

Russian Revolution. But they ought to know that their hopes of national independence are intimately bound up with the Russian Revolution—that the only way in which they can secure their independence is by *their standing by Russia and not by their separating from it, thereby weakening it.*

To a Socialist not affected by the virus of bourgeois nationalism Kautsky's warning was entirely unnecessary, and it was evidently written for the especial benefit of the German Socialist workingmen whom the Scheidemann governmental recruiting agency was trying to lure into an acceptance of the German Government's annexationist plans on the specious plea that Finland and the Ukraine were being made "independent." The Russian Socialists did not need this warning. Not even the Bolsheviks, as may be seen from their stubborn refusal to recognize the German-made "Ukrainian Republic" and the war which they have waged on this imaginary "nation" as well as on Finland's "independent" government, even while they were laying down their arms in the war against Germany.

And the situation with respect to a "German" peace—and every separate peace was in the very nature of things bound to be a "German peace"—was even more simple and was well recognized by all Russian Socialists as well as by all good Socialists the world over, not excluding Germany. The Russian Revolution could not co-exist with a victorious German Militarism. But a separate peace meant German Militarism triumphant. Hence the repeated and passionate declarations of all Socialist parties and factions in Russia that they were not working for and would not conclude a separate peace.

Some are now inclined to doubt the sincerity of these declarations—at least in so far as the Bolshevik leaders are concerned. I do not belong among them. I can no more credit these accusations that I can credit the counter-accusations that the "Menshevik" leaders were intentionally playing into the hands of Allied imperialists. The fact is, as I have pointed out in my first article on the Tragedy of the Russian Revolution, that the Rus-

sian revolutionists are the unfortunate victims of a cruel fate which has placed them upon the horns of a terrible dilemma, the acceptance of either alternative being equally fatal to their aspirations. The "Mensheviks" took what seemed to be the line of least resistance:—an appeal to the Western "democracies" seemed the natural thing to do for the new-born democracy of the East, and most promising of results. Their failure seemed to call for more heroic, more venturesome expedients, and the Bolsheviks were willing to try them.

But Trotsky went to Brest-Litovsk for exactly the same purpose that Skobelev was to go to Paris—in an attempt to bring about a general and democratic peace. The means adopted may seem to some of us like a foolhardy adventure upon which only reckless adventurers could embark. But in judging our comrades we must remember the desperate straits in which the Russian Revolution found itself, not only physically by reason of the exhaustion of the long war, but also morally by reason of its alliance with nations that were manifestly unwilling to give up their imperialistic aims. To which should be added the consideration that a certain amount of confidence in the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat of all countries is not only an article of faith in all Socialist creeds, but one of the most essential ingredients in the make-up of a true revolutionist. Too much faith of this sort is liable to become dangerous under certain circumstances. In the present instance it turned out disastrous. And we have a right to criticize Trotsky and his associates for not being more careful about the people in whom they put their trust, and particularly for recklessly destroying their bridges behind them before making sure of their ground. But we have no right to suspect their good faith or their fidelity to principle.

Trotsky did not go to Brest-Litovsk to make a separate peace—an "honorable" separate peace, such, for instance, as the "good" Ukrainian Rada has made. The best proof of that is the fact that he did not make such a peace. Nor did he for a moment entertain the belief that he would convert the German Militarists to the idea of a general democratic peace. Concerning the true character of the German Militarists, Trotsky and his associates