

The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of International Events

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The Allies Speak

THE Allies, it is reported, have issued an ultimatum demanding the resignation of the Hungarian Soviet Government, and the election of a Constituent Assembly under the supervision of Allied troops. Threats of war against Hungary and Russia are coming from sinister sources. But, simultaneously, comes the report that two regiments of French troops at Odessa refused to fight against the Bolshevik troops. France and Italy and Great Britain cannot depend upon their conscript armies, consisting overwhelmingly of workers, in a war against the Bolsheviks. If the Allies war against the Bolsheviks, they invite revolution; if they do not, they invite the unhampered spread of Bolshevism. They speak and ultimate; but events and destiny are with the international revolutionary proletariat.

Political Amnesty

IN a few days, Eugene V. Debs will go to prison to start serving a ten-year sentence. Certain bourgeois liberals, such as Charles Edward Russell (who formerly, very mistakenly, considered themselves Socialists) recently cabled President Wilson in Paris asking "clemency" for Debs. No answer.... The recent flourish concerning the release of some political prisoners and reduction of the sentences of others, was a bit of political camouflage and hypocrisy, for in every single case the men and women affected were absolutely innocent even from the standpoint of the government. The revolutionists are still in jail.... In bourgeois circles, and in circles of petty bourgeois Socialists, the clamor is arising for political amnesty. This is a characteristic of the impotent policy of petty bourgeois radicals. They demand from the government amnesty for political prisoners while that identical government is preparing new measures against the revolutionary movement, new measures to arrest and deport agitators. Instead of demands upon the government, mass proletarian pressure upon the government—that is the policy of revolutionary Socialism, which alone will get amnesty for our comrades in prison.

Crushing Bolshevism

THE American plutocracy is in an acute state of fear. And it fears what Capitalism in all nations fears—Bolshevism. A general and intense campaign is going on against Bolshevism in the United States, which has two phases—repression and propaganda. The repression assumes the form of jailing and deporting agitators, and passing measures against "revolutionary literature" and "revolutionary ideas"—experience eloquently shows the futility of repression. Revolutions thrive on repression. Repression is itself an enormous force preparing revolutions. And the propaganda? Millions of dollars are being spent; thousands of full page advertisements against Bolshevism are appearing in the daily press; and we consider these advertisements excellent Bolshevik propaganda, since they are compelled to camouflage conditions that prevail. One advertisement had the picture of Russian workers starving and being shot, and in contrast an American workman in his own home with his wife, child, peace and plenty:—isn't this excellent Bolshevik propaganda for the unemployed, for the strikers in Lawrence, for the Seattle and Butte workers who were menaced with military force during their strikes? Bolshevism is the expression of the conditions and the needs of the workers, of their oppression and their struggle against oppression. Every worker is a potential Bolshevik; and the proletariat of all nations is the natural ally of

the revolutionary proletariat of Russia and of Hungary. Let them repress! Let them legislate! Let them carry on propaganda! The iron battalions of the proletariat are marshalling for the great struggle, for the conquest of power, and Socialism.

In Germany—Preparations

THE proclamation of a proletarian dictatorship in Hungary of a Soviet Republic, has aroused the enthusiasm of the revolutionary masses in Germany, while it has increased the uneasiness of the Ebert-Scheidemann Government by Assassination. The Spartan-Communist propaganda is increasing with tremendous energy, being characterized as "twice as large" as before the recent "crushing" of the Spartan revolts. Spartan strikes in the Rhine territory occupied by Allied troops have been broken; and reports say that the Rhineland would have gone Spartan if not for the presence of Allied troops. A strike of 50,000 has been called in the Saar mines: the French troops are "maintaining order." Strikes in all parts of Germany demand six hours work, more pay and food, disarming the police and government guards, the withdrawal of government troops from all strike areas and the establishment of a Soviet Republic. Intense preparations are being made for a new revolution—the proletarian revolution. The royalist-bourgeois forces are preparing to come to grips, while the "Socialist" Government of the People's Butchery is being isolated, Weimar having become a political ghost. The threats of the Allies, also, are shaking this government, which secured a measure of popular confidence by its promises to secure food and "good treatment" from the Allies. But now the Allies threaten invasion. Soviet Russia controls the situation. The bourgeois-"Socialist" Government has sent Karl Kautsky to Moscow to discuss "arrangements." But Soviet Russia will cooperate only with a Soviet Germany. Not even Kautsky, that master of dialectical sophistry, can convince Lenin that the German Government is Socialist. Either an invasion by the Allies or the development of the situation will bring the collapse of the bourgeois-Socialist Government; then a Soviet Germany, an alliance with Soviet Russia, a League of revolutionary nations, Russia, Hungary and Germany (perhaps others), and then—the world revolution. All this is in preparation.

Brest-Litovsk

THE twinge of fear is, to the bourgeois, the beginning of wisdom. The acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk treaty by Soviet Russia was denounced by international Capitalism as a German victory, as an act of deliberate pro-Germanism by the Bolshevik Government, as the final inescapable proof that Lenin and Trotzky were German agents. But now, with Bolshevism rampant in Germany, with the threat of a Bolshevik world revolution, when facts and not fancies are supreme, the bourgeois begins to try to understand international events.

