

# Withdraw from Russia!

THE news coming out of Russia since armed intervention was initiated parallels, in a measure, the news from Belgium during the early days of the war, when Germany invaded that nation, disavowing interference in the internal affairs of the Belgian people—and imposing an alien dominion upon the people.

The invasion of a peaceful nation against the protest of its government, *de jure* or *de facto*, is a violation of the laws of nations, and of all the avowed purposes of the Allies. It is an expression, fundamentally, of Imperialism and militarism. It is the crime of imposing an alien will upon the peoples by means of the bayonet. Is this what the Allies mean by the freedom of nations and the inviolability of international law?

The immediate-objective of intervention, that the Czecho-Slovaks might act as the centre for the counter-revolutionary overthrow of the Soviet Government, or, in the words of Lloyd-George, that intervention might create "a centre for the elements opposed to Bolshevism," has collapsed miserably and completely. The theory was that the Russian people were helpless under the domination of a few unscrupulous individuals, that the Soviet Government was not representative of the masses. Intervene, was the theory of intervention, and the Russian people will itself sweep aside the Soviet autocracy. But more than five months have passed since intervention was initiated, and the Soviets are still supreme. More than five months have passed, and the counter-revolution from within has not materialized, and its petty, isolated expressions have been easily crushed. More than five months have passed, months of enormous pressure, and it has been proven that the strength of the Soviets is the strength of the revolutionary masses. What now? Shall one million, shall two million; American, British and Japanese troops march against the Russian people? Shall the Soviet Republic be crushed by the overwhelming might of alien military power?

All that this preliminary intervention accomplished was to multiply the agony of the Russian people. The Czecho-Slovaks disorganized the food supply of the country, increasing starvation, interfering with industrial and social reconstruction. The Allies are blockading Russia, increasing starvation. And one of the purposes of intervention was to relieve the starvation of the Russian people!

We are familiar in this country with the hypocritical methods used by the sinister interests of Imperialism to force intervention in a country in which they have brutal purposes to promote. When American interests intrigued for intervention in Mexico, the press teemed with heart-rending stories about "mass starvation" in Mexico; enough crocodile tears were shed to convince the sentimental—and the gullible. But after intervention became impossible, the American press did not any longer concern itself with "mass starvation" in Mexico. . . . But if Russia is starving—why not ship food? Is the proper means of relieving starvation bread or bullets?

The Russian people do not beg for food, they do not ask for charity—that is a bourgeois characteristic: the bourgeois is either a bully or a beggar.

The Russian people do not want charity. They want all alien troops to leave Russia, so that they can proceed in their own way with the tasks of reconstruction. They want the blockade of Russia ended, a blockade which gives the lie direct to all claims of being interested in relieving starvation in Russia; they want free and equal access to the markets of the world. The Russian people do not plead—they demand: they demand that the international proletariat shall insist upon justice for Russia. . . .

"We must restore Russia!" clamor the hypocritical representatives of Imperialism, who also want to restore Russia—in what way and for whom? Is Russia to be restored by intensifying her disorganization through invasion, preventing the recovery of the country and multiplying the factors making for starvation? Is Russia to be restored through a "Peace

## II

### The Prettexts for Intervention

of Warsaw," imposed by means of crushing the revolutionary masses with alien bayonets? Is Russia to be restored to the imperialistic bourgeoisie and the Czarist bloc? Is Russia to be restored by crushing Socialism. These are the inevitable consequences of successful intervention: the revolutionary masses are resisting intervention and invasion to the death.

The imperialistic press prints all sorts of lying stories about terrorism in Russia. But did this press ever propose intervention in Russia against the terrorism of Czarism? This is a stupid pretext. Capitalism itself is terrorism; a never-ceasing terror. Capitalist industry is a terror. Capitalist government is a terror. Capitalism is an organized terror against the proletariat. It is because revolutionary Russia struggles to end this bourgeois terror and that bourgeois hirelings everywhere insist upon the crushing of the Soviet Republic—to end terrorism! This end of "terrorism" in Russia would mean the initiation of a new international terror against the proletariat, against civilization.

Is the use of troops and police during strikes not terror? Was the massacre of women and children at Ludlow not terror? This is terrorism against the proletariat and civilization; what terrorism there is in Russia is for the proletariat and civilization.

Bourgeois morality admits the necessity of war under certain conditions; and war is a giant, organized terrorism. Was the recent war a pink-tea affair, with its tens of millions dead and maimed? So be it: revolution is a form of war—a civil war. Every revolution flares up into civil war—the French Revolution, the American Revolution, the Russian and the German Revolution. Terrorism was used in all these revolutions; and it was justified. Civil war rages in Russia; in our own civil war, was the fight waged with bon-bons and sprays of perfume? Progress proceeds in the shadow of the valley of death.

