

# Soviet Russia and the World

By L. C. A. K. Martens

*Representative in the United States of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic*

IN THE darkest hours of trial of the Russian Workers Revolution, during the past year, when the Russian masses striving for industrial freedom and brotherhood of men met with savage attacks, not only physical but in the form of an organized campaign of lies and abuse all over the world, the aim of which was to estrange the Russian masses from their fellow workers throughout the world and forever to discredit the cause of Socialism, the broad masses in America intuitively felt the injustice of the attacks and courageously they spoke out their minds in the face of the vilifiers. This the Russian people know, and they will not forget it. They take it as proof of the fact that international solidarity of the workers is not an empty word, but it is based on real common interests which make laboring masses in different parts of the world, in spite of language, race and national differences, understand their common aspirations.

Soviet Russia has now been in existence almost a year and a half. It has left behind itself the preliminary stages of the revolution. It has become deeply rooted in the consciousness of the workers and peasantry of Russia. Its power within Russia cannot be challenged by any group of opponents on their own accord. The forces of the enemies of the people are badly disrupted. Only with the help of foreign bayonets is it possible for a small group of former exploiters of Russia to make a stand against the united forces of the working people.

But the Russian workers know who are those Kolchaks, Denikines, Semenoffs and others who are striving to overthrow the Soviet. They know that they represent the Russia of the Czar and the landlords, the Russia of the knout, the Russia which has gone forever and never will arise again. They know by experience that wherever the Kolchaks and Semenoffs have even temporarily succeeded in establishing themselves it has spelt new slavery for the workers in those territories. This is one of the reasons why Soviet Russia not only has gained the unqualified and determined support of all the laboring masses of Russia, who are willing to give their lives in defence of the achievements of the workers revolution, but it has also lately convinced former opponents of the Government, such as "right wing" Social Revolutionaries and "Mensheviks" not only of the futility of the opposition to the Soviets and of armed intervention, but of the great dangers it involves to all liberty in Russia.

In Russia proper today you find no elements of any importance who are in favor of intervention. It

is also no secret I divulge, when I say that workers in military uniform who have been sent to Russia from other countries to fight the Soviets, after having been told that they are there in order to liberate the Russian people from the oppression of the Bolsheviks, can find there scarcely anyone who wants to be thus "liberated," but that on the contrary, the people want to be liberated from the Kolchaks. This has made many of the workmen in uniforms quite puzzled, and I am sure that they are as eager to be friendly with the Russian workers as the Russian workers are eager to be friendly with them. The Russian workers cannot conceive why people of other countries can stand being induced to support reaction in Russia, and they are gratified to find that in every country in the world there is a determined will among the masses to end military intervention in Russian affairs.

After having established themselves physically and politically, and after having gotten the moral support of the vast majority of the Russian workers and peasantry, the Soviets are now confronted with the tremendous problem of reorganizing the economic forces of the country on the basis of common interest of the toiling masses without an opportunity for exploitation of labor. The great work of reconstruction has been hampered not only by the natural difficulties of the transition period, and by lack of many materials due to the economic isolation of Russia, but the necessity of defending the country against encroachments has of course also absorbed much energy which could have been used in constructive work. This is one additional reason why the Russian workers expect intervention in Russia to come to a speedy end, and I want to say right here that those who have been instrumental in making the Russian people expend much energy for the military defence of the country to the detriment of economic reconstruction are the last ones who have a moral right to blame or to accuse the Soviet Government of Russia for any shortcomings that may be found in its work.

In spite of all obstacles, however, we are seriously organizing all our powers in the work of reconstruction. Today when Soviet Russia sends her representative to the United States to establish economic relations between those two countries it does so conscious of her strength and of the problems involved.

The purpose of the Russian workers is to create in Russia prosperity and freedom and by their example of the ability of the working class to manage their own affairs, in practice to demonstrate the soundness of the principles of Communist Socialism.

Efforts have been made to picture Soviet Russia as a menace to the peoples of the world, as a new militaristic power, which has designs for supremacy everywhere. Those who take such a stand either are unable or unwilling to understand the real nature of the aspirations among the suffering masses in the world. When we received the news of Hungary's having established a working class government along the lines of the Russian Soviet, we who know the facts, know that the revolution of Hungary was not as the Russian revolution was not, a thing engineered by a few agitators. The opponents of the workers revolutions, it seems to me, are either too profuse in their estimation of the genius and abilities of Bolshevik propagandists or then they quite pitifully underestimate the intelligence of people in their countries, when they believe or pretend to believe that social revolutions here or there can be accomplished just by having a Bolshevik propagandist deliver a few talks and spend a little money in propaganda matters. Revolutions are not being made that way. They spring out of the social conditions in each and every place. Just as the Soviet Revolution was the only logical outcome of the determination of the Russian workers to free themselves from terrible oppression, which they knew could not be abolished by retaining the foundations of the old social order, and the Soviet Government thus became the only hope of the downtrodden people, so the Hungarian revolution is an elementary force springing out of the conditions in that country.

