

Problems of the Soviet Army

IN accordance with the decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, I have assumed command of all the armed forces of the Russian Republic, promising to exert all efforts for the defense of the state against the enemies threatening it from all sides.

Everyone understands that this task is a difficult one, and I am personally conscious of the difficult and complex character of this problem. But, at the same time, I believe and hope that with the aid of the whole command of the Workmen's and Peasants' Red Army and all the true revolutionary forces of the country, I shall succeed faithfully and conscientiously in carrying out my task and defeating our insolent enemy, thus safe-guarding the rights of the poor and of the worker.

Now all are aware of the fact that the armed demonstrations of the Czecho-Slovaks, which at first seemed insignificant, assumed the magnitude of an immense conflagration, an uprising of various counter-revolutionary forces which are attempting to encircle the country, thrusting nearer to us the numerous bands of White Guards and traitors. Like hungry jackals, these bands attack us on all sides and the struggle against them, gradually becoming more intense, has become a struggle of life or death; one or the other of the combatants must perish: either they or we. I firmly believe that we shall come out victorious from this struggle, for we are fighting in a sacred cause—for the rights of the poor, for fraternity and justice on earth, and this must triumph over slavery and exploitation.

But, firmly believing in all that, I cannot, to my deep regret, speak as confidently about my immediate aides who have been entrusted with the command of military units and to whom have been given responsible positions. Not all, of course; but some of them have not yet become imbued with the great idea for which every true revolutionist is ready to shed his blood; instead of encouraging their troops and implanting in

Proclamation of Commander in Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Russian Soviet Republic, Vatsetis; countersigned by Members of the Revolutionary Council, Danishevsky and Smirnov; Chief of the General Staff at the Front, Maigur.

them the faith and righteousness of our cause, leading them thus on to victory, some of them suffer from weakness and at critical moments lose their presence of mind. Here and there telegrams report: "I refuse responsibility," "cannot be held responsible for the consequences," and similar expressions. There are cases on record where some threatened to throw off responsibility under circumstances where there was no one else to assume the responsibility, and where a renunciation of responsibility might lead to complete disruption and irreparable injury to the cause.

In studying the conditions which impelled some persons to write about throwing off responsibility, I could not escape the conclusion that the fault lay not in the conditions, but in weakness and confusion of mind. And now, in assuming command of all the armed forces of the Russian Republic, I am obliged to call attention to this deplorable circumstance—the lack of spiritual leadership and the confusion of mind, and at the same time to appeal to all commanders and the rank and file of the soldiers, in these words:

This is neither the time nor the place for such a pernicious attitude in our ranks; remember the great cause we are fighting for and the slogans inscribed on our banners; recall the old oppression and the ocean of tears and blood shed by the poor: and at the thought of all this, let your weakness of spirit end, and out of it come a flaming hatred for the enemies of the poor. Let the great ideas for which the blood of revolutionists is now being shed raise your weak spirit and evoke a firm faith in our victory; do away with your confusion, and breathe the revolutionary spirit into

your troops, and with them rush against the enemy with the irresistible determination to defeat him. Remember, that the Revolution promotes only the courageous and deserving, and that it pitilessly destroys as useless those who lack spirit. There shall be no such destruction among our ranks, for there is no place for it in a revolutionary army.

Soldiers of the Red Army! You are fighting—and you shall win—for yourselves and for toiling people. Your victory will sweep as a purifying flame throughout the world. Into all the putrid corners of the world your victory will bring joy to the homes of the poor and terror to the palaces of the parasites. The toilers will once again realize that they are a force in the world and that they have been abused, deprived of light, warmth and education simply because they have not been organized. The toilers were disarmed by a clique of landlords, bureaucrats and speculators who seized power. The toiling people are more numerous than all the other classes put together. In our country there are nearly 100 million toilers, and you, soldiers of the Red Army, may by your victories throw a warm ray of freedom in the lives of those 100 million workers; but should you prove badly prepared for the battle or insufficiently courageous, your enemy will triumph. Think what your defeat may bring to the toilers! After your defeat the toilers will lose all their revolutionary gains; they will lose their freedom and again become slaves of the rich and the speculators; they will again become scattered, isolated and poor, and the only thing they will preserve will be eyes with which to weep over their lost freedom. I believe that all members of the Red Army will become imbued with the great idea of our struggle and very soon by concerted action achieve brilliant victories for the glory of our Soviet Republic,—which is yet young, but strong in revolutionary spirit. Let these victories still more strengthen the spirit of our Republic, giving it the power and opportunity to bloom for many, many years to come.

American "Democracy" and the European Workers

By A. Nyemanov

WHEN during the Summer of 1917 the Petrograd workers organized a demonstration to protest against the death sentence to Tom Moonéy, the American bourgeois press shrieked its indignation. And of course, so-called "society" joined in the chorus. They were indignant and at the same time astonished at the "impudence" of the workers of far distant Petrograd who came out against the "justice of American democracy."

