

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of Events in Europe.

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## American Journalism

MR. HEARST and his papers have recently been the object of attack by other bourgeois papers. He has been denounced as disloyal, pro-German and anti-American and in turn he has denounced his accusers as the enemies of the people. All this makes good newspaper copy and is highly edifying to the American workers, besides keeping their minds occupied with unessentials, but there is another aspect of Hearst Journalism which it would be well for the common people to consider.

For some time past the Hearst papers editorially opposed the occupation of Russia by American troops, said a good word for the Bolsheviks and strongly denounced the misrepresentation of the Soviet Government by the American press. At the same time as these editorials appear in his newspapers another agency bearing Mr. Hearst's name, the Hearst news service for the moving pictures, takes quite a different attitude on the Bolsheviks. In one of this series of news pictures an animated cartoon entitled *The Menace* is shown. A scene of desolation and ruin is depicted and gradually as the film develops the giant shadow of a ferocious Russian peasant, with a villainous looking pistol in one hand and a blazing firebrand in the other, is seen gloating over the ruins. The shadow is labelled "Bolshevism."

Which is the true portrayal of the Bolsheviks? Is it the word picture of the editorials, which show the Bolsheviks as a misrepresented, maligned people who are striving to establish order out of the chaos wrought by four years of war and centuries of Czarism; or is it the film picture, which portrays the Bolsheviks as an evil force, armed with the pistol of murder and the torch of incendiarism, seeking what it may destroy. It would be well for the workers to ponder over this aspect of American journalism—if they accomplished nothing else they would at least save themselves from the ignominy of being treated as gullible fools prepared to swallow anything placed before them.

## They Are Still There!

PERHAPS the best proof of the real character of bourgeois democracy is furnished by France's action regarding representation for the Soviet Government at the Peace Conference. France! Republican France! Who suffered during her revolution in exactly the same way as Russia is suffering today. The Great Powers of Europe united against her cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," fearing that behind that cry stalked the "terrible menace" of the awakening of the common people. The best proof of their success in crushing the spirit of the revolution is France's answer to Great Britain's proposals regarding the Soviets.

"The French Government, so far as it is concerned, will make no contract with crime," says M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister. "By agreeing to recognize the Bolshevik Government we should give the lie to the policy—which the Allies have not ceased to sustain in argument—of furnishing at all accessible points of Russia all the aid and succor possible to give to the healthy, honest, faithful elements of Russia in order to help them to escape from the

bloody and disorderly tyranny of the Bolsheviks and to reconstitute a regular government by themselves."

Indeed the French Government need make no contract with crime for it is already contracted to the crime of Capitalism. A contract which made possible the loans which the Czar utilized to crush in blood the aspirations of the Russian people in 1905-6 and which necessitated the invasion of Russian territory in 1918 to terrorize the Russian people into paying the money loaned to crush them.

But it would be folly to suppose that because France is the mouthpiece for the refusal to allow the Soviet Government to participate in the Peace Conference—a conference which Russia more than any other single agency brought about—the other capitalist governments are willing to recognize Russia. France is merely the foolish spokesman for the more astute forces of the Great Powers. England makes a plea for a policy of conciliation in Russia, and France refuses. . .

Since when did England become the conciliator of disputes? Can capitalist England afford to have Bolshevism triumph any more than capitalist France? Even our own bourgeois press shrieks loudly that the United States, removed from Europe by three thousand miles of sea, can not tolerate the growth of Bolshevism in the old hemisphere. And if capitalist America opposes Bolshevism five thousand miles off, how can capitalist England tolerate it when only removed by a few hundred miles? Great Britain's proposal was a straw proposal, made to be refused.

England has a strong working class, a working class becoming increasingly impatient with war against the Bolsheviks, and so she proposes conciliation in Russia. *And very much to her surprise France refuses to be conciliatory!* What a fine talking point for Lloyd-George when he faces the British working class!

America has given Russia many fine words and now England also spins fine phrases about conciliation. But actions speak louder than words. Alien troops are still in Archangel and Vladivostok. . . .

## Spargo and the Labor Party

WITH the formation of an Independent Labor Party in New York, Chicago and several other large cities well under way *The New York World* publishes in last Sunday's issue an interview with John Spargo. For some reasons or another *The World* seems to think that Mr. Spargo is an authority on such matters—though *The Tribune* found out some time ago, when it sent him to Europe, that his information regarding the labor movement was very scanty to say the least—and it accordingly gives his views quite a prominent position.