Complaints of terrorism in Russia are sheer hypocrisy. There is terrorism in Russia, the necessary terrorism of every revolution; but it is vilely exaggerated by the imperialistic press: there is no need for much terrorism in Russia since the masses of the people are for the Soviet Republic and the counter-revolution within has been dispersed.

But—the Bolsheviks are pro-Germans! Are they? Was their revolutionary agitation against the Kaiserism, their co-operation with revolutionary Socialism in Germany, "pro-German"?

This argument never had a shred of validity; that is now apparent: but alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok! . . .

Let us consider the "pro-German" argument.

The usual form of this argument was that the Bolsheviks, Lenin and Trotzky, were agents of German Imperialism. This was obviously silly; not even the forged documents offered as "evidence" by the Creel Committee could make one believe this stupid fairy-tale.

More appropriate was the argument that the Brest-Litovsk treaty had to be revised. But this revision has now been accomplished by military disaster—and the proletarian revolution in Germany; but—alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok!

The necessity for the revision of the Brest-Litovsk treaty was indisputable; but the problem was: *who* shall do the revising, and in the interests of *whom*? Should this revision be accomplished by crushing the Soviets and the Revolution, the revision would be more infamous and disastrous than the original treaty itself. It would have been an imperialistic revision, promoting international Imperialism.

Revolutionary Russia realized the enormity of the Brest-Litovsk peace, and used all its energy to bring about its revision in the only Socialist way—by developing the proletarian revolution in Germany. In September the Bolshevik Zinoviev, speaking in Petrograd, said: Don't worry about the supplementary clauses in the Brest treaty; Comrade Lenin signs

them without even reading the text; they do not matter: the German revolution will come and destroy the imperialistic plans of Germany.

The Revolution did come; German Imperialism dead. But alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok! . . .

Another argument made in favor of intervention was that the eastern front should be restored. In September, Secretary of State Lansing announced that it was not America's intention to restore the eastern front; but American troops stayed in Vladivostok. Now there is no necessity of restoring the eastern front; but alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok!

Let us consider this "restoration of the eastern front," that Russia should be dragged back into the war. Let us dismiss the propriety, the decency and justice, of forcing a nation into war against its will; this procedure was a crime only when perpetrated by Imperial Germany. There is a much more convincing answer. These four and a half years of war have proven that war today is largely a problem of productive capacity. The military machine depends absolutely upon a properly functioning industrial machine behind the front. Industry determines the capacity of a nation to fight; industrial collapse inevitably means military collapse. Now, what was the situation in Russia? Industrial disintegration was general, a disintegration produced by the regime of the Czar and completed by the bourgeois-"Socialist" regime of Kerensky. The heritage of the Soviet Republic was industrial chaos. Under these conditions, to have continued the war would have been sheer suicide, the end of the Revolution. Russia could resume the military war against Germany, either an imperialistic or a revolutionary war, only after industry had been restored. The political, the social, the military problems of Russia all resolve into one central problem—the restoration of normal conditions of production, the development of industrial power out of which alone rises military power.

Moreover, Soviet Russia was not thinking in terms of war, but in terms of the class war, of the revolutionary war. Soviet Russia's policy was determined by the necessity of arousing the proletarian revolution in Germany, as a preliminary to the proletarian revolution in all Europe. In urging ratification of the Brest treaty, Lenin argued: This is an infamous peace against the Revolution, but it will fail, precisely as the more onerous Tilsit treaty of Napoleon failed to crush Prussia; then only a few bourgeois intellectuals made history; now the masses are in motion, and history moves with the speed of a locomotive; if we try simultaneously to carry on a war against our own Imperialism and foreign Imperialism, we shall lose both wars. Capitalism and reaction will come back to power in Russia, and the revolution in Germany will be postponed indefinitely, but if we, through peace, however onerous, can concentrate on the inner problems of our Revolution, and crush forever Russian Imperialism and the counter-revolution, then later will inevitably come our victory against international Imperialism. Our peace will not end the war or insure German victory; the war will flare up more intense and violent than ever; the economic and social crisis will be feverishly accelerated, will inevitably produce the Revolution—and then Soviet Russia will come into her own.

It was a sober analysis of the facts, a brilliant formulation of revolutionary Socialist tactics. Revolutionary Russia did conquer! . . . When the revolution started in Germany, Soviet Russia offered the German proletariat help—and a million troops! . . .

The journalistic hirelings of Imperialism pretend surprise that the Russian people are resisting the counter-revolutionary invaders. Apparently, the Russian workers and peasants should without a protest and without resistance allow their own revolution to be crushed, a revolution that they have accomplished by means of unparalleled struggles, in blood and tears and agony. And now that their hopes are being re-

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