

Soviet Germany

IT IS coming—the new revolution in Germany, the proletarian revolution for the definite conquest of power and proletarian dictatorship.

The Spartacans have issued a call for a national general strike as preparatory to the overthrow of the Constituent Assembly and its bourgeois government. A state of siege has been declared in Berlin and its suburbs. The Berlin *Vorwaerts* is apprehensive, declaring that the workers will respond to the strike call. The Spartacan call declares that the purposes of the strike are:

1—The overthrow of the Constituent Assembly and the Government; establishment of a Soviet Republic and proletarian dictatorship.

2—The introduction of Councils in the factories as an instrument for workers' control of industry and the ultimate realization of the complete socialization of industry.

3—The dismissal of Government troops and the disarmament of the bourgeoisie, the withdrawal of all troops from Westphalia, Bremen and other regions.

4—The formation of a Red Guard under control of the Soviets, which would take over all military and police powers.

5—The liberation of all political prisoners and the establishment of a revolutionary tribunal to try the Hohenzollerns, Field Marshall von Hindenburg, Gen. Ludendorff and Admiral von Tirpitz, and the "traitors to the Revolution," President Ebert, Chancellor Scheidemann and Gustav Noske, the "minister of defense" who is butchering the masses.

6—Immediate peace and an alliance with revolutionary Socialist Soviet Russia.

The call of the Spartacans for a general strike in Berlin is to climax the political strikes which have been declared all over Germany. It was called for Wednesday, but depends upon the general strategic situation. The strike is a clear, uncompromising political strike for the purpose of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The new crisis and action developed out of the declaration of a proletariat dictatorship by the Munich Soviet. The Spartacans control Munich, the Soviet, the public buildings and the transportation service. Control of food has been established, the workers securing twice the ration of the bourgeoisie. At a Congress of Soviets in Munich it was announced that the Soviet had appointed Commissaires whose duty it was to introduce Socialist measures, concerning which chairman Nikisch said:

These Commissaires have dictatorial powers. One of the most important is the Housing Commissaire, whose task it is to find dwellings for all laborers. The Food Commissaire will see to it that every Bavarian gets his portion. Foodstuffs of those who have too much will be taken away from them. The city proletariat is now being armed and next will come the peasants.

"We are beginning the second revolution, the revolution against capital," declared Sauber. "Parliamentarism must be done away with." The Communist Levin proposed the immediate declaration of a Soviet Republic for all Bavaria and war against the bourgeoisie, the Constituent Assembly, the education of revolutionary events, the unceasing agitation of the Spartacans and the proclamation of proletarian dictatorship in Bavaria developed action all over Germany. Central Germany, with the miners in the lead, flared up into general strike with a distinctly political character; general strikes were declared in Leipsic, Erfurt, Halle, and in other districts. The transportation system was demoralized by the strikes. The bourgeoisie retaliated by a "strike" of their own—physicians, pharmacists, professionals generally—but this "strike" proved a fizzle, simply intensifying the spirit of revolt and the determination of the masses to act definitely for the conquest of power.

The proletariat is using its economic power to demoralize and overthrow the Government. But the strikes are simply a prelude; if the situation develops favorably, out of the strikes will come revolutionary mass action, armed revolutionary attack upon the Government and the seizure of power by the Soviets.

These events are isolating the Constituent Assembly and the bourgeois—"Socialist" Government at Weimar. They are not only isolated, but verging upon collapse.

They issue frantic appeals, while the masses prepare for revolutionary action. The Constituent Assembly and the Government refused to act upon the demand of the masses for "the socialization of industry." The Constituent Assembly passed a measure creating a "national army," a reactionary measure to create a force for crushing the masses. The Constituent Assembly clearly expressed its counter-revolutionary character.

It was clearly the purpose of the Constituent Assembly and the moderate Socialists to dissolve the Soviets: necessarily, since the Soviets, potential of proletarian dictatorship, cannot co-exist with a Constituent Assembly and parliamentary government. When this danger of dissolution appeared clearly to the Soviets, there was an immediate swing to the left, and an accelerated assumption of control by the Spartacans. In Berlin, the Soviet Central Council is dominated equally by the Spartacans and the Independent Socialists: these Independents have apparently accepted the Spartacan Communist program. The Soviets insisted that they would not dissolve, and a call was issued for a national congress of Soviets as against the Constituent Assembly. Then came a moderate proposal for a compromise: that the new parliamentary government should have a lower chamber composed of representatives of the Soviets. The Government is reported as willing to consider this proposal in order to conciliate the Soviets. But the proposal is counter-revolutionary. It is necessary that parliamentary government should be abolished; that a new proletarian state capable of introducing Socialism should be established. Only a Soviet state functioning as a proletarian dictatorship can act upon the problems of the revolution, can actually socialize industry, can expropriate the bourgeoisie politically as a preliminary measure to their complete economic expropriation. Parliamentary government is the instrument of the bourgeois order; it means the supremacy of capital. Should the Soviets accept the proposal to constitute a lower chamber of a bourgeois parliamentary government, they would become stultified into a mere "parliamentary opposition," would relinquish the great revolutionary task that beckons them.

