

# The Workers' Council

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## The Workers' Council

AN ORGAN FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The working class of the United States, today, is as much exploited economically and as much suppressed politically as any other in the world, and it has the weakest labor movement on the political as well as on the economic field. Still the American masses are by no means inherently reactionary or conservative. They have shown a keen response to the appeal of the Russian proletarian revolution, and their attitude towards Soviet Russia has been so unmistakably sympathetic that though unorganized it has prevented the government from active military hostilities during the last two years.

Moreover there is a growing sentiment that stands behind the Third International and its principles. All that is needed is a force that will cement this unorganized sympathy and understanding and loose allegiance into a compact body.

The Socialist Party vacillating between the Second and the Third International, standing upon a platform of ineffectual reforms and parliamentarism of the kind that have, since the war, been discarded by every European socialist party outside of the Second International, is not today the instrument of revolutionary working-class education and action.

The American working-class undoubtedly offers a field for fruitful action. But this action can be undertaken only after all those who are today working as individuals and in groups for its culmination, have been gathered behind a great driv-

ing force functioning on the political as well as on the economic fields, reaching the working-class in the shops and in meetings, in the labor organizations and through the press, in political campaigns and in political organizations.

"The Workers' Council," a bi-weekly organ for education and propaganda which is about to make its first appearance, intends to become the medium through which this force will find expression. In launching the new undertaking we are fully conscious of the task we are facing. But it must be undertaken and can be met successfully if every one of us does his duty.

"The Workers' Council" will stand uncompromisingly and unreservedly for the Third (Communist) International and its principles. It will attempt to carry such agitation into working-class circles that have never been reached before.

It will endeavor to become the expression of revolutionary Socialism, as it was conceived by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the Communist Manifesto of 1847, and as it has been interpreted, in the light of modern conditions, by the Russian Revolution, culminating in the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The Workers' Council" will stand by these principles and endeavor to make them a conscious force in the American labor movement. It calls upon the class-conscious elements of the workers to rally to its support.

## A Place in the Sun

Whatever our opinion may be of the gentleman who now occupies the White House, it must be admitted that he, unlike his weakly vacillating predecessor, leaves no one in doubt as to his position. He is the servant of the imperialist interest of America, and he does not care who knows it. He is determined upon an aggressive foreign policy that will establish the American capitalist class firmly as a factor in the world market. He realizes that imperialism abroad can be achieved and maintained only at the expense of democratic institutions at home, that only a complete centralization of power in the hands of a small group of autocrats can assure the success of his ambitious plan. And Mr. Harding is willing to pay the price. He has no patience with the weakly sentimentality that pretends to preserve constitutional rights that are obviously not in accord with the new role that America is to play. He makes no attempt to hide his real purpose behind a smoke-screen of beautiful phrases. He does not propose to be handicapped in the serious business of capturing the world for the money powers of the United States by a too close consideration of the opinions and feelings of its people.

The first week of the new administration has indicated beyond a doubt the policy that is to be

pursued. In the inaugural address, hidden in the mass of florid verbiage that is used on such occasions to conceal the speaker's true opinions, we find a short paragraph, so short that it almost escaped public attention, that serves notice upon the American people, that the era of international warfare has only just begun.

"Our supreme task," says Mr. Harding, "is the resumption of our onward normal way. Reconstruction, readjustment, restoration — all these must follow. I would like to have them. If it will lighten the spirit and add to the resolution with which we take up the task let me repeat, for our nation, we shall give no people just cause to make war upon us. We hold no national prejudices, we entertain no spirit of revenge, we do not hate, we do not covet, we dream of no conquest nor boast of armed prowess.

"If, despite this attitude, war is again forced upon us I earnestly hope a way may be found which will unify our individual and collective strength and consecrate all America, materially and spiritually, body and soul, to national defense. I can vision the ideal republic, where every man and woman is called under the flag for assignment to duty for whatever service, military or civic the individual is best fitted, where we may call to universal service every plant, agency or facility, all in the sublime sacrifice for country, and not one penny or war profit shall inure to the benefit of private individual, corporation or combination, but all above the normal shall flow into the defense chest of the nation.

"Out of such universal service will come a new unity of spirit and purpose, a new confidence and consecration, which would make our defense impregnable, our triumph assured. Then we should have little or no disorganization of our economic, industrial and commercial systems at home, no staggering war debts, no swollen fortunes to flout the sacrifices of our soldiers, no excuse for sedition, no pitiable slackerism, no outrages of treason."

To make certainly doubly sure, the Secretary of the Navy, a few days later, announced the program of the new administration, and demanded that the United States must have a navy, as large or larger than that of any other nation in the world.

Nor is all this to be accepted simply as idle "big talk," or as a warning issued to the world in general that the United States intends to protect itself to the utmost from foreign attack. On the contrary, the administration has already launched upon a very positive program of imperialist aggression, a program so palpably unfriendly to both Japan and England, the two chief competitors against American capital in the world market, that difficulties are bound to ensue. The sending of General Wood to the Philippines will certainly be regarded in Japan as a threat. The proposed concentration of the entire fleet in the Pacific can serve only to deepen this impression. In fact Washington, according to the statements given out to the correspondents of the press, makes no secret of its intentions. The fleet will go to the Pacific, not because the country is in danger of invasion, but for the purpose of emphasizing the new foreign policy upon which the United States is about to embark. The American govern-

ment is determined to play a more important part in the Pacific and in the Orient than hitherto. Nothing that transpires in there shall escape its notice, nothing of international moment shall be done there without its consent. According to these statements, America has had to submit to indignity after indignity in the past in its foreign relations. Recent years have changed this. The war has made the United States a military as well as an economic factor, and the new administration is not prepared to relinquish the position it has already gained. In line with this change of foreign policy, it has been intimated that the new administration will disregard the Lansing-Ishi treaty, since it practically recognizes and establishes the dominance of Japan in the Orient. In other words, our neighbors on the other side of the Pacific have been thus unofficially notified that the present administration does not propose to stand by the foreign policies of the Wilson Administration.

American capital is emerging from a long period of extremely profitable exploitation at home. But the industrial development of the nation has been carried to the point of satisfaction. Investment within the borders of the United States no longer promise anything more than moderate return. Large investors, their lust for enormous profits inflamed by the extraordinary inflation that accompanied the war, are reaching out to Asia for more profitable fields. China, hitherto regarded by Japanese capital as its own private field of exploitation, must be made immediately accessible to American capital. Mexico South and Central America must come so completely under the domination of their great neighbor on the North as to practically nullify the possibility of Japanese influence there. They must, moreover, be made more tractable to the will and dictatorship of American investors, must be forced to lend them the same sympathetic support and interest that they have been accustomed to receive at the hands of their public servants at home.

Meanwhile England is ill at ease over this metamorphosis that is turning a friendly and more or less desultory competitor into an active menace. English capital has already found a firm foothold in China. London reports the organization of a huge business enterprise that will undertake to unlock China's industrial resources. This concern has already secured important concessions from Peking. Up to this time it has been impossible for foreign capital to own real property outside the open ports. These limitations have been removed in the interests of the new undertaking. Thus the United States, by reaching out into territory now under the domination of either Japanese or English capital, is storing up trouble for the future, a fact that our administration recognized, and for which it intends to be prepared.

In short, the United States, in a single week, has openly broken with its traditional position of aloofness in international affairs. The administration has steered the ship of state into a course that can have but one ultimate outcome, new international difficulties and new wars, without pretending to consult Congress, the recognized expression of the will of the people. Its transactions are clothed in a deep shroud of mystery becoming public only when all possibil-