

## Armistice on All Fronts

By LUDWIG LORE

Negotiations in Brest Litovsk are still under way. But the last three weeks have been a deadlock and today it is practically certain that they will lead to no settlement between the two parties. As a matter of fact we do not believe that either side has the intention of making peace. The revolutionary government is opposed, in principle, to a separate peace, Germany from egoistic motives. Our comrades in the Russian government know that a separate peace with the Kaiser will enormously strengthen junker reaction, and will bring to the fore German annexationist tendencies. On the other hand capitalist imperialistic circles in Germany know only too well that to secure a separate peace acceptable to the Bolcheviki, they must lay their cards upon the table and play their best trumps.

It is certain that both parties entered upon these negotiations, not because they expected immediate and positive results, but because they hoped to exploit them for their own respective purposes. The German government has played with peace offers too long to dare to refuse negotiations when proposed by the other side. It feared the effect upon its own people, who would have been at a loss to understand a refusal to discuss Russian peace terms. Germany was therefore forced to play the miserable, double-faced game that has been so poignantly illustrated by the speeches of Czernin and von Kuehlmann on the one side and of General Hoffmann on the other. Germany declared herself, "in principle," in sympathy with the Russian peace formula, and in practice attempted to annex the Baltic provinces.

The comrades at the head of the Russian nation know only too well that Russia has ceased to be a military factor. No force from within or from without can galvanize it into war-like activity for some time to come. War on a large scale, with its mass armies of millions of men, whether for capitalistic or for revolutionary aims, is out of the question at the present

time. The soldiers are going home, the people are starving, and above all, the necessity of preserving the Revolution demands an immediate liquidation of the war. But the international situation today is such that an early and a democratic peace can come only if the Russian Revolution is backed up by revolutionary uprisings in other belligerent countries, and receives from them the necessary support. In other words, an uprising of the German and Austrian proletariat is the premise for an early peace, a peace that would be concluded everywhere in the interests of the working classes. Fear of revolt everywhere would force the hand of the ruling classes. The piratical imperialistic desires of the allied nations, as the diplomatic treaties published by Trotzky plainly show, are as egoistically opposed to the interests of the people as are those of the central powers. The revolutionary overthrow of the central powers would inevitably bring in its wake the collapse of allied militaristic and imperialistic aims.

Revolutionary Russia, therefore, recognized the necessity of adopting radical measures to awaken the class conscience of the German people. It was no easy task. In Germany, the traditional land of servility and submissiveness, a revolutionary uprising is conceivable only under the severest pressure. The elements that remain at home are composed mostly of women, children, the aged, infirm and crippled, and the ammunition worker, who has always been difficult to organize for revolutionary action. The majority group of the Socialist movement still plays the role of the imperial lackey, ready, at a word, to perform political somersaults; while the Independent Social Democracy seems still too weak to fulfill the mission that falls to the lot of the German proletariat.

These considerations led the revolutionary government of Russia to adopt the indirect method of influencing the working class of Germany and Austria. It could not reach the proletariat of these two nations directly with its propaganda. There was only one possible way of reaching them—to speak to them over the heads of their own ruling classes. To accomplish this Russia proposed a general armistice of all belligerent