

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of International Events

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*We need to have the clear party note sounded now and our position sharply defined as an uncompromising revolutionary party if we are to take and hold our rightful place in the international movement. We have got to plant our party upon the rock if it is not to be swept away in the oncoming tempest.*—EUGENE V. DEBS, February 15, 1919.

## A League for Camouflage

THE draft of the "constitution of the League of Nations" is ready. The most vital provision of the "constitution" is that providing that the League shall have an Executive Council of representatives from the "Big Five"—the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. *The control of the affairs of the League is in this Executive Council, and this Council consists of five nations!* The "League of Nations," as projected, follows closely the tendency of modern trust Capitalism—the "Big Five" hold the majority stock, while all the other nations who may come in will constitute the minority stockholders. A League that is controlled by five big imperialistic powers is not a League of Nations but a League against the nations. It is an alliance of the victors in the war, for world dominion; it is, moreover, a camouflage to disguise the imperialistic appetites of the powers and to "satisfy" the longings of the masses, who have bled in the war, for permanent peace. It is a deception and betrayal—Capitalism can do nothing else but deceive and betray the masses. As against this League against the nation, our formula is: overthrow of Capitalism and Imperialism as the necessary preliminary to the organization of a League of Nations through international Communist Socialism.

## Industrial Revolution

IN an interview, Mayor Ole Hansen, of Seattle, declares that the recent strike of 70,000 workers "was an attempted revolution. . . . The plan was to start the revolt here and have it spread to other cities. . . . The intent, openly and covertly, was for the overthrow of the industrial system: here first, then everywhere." Mayor Hansen admits that there was no violence in the strike yet boasts openly of the fact that machine guns and rifles were to be used by the municipal government. The Seattle strike did not revolutionize the industrial system; but it is an enormous factor in revolutionizing the consciousness and modes of action of the American proletariat. The Seattle strike, apparently, caved in because of the betrayal of union officials, upon whom the strike was imposed, and because it seems the workers were not yet prepared to come to grips with the enginery of repression, and seize power. But the day will come when the union officials and all other traitors will be swept aside; the day will come when the proletariat is prepared to seize power; and then we shall have the industrial revolution, and Socialism. In the interval—prepare!

## They are Still There!

THERE is, at this moment, an utter confusion concerning the Allies' policy toward Soviet Russia. Secret diplomacy is in action. Rumors are that the Prinkipo Conference is to be abandoned: is this because the Bolsheviks scored by accepting? Another rumor is that a new conference will be held somewhere else.

The New York World, February 18, accuses the factions opposed to the Soviets of being tainted with

"reaction as well as cowardice," and says: "In the main, they seem to be without popular support. We cannot wonder at the lack of faith in them when we reflect that they do so little to inspire respect and confidence and depend altogether on external force to establish their rights."

The American Government has announced that its troops are to be withdrawn in the spring, when weather will permit; in the meantime two companies of engineers are sent to Archangel to "facilitate" this departure.

Still, fighting proceeds against the Soviet Republic. The Soviet Republic is still isolated from the world; it cannot communicate freely with the world, nor purchase food and machinery. Is it the purpose of the Allies to isolate Russia, and starve it? Promises and proclamations are frequent—but alien troops are still at Archangel and Vladivostok!

## Our N. E. C.

THE National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party is developing intense resentment against it among the party members. This resentment is preparing to burst forth in a struggle for the capture of the party for the party, for revolutionary Socialism.

The armistice and the German Revolution came in November; great events requiring great action—but our N. E. C. was dumb and inert. No clear call to action; no call for an immediate emergency National Convention of the party. The N. E. C. had neither initiative nor courage in the great crisis.

Local after local of the party demanded an emergency convention; but the N. E. C. at its January session refused to issue the call, and instead issued a call for an "amnesty convention" in May, together with bourgeois liberal organizations. The intent was clear: to satisfy the membership with a convention, and sabotage the call for a party convention. Party matters cannot be discussed at this "amnesty convention;" and, moreover, the issue of political prisoners should be a class and Socialist issue for the party. We must end the dickering and compromising with bourgeois liberals, who are potentially counter-revolutionary. On this head, the Detroit Socialist Party has sent the following resolution to the National Secretary:

"We, the Executive Committee of Local Wayne County (Detroit), at our regular meeting January 30, 1919, protest against the action of the National Executive Committee in calling a so-called Convention in association with reactionary bourgeois organizations of all kinds, and failing to call a regular Convention, which is so urgently needed at this time to thrash out difficulties arising within our ranks due to the world situation."

Other locals have protested against this "convention;" and they have protested, moreover, against the arbitrary act of the N. E. C. in designating Algeron Lee, John M. Work and James Oneal to "represent" the party at the Berne Congress, and against participation in the Berne Congress.

