

ity of an expression of public opinion has passed. It has been possible, in this great democracy of ours, for a few men to place the entire nation in a position where war is inevitable, to adopt a course that can be maintained only by the abnegation of every free principle of government, under a regime of unqualified autocratic reaction. Under the Constitution Congress alone has the right to make war. But Mr. Harding and his Cabinet without consulting Congress have adopted a policy which will lead inexorably to new hostilities, with Mexico, with Japan, with England. The time will come when conflict heaped upon conflict, when injury added to injury, will flare up into a new world war. Then the rulers of these nations will once more come before their peoples, to show how ruthless they have been attacked, how their most sacred rights have been trampled upon. Mr. Harding and his cabinet will call upon Congress to declare war upon the enemy who has dared to invade the shrine of our liberties. They will call upon the people to vote upon the question of war or peace when it is too late to recede, when they, by their imperialistic machinations, have piled up a conflagration that will threaten to consume the world. Congress will vote for war, because there is no other alternative. And the men of the nation will once more give their lives that American imperialism may live.

The Bitter Lesson

While the pre-war dollar still hovers about the 50-cent level, the masters of industry are busily reducing wages to the pre-war point. Wholesale reductions of 10, 20, and 30 per cent are being announced throughout the country. In the less organized industries cuts of as high as 60 per cent are being quietly put through. As usual, the lowest paid workers suffer from the largest comparative cuts. The packers not only announce a wage cut of 12½ per cent, affecting 200,000 workers, but also the replacing of the basic eight-hour day by one of ten hours. This in spite of their agreement with the workers to maintain the status quo until a year after a treaty of peace was signed with Germany. From coast to coast the railroads are vigorously setting about the task of lowering the standard of living of millions of men. Here also the lowest paid workers must stand the brunt of the attack. Hundreds of thousands of railroad laborers are being reduced from \$4 to \$3 a day.

This is a "return to normalcy" with a vengeance! It is the real inaugural message to the American workers, though of course there was no hint of anything of the sort in the pious platitudes emitted by Mr. Harding in front of the Capitol.

These wage-reductions are natural and inevitable in circumstances like the present under a system like our own. The object of our economic system is to maintain profits. In our society the purpose of a field of wheat is not to provide bread but to build up profits. The purpose of a clothing industry is not to provide clothes but to create dividends. The purpose of a railroad is not to transport people and commodities, but to transport gold into the pockets of the insiders. To a sane and impartial

planetary observer such a system of production would seem quite mad. It is the system we have, however, and there is certainly no political intelligence at large in high places that holds out any hope of a better one.

The recent industrial slump has threatened the holy profits. The domestic consumer has grown wary and a good proportion of our foreign markets have vanished while the European statesmen have been completing the ruin of Europe. Industrial stagnation has brought on a labor surplus here and the masters of industry have been quick to take advantage of it. Wages are being reduced in order that the great god Profit may be maintained in the style to which he is accustomed.

The maintenance of profit is not as simple as it was before Mr. Wilson led us forth in the grand but expensive crusade to usher in a new world order. Taxes are sky high. The war must be paid for. It must be paid for out of production, for there is no other way. Either profits must be sacrificed or the workers must be sacrificed. Since the profit mongers are the lords of industry, the worker must pay.

In the present situation the worker is in the position of being the most easily replaceable part of the industrial machine. This condition is common except in times of labor famine. It will continue to recur as long as the workers tolerate a leadership which accepts the economic creed of capitalism. It will continue as long as the workers are willing to serve capitalism as cannon fodder in war and factory-fodder in peace.

Only by class-conscious organization can those who produce from their toil and sweat, out of their suffering and starvation, all the wealth of the world, be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor and build a new world of happiness and freedom. Only by class-conscious organization can they cast from their shoulders the overwhelming dead-weight of profit. Only by class-conscious organization and international solidarity can they escape the old captivity, strike off the old chains. The present is a time of bitter education, but its lesson is plain. Can the workers fail to profit by it?

COMMUNIST RUSSIA

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intrigues and blockades. It may take ten years, perhaps a generation. What of it! Russia is past the most difficult period of transition from the capitalist state to a communist state, while other capitalist countries must still face the period of revolution. Therefore let Russia lead the way. Let the American workers realize that Russia's fight is their fight, that Soviet Russia's success is the success of the laboring people the world over! Hail Soviet Russia, the first Communist Republic, the land of, by and for the common people. We greet you, workers and peasants of Russia, who by your untold sacrifices, by your determination and devotion, are transforming the Russia of black reaction, of the domination of a few, into a land of glorious promise for all. Comrades in America, watch the bright dawn in the East; you have but your chains to lose, and a world to gain!

