

# The Bolsheviks will catch you if you don't watch out

By Julia Hill

**U**NDER the present Capitalist system of society it seems that fear is the predominant factor in keeping people "good." Always some bogey, some horrible example, is being paraded before the public eye. No matter what the object "the powers that be" have in mind, the people are never appealed to because of the inherent virtue of the objective itself. The fearful consequence accruing if any other course is pursued forms the chief line of argument, the horrible alternative is always stressed.

The populace becomes restive under conditions as they are, some upheaval stirs the sluggish mass into inquiry, a bogey is immediately produced and the mind is terrified with *may be* into forgetting what is, in the same manner as an ignorant parent forces a child into obedience, by scaring it with tales of the appearance of a bogey-man consequent upon disobedience. This method of conducting society is based on fear and ignorance. The fear of the capitalists as to what would be the result of an inquiry into present day conditions by those who suffer under these conditions, and ignorance as to the actual result of such an inquiry, on the one hand; the fear of the masses of the appearance of the bogey and the ignorance that allows the existence of such a bogey to go unchallenged, on the other.

Capitalism's hirelings so far understand their masters' methods as to know that bogeys are necessary, and know the psychology of the masses sufficiently to understand that the bogeys must change from time to time, consequently they are ever on the lookout for anything that can be dressed in bogey clothes. Thus the French Revolution became the Reign of Terror and the restive masses all over the world were for a long time awed into submission with stories of its horror. But people are now becoming convinced the French Revolution was not the terrible orgy of blood it has been depicted, they are beginning to trace its beneficial effects upon the world at large, to see that what bloodshed actually did take place was a tiny rivulet compared to the sea of blood that accompanied the regime of the French aristocracy.

Accordingly Capitalism has discovered that the French Revolution, in its bourgeois aspects at least, was a glorious thing, its slogans are now the acme of bourgeois ideology. The thinking workers have progressed beyond the reforms of the French Revolution, are turning their attention to other things, so a new bogey must be found. And where would it suit Capitalism better to find this bogey than in these new ideas of the workers?

So the Bolsheviks become the modern bogey. The Bolsheviks hold the key to the solution of the world's problem, once the workers grasp the import of their doctrines Capitalism is lost. Therefore the workers must not turn a sympathetic ear to their words and the best way to keep the workers deaf is to create, out of this new evangel, a bogey—thus killing two birds with the one stone; terrorizing the people into submission with the instrument of their own salvation.

It is obviously impossible to terrorize people with something with which they are familiar. It is the unknown that is dreadful, that "puzzles the will and makes us rather cherish ills we have than fly to those we know not of." Consequently the bogey must be created out of the unknown. Socialism for a time became the prospective bogey—free love, breaking up the home, the idle dividing up with the industrious—but Socialism became more or less familiar to the average man, he became accustomed to the sound of the word, at least, and he knew that some of his own neighbors had embraced its tenets, thus it lost some of its most spectacular terrors.

When the Social Revolution became a fact in Russia and, as the struggle developed, it was found that a section of the Socialists, those who insisted on applying the full measures of Socialist principles to the problems confronting them, were called in the Russian language, Bolsheviks, the new bogey was found. Nobody seemed to know who or what the Bolsheviks were. It was a chance in a lifetime and the news-

papers, the spokesmen of Capitalism, seized upon it with avidity.

The Bolsheviks became, over night almost, fiends incarnate. Tales began to filter through the columns of the press of their excesses. Every crime in the calendar was charged to their account. As a matter of course they became German agents in the Allied countries, and Allied agents in the Central European states. Vague accounts of slaughter fests in the streets of the Russian cities became an every day occurrence. Descriptions of the appearance and manner of these Bolsheviks were so vivid that the average newspaper reader got a confused idea of a Bolshevik as an animal, somewhat resembling a man, with a large bushy beard, wild uncombed hair, uncouth ways of speech, small beady eyes and an unquenchable thirst for the blood of a very harmless and good section of the Russian people known as the Bourgeoisie.

Russian nobility were slaughtered out of hand by these wild people, but nobody could work up a very righteous rage about the death of the Czar or the members of his court, unless the details of the execution were particularly horrible. So the newspapers killed the Czar about once a week, each time giving him a different form of death. First he was hanged, most people seemed to agree that he could scarcely have expected to escape anything else, then he was shot without a trial on a very cold and stormy morning just before daybreak, then he was slowly done to death by starvation, then trampled by the mob, then he was tortured in prison, then given a slow and very painful poison and finally he was boiled in oil to the accompaniment of delighted yells from a mob of Bolsheviks.

