

Terribly severe is our struggle. In many of your expressions concerning the revolution we found proof of the internal struggle. Your confusion, your unhappiness, your irritation, your amazement and sometimes your horror; we understood and appreciated them. We felt the torture of your mind and heart, when the revolution, victorious and yet perplexed in its titanic attempts to withstand its enemies, adopted methods and brought into practice means which Socialism had taught us to condemn in the master class. We were torn by the same tortures, we suffered as you suffered. We felt the same agony of the breach, the terrible difference, between the dream and the reality.

But we suffered more on account of you, you to whom we have always looked with such deep and implicit trust. We were afraid that your revulsion for the rough, severe and sometimes really hideous forms of the revolution would blind you to its golden kernel, its deepest being, its glorious liberating power. We feared that your criticism, your wavering and accusations would bring you to the side of the enemies of the people. We knew that the more violent becomes the class struggle, the smaller becomes the line of demarcation between friend and foe, how impracticable it is to take a position between the two armies.

We knew that whoever in this period of violent struggle (which had already started for Russia and which is inevitable for the whole capitalist world) does not remain steadfast with the revolutionary masses, despite their shortcomings and mistakes which make this gigantic struggle irrevocable, will be forced into the camp of the peoples' enemies whom the imperialistic rulers are endeavoring to restore and maintain.

Out of abhorrence for the deplorable, but historically inevitable excesses of the social revolution, the timid shall find themselves with those who in one terrible uninterrupted carnage would sacrifice civilization and humanity to their demoniac desire for power and conquest. Out of indignation at some deplorable

but isolated and in fact accidental violations of humaneness by the masses the timid will go hand in hand with the social wolves, whose conception of humanity ends with the clique of great possessors of property and whose sense of justice consists in the mutual division of the spoils.

How many of the great Russian philosophers, fighters and martyrs whom we have honored, are already in the camp of the enemies of the revolution, the enemies of humanity: Kropotkin, Plechanov, Breshkovskaya? Should we lose you also?

Fear concerning this greatly agitated us. But since we know that you have offered your services to the Soviet Government we are at ease and rejoice. You saw the danger, you realized where the swinging between the parties would lead you. You understood the loyal purport, the highest possibility of the revolution, you conquered your wavering. High minded was your action in setting aside your wrath, aroused by many an angry and hurtful word.

You saw where you belonged and took your place amongst the leaders of the revolution, fighting for humanity. The social revolution is unlimited in its objectives, it embraces the whole human fabric, manifold are its aspects. Alongside the violent political and physical struggle against the enemy class, sparkles the economic and social reconstruction, the moral, educational and artistic elevation of the whole working class.

You, Maxim Gorky, are now selected for the glorious work of promoting the spiritual uplifting of the broad masses in the Soviet Republic, of satisfying their elementary cravings for beauty and civilization, of unlocking for them the gates of human knowledge and leading them through its heights and depths, of filling their outstretched hands with the soft-glowing pearls and sparkling gems ripened in the work-shops of human genius.

What was and is nothing but a lie and a delusion

in all capitalistic countries has become a reality in Russia—making the masses a partner in the enjoyment of the beautiful treasures which humanity has collected during the centuries. And you, fortunate one, are the leader of this great work of civilization. How we rejoice in this, for your sake and for our own and for the results we expect from your work. We rejoice that the political leaders of the Soviet Republic called upon you for such an extraordinary position.

And as the Russian proletariat was our teacher in the use of the mass strike and in the mass refusal of military service, so it is now our teacher in the Socialist reconstruction of society. And we hope to learn in which way, by what methods we can best serve the spiritual uplifting of the masses. We rejoice from the bottom of our hearts for the Russian people, that the sun of your fine, sparkling, strong humaneness will penetrate freely into the plastic being of their desire for beauty and their craving for exaltation.

But we rejoice also for you, Maxim Gorky, that your heroic and high-hearted stand linked your fate with that of the revolution, at the moment when its enemies, the capitalists of all countries, multiplied their efforts to strangle it in an iron grip, at the moment when they supplied fanatical assassins with weapons to deprive it of its most beloved leaders.

We rejoice for you, that your name as a revolutionary author shall beam unblemished in the future and that you shall live in the memories of the coming generations. We rejoice that you are saved from the shame of deserting the holy cause of human liberation.

We send you, Maxim Gorky, assurance of love and warm sympathy, and we hereby solemnly vow to follow you, to conquer our internal struggle and hesitation, to fulfill our duty in the great struggle which will undoubtedly extend until it embraces all countries. May it be given to many of us, even as you, to dedicate our strength to the spiritual uplifting of the masses, the peoples liberated by their own efforts.

Socialism and the New International

By Leon Trotsky

THE crisis in the International is not an external, irrelevant phenomenon.

The Socialist parties of Europe were formed at a time of comparative capitalist equilibrium and of a reformist adaptation of the proletariat to national parliamentarism and the national market. "Even in the Social-Democratic Party," wrote Engels in 1877, "petit bourgeois Socialism had its defenders. Even members of the Social-Democratic Party who recognize the fundamental concepts of scientific Socialism and the practical nature of the demand that all means of production should pass over into social ownership, declare that the realization of this demand is a possibility of the remote future, the precise time of which is practically impossible to determine." Thanks to the long-drawn out character of the "peaceful" period, this *petit bourgeois* Socialism actually became dominant in the old organization of the proletariat. Its limitations and its insolvency assumed the most offensive forms, as soon as the peaceful accumulation of contradictions gave way to a tremendous imperialistic cataclysm. Not only the old national governments, but also the bureaucratized Socialist parties that had grown up with them, showed that they were not equal to the demands of further progress. And all this might have been more or less foreseen.