It goes without saying that the European Socialists have known for a long time that America is dominated by the vested interests. However, for a long while they were of the opinion that America, after all, was more "liberal" than the bourgeois states of western Europe. Only now they begin to understand that this opinion was mistaken. "The beautiful reality" is beginning to teach them by experience how little the American bourgeois republic has in common with genuine democracy. They cannot fail to note that the "powers-that-be" of America in their persecution of those who think differently than they, are demonstrating a greater relentlessness than was practiced by the late Czarism.

The other day, according to newspaper dispatches, in a number of cities of Sweden meetings were held to protest against persecution of Socialists and industrialists in our "free-loving" and "democratic" republic. The Swedish comrades apparently are very well posted on the situation in America. They know that about 2,000 "political offenders" are pining away in the prisons and cells of American democracy. They know about the real measure of punishment to which American courts resort.

The Italian Socialists are also well informed on the real situation on this side of the Atlantic. The Italian Socialist press is conducting a systematic information campaign, relative to the severity of American "class justice." During the "festivities" held in Italy to celebrate the presence there of Mr. Wilson, the Italian Socialists did not fail to express their feeling of indignation regarding the persecution of Socialists and industrialists in America.

The American labor press with the "Labor Leader" at the head, prints biting articles against American conditions in regard to the unexampled severity of the sentences—20 years prison confinement—which have fallen to Berger, Engdahl, Germer, Tucker and

Krause. Even the annals of the Czar's court justice pale before these sentences.

The mask of "liberalism" has been torn from the face of American plutocracy. Henceforth the European proletariat knows that where the foot of American official justice treads, there, in the words of the poet—"dies out the very breathing of life" and the "grass ceases to grow." . . . The hard labor sentences in the courts, the unlimited sway of the administrative authorities, the unexampled persecution of the Socialist press, the unheard of organization of secret service spies, which excels even the Turkish secret

gun, that a continued military intervention and an attempt to influence Russia by force would require an army of occupation a million strong for a long period, the surest way of swiftly transplanting the proletarian revolution to the Entente countries. The example of the German army of occupation in Ukraine is sufficiently convincing. Another section of the bourgeoisie in the Entente countries clings as firmly as ever to the idea of military intervention in Russia, together with an "economic siege" (Clemenceau) and of crushing the Soviet Republic. The entire press that serves this bourgeoisie, that is, the greater part of the daily papers in England and France which have been purchased by the capitalists, predicts an immediately impending collapse of the Soviet power, depicts the horrors of hunger in Russia, and spreads lies about "disorders" and the instability of the Soviet government. The White Guards, the troops of the capitalists, aided by the Entente with officers and war supplies, with money and auxiliary troops, these officers cut off Russia's hungry center and north from the grain districts of Siberia and the Don Region. Famine among the workers in Petrograd and Moscow, in Ivanoff-Voznesensk, and other labor centers, is, as a matter of fact, great. Never have the masses of the workers suffered such depths of misery, such pangs of hunger, as those which they are now condemned to by the military intervention of the Entente, an intervention which is partly masked

service of the Abdul Hamid times; legislative bills which fix a punishment of five years imprisonment for having "unlawful literature"—all these facts have gained wide publicity in the European countries.

Similarly, to those days when stormy meetings of protest against the Czar's reaction were held in America, now such meetings are being held by the European workers in protest against American reaction.

Times are changing! The legend of a "liberal" and "freedom loving" America is no more. Faith in the bourgeoisie has died out. The necessity of fighting these evil and degrading forces which are strangling with their claws America and the whole bourgeois world is daily being forced on the consciousness of the workers the world over.

A Call to the American Workers

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behind a hypocritical assurance that they will not send "their own" troops, while they are continuing to send mercenaries as well as war materials, money and officers. The masses could not bear such misery, if they did not understand that they are defending the work of Socialism both in Russia and the rest of the world.

The Entente and the White Guard forces are holding Archangel, Perm, Rostov on the Don, Baku, Ashabad, but the "Soviet movement" has taken control of Riga and Kharkov. Lettonia and Ukraine are becoming Soviet republics. The workers see that these tremendous sacrifices are not being made in vain, that the Soviet power is great and spreading, growing and establishing itself all over the world. Each month of severe struggle and tremendous sacrifice strengthens the cause of the Soviet power all over the world and weakens its enemies, the exploiters.

Undeniably, the exploiters still have forces at their disposal with which to murder and lynch the finest leaders of the world revolution of the proletariat, to multiply the sufferings and tribulations of the workers in the occupied or conquered countries and districts. Yet all the exploiters in the world have not enough power to conquer the world revolution of the proletariat which will bring to the human race liberation from the yoke of capital, from the constant threat of new and unavoidable imperialistic wars in the interest of Capitalism.