

# The Revolutionary Age

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## The Struggle of the New Year

THE birth of the year 1919 finds the world on the threshold of a new era. Out of the chaos of international war, national ambitions, commercial rivalries and diplomatic trickery is gradually emerging the real struggle—the war of the classes. Since the cessation of hostilities it is becoming gradually clearer that there are but two nations in the world, the working class nation and the capitalist nation. And between these two the battle line is flung.

Already two great countries have thrown aside the pretense of peace between the classes, and in one of these, Russia, the workers are definitely in the ascendancy, while in the other, Germany, the struggle is raging for the conquest of power, the proletariat slowly gaining the upperhand. Throughout the rest of the world reaction is, for the moment, holding sway. Flushed with the visionary triumph of victory in the international war, the workers of the Allied nations have paused in the fight, and capitalism is endeavoring to prolong the pause sufficiently to re-entrench itself, while at the same time preparing to crush the Russian workers and to uphold reaction in Germany.

Because of this very pause, because reaction is now riding the crest of the wave, Capitalism is becoming increasingly arrogant, is forgetting to be careful and is revealing its sinister designs. Frightened into caution by events in Russia, Capitalism made haste slowly at first and then forgot its danger sufficiently to openly aim at the destruction of the Russian workers, only to again receive a shock by the developments in Germany, but, reassured by the inaction of the workers of the Allied countries and spurred on by the necessity of its inherent greed, Capitalism is again forgetting its danger and is riding for a fall. The voices of the more farsighted of the capitalists are gradually being silenced and drunk with its own success Capitalism is throwing discretion to the world.

But the broad masses of Russia and Germany have felt the pulse of life in their veins, have glimpsed the possibilities of the future and having overcome their initial fear of action, are gathering power and momentum with amazing rapidity. The revolutionary instinct of the people having found expression at last is sweeping all before it, and is forcing the capitalists into open war. The revolutionary cry, "Workers of all coun-

tries unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to gain," sounded by Karl Marx half a century ago and since then voiced by Socialist propagandists in every country of the world, is now thundered from two hundred million throats.....

The year just gone saw the spread of this watch-cry from Russia to Germany, and in that year the thunder of the guns, the cries of the wounded, the groans of the dying and the weeping of the forsaken dulled the strength of Russia's voice. But in the year just born

the noise of international war is deadened, the triumphant cries of victory will soon be silenced, and then the voices of the advancing proletariat will be heard in many lands.

Every day brings the real issue into bolder relief. Capitalism has no choice, it must combat the advancing workers; but it can only combat them with other workers and the watch-cry is infectious. Only by obscuring the real issue can Capitalism hope to be successful. But the nature of the struggle that is at present devel-

oping tends to reveal, rather than obscure the issue. No longer can the workers be successfully rallied to battle against their brothers by the fear of a dread imperialism. The German and Russian workers have killed their imperialism and it is only in the Allied countries that Capitalism holds sway. But in the Allied countries the workers have been fighting and dying side by side, and any war that may develop between these countries can not rally the workers to the support of their various governments as did the last war.

On the fields of battle, on the grey stretches of the ocean, in the mills, mines and factories, and in the homes of the workers the dread import of international war has been realized. While the fight was actually in progress, the wounds were obscured, the grief was hidden, the hysteria of war kept the nations keyed up, but with the end of the fighting the workers are beginning to realize the enormity of the sacrifice and are beginning to balance it with the gains accruing from victory.

When the emptiness of victory is revealed, then the class struggle will flare up in the Allied countries. The old antagonisms of nation against nation will disappear and in their places will develop the antagonism of the class war. The year 1919, although it has been issued in to the ringing of bells proclaiming "peace on earth, good will to men," will not be a peaceful year. It will be a year fraught with perils, a year more momentous than any ever witnessed in the history of mankind, and although its days will be stained with blood, the blood of brothers shed by brothers, though it may not, in itself, be a happy year, yet the historic watch-cry of the workers, swelling loud and strong, foretells that 1919 is a year pregnant with happiness for the workers of the world.

Karl Marx

## The International

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!  
Arise, ye wretched of the earth.  
For justice thunders condemnation,  
A better world's in birth.  
No more tradition's chains shall bind us.  
Arise, ye slaves! no more in thrall!  
The earth shall rise on new foundations.  
We have been naught, we shall be all.

CHORUS

'Tis the final conflict,  
Let each stand in his place.  
The International Party  
Shall be the human race.

We want no condescending saviors,  
To rule us from a judgment hall.  
We workers ask not for their favors;  
Let us consult for all.  
To make the thief disgorge his booty,  
To free the spirit from its cell,  
We must ourselves decide our duty,  
We must decide and do it well.