

Elsewhere in this issue we discuss the situation in Germany. It is therefore unnecessary to discuss the subject at length here. We shall merely repeat the general conclusion: Germany seems to be marching backward—and the German working class seems to be well in front of the procession.

Herein lies the tragedy of the Russian Revolution—for a real tragedy it is, in the old Greek conception of that term, a fatal situation from which there seems to be no escape. Bolshevik and Menshevik, “extremists” and “moderates,” seem to be alike foredoomed to failure. At least as long as the Russian Revolution is compelled to choose between the Scylla of “democratic governments” and the Charibdis of a “German revolutionary proletariat.” For, for the present at least, both are pure figments of the imagination, each bound to prove a broken reed in the hands of any one who places reliance upon it.

The Task of the Constituent Assembly. A Republic without a President.

From the *Iswestia*: “Reports of the Council of Deputies of the Workmen and Soldiers. Petrograd, the 13/26 of April, 1917.”

(Translated from the Russian by **Marius**.)

(Foreword by **Marius**)

The article of the official organ of the Council of Delegates of Workmen and Soldiers of Petrograd reprinted herewith seems to me so characteristic of the prevailing public spirit in Petrograd at the time of its publication there, that I permit myself to call special attention to it. It is an historical document worthy of being preserved in the archives of international Socialist literature.

A few details in the article are not absolutely correct; a few others could stand a more minute analysis. The terminology of the Council's writer: “Constituent Assembly,” “Legislative Assembly” are borrowed from the Great French Revolution. Nevertheless the fact remains that the Council of Deputies of Workmen and Soldiers know what they want and know what they are talking about. The most unfortunate point however, is that the theoretical statements and deductions in the article—which document seems to have been considered infallible and thought to contain a program certain of realization—appear at present as ideals only, (not to say as unfulfilled wishes), appear as the product of the first weeks after the success of the Russian Revolution, and as the expression of the enthusiastic satisfaction with the great progress made and of the certainty of still greater progress resulting immediately from further development of the Revolution. For now we witness a turn for the worse in Russia. It started with the deviation from the statement that “the Russian nation will not deliver the Governmental power, in whole or in part, not even for temporary use, to any individual.” Yet it did—for we did have a dictator in Russia: Alexander Kerensky.