"The task of the Socialist Party," we wrote twelve years ago, "consisted, and still consists, in revolutionizing the consciousness of the working class, as the development of Capitalism has revolutionized social

relations. But this labor of agitation and organization has its internal difficulties. The European Socialist parties—particularly the most powerful of them the German—have already attained a certain conservatism, which is all the stronger where the most numerous masses have embraced Socialism, and where the organization and discipline of these masses is the most advanced. In view of this, the Social Democracy, as an organization expressive of the political experience of the proletariat, may, at a given moment prove to be an immediate obstacle on the path of an open struggle between the workers and bourgeois reaction. In other words, the propagandist-Socialist conservatism of the proletarian party may, at a given moment prevent the straight fight of the proletariat for power (*Nasha revoliutsia*, 1906, P. 285). But if the revolutionary Marxists were far from being fetishists with regard to the parties of the Second International, no one could foresee that the destruction of those giant organizations would be so cruel and so catastrophic.

New times demand new organizations. In the baptism of fire, revolutionary parties are now being everywhere created. The numerous ideologico-political offspring of the Second International have not, it appears, been in vain. But they are passing through an internal purification: whole generations of "realistic" philistines are being cast aside, and the revolutionary tendencies of Marxism are for the first time

being recognized in their full political significance.

Within each country the task is not so much to support an organization that has outlived itself, as to bring together the genuinely aggressive revolutionary elements of the proletariat, who are already in the struggle against Imperialism, gravitating into the front ranks. On the international field the task is not to coalesce and "conciliate" government-Socialists at diplomatic conferences (as at Stockholm!), but to secure a union of the revolutionary internationalists of all countries and the pursuit of a common course of action in the Social Revolution within each country.

To be sure, the revolutionary internationalists at the head of the working class at present constitute, throughout Europe, an insignificant minority. But we Russians ought to be the last to take fright at such a state of affairs. We know how quickly, in revolutionary moments, the minority may become a majority. As soon as the accumulating resentment of the working class finally breaks through the crust of government discipline, the group of Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Mehring, and their adherents will immediately assume a leading position at the head of the German working class. Only a social-revolutionary policy can justify a division in the organization,—but at the same time, it makes such a division inevitable.—From a pamphlet, "What's Next?" (published in Petrograd, August, 1917.)

The Revolutionary Movement in Ireland

According to the Irish bourgeois press the end of the Belfast strike has not ended industrial unrest in Ireland. In all the industrial centers strikes continue and even in the agricultural districts strikes are widespread, the laborers, the agricultural proletariat, being very active. The magnitude of the strike in Belfast has apparently captured the minds of the workers and the general strike looms ahead. The following excerpt from an editorial in *The Voice of Labor*, the organ of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, shows that the question is receiving much attention:

We welcome the current discussion on the employment of the general strike of labour as a political weapon. The organised cessation of labour may be as potent as its organised application. Like every other weapon, however, the general strike calls for skill in those who would wield it, and skill in this instance demands a wise foresight. The general strike has several forms. Our disposition in favour of it arises from the success which attended the employment of one, only, of these forms, when on April 23rd, there was a general "rest" for one day only. Next day work was resumed as usual. The one day strike was simply the interpolation of an extra Sunday in the calendar. For it the wise made due provision and the unwise suffered no inconvenience

If, however, it is proposed to institute a sustained general strike, until its declared objects were attained, obvious limitations must be imposed on the extent of the stoppage of work. The community must be fed, and therefore the food suppliers must keep open shop. Reserve stocks of food are generally insufficient to feed the nation for more than a week ahead. Therefore, the mills, abattoirs, and markets, and the lines of transport must not be interfered with. Numerous other exceptions will occur at once to our readers, who knowing more than a little of strikes, are not so prone as academic persons to talk lightly about them.

These suggestions of some of the difficulties of the General Strike are not intended to discourage the advocates of the proposal, and when we suggest further that in the event of a national stoppage the existing machinery of the trade union movement would probably be dislocated, we do so, in the hope that steps will be taken to set up in each locality an efficient representative body capable of undertaking the local management of communal affairs.

Where Trades Councils exist they should maintain close touch with the more mobile military organisations, and with their aid, take stock of local resources. In the event of a general strike each parish will have to feed itself for a few days or a few weeks. Fuel supplies will stop along with other necessities and commodities. Without a preliminary survey of the kind we suggest, the best-laid plans will go wrong, and the

powerful weapon of the General Strike return like the boomerang on those who handled it.

The following report deals with the activity of the Socialist Party of Ireland and is a further instance of the solidarity of class conscious workers everywhere in demanding that their governments "withdraw from Russia."

Despite the police order prohibiting a Bolshevik demonstration, the workers of Dublin seized the opportunity to hail the revolution in Central Europe and celebrate the establishment of the Soviet Republic in Russia. The occasion was the mass meeting in the Dublin Trades Hall on Sunday, December 1, when the S. P. I. organised a rebel gathering to rejoice at "the downfall of Prussianism." The speakers and the audience made it clear beyond cavil that the Prussianism they meant was militarism, imperialism, and capitalism, and that if it has been banished from Russia and Germany, it is still rampant and still ruling in Ireland and in Great Britain. The spirit and tone of the meeting were most subversive and the speeches were directed against the social and political disorder which is still maintained in this country. Eminently practical and pointed advice was given by the speakers, who included Tom Moran, Wm. O'Brien, Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington, Tom Johnson, Sidney Arnold, J. I. Hughes, Hector Hughes, and Tom Kennedy. The war-cry of the meeting was: All power to the Soviets.