expedition and the popular demonstration against the militarism of the Terauchi ministry, in the form of fierce food riots, were the chief causes of the fall of the government.

Baron Uchida, the former ambassador to Petrograd and present Minister of Foreign Affairs, led the fight against intervention in Siberia, and finally succeeded in overthrowing Terauchi. If he possesses any conscience, his first act as Minister of Foreign Affairs should be the withdrawal of the Japanese troops from Siberia.

Even under the Terauchi ministry the Japanese press frequently characterized the sending of troops to Siberia as "a meaningless act," or more severely as "an outrageous proceeding," but still the Japanese soldiers are in Siberia. All we know about the attitude of the Hara government towards Russia and the Russians is that so far it has not expressed any inimical feeling towards the Bolsheviks. Premier Hara has even gone so far as to state that his government will recognize any stable government in Russia, "Bolshevik or otherwise."

Japan's foreign policy, or, rather, lack of foreign policy, is inherently weak and is consequently easily influenced by the other capitalist nations. But it is apparent that the Hara government will recognize the Bolshevik government as it becomes increasingly clear that it is the stable government. The prediction, made while he was still ambassador to Petrograd, then the seat of the Russian Soviet Republic, that Bolshevism was "the world-wide power that will eventually dominate Europe—first Austria-Hungary, then Germany and finally end the present war," shows that Uchida must have been impressed by the Bolshevik ideas of freedom. But now he is the foreign minister of the present government. . . .

The Hara ministry has been very favorably reported in the foreign press as the first of the Japanese party governments whose premier is a commoner, without any title. Truly Hara is the recognized leader of the Seiyukai, the majority party of the lower house of the Japanese parliament, but he is an opportunist in his political faith and conduct. He was Minister of the Interior under the Yamamoto ministry and even supported the bureaucratic government of Prince Katsura and that of his predecessor, Terauchi.

The only difference between this government and that of the former premier is that Hara is neither a count nor a marquis, but simply Mr. Hara. This may seem of very great importance to some who are accustomed to the usage of Japan, but the Hara ministry is not a popular government at all. It is, however, not a clan government, inasmuch as it was not dominated by either the Chosiu or Sassin clans as were all the former ministries; it is distinctly a capitalist government supported by the influence of the clans. An incisive characterization of the Hara ministry is given by Comrade Sakai in "The New Society," the only Socialist monthly published in Tokyo:

"The Hara ministry, a ministry of capital, which is termed a People's government, is formed. Mr. Noda, Minister of Transportation, represents the Fukuoka Seiyukai. He is called a 'minister of the people,' but really represents Mitsui, the millionaire, and the cotton and coal industries of Japan. Mr. Nakabashi, Minister of Education, represents the millionaires of Fujita and Osaka, and also the Osaka Merchant Marine Company. Mr. Yamamoto, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and Mr. Takahashi Minister of the Treasury, represents varied financial and industrial interests. Mr. Tokoname, Minister of the interior, represents the money power and the clan interests of the Sassiu. While Mr. Hara represents the Seiyukai as a whole: he, at the same time, looks after the interests of Furukawa, the copper king of Japan.

"It is a party government as against the clan or bureaucratic government. But in reality it is a gov-

ernment of capitalists. Only its body represents the Seiyukai; its tail is the landed interests, while its neck and head are industrial and commercial capital. In itself it contains the germ of the coming conflict of interests. The Seiyukai represents the Mitsui influence, while the Kenseikai, the opposition party, represents the Iwasaki Mitsubishi money power. The late governor of Kyoto, Mr. Kiuchi, now in prison on account of an election scandal, is a son-in-law of Iwasaki Mitsubishi, a millionaire, as is also Mr. Kato, president of the Kenseikai. Here is the beginning of a conflict between two great money powers.

"As the struggle for power between the money powers, clan powers, industrial and commercial powers and the landlords develops, each and all these people will more or less attempt to cajole the majority of the common people. In this conflict the people's power will be strengthened."

Comrade Sakai's analysis of the Hara ministry is very interesting and very true, but he omitted one important figure in that ministry: Minister of the Army Tanaka. Tanaka, representing the Chosiu clan, is a well-known Japanese general—the von Moltke of Japan—and an ardent advocate of intervention in Siberia. As long as this imperialist is Minister of the Army, the policy of Japan towards Russia will be dominated by militarists. However, the destruction of German militarism and the miserable fall of Kaiserism will be a check on the Japanese militarists, while Uchida's influence will be strengthened by the power of Bolshevism in Europe.

