

# The Treaty of Versailles

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THE Versailles peace treaty signifies not peace but a further continuation of war. It creates a condition that can produce nothing else than a continuation of the war. Besides, this is the purpose of the framers of the treaty, namely, to make the war conditions lasting in order to be in a better position to combat the working class movement. The present *de facto* oligarchy keeps itself in power by inciting the workers of different countries against one another. It is obvious that the capitalist governments formulated such a peace as signifies a continuation of war. It is a war in so far as it drives certain workers into conflict with others; it is a peace in so far as, by the continuation of bloodshed, it does not kindle revolutions. Thus, in the last analysis, calculates the oligarchy. Whether their calculations are correct—that is another question.

One instrument of the unbroken warfare seems to be the League of Nations, which, under the Treaty of Versailles, implies a continuation of the coalition, not a peace organization for whose foundation Imperialism is clearly not fitted. *But even this coalition can not exist for long; on the first contact with reality it will, of itself, fall to pieces.*

The only purpose of the League of Nations is to serve as a demagogic cover under which is hidden the continued coalition of the Entente powers against their German rivals. The League of Nations used to be a demagogic means to work up the patriotism of the masses

in the Entente nations; but conditions have changed. The mob has already ceased to believe the stories told them for such a long time, and all that demagoguery on the League of Nations is already somewhat stale. I am convinced that it will not delay for one moment the rapidly spreading revolutionary movement in the Entente countries.

Besides the very fact of a continuing existence of a military coalition shows that the conditions created at Versailles are but a new form of prolongation of the war; it shows that the old world is not in a position to solve either the contradictions formed by it, or the problems which it establishes for itself, and that the moment has arrived for the new society to take the legacy which it alone is in a position to manage.

As to general disarmament, it is only a new manoeuvre to continue the rule of the oligarchy. Universal military obligation prepared the masses for revolution. The workers used the arms put into their hands to threaten their masters. Therefore the oligarchy is obliged to turn to the system of voluntary service and, instead of the national militia, there are organized bands of White Guards.

This program of disarmament is also a new demonstration that the Treaty of Versailles is hurrying to reconcile not only national but

class antagonisms. Germany is brought to such financial exhaustion that the German people even if they worked day and night, could not recover from this condition. As to the other aspects of economic life, Germany is made entirely unable to pull itself out of the condition into which it is put. All this leads only to the result that the antagonism of interests in the international field will take on a most lingering, sharp, and serious character.

Lorraine and the Sarre Basin constitute a prize of war, and through this acquisition the French hope to gain a large stake for their own pocket. The working class has nothing to gain on this, but it is a fact, on the contrary, that French capital is afraid of the revolutionary traditions of the French workers, and therefore frequently shows the inclination of fastening itself on a foreign labor market.

In the department of Meurthe and Moselle, French capital has to deal not with the French working class, but with a motley mass of workers of all sorts of nationalities. The French capitalists thus strengthen their class condition and still less than before reckon with the Parisian workers and their revolutionary inclinations.

In general, what is done at Versailles is not in a position to bring a condition of quiet; it only drives the workers into the street. This still-born treaty of the Allied powers turns over a new leaf in history for mankind: a revolutionary period of "storm and attack."

## Aspects of the Russian Revolution

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of their own class. This Government—the Dictatorship of the Proletariat—will take away capitalist property and disfranchise all who do not work. When the capitalist class is eliminated, the war between the workers and the capitalists will be over, classes will have disappeared, and democracy will follow, based upon equality and the liberty of the individual.

Real democracy must act in accordance with the interests of society as a whole. Our own form of Government is a striking example of a Government designed to uphold the interests of a minority—the capitalist class. *Apparently democratic in form, the Constitution of the United States was deliberately framed, by landlords, traders and speculators, to establish and maintain their property rights and to thwart the will of the majority of the people.*

Revolutions are never precipitated by the majority of a people—even the American Revolution was not begun by a majority—but they must possess the power to overthrow the ruling class. In the past, successful revolutions have always replaced the rule of one minority class by another minority class. The characteristic of the Social Revolution now in process is that it does away with every form of class rule.

But even the Social Revolution will not—cannot be started by a majority. It is begun by a mass of class-conscious and resolute proletarians, and the course of the Revolution itself awakens ever greater and greater masses of workers to an understanding of their interests, and draws them into the vortex of revolt.

There is no reason why the revolutionary forces should represent an absolute majority. Even when they embrace the vast majority of

the working class, the acts and decisions of the Proletarian Dictatorship will not be based on democracy, but on the *class position* of the proletariat against the capitalist class position. In Russia the Proletarian Dictatorship could not last an hour unless it kept continually in touch with the revolutionary masses through the Soviets, leading yet controlled by the great popular will.

Moderate Socialists—and the bourgeoisie—accuse the Bolsheviks of advocating immediate, complete and perfect Socialism. What an absurdity! The Dictatorship of the Proletariat must last until Capitalism is abolished. Capitalism is international; world Capitalism must disappear before the Proletarian Dictatorship of any one country is ended.

Karl Marx said, "The victorious proletariat cannot seize the ready-made machinery of the State and use it for its own purposes." It must build new organizations, based not on the government of men, but on the administration of things.

In Russia it is undeniable that the great masses of the people wanted Peace, Land, and Workers' Control of Industry. In the sense that it has no other purpose than to give the people their desires, the Proletarian Dictatorship is profoundly democratic. In the sense that it refuses to ask the opinion of militarists, landlords and manufacturers upon these matters, the Proletarian Dictatorship rejects "democracy."

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The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is "political power." Its purpose is simply to abolish the capitalist class. The political power of the capitalists *cannot* abolish the workers—for the workers are essential to society; but the Dictatorship of the Proletariat *can* abolish the capitalists, for they are unnecessary.

Foiled in their game of tearing Marxian phrases from their context, the moderates, whenever they come across something in Marx that doesn't agree with their theories, explain that the old gentleman wrote it in a moment of aberration. "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," for example, was written "casually"—"merely a phrase;" Marx really didn't mean it.

Apparently the moderates don't know where the phrase occurs, so they hint that it is part of the *Communist Manifesto*, written in 1847. They may quote some sentences—torn from their context, by the way—from *The Civil War in France*, written in 1870, to prove that Marx changed his mind.

As a matter of fact, "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" occurs in a document five years later—*Critique of the Gotha Program* of 1875. Marx was then tolerably mature; he was not searching for "strong idioms;" he wanted to express himself clearly and definitely—and he did, as follows:

*"Between the capitalistic society and the communistic lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. This corresponds to a political transition-period, in which the State cannot be anything else but the dictatorship of the proletariat."*

This exactly defines the Russian Soviet Government.

As Marx says:

"They (the proletarians) have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for and insurances of individual property. . . ."

"In one word you (bourgeois) reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend. . . ."

"The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at. . . ."

And also bourgeois "democracy"!