

avoided, I do not deny. In any country in revolution a certain rough element, devoid of principles, inevitably bobs up, to take advantage of the situation for purposes of plunder. The Provisional Government leaders had taken stringent measures to put down such persons. From the start the forces of the Workers' government were under strict orders to give "White Guard" captives all the rights of organized warfare, though the "White Guard" forces had no standing in international law. On the other hand, "White Guard" leaders have openly boasted that "Red Guard" captives were to be slaughtered as "Bandits."

The producing working classes of Finland, strongly organized, trained in over ten years of parliamentary achievement, desire to establish Finland as a cooperative commonwealth, without special privileges or political or economic exploitation of any kind. They are opposed by the aristocracy and the capitalists who lead the junker forces of Finland, and who are willing to accept German vassalage to perpetuate their feudal control and keep the mass of the people in chains.

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The Finnish Socialists have always demanded for the working people of Finland education in the language of the people, and the right for Finland to determine her own fate in accordance with the specific economic conditions of that country. They have always fought for Finland's autonomy. But never have they been nationalists in the usual meaning of that word. The national question was to them a class question.

Until the Russian Revolution, the Russian Czar was the main support of the Finnish bourgeoisie in their opposition to the interests of the working classes. Especially after 1906, when the workers in Finland achieved parliamentary rights, the unlimited power of veto of the Russian Czar was used by the Finnish bourgeoisie as a weapon against the radical legislation of the Diet in which the Socialists were in the majority.

The power of the Socialists was so great, that although they were in the minority until 1916, the bourgeoisie did not always dare to oppose the passage of some of the important laws de-

manded by the masses. Instead of that they utilized their connections with the Russian court and almost always succeeded in thwarting radical legislation by the veto of the Russian Czar. Finland's dependence on Russia was thus one of the principal obstacles to the workers' control of Finland and this class interest of the Finnish Parliament led to the fight for Finland's autonomy.

That the independence desired by the Finnish Parliament—as well as by the Finnish bourgeoisie—was a class issue and nothing more, will be seen from the following facts: In July 1917 the majority in the Finnish Diet, representing the Socialist party, voted for Finland's independence from Russia, and was ardently opposed by the Finnish bourgeoisie. In November of the same year, the illegally elected bourgeois majority in the new Diet,—(recent dispatches from Finland prove the election was tainted with huge frauds, tens of thousands of Socialist votes having been stolen) voted for complete independence of Finland *against the opposition of the Socialists*, who demanded that such an independence should be proclaimed only with the sanction of the Russian Government and that close military and economic connections with Russia be continued. The reason for this is quite clear. In July 1917, Russia was governed by Kerensky, who, in spite of all his socialist paraphernalia remained militaristic and bourgeois. At that time there was no apparent possibility of having in Russia a real workers' government and the Finnish bourgeoisie was successfully using Kerensky's government against radical legislation of the Socialist party in the Diet as they used the Czar against the Finnish radicals. The Finnish Socialists having obtained the majority in the Diet, not accidentally but because of strong labor organizations throughout the country, very naturally wanted to have an unhampered opportunity to utilize their power for the advance of the cause of labor. It was just because the bourgeoisie well knew that its safety was threatened by the radical bills of the Socialist Diet, that they opposed Finnish independence at that time.

In November 1917, the roles were changed. The workers were in power in Russia,—the bourgeoisie was in power in Fin-