

An Open Letter To American Liberals

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THE letter that follows has been sent to a number of prominent American liberals with whom Comrade Nuorteva, as official representative of the People's Republic of Finland, has repeatedly had occasion to discuss the general situation in Russia and in Finland.

They have shown interest in and appreciation of the importance and difficulty of the problems which the peoples of the countries in question were called upon to solve.

Comrade Nuorteva addressed these gentlemen not purely and solely as a personal matter, but as exponents and representatives of a group that has preserved and embodies the best American traditions, without having become contaminated by the sordidness of machine politics—the liberals of America.

They must accept the responsibility that goes with their station as well as with their historical antecedents—either protest against what they cannot justify or become responsible as fully as if they had themselves done that which they failed to oppose.

Sir:

So it did happen after all. America, the "sponsor of the new freedom," America, the "founder of world democracy," is in Russia to-day, together with the Japanese, British, French and Italians, Colonel Semenoff, General Horvath and other Russian reactionaries, to destroy the Bolshevik revolution. That is what the intervention amounts to, all reassurances notwithstanding.

I don't know that I have any business to write to you about Russia. I don't know that you have any time or interest to spare to consider the world drama which is being played in the far East. I don't know whether your patriotic efforts at bringing about class harmony in America will leave you time enough to see how your government and other governments are trying their utmost to prove to the world in Russia that conflicting class interests never can be conciliated.

Yet, somehow, I cannot refrain from writing you these lines. The greatest crime the history of the world ever has witnessed is being perpetrated against the Russian people—under the guise of "helping Russia,"—a crime as much blacker than that of the German imperialists, as is a stab in the back from a man pretending to be a friend more repugnant than a blow in the face from a confessed enemy. The Germans were at least frank in their indecency. They never pretended "helping Russia." And in Germany even the despicable Scheidemanns had enough moral stamina to raise their voices in the German Reichstag against the brigand terms imposed upon Russia by the Brest-Litovsk "peace" treaty. German papers printed vigorous criticism of Germany's policy in Russia. Here nobody dares to say anything,—least of all you, the so-called liberals, who have been trying to persuade us, the "dogmatic Socialists," that class interests are not the paramount issue in the world war and that there is some guarantee to the democracy of the world in the idealistic aims of great individuals.

What are you doing in Russia, sir? I am saying you, because *as long as you have not raised your voice in protest, you are responsible for it along with all the others.*