The Czar, however, had few friends in the world, even amongst the most tender-hearted, so the newspapers left him alone and turned their attention to the Bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie were described as that section of the population who were always engaged in performing useful work, except while they were bathing or putting on clean collars. Sob stories about the beauty of their homes, the cleanliness of their babies, the gentleness of their voices, their spotless linen and the culture and refinement of their womenfolk, filled the pages of the press. Then one morning a horrified world learned that the Bolsheviks had decided to massacre the Bourgeoisie; everyone with a white collar, a beautiful home, a clean baby or a refined look was to be immediately done to death without trial.

Now whenever the news from Russia is scanty an account of a massacre of the bourgeoisie by the Bolsheviks is published with full details.

But who are these Bolsheviks and what is Bolshevism if we take away the bogey clothes?

The Bolsheviks are revolutionary Socialists and Bolshevism is Socialist theories and principles translated into action. Bolshevism is not peculiar to Russia nor is it peculiarly Russian. It is simply Socialism applied to Russian conditions. The Bolsheviks are the people; the workers, the farmers and the soldiers. They are that section of the Russians who under the Czaristic regime felt the lash of the knout, the pangs of hunger, the bitter frost of winter. They are exactly the same type and class of people who form the large mass of the population of any country, the disinherited, "the large and respectable class of no property," the men and women who perform the world's work and who bear the world's miseries. The only difference between the Russian Bolsheviks and the mass of the people anywhere is that the Bolsheviks are class conscious, intelligent students of conditions as they exist under Capitalism and as they will exist under Socialism.

The Bolsheviks are the architects of the new structure of society, the seers and heralds of the new age. Bolshevism is the instrument of the workers in abolishing the old order and establishing the new. Its tactics, in the work of abolition, follow the scientific lines laid down by those who foresaw the breakdown of

the present system of society, and its methods, in the work of building the new society, follow the same scientific lines, augmented by the knowledge gained through the actual operation of destroying the old structure of society.

As opposed to the section of the Russian people who are called Mensheviks, Social Revolutionists and a variety of other names, the Bolsheviks, refuse to be content with simply repairing the old system of society to temporarily suit the needs of the moment, but insist on rebuilding the whole structure on a new foundation. In the course of the actual work of abolishing the old system it developed that a minority of the Socialist theorists became afraid of the success of their own principles, wanted to call a halt and endeavor to affect a compromise between the old and the new. The Bolsheviks took the stand that only by thoroughgoing methods could the new structure be made to withstand the storms and refused to compromise on any fundamental principle. They maintained that the old system of society must be eradicated root and branch, that the two systems could not exist together but that one or the other must finally prevail, and they threw themselves uncompromisingly on the side of the new society.

They declare that the continuation of various classes in society works detriment to the world as a whole and they propose to do away with classes by establishing one class in society and one only—the working class—to the end that every person in society must contribute to the maintenance of Society.

The Bolsheviks recognize that, in order to carry out this program, it is necessary that the people of all countries should cooperate, that the world instead of being divided into various and antagonistic groups must become one organic whole, having only one fundamental interest; the maintenance and well-being of society as a whole.

These ideas necessarily meet with opposition from the class which profits from the present system—the Capitalistic class; and this opposition must, in its very nature, also be uncompromising because it recognizes that either society must be constituted among the lines laid down by the Bolsheviks, or it must continue along the present lines—the existence of one group by the exploitation of the rest. This opposition takes the form of open war in Russia, and the creation of the Bolshevik bogey elsewhere. Capitalism recognizes that where Bolshevism is strong it must be fought and exterminated by means of killing sufficient of its advocates, and that, where it has not yet captured the minds of the masses it must be prevented from doing so by preventing its principles and practices into something that will repel the majority of the workers. Only by preventing the spread of Bolshevism can Capitalism save itself from destruction, because under the present system, the few dominate the many, and once the masses realize this, Capitalism will vanish like an evil dream.

So the bogey is paraded before the public eye in all its trappings, and the people are warned: "The Bolsheviks will get you if you don't watch out."

The Berlin workers by their action in suspending the issues of the newspapers show that if they can't have the truth they are at least determined that they shall have no lies.

\* \* \*

Samuel Gompers is very much annoyed that although he has taken a decided stand against the formation of a Labor Party the movement is getting extensive support, but he should take consolation from the fact that though the Kaiser was fired, he has not even been asked to resign his job—yet.

\* \* \*

"Mr. Bonar Law gives advice to Labor," runs a headline, but then nobody ever takes advice.

\* \* \*

We wonder did Senators Sherman and Knox ever hear of an old copy-book line beginning with something about the cat being away?