

England and Germany have not hesitated to ruin a whole row of nations, from Belgium and Servia to Palestine and Mesopotamia. Shall we then hesitate to act in the name of the liberation of the workers of the world from the yoke of capitalism, in the name of a general honorable peace; shall we wait until we can find a way that entails no sacrifice; shall we be afraid to begin the fight until an easy victory is assured; shall we place the integrity and safety of this "fatherland" created by the bourgeoisie over the interests of the international socialist revolution?

We have been attacked for coming to terms with German militarism. Is there no difference between a pact entered upon by Socialists and a bourgeoisie (native or foreign) against the working-class, against labor, and an agreement that is made between a working-class that has overthrown its own bourgeoisie and a bourgeoisie of one side against a bourgeoisie of another nationality for the protection of the proletariat? Shall we not exploit the antagonism that exists between the various groups of the bourgeoisie. In reality every European understands this difference, and the American people, as I will presently show, have had a very similar experience in its own history. There are agreements and agreements, fagots et fagots, as the Frenchman says.

When the robber-barons of German imperialism threw their armies into defenseless, demobilized Russia in February 1918, when Russia had staked its hopes upon the international solidarity of the proletariat before the international revolution had completely ripened, I did not hesitate for a moment to come to certain agreements with French Monarchists. The French captain Sadoul, who sympathized in words with the Bolsheviks while in deeds he was the faithful servant of French imperialism, brought the French officer de Lubersac to me. "I am a Monarchist. My only purpose is the overthrow of Germany," de Lubersac declared to me. "That is self understood (*cela va sans dire*)," I replied. But this by no means prevented me from coming to an understanding with de Lubersac con-

cerning certain services that French experts in explosives were ready to render in order to hold up the German advance by the destruction of railroad lines. This is an example of the kind of agreement that every class-conscious worker must be ready to adopt, an agreement in the interest of Socialism. We shook hands with the French Monarchists although we knew that each one of us would rather have seen the other hang. But temporarily our interests were identical. To throw back the rapacious advancing German army we made use of the equally greedy interests of their opponents, thereby serving the interests of the Russian and the international socialist revolution.

In this way we furthered the cause of the working-class of Russia and of other countries; in this way we strengthened the proletariat and weakened the bourgeoisie of the world by making use of the usual and absolutely legal practice of manoeuvring, shifting and waiting for the moment the rapidly growing proletarian revolution in the more highly developed nations had ripened.

Long ago the American people used these tactics to the advantage of its revolution. When America waged its great war of liberation against the English oppressors, it likewise entered into negotiations with other oppressors, with the French and the Spaniards who at that time owned a considerable portion of what is now the United States. In its desperate struggle for freedom the American people made "agreements" with one group of oppressors against the other for the purpose of weakening all oppressors and strengthening those who were struggling against tyranny. The American people utilized the antagonism that existed between the English and the French, at times even fighting side by side with the armies of one group of oppressors, the French and the Spanish against the others, the English. Thus it vanquished first the English and then freed itself (partly by purchase) from the dangerous proximity of the French and Spanish possessions.

The great Russian revolutionist Tchernychewski once said: Political activity is not as smooth as the pavement of the