The most significant feature of recent events in Germany is the apparent revolutionizing of the Soviets. The earlier Spartacan revolts failed because the Soviets were not in action; but they contributed enormously to the revolutionizing of the Soviets, in creating the consciousness and concepts of revolutionary action. Revolutionary action is the supreme educator of the proletariat.

Another significant feature is the definite swing to the left among the Independent Socialists. In Bavaria, the Independents are again playing the counter-revolutionary game by trying to come to "an agreement" with the majority Socialists: but the Spartacans are in control. In Berlin, however, the Independents seem to be working together with the Spartacan Communists. Húgo Haase has declared that "the second revolutionary unrest will result in two competing governments, one in Weimar and the other in Berlin, the latter a Soviet Government. Only by accepting the Communist program can the Independents become a real force in the Revolution.

Simultaneously with these great events, comes the report that a large Bolshevik army is at the German frontier prepared to co-operate with the Spartacan Communists. The revolutionary Communists of Russia and Germany have prepared an offensive and defensive alliance, which will spring into action the moment the Spartacans and the Soviets secure control in Germany. This is what the Allies fear; this is what the petty bourgeois Socialists represented by Ebert, Scheidemann & Co. fear, a fear expressed in one form by their refusal to accept food from Soviet Russia to feed the German people. In an article in the Berlin *Vorwaerts* recently, Friedrich Stampfer said:

What is the situation in Germany? Here the Russian policy is working in the first place at the complete destruction of what exists; the new organization is to arise out of complete dissolution. So the new war would break out when the German people stands completely defenseless in face of its enemy. Consequently, Russian policy reckons less with its military power than with the revolutionary effect which it hopes to

produce in the Entente camp. The Bolshevik world revolution is the last card on which it stakes everything.

Allowing for its prejudice, this clearly presents the situation. But the proletarian revolution will issue out of the needs and action of the proletariat of Germany: Russian Bolshevik propaganda simply accelerates the process. At this moment, the immediate fate of the international proletarian revolution is being decided in Germany. The Spartacan Communists may conquer power: then will come, universally and implacably, the final struggle against Capitalism and Imperialism.

Bolshevikjabs

THE new York *Call* asks: "What became of the fellow that used to say: 'I am a Socialist, but —?'" Might we venture the guess that he has been made a Socialist Alderman in New York City.

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Under the headline "Berlin Riots Renewed By Spartacans," an evening paper carries this paragraph: "A Belgian Commission has been dispatched to inquire about 1,000,000 valuable pigeons that were stolen. . . . It is believed that most of them were eaten." Outlaws! Bolsheviks! Pigeon-eaters!

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Investigating Bolshevism

Senator King:—Do you believe in God?
Senator Nelson:—Do you believe in the Christian religion?

Senator Overman:—Answer the question—Do you believe in a God?

Senator Wolcott:—Do you believe in a future punishment?

Miss Louise Bryant (witness): Am I being tried for witchcraft?

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"Intrigue cannot stand publicity" said President Wilson in his speech at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. Which we suppose explains why secret sessions are being held in Paris.

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In view of the fact that Mr. Wilson has declared that: "Europe . . . sees that statesmen have no vision," we wonder would it be fair to say that the plan of the League of Nations was drawn up by men without vision?

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By passing a resolution favoring self-determination for Ireland the Irish vote in America has again been made safe while the President's interview with the Irish delegation makes it plain that England is not in danger of any embarrassing suggestions from America. Thus everybody's pleased, Ireland's claims are recognized thus adding to the lustre of self-determination, England's point of view is also recognized thus keeping unimpaired the doctrine of the rule of the sword. Liberty receives a polite bow, tyranny gets a hearty handshake and things remain as they were. Ain't Democracy wonderful?

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As we see the situation from the newspapers it is something like this: The League of Nations is a success, No it isn't, Yes it is, No it isn't, Yes it is, No it isn't. . . .

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We will offer a valuable prize to any person who will explain in not more than 10,000 words the difference between the Balance of Power and the League of Nations.

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After perusing the proposed Red Flag Bill we have come to the conclusion that it will be almost as easy to get 5 years and a \$5,000 fine under it as it is to get 20 years and a \$10,000 fine under the Espionage Act.

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Lloyd-George speaking before the "Industrial Parliament" in England said that the Government must not dictate to either capital or labor but must remain impartial. This declaration of the government's attitude doubtless explains the use of Government troops in the strikes of Glasgow and Belfast.

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But who wants an impartial government anyway? We are afraid that Mr. George doesn't understand the situation—Labor is aiming to become the government.

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"The commission of jurists appointed to consider the guilt of the ex-Kaiser and others, has decided that the sovereign of a state cannot be proceeded against" says a newspaper report. We dislike having to disagree with a commission of eminent jurists but we have a faint recollection that Nicholas Romanoff was at one time a sovereign and that he was proceeded against very effectively indeed.