It was clear to the revolutionary Socialist, at the time, that the Brest-Litovsk treaty was imposed upon Soviet Russia; that the Bolshevik Government accepted it then because it was helpless and not prepared for a revolutionary war. It is clear now, that Brest-Litovsk marked the beginning of the end of Germany as a military power. In a cable from Paris to the New York Tribune, April 1, Frank H. Simonds accepts this conception of Brest-Litovsk:

Looking backward, one perceives that what the Hungarians did last week was to follow the precedent of Brest-Litovsk, where Lenin and Trotzky, unable to resist the German demands, refused to agree to them and left Germany to enforce upon the body of Russia what she could not acquire with the consent of the Russian will. We know now that Brest-Litovsk was the greatest blunder that Germany made. We know now that in the end Bolshevism came to Berlin, the Kaiser did not go to Petrograd.

That is conclusive, coming from a gentleman who repeatedly denounced Brest-Litovsk as the final proof of the pro-German turpitude of the Bolsheviks.

Brest-Litovsk is a symbol. It is a symbol, on the one hand, of the barbarity and class turpitude of international Imperialism, equally of the Allies and the Central Powers; and, on the other, it is a symbol of the revolutionary realism of the Bolsheviks, of the accuracy of their contention that Capitalism is verging on collapse and that the day has come for the proletarian world revolution.

When the Soviets decreed a proletarian dictatorship, an offer was made to the belligerent governments and peoples for an armistice on all fronts as a preliminary to general peace negotiations. The Allies rejected the offer, as a means of acting against the proletarian revolution in Russia: the Central Powers accepted with the characteristically infamous and stupid intention of using the revolution to promote their own sinister purposes. The armistice was concluded on the

eastern front; but still the Bolsheviks insisted on general peace negotiations, and desperately invited the Allies to participate: but the Allies contemptuously refused. This gave imperial Germany an opportunity of forcing separate peace negotiations upon Soviet Russia. The Allies sabotaged peace, the Central Powers butchered it. But still the Soviet delegation tried to give the negotiation a general character, trying to stir up the masses against the governments. Then, repudiated, by the Allies, threatened by the Central Powers, temporarily abandoned by the masses, the Soviet Government was helpless against the Austro-German demands for annexations. But still they refused to sign the robber peace: and then the German troops marched in, and Soviet Russia was compelled to accept the peace.

Lenin's arguments were cogent: Russia is not prepared to wage a revolutionary war; we must have a respite to reorganize our industrial system; our peace will not end the war, but the war will flare up more intense than ever, and with it the social and economic crisis; the revolutionary uprising of the masses will come, and then a strong, re-organized Soviet Russia will dominate the situation, and hasten the world revolution in co-operation, through its economic and military resources, with the revolutionary proletariat of other nations.

And so it has come to pass.

All governments were against Soviet Russia, still are, except the Socialist government of Hungary. They intrigued and acted against a country demoralized and starving as a result of the evil heritage of Capitalism and Czarism. They used Brest-Litovsk, that living wound inflicted upon suffering Russia, as a means of a vile slanderous attack upon Russia.

But Soviet Russia conquered!

Out of Brest-Litovsk came the ideologic impulse for the revolution in Germany. It convinced the masses of the imperialistic folly of their government. It was a peace that did not bring peace. After Brest-Litovsk, the Bolsheviks started a new war against German Imperialism—a war of revolutionary propaganda.

And Soviet Russia conquered!

One year ago, Soviet Russia was apparently prostrate. They thought they could despise and attack Russia. But now, Russia, symbol of the proletarian revolution, is the great decisive factor in the world situation. The revolutionary government in Hungary, the revolutionary masses in Germany—everywhere—look to Soviet Russia. Power is with the proletarian revolution, with the ideals of Bolshevik Russia. Starting with March, 1917, on through the period of Menshevik-Kerensky compromise, November 7, Brest-Litovsk and today, the Bolsheviks have adhered uncompromisingly to their policy: *on with the world revolution.* And it is on!

The I. W. W.

IN these days, when society and the proletarian movement are equally being revolutionized by events, by the proletarian revolution in action, it is absolutely necessary that the Socialist adjust himself to events. Unfortunately, the yellow Socialist learns nothing and forgets nothing. Always a reactionary and a petty bourgeois, the yellow Socialist persists in pursuing a counter-revolutionary policy at a moment when the Revolution is the problem of the day. But it is not the yellow Socialist alone who refuses to learn from the experiences of the proletarian revolution in action, from life itself. There is the "red" Socialist, most aptly characterized by the petrified dogmatists of the Socialist Labor Party. And then there is the I. W. W.

The theory and practice of the I. W. W. come nearest to the Bolshevik policy. But it does not go the whole way. It is, in fact, only a basis upon which to build. Bolshevism, the proletarian revolution in action, has contributed vitally to our revolutionary theory and practice: but there are elements in the I. W. W. who refuse to admit that Bolshevism has contributed anything new, that the I. W. W. is Bolshevism. And when you point out that the I. W. W. as it is is not all of revolutionary theory and practice, these elements become furious.

In its issue of April 1, *The Rebel Worker*, published by the New York Central Committee of the I. W. W., says:

Just as Louis Fraina says "The I. W. W. is becoming conservative," Solicitor Lamar of the P. O. Department rushes before a congressional committee in order to make the breathless declaration, "The I. W. W. is the centre of the Bolshevik conspiracy to overthrow the U. S. Government." Evidently neither Fraina nor Lamar know what he is talking about.

We shall not discuss here whether the I. W. W. is becoming conservative. But since when is Lamar a judge of revolutionary ideas? Kerensky was denounced as a Bolshevik by men of Lamar's type. Ac-