The Russian revolution has been the object of attention in every country in the world. Much has been said about it and very much which is not true. It will be one of my main objects to place the Russian situation before the people of America in the light of actual facts, and I want once more to express my conviction that American workingmen and women, who up till now determinedly have refused to join in the chorus of vilification of the Russian revolution, will in the future as well retain their sympathy toward the Russian workers, and that they will translate this sympathy into an attitude of understanding and support towards my efforts to establish friendly relations between America and Soviet Russia, thereby letting Soviet Russia profit from cooperation with the rest of the world and letting the rest of the world profit from cooperation with Soviet Russia.

## Problems of the Soviet Representative

By Nicholas I. Hourwich

THE conscious American proletariat the other day greeted the appointment of a representative of the Socialist Republic of Russia. Celebrations of this event are still going on. Everywhere meetings are being held to greet the Soviet Ambassador. Socialist and labor organizations all over the country are sending telegrams of greeting, letters promising aid and co-operation in every way that may assist the cause of Soviet Russia, represented here by L. C. A. K. Martens, which is actually the cause of the conscious proletariat of the world,—the cause of the proletarian revolution in Russia.

But the revolutionary Socialist organizations of the American proletariat would make a fatal error if they, starting with the idea that someone, without their aid, would take care of revolutionary Russia, limit themselves simply to greetings and promises. They must not fail to translate this into revolutionary activity.

Not for a single moment do we doubt the great importance of the purely diplomatic activity of the Soviet representative. Still less are we inclined to doubt the magic power of Russian gold—the magic influence of this gold upon the minds and attitude of the American plutocracy, which has already manifested itself in an obvious manner. . . . But, with all due allowances for this, we consider it necessary to sound a warning to the American workers—and to Comrade Martens himself—against exaggerating the importance of purely diplomatic and commercial activity here. We consider that it would be a fatal mistake should these purely diplomatic-commercial efforts become the centre of his activity.

Evidently, as concerns "diplomatic" activity, Comrade Martens himself does not entertain any sentimental illusions. In an interview issued by him the other day, he definitely and unequivocally stated: "The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic does not care about political recognition by the United States. . . . All that we want is trade recognition." Comrade Martens perfectly understands that, in a

world of capitalistic relations, commerce "is the real thing, and all else—nonsense." "Commerce" will create definite social-economic relations, a definite "equilibrium of social forces," after which, as Comrade Martens puts it, "the flag—that is, political recognition—will follow."

We would like to go a little further with this absolutely correct, truly Marxian reasoning. We should like to emphasize that commerce itself, that is, the establishment of commercial relations between Russia and the United States, in its turn, will come only as a result of definite social relations, the establishment of a definite equilibrium of social forces,—the very equilibrium on which depends the success itself and the salvation of the Russian Revolution, in general.

Comrade Lenin has repeatedly declared that the final triumph (or, inversely, the ruin) of the proletarian revolution in Russia depends on *whether the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and proletarian revolutions in other countries come to the aid of the Russian Revolution*. And in this one finds the key to an understanding of the present political situation.

If revolutionary movements of the proletariat in other countries conquer, then the conquests of the Russian Revolution, the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, will be saved; and, as a result, of course, will come "commercial and trade" relations and all sorts of other relations. If, on the contrary, revolutionary proletarian movements in other countries fail, a mortal blow will be struck at the Russian Revolution. And, in that event, "commercial and trade" relations will not help. We ought not to forget that the capitalist world, including capitalist America, is not very anxious for commercial relations with Socialist Russia, since the cherished hope of the capitalist world is something greater—to crush the revolutionary resistance of the Russian proletariat, to suppress Socialism

in Russia, and then swallow the whole of Russia, with all her commerce, trade and natural resources.

In the prevailing political situation, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat is the main thing, the centre of gravity; it is everything, both in the interests of proletarian Russia and in the interests of the emancipation of the proletariat of the world. The success or failure of the proletarian movement, the growth of the Bolshevik movement in countries still ruled by Capitalism, is serving, at this moment, as a barometer of the "favorable" or hostile attitude of capitalist governments toward Soviet Russia.

The establishment of commercial and trade relations between Russia and capitalist countries, with all its independent value for the economic life of Russia, is, for Russia, similar to the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty—a means to "win time." . . .

All this, in our opinion, draws the "line of behavior" for the revolutionary Socialist organizations of the proletariat in America, as well as for Comrade Martens as representative of the Russian Soviet Government.

The centre of his attention, the compass directing his activity here into proper channels, should serve the interests of the revolutionary Socialist movement of the American proletariat, the interests of the advance guard of the movement—the left or Bolshevik wing of the American Socialist Party.

We are fully aware in his manifold activity, Comrade Martens may not always or frequently be in a position to act openly and definitely under the banner of the left wing, though, essentially, he should always go under that banner; but he must carefully look after and be on the lookout in order not to give the prestige of Soviet Russia to the right wing, to the moderates and social-opportunists, and thereby, perhaps unconsciously, stab the left wing in the back. It is this left wing which is the bulwark and hope of proletarian Russia, which Russia has called to its International Communist Congress.