

principle. At best they were willing to accept it as a "*basis of negotiations*"—that is, as a means of concluding as advantageous a bargain as they could under the given circumstances. Naturally they were looking to the condition of the market—which in this case meant the state of the "war map," which Germany had long ago declared to be the basis of all peace terms. But the war map—or the peace market—is entirely different with respect to a separate peace from what it is with respect to a general peace. With respect to the former, Russia is in the position of an anxious buyer, with Germany having a corner on all the peace available in the market; while with respect to the latter Germany knows that she is at least as anxious to obtain peace as are her adversaries. On true *business principles*, therefore, which underlie all peace by negotiations, her terms of peace in the two transactions must necessarily be different. For a general peace she is willing to accept one price—the Russian formula *as interpreted by herself*; but for a separate peace she must exact quite a different price—a price which is in open and avowed defiance of that formula. All of which is in true conformity to the spirit of a *negotiated bargain peace*.

Fundamentally opposed to this conception of peace-making is that of the Russian delegates. As against the idea of a peace by bargain-and-sale negotiations they put forward the idea of a peace based on general principles, independent of the condition of the war-map market. No wonder the German negotiators cannot understand them. "These Russians"—they say—"talk as if they were conquerors." What poor Von Kuehlmann and Czernin evidently do not understand is that according to the Trotsky idea of peace-making it makes *no difference*, in discussing peace terms, as to whether one is conqueror or conquered. Trotsky is not out to *buy* peace at the best market price, but to *establish* peace on the basis of democratic principles.

The peace-parleys at Brest-Litowsk are therefore entirely different from any other peace negotiations of which there is any record in history. It is a struggle between two fundamentally opposed principles in peace making. Between the principle of peace by negotiation along bargain-counter war-map lines and the

principle of a democratic peace irrespective and in utter disregard of the laws of negotiation and the commodity market

Which of these two principles will prevail we do not feel called upon to predict. One thing, however, seems to us quite certain and that is this: *It is a case of now or never*—or at least not for a long time to come. If the Russian revolutionary principle in peace making is to prevail it must prevail now at Brest-Litowsk. Should it fail at Brest-Litowsk and the German militarists be permitted to impose their kind of peace upon the Russian Revolution, then the new principle cannot possibly be applied at the conclusion of this great world war, which means that this great catastrophe will not be the last of its kind. But the Russian Revolutionary principle in peace making—which is designed to end *all* war—cannot possibly prevail at Brest-Litowsk without assistance from the democracies of the world. The only way to make that principle prevail now is by turning the separate peace negotiations at Brest Litowsk into *general* peace negotiations, with a generally accepted democratic peace programme in advance of the meeting of the negotiators, and with the unequivocally announced principle that in these peace negotiations there must be no distinction between conqueror and conquered, victor and vanquished.

It is up to the working class of all countries to follow the glorious example set them by the Russian Revolution.

B.

Eleventh Hour Conversions

The allied "peace offensive" which was inaugurated by Lord Lansdowne's celebrated letter and has reached its culmination point, so far, at least, in President Wilson's war-aims message of January 8, must have come as a great surprise to a good many people, and particularly to our "liberals," who for months have been pleading for this very thing in order to save the Kerensky government from its impending doom, and pleading in vain. For six long months our "liberal" war enthusiasts were pleading with