

## Soviet Russia Speaks to Britain

By MAXIM LITVINOFF

*Plenipotentiary Representative in Great Britain of the Russian  
Federative Socialist Republic of Soviets.*

[At the recent conference of the British Labor Party, A. F. Kerensky appeared, without preliminary announcement, and attacked the Soviet Republic. Although the majority of the delegates apparently approved of Kerensky, there was much opposition. A storm broke loose on the left of the hall, where the greater number of the radical Socialists were sitting. One delegate asked, "Will Mr. Litvinoff be allowed to speak at the same time as Kerensky?" Another delegate: "I want to know whether this conference is going to have it clearly stated what is the reason of Mr. Kerensky's visit, and whether the explanation will be given in the presence of the representatives of the present Russian government?" Another delegate: "We don't want any government plant in this business," to which the chairman indignantly replied: "To say such a thing in the presence of Mr. Kerensky is an outrage." Other delegates amid great turmoil and disorder demanded: "Whom does Kerensky represent?" Brown, of the Bristol Labor Party, was unfaltering against Kerensky, and was "persuaded" to leave the conference after a vote had been taken that he should be asked to withdraw. The whole episode was a deliberate counter-revolutionary manoeuvre.]

The Chairman of the Labor Party Conference has withheld from me the opportunity of conveying to the delegates the greetings of the Russian working classes and their representative body, the Government of the Russian Socialist Republic. He has, moreover, deemed it fair and just to allow Mr. Kerensky to make a calumnious attack on this Republic, without permitting me, as its accredited representative, to reply to his charges, in spite of my own request and that of many delegates. I therefore consider it my duty to endeavor to throw some light on the Russian situation, over which a fresh attempt was made by Mr. Kerensky yesterday to throw an obscuring mist.

Whom does Mr. Kerensky represent? Asked by so many delegates, this was not an idle question, for it is natural to suppose that delegates or visitors, officially invited to Labor Conferences, should represent the interests of Labor. Does Mr. Kerensky now represent these interests? Does he even pretend to represent

them? Mr. Kerensky, in his speech, made no mention of the working classes; he was honest enough not to pretend to speak on their behalf, but appealed on behalf of the intellectuals, on behalf of officers, on behalf of "Russia." It should be remembered that the Russian Revolution was not merely a political revolution—it was, and is, also, a social revolution. And as such it necessarily sharpens the class struggle, which has now reached its extreme point, having divided the country into two opposing completely irreconcilable camps—the factory worker, the impoverished peasant, the unemployed, the disinherited, the despised and rejected—in fact, about 85 per cent. of the population—in one camp; and a small minority—the capitalist, the landlord, the banker, the stockbroker, the general, the bureaucrat of the Czar's regime, the middle-class lawyer, the journalist, etc., in the other. The different shades of political opinions and parties faded into insignificance, leaving on the political arena two parties—supporters and opponents of the Soviets (Councils of Workers' and Peasants' Delegates).

*I maintain that Labor, whether in or out of power, is more than any other class entitled to speak on behalf of its country.* And this is especially true of Russia, where the laboring masses are in full and indisputable control of the State apparatus, themselves forming the local and central government of their country. And when anyone speaks in the name of Russia he must be asked point blank whether he speaks in the name of those who, after eight months of the bitterest struggles, have defeated their enemies, consolidated their power, and are now the only guardians of the political and social gains of the great Russian Revolution, or whether he speaks in the name of those who, having used the foulest means at their disposal to overthrow the authority of the workers, have failed to achieve any success in Russia itself, and are now invoking the aid of foreign Powers, looking for support now to Germany, now to the Allies.

Mr. Kerensky, like our other opponents, makes the bold statement that the Soviet Government does not represent the bulk of the population, but when faced with the pertinent question: "How then has the Government maintained its power if it be