According to our party constitution, the N. E. C. has no right to select "international delegates." When the motion to designate delegates was submitted to the N. E. C., member Katterfield called the N. E. C.'s attention to the unconstitutionality of the motion, and refused to vote. Comrade Katterfield was right; but he should have gone a step further, and appealed to the membership to prevent the N. E. C. from usurping authority: there must be mass action in the party against our reactionary officials.

The attitude of the N. E. C. is determined by the fact that the majority of its members are adherents of moderate Socialism, and they are acting to prevent the revolutionary sentiments of the party from conquering the party. They are moderates; they have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing; they are not in harmony with the revolutionary ideals and policy now vitalizing the international movement. They are pledging our party to the counter-revolutionary Berne Congress, to the yellow "International."

There is real activity in the party—intense revolutionary aspirations. But all this finds no expression in our N. E. C.; on the contrary, the N. E. C. is a damper on the party. The activity of the party locals is isolated; there is no national unity of action. The N. E. C. should have issued a call to the great struggle; but it did not: it is paltering, evading. There is the proletarian revolution; there is the problem of the new International; there are great strikes, developing mass action—but our N. E. C. does not act: it represses.

The present N. E. C.; we are convinced, does not represent the party. It must be repudiated. The membership has it in its power to elect revolutionary Socialists to the N. E. C. at the coming referendum. It should, it must.

## Congress Investigates

THE Congress of this United States is a pitiable thing. It is intellectually sterile and morally corrupt. It has no conception of the problems of the day: the only role it can play, apparently, is the role of marplot.

Congress had practically nothing to do with the management of the war. When the President wanted war, it declared war; when the President asked for conscription, Congress adopted the Conscription Act; when the President demanded new authority, it was granted; and when the President usurped power, Congress did not protest. It was an impotent and despicable Congress, too ignorant and provincial to influence the course of events.

The war ends, but the impotence of Congress does not end. The American delegates to the Peace Conference were chosen by the President, Congress being shoved aside. Congress protested, but that didn't alter things in any way. Just prior to his departure for Europe, President Wilson put the whole matter of reconstruction up to Congress; but in two months Congress has done absolutely nothing on this matter; soldiers and sailors are being demobilized; unemployment is increasing; great problems are ahead—but Congress does absolutely nothing except indulge in talk, and cheap and uninteresting talk at that.

The Congress of these United States is intellectually, morally and politically bankrupt. . . .

During the war Congress demonstrated its incapacity to cope with elemental forces and problems. So it talked—and held investigations.

Now that the war is over, a new elemental force and problem disturbs the world—the problem of labor unrest, of the awakening of the working class. Everywhere there is unrest, strikes and industrial revolts; and all this is expressing itself in an acceptance of Bolshevism—and Bolshevism is nothing but revolutionary Socialism. This force is destined to conquer Capitalism, to transform the world; it is an acute danger to Capitalism. Congress feels this force, senses its danger; but is impotent to deal with it, cannot deal with it, because it is an inevitable expression of the collapse of Capitalism and the needs of the working class. So—Congress investigates!

The Senate, just now, is "investigating" Bolshevism. It is a very peculiar investigation. All the old-wives' myths and rumors that have been floating about in the press these two years are coming before the Senate as if something new. Rumor is accepted as fact, vituperation as argument. Every witness that the Senate Committee has heard is convinced that Bolshevism is a vile thing oppressing the Russian people, and the Senators are equally convinced: but still the Russian people accept the Bolsheviks, fight and die to maintain the Bolshevik Government—their own government. Poor souls, they do not know how much the Senate disapproves of the thing they love!

It is useless to consider in detail the lies and slanders which are offered as a feast to the Senate. But one thing is interesting: the story of sexual immorality in Russia.

It is an indisputable fact of history that every revolutionary movement, whether religious or social, has been accused of immorality and sexual debauchery by the master class. The early Christians were stigmatized as sexual degenerates; and the accusations about their orgies would make spicy reading. Sexual debauchery and perversion were attributed to the communist and religious movements in the Middle Ages and to the French Revolution. Socialism, since its inception, has been stigmatized as a movement for sexual promiscuity.

Why is this? Every master class is itself a class of sexual degenerates, and imagines that its opponents are also. Accusations of sexual immorality accomplish two purposes: they arouse indignation, and at the same time they titillate the passions of the mob. There is a perverse sexual satisfaction in this sort of thing: it clearly stigmatizes the mind of the master class.

It was said that Socialism meant sexual promiscuity; that it meant every woman for every man, and that children should become the property of the state. You have a Socialist regime in Russia; presto!—"decrees" are produced which incorporate these ideas! This, in spite of the fact that the actual decrees on marriage and divorce of the Soviet Government are available—decrees which are human and civilized, infinitely superior to the laws of capitalist society, and recognizing the purity of the sexual relation.

Capitalism, itself a dictatorship, accuses the Soviets of being a dictatorship; itself a breeder of terrorism, Capitalism indulges in righteous indignation at the "terrorism" of the Soviets; itself degrading sex, prostituting women, and making love and mar-