

It was this fear of the masses that led the representatives of French nobility on that famous 4th of August, 1789, to voluntarily sacrifice their feudal rights.

In this stage, coalition governments, with representatives of the working class, may be of value to their interests. But it must be born in mind that this can be only a short transition period. On the other hand, it would be senseless to attempt to curtail this stage artificially or by force.

The class struggle cannot, of course, be set aside for any length of time, so long as class rule exists. The greater the demands of the working classes become, the sharper will grow the resistance of their exploiters.

And so, of necessity, the third stage of the revolution must come: the revival, yes the intensifying of the struggle between the classes which united in overthrowing the old government. Through this stage, too, the Russian revolution must inevitably go. No cleverness of tactics, no terroristic recklessness can prevent it. It will be the deciding stage of the Russian revolution, albeit not its most joyous one. It lacks the glad joyousness, the unbounded hopes of the first stages. But it is the most important period, that period which will determine its historic character, in which the significance that coming generations will ascribe to it, will be decided.

In this period not only the two classes will fight against each other, but tactical differences between the various groups of the same class will appear as well. These tactical questions may make themselves felt under certain circumstances even before the class differences themselves become apparent. The class interests are a deciding factor in politics, but not the only factor.

In war the plan of action of an army is determined not only by the whereabouts of the enemy, but by a fairly definite knowledge of his strength and the strength of one's own forces as well. In an army there may be a variety of opinions. But it stands under the direction of a single commander, and he decides upon a single plan of action for the whole army. The political army of democracy knows no commander in chief. In spite of uniform class interests, yes, in spite of absolute

agreement in political theory, it may be split up by a difference in the estimation of strength of the movement itself and of the power of its enemies.

This is particularly true of a movement that is evolving under conditions such as exist in Russia at the present time. Czarism and the war have made it practically impossible to determine, even approximately, the strength of the various parties and tendencies. It becomes the more important for the consolidation of the revolution, therefore, to find a definite basis upon which this knowledge may be more or less adequately established. The election of a constitutional assembly is an absolute necessity. Not because it will wipe out the differences between the classes and parties, but because it will permit a fairly accurate calculation of their relative strength, giving to their struggles a more rational basis. But even more important for the future of the Russian revolution than a constitutional assembly is peace.

It has become customary to compare the present Russian movement with that of France in 1793. But they are widely different in character. When war broke out between France and reactionary Europe the revolution in France had practically accomplished its work. The agrarian population had already gone over to the new regime, won by the confiscation of church lands and the lands of the feudal lords who had rebelled against the revolution. The war was in the main a war to defend the revolution from the threatening attacks of European monarchs. It was a sort of international class struggle. And in this struggle the revolution gave to its defenders a new war measure of epoch-making importance, placing a mass army raised by popular conscription in the field against the small professional armies of the monarchies. To this it owed its victory and thus the war brought to France, after the first heavy loss, not the misery of invasion, but rich gain.

In Russia war preceded the revolution, and brought to the latter only unspeakable suffering, complete disintegration. It does not preserve for the working class what the revolution has accomplished; on the contrary, it makes it impossible for them to take