The Hara ministry is a camouflage popular government, a party government in name, but in reality dominated by the Japanese capitalists and at bottom by the same old autocratic influences. At the same time this corrupted, capitalistic and oppressive government will hasten the final crash of the impending revolution.

The recent awakening of the workers in Japan is nothing remarkable, but they have already realized their power by the recent riots—the power of their hunger. Bolshevism will reach Japan soon. The Japanese workers are preparing for it as the capitalist exploitation increases and the government becomes ever and ever more oppressive and brutal.

## Divide and Rule

**D**IVIDE and rule—such is one of the basic principles of the imperialistic policy. With this principle in mind, imperialists among the Allies are being guided while they aid and deepen the separatist movement in the former Empires of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs. The more Chinese Walls are built around the numerous peoples in Central Europe, the better will it be for Imperialism and the worse for the cause of the proletarian revolution. In this respect, the interests of the proletarian revolution and the interests of imperialists among the Allies are directly opposed.

Let us take the most striking example. The Austrian-Germans quite definitely expressed their desire to join the German proletarian republic. The interests of the proletarian revolution can but gain because of this. Moreover, the decision of the Austrian Germans to join Germany is quite natural from the purely national point of view. Why, then, a question arises, should obstacles be created against this normal desire?

The imperialists among the Allies, however, have already begun to protest. The organ of Parisian plutocracy, the "Matin," declares against the political union of these two sections of the German people, and the president of the Chamber of Deputies, Deschanel, states openly that the Allies will take care that this union should not be realized. Probably, threats will be used to transfer part of the contribution from the shoulders of the Germans to the Austrian shoulders, or some such measures. The imperialists are always resourceful in choosing means—if not by crook, then by hook—to attain their aims of plunder.

A union of all Germans, from the point of view of the imperialists among the Allies, is inadmis-

sible. Of course, the matter changes when the thing concerns the possible disunion of such a people. The rumor that Bavaria intended to separate from Germany was met with loud approval.

Such an attitude is quite natural: the imperialists among the Allies need a weak, broken-up Germany, since such a Germany will not become an imperialistic competitor. Moreover, Germany may become a Socialist republic, and a strong Socialist Germany might become a deadly menace to international capitalism.

Let us go further, however. The existence of a long row of small "independent" states will create the political atmosphere of perpetual national conflicts, the classical example of which were the Balkans. The sharks of the large State Imperialism find it very convenient to catch fish in the waters of mutual distrust and nationalistic passions among the small states.

One ought not go very far for examples. The Polish nationalists in Galicia have already begun a deadly struggle with the Ruthenian nationalists. In the vicinity of Lvov and Przemyśl big battles have already taken place. And this is merely a beginning!

The so-called Great-Serbian aspirations are far from being ideal. Between Serbs, Croats and Slovenes an open hostility has broken out. This will play into the hands of Italian Imperialism. The enmity between Serbians and Bulgarians, it is understood, will not be liquidated with the war's end. The far from friendly relations between Polish and Lettish nationalities will surely result in open hostilities. It is not any better in Hungary, with her numerous Slav population.

As experience shows the labor movement loses a great deal where national conflicts and disagreement dull the edge of the class struggle. There were cases, as, for instance, in Bohemia, where numerous proletarian elements went over to the ranks of petty-bourgeois nationalists. We must not forget, also, the circumstances that the boundaries of small states in the highest degree narrow the breadth of the revolutionary movement. Narrow national boundaries of a small state chain the hands and feet of the international movement. The horizon of a Socialist conception is narrowed and localized. The mire of petty, everyday questions swamps the movement and it loses sight of the larger international perspective. It is a very good ground for the growth of miasms of petty national and opportunist activities.

The interests of a revolutionary labor movement, the interests of the coming Socialist system of society, insistently demand a wide state organization on the principle of federation. This is the ideal we must strive for. Its realization depends on two conditions: on the strength of a Socialist revolutionary movement in a given country and on the aid which may come from the Socialist movement in other countries. Only through the concerted efforts of the whole conscious revolutionary proletariat can we hope to overcome the plottings of international Imperialism and its hirelings among the "liberated" nationalities. A Federated Proletarian Republic in the former Danube monarchy, a Federated Proletarian Republic in the Balkans, a united Socialist Germany—such, and such only, is the solution of the "national" controversy splitting these countries. And this promotes Socialism.