

advantage of their victory. Nor has the revolution given to Russia any war measure that would place it at an advantage over its opponents.

And there is still another difference. The significance of the French revolution was tremendous. It was the signal for the overthrow of the whole feudal system. The Russian revolution of to-day can have no such efforts. A bourgeois revolution is no longer necessary even in Russia; the capitalist class and even a considerable portion of the agrarian population had secured practically every juridical and economic right they needed, even before the revolution broke out. But the proletariat in Russia is still too weak and too undeveloped to rule the nation, to accomplish a revolution in the Socialist sense of that term.

The significance of the present Russian revolution is, above all, political. Its aim lies chiefly in the winning of democracy as a foundation upon which the proletariat may most successfully carry on its class struggle, may develop and organize its forces for the conquest of political power.

But war and democracy are two forces that cannot easily be brought into harmony. A state of war brings, even in highly democratized nations, for the period of its duration, a certain curtailment of democratic rights.

That was also true in democratic France. The reign of terror, generally regarded as a product of the revolution, was, as a matter of fact, the product of the war. And this explains, too, the fact that the climax of the rule of democratic forces in France, coincided with the climax of political persecution and political death sentences.

This war threatens the very essence of the Russian revolution, its democracy. Furthermore, it robs the revolution of the opportunity to counteract its political sacrifices by economic gain.

An early peace is therefore indispensable for the success of the Russian revolution. But it, too, will endanger the revolution, if it is a peace at any price, a peace other than that formulated and demanded by its leaders, a peace without annexation and indemnities, a peace preserving the right of small nations to

decide their own destinies in every direction. If the war should end with the rape of nations, weakening instead of strengthening this outcome, then revolution, not its aim, but its method, would be discredited for years to come, not only among the Russian people, but among all other nations as well.

Thus they stand between Scylla and Charybdis. The continuation of war threatens economic and political, separate peace, moral bankruptcy.

A revolution that is an outgrowth of existing conditions possesses a gigantic vitality and momentary reverses are by no means cause for despair. But they should bring to us the grave warning, not to leave our Russian comrades alone to their fate. Their cause is the cause of the international proletariat. The collapse of revolutionary Russia would halt the process of democratization in Central Europe that has already begun.

Revolutionary Russia alone is not in a position to enforce a peace upon the terms it has proclaimed. It is time for the International to do its duty, at last, toward itself as well as toward the Russian revolution.