

by a backward majority out in the provinces it is quite possible that the threatening elements seek to retain their position by working for complete independence for the provinces, aye, for the communes, as for example the Bakunin adherents in Spain in the early seventies.

Thus, under the conditions of Russia's life, the dictatorship of the proletariat threatened to lead to the political and social dissolution of the country, to chaos, but thereby also to the moral bankruptcy of the revolution and a preparing of the way for a counterrevolution.

As a consequence of these fears, it happened that until now the Mensheviks held the upper hand in the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils, although a bourgeois-proletarian coalition cabinet cannot possibly be a durable formation and cannot create anything great. The longer such a cabinet lasts the more must both classes, the one as well as the other, in view of the inherent antagonisms between them, come to lose confidence in the government, so that little by little the ground is pulled from under its feet. The Russian revolutionary cabinets were also only meant as provisional governments to bring about peace and call together the Constitutional Assembly. They could only perform their function on the condition that peace and the Constitutional Assembly were brought about quickly. The longer peace took in coming the more untenable the coalition became and all the faster grew the mass of Bolshevik adherents until they finally came into power.

Now we shall see whether the fears entertained regarding their advent were well grounded. In the matter of energy nothing is lacking. They count among their adherents very intelligent keen-sighted comrades. But the difficulties that lie in the actual conditions before them are enormously great. Should they succeed in overcoming them their success will carry in its train unheard-of consequences. It will mean the beginning of a new epoch in the world's history.

For the present nothing can be said with certainty regarding this, however.

That does in no wise imply, though, that the Russian events must leave us passive. Whatever the result may be, whether peace be brought about or the war prolonged, whether these events leave Russia a defenseless spoil to be disposed of according to pleasure, or whether the Bolsheviks or the Mensheviks come out on top,—whatever the outcome may be these events signify to us a serious admonition to deliberate upon the question of making easier the situation for the Russian Proletariat.

Still we need do nothing more for the Russian revolution than just the fulfilling of our duties to the German proletariat, to the German

people. These duties resolve themselves into a peace according to our fundamental principles and the democratization of Germany.

Establishing the supremacy of the parliament is a step toward democratization, but alone and in and of itself insufficient. However great is the significance of the dependency of the government on the parliament, this makes for democratization only provided that hand in hand with this condition goes the growing dependency of parliament on the great mass of the people. A parliament that does not derive its support from the mass of the people is powerless. On the other hand, the people in a parliamentary state that leaves its fate exclusively in the hands of the parliament is likewise impotent.

Marx acknowledged the necessity for the parliament in modern politics, but just as much the necessity of pressure on the parliament from without. He who demands the supreme power be lodged in the parliament, but at the same time holds back the proletariat from all efforts to influence the parliament through methods corresponding to the nature of the proletariat as a class, he does not seriously desire the democratization of the (German) political system. His declarations of sympathy for the Russian revolution are consequently only hypocritical.

Sadly enough, the Socialistic elements which in this manner paralyze the proletariat at present—at a time so decisive as regards the future of the working class—they still dominate a number of important portions of the proletariat.

Only if events in Russia take a direction so that they carry with them all the proletarian masses of Western Europe will it be possible to overcome the paralyzing influence of these elements.

It were idle today to try to prophecy anything as regards this matter. We must be prepared for anything, the worst as well as the best.

(The Survey)

The British Miners and the War

An Interview with Robert Smillie, President of the Lanarkshire Miners' Union (Scotland), President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Chairman of the Triple Alliance of Railway Men, Transport Workers and Miners

Our experience in this country was that when war was declared it undoubtedly created an enormous amount of enthusiasm. Men of all ranks rushed to join the army, for what to them seemed the holiest cause that could be—the defense of small nations and treaties. Fathers and sons went together to recruiting offices, and fathers made misstatements about their ages in order to be accepted as recruits.