Russia's Triumph

With the signing of the Russo-British trade pact, to be followed by a peace treaty with Poland, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic enters upon a new stage of progress. After three and a half years of isolation it has now won its right to recognition as a Sovereign State. After three and a half years of battle against a hostile world in arms eager to maintain the old order of greed and grab, Soviet Russia unaided has beaten off her enemies and forced them to come to terms with her. Against Soviet Russia invasions failed, and starvation blockades failed, and lying propaganda failed, and internal plotters and hired assassins failed. At times it seemed that only by a miracle could free Russia survive, for czarism and the ineffective transition governments had left nothing but chaos and starvation. The survival is indeed a miracle of heroism. The triumph of the Russian workers and peasants is the most notable event of modern times.

Not altruism certainly, but hard reality, led the Imperial British Government to sign a trade treaty with Soviet Russia on equal terms, to pledge itself to the lifting of the blockade and to co-operate with Russian trade processes. It is the primary business of the British Government, in its foreign policy, to look after British trade. For many months Germany has been diligently cultivating the Russian market. Seven great orders for locomotives and locomotive parts alone have been placed in Germany by the Russian Commissariat of Ways and Communications. German manufacturers, starved for markets, have rushed ahead on these orders. In the matter of locomotive parts they are three months ahead on deliveries. Their locomotives began to arrive in Russia some weeks ago. If British statesmen permitted this most promising market to slip away from them, the realistic British traders would liquidate the power of Lloyd George & Co. in short order. Thus it has happened that the Russian emigrés in London and the little band of former Russian diplomats without a country have of late been finding Downing Street not at home when they called. Britain's idle factories and Britain's army of unemployed were the first consideration in British politics. The Russian market was a necessity if Britain was to pull itself out of a nasty economic hole. The attraction of Moscow proved irresistible, let the old-fashioned Tories and imperialists rail as they would.

In concluding the pact, the Lloyd George Government scored doubly. It scored over its chief imperialist rival, France, and its chief economic rival, the United States.

The entente with France has for some time been showing signs of wear and tear. The recent occupation of the Rhine Valley was obviously not altogether to the liking of the British Government, and has caused a further strain on Anglo-French relations. England has no particular reason at present to welcome a greater France that may grow into an uncomfortable neighbor. England wants above all things peace and quiet and trade, and France's present policy of intrigue and bluff has been keeping all Europe and part of Asia in a turmoil. More-

over the French chauvinist press has been vigorously attacking England and lauding the United States. The Russo-British trade pact marks the first serious break in the entente.

Incidentally it leaves the United States in a humiliating position. Here too we have a critical unemployment problem. The capitalists have found bankrupt Europe a dead market for our goods. The continental chauvinist governments are willing to buy, but they want to borrow money with which to pay, and their assets are not easily discernible to the naked eye. Russia, the greatest market in the world today, has been offering us preferential treatment for her trade since there first appeared a possibility that the Russian blockade would be opened. But the Wilson administration chose to spurn the offers and deport the Russian trade representatives. From any point of view the policy was imbecilic. It was cleverly fostered by anti-Russian propaganda emanating from London, which our provincial politicians and our narrow-minded capitalists swallowed, lock, stock and barrel. While British statesmen were perfecting their agreements with Krassin and British traders were eagerly making their arrangements in Moscow itself through their accredited agents, British diplomats were cleverly disseminating for American consumption propaganda that no self-respecting nation could have any dealings with Russia. It was a slick game, and it worked. Britain has handsomely won from Uncle Sam the first round in the struggle for markets.

The signing of the trade pact follows a month of the wildest sort of anti-Russian propaganda, emanating mostly from French sources. As soon as Krassin's final negotiations began in London, the French propaganda factory at Helsingfors began to announce the immanent overthrow of the Soviet Government. French and Finnish intrigues managed to give color to the propaganda by stirring up a little counter-revolutionary tempest at Kronstadt, which was announced as in progress, in the reactionist press in Paris, some days before it actually occurred. Anti-Soviet uprisings were reported all over Russia, and in the so-called "news" the streets of Moscow and Petrograd ran with blood, while Lenin was packing his trunks to flee. It is now plain that all these wildcat reports were sheer inventions. The trouble was confined to Kronstadt, and is being gradually liquidated, the delay being caused by the desire of the Soviet authorities to avoid bloodshed, even the blood of the poor dupes of French imperialism. It is interesting to note in connection with the Kronstadt affair the persistent reports that food has been furnished to the rioters by a counter-revolutionary propagandist organization calling itself the American Red Cross. That is good news for the British traders!

Thus Soviet Russia enters a new era. The blockade is ended. The imperialist thieves are divided in counsels. A more normal life can be assumed and a great era of construction looms ahead. The Russian workers can now set about their task of building up a civilization that will be a model for the whole world, a model in human happiness, in human right, in human freedom. The dreams of the little man in the Kremlin can move towards splendid realization.