After explaining that Mr. Spargo, although one of those Socialists who were forced to leave the Socialist Party on account of its attitude on the war, has not spent his time "abusing his former comrades—he thinks they were wrong on some fundamental points, but he doesn't think they are either fools or traitors—" *The World* allows him to plunge into the depths of Socialist philosophy. After wallowing around, with the help of the interviewer, finally a leading question is sprung and then "Mr. Spargo smiled."

The interviewer asks would the new Labor Party be "a strictly American party or would it be (here his voice dropped to whisper) *international* in its aims and attitude?" Pausing to smile, Spargo rushes into explanations. After explaining that the Socialist Party is nationalist, although calling itself internationalist, and that all the rest of America is violently internationalist, though believing itself nationalist, and that nationalism and internationalism are one and the same thing except in fundamental differences, he delivers himself: "It is quite possible then that the new Labor Party will not think of itself as international; but if it is a genuine Labor Party it will not only be a Socialist Party in fact, whatever its name, but inevitably must participate in the international Socialist movement."

But despite the confusion of terms that Mr. Spargo sees ahead of the new Labor Party he is very much in favor of it and down at the end of the interview he gives his reasons for his attitude. Labor it appears is beginning to wake up and if things don't go as it wants them to, there is a danger that it may be very

nasty, so Mr. Spargo wants a "sane" unionism, nothing like Russia, that will step by step "realize the full measure of the democracy we have been fighting for." In other words he wants a safety valve, something that will keep the workers quiet without really changing the present system of society. . . . And Mr. Spargo is a Socialist!

The movement to create a Labor Party in America is a healthy sign, a sign of the awakening of the workers to the realization of their real position in society. But it is only a sign, so far. At this stage of the world's development the creation of a Labor Party with a platform of reform, even though it is very liberal reform, is not a thing to be hailed with enthusiastic delight. The day of reform is fast passing away, and a new party that will aim to placate the workers and lull them into a sense of false security may well prove a step backward. On the other hand a small beginning may lead to a great end. It is certain, however, that any movement of labor which does not recognize the existence of the class struggle, aim at the abolition of the wage system and the establishment of industrial democracy, is out of touch with the march of the times and is destined to hold labor back, at least for a time.

We wish the new Labor Party well, that it will develop the class consciousness which its creation indicates is beginning to make itself felt in the ranks of the workers. The surest way to such development lies in having nothing whatever to do with Mr. Spargo or his brand of "Socialism."

## Bolshevikjabs

The Peace Conference opens its sessions and all is well with the world except in Russia, Germany, Poland, Ireland, Montenegro, Argentina, Hungary, Italy, Greece, Jugo-Slavia, China and a few other unimportant places.

In fact if the Conference had delayed its sittings for a few more weeks it would have had a much easier task because by that time there would be no peace to discuss.

As Russia, China, Ireland and a few other countries are to be excluded from the peace table it would seem to be alright to call it a Selective Peace Conference.

Perhaps in view of the way things are going in Italy and elsewhere it will be best to call it a Piece Conference.

The life of a Bolshevik leader is at least an eventful one whatever else may be said about. Liebknecht has been killed, jailed, wounded, and exiled within the last week according to press dispatches, while within almost the same period of time Trotzky has fled from Russia, jailed Lenin, executed a thousand bourgeois officers, sent another wife away with several million dollars in gold and been confined to bed with a bad cold. Lenin has not been so fortunate of late having been merely shot while leading Bolshevik troops, thrown into jail in Moscow by Trotzky, closeted with von Ludendorff and overthrown by the Russian Government at Stockholm.

The New York Tribune in a headline tells us that the British Empire is a miniature World League which seems to us one of the strongest arguments against the League of Nations we have yet heard.

It would appear from the press reports that unless a little food is given to the starving workers of Europe they may take all they need.

General von Ludendorff is reported to be busy writing a book which will be in the nature of a defense of his part in the war. It would be a good idea for an enterprising publisher to issue all these books, now being written by former rulers, generals, admirals and diplomats, in a series under the title "A defense of failure."

It looks as if one of the first little countries to be visited with self-determination is Luxemburg. And it serves her right for not resisting the Germans!

Why is Italy like Oliver Twist?