

It would seem as if the much ridiculed methods employed by the Russian Red Guard at the various fronts have, after all, not been without a marked effect upon the Allied forces. When we consider that the British forces are in grave danger and that French troops have refused to continue fighting in Odessa, we must admit that the Bolshevik ammunition of speeches in No-Man's Land and leaflets dropped from aeroplanes, though perhaps not as deadly, are certainly more effective than the high-powered guns of the invaders. Evidently not even the hard heads of our American dough-boys are able to resist the "insidious" propaganda that proved the undoing of the German government after its "glorious" victory over the Russian Soviet government.

The offensive of the Russian Army has been, wherever possible, one of education instead of cannon and bullets. Tons upon tons of leaflets were, by the most devious ways, distributed among the enemy soldiers, always emphasizing the class character of the war against Russia, always appealing to the working-class sympathies of the men who were carrying arms against a working-class government. Instead of interning prisoners of war and arousing their resentment against their captors by harsh treatment and suffering, they took them, in large companies, into the Russian cities, to show them conditions as they really were. These men were given the choice of remaining in Russia or returning to their own armies. Some preferred to remain with their captors. Indeed there are numerous instances where German and Austrian prisoners of war fought and died for the fatherland of their adoption. Those who returned became ardent defenders of the new regime, and constituted an effective antidote against the lies and calumnies that had been spread about the Bolshevik regime.

That the American soldier, with his proverbial stupidity on all political subjects, and his lack of sympathy for all so-called "foreign" ideas, should be capable of responding to the appeal of Russian revolutionary propaganda, seems to us to justify great hopes for the future of the revolutionary movement in this country. It again proves that the appeal of revolutionary ideas and methods is more potent than the world-wide campaign of capitalist lies and counter-revolutionary agitation.

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Documents

Maxim Gorky's Confession

The war has ended. German Imperialism has been conquered and must suffer a severe penalty for its lust for plunder. The German proletariat, tortured by war and wasted by hunger, will pay dearly for the war because it submitted to the policy of its ruling class. The victors, who a short time ago, proclaimed to the whole world that they were destroying millions of men for the victory of justice and the happiness of all peoples, have now forced the conquered German people to accept the terms of an armistice which is ten times harder than the Brest-Litovsk peace and which threatens the Germans with inescapable hunger. From day to day the cynicism of the inhuman policy of the imperialists becomes clearer and threatens more and more openly the peoples of Europe with new wars and fresh bloodshed. President Wilson, who yesterday was the eloquent champion of the freedom of peoples and the rights of democracy, is equipping a powerful army for the "Restoration of Order," in Revolutionary Russia, where the people have already realized their lawful right to take the power into their own hands and are striving with all their might to lay the foundation for a new political order. I will not deny that this constructive work has been preceded by an often unnecessary destruction. But I, more than anyone else, am justified and in a position to explain, that the cultural metamorphosis which is going on under particularly difficult circumstances, and which calls for heroic exertions of strength, is now gradually taking on a form and a compass which has up to the present, been unknown in human history. This is not an exaggeration. But a short time ago an opponent of the Soviet government and still in many respects not in agreement with it, I can yet say, that in the future the historian, when judging the work which the Russian workers have accomplished in one year, will be able to feel nothing but admiration for the immensity of the present cultural activity. I will not undertake to enumerate examples. I only want to say, that to every one, this process, which for the first time allows the Russian people a share in the rudiments of the world's culture, is a thing of the heart; everyone who is striving for a renovation of the world can only and should only rejoice at the rapidity, the strength, and the zeal with which the Russian people is struggling to build for itself a new cultural life. It is true, that in this work in Russia, which has a world significance, great mistakes and unnecessary cruelties have been committed. What significance however, have these mistakes in comparison with the shameful crime of the war which was called forth by English and German imperialists? This damnable war evoked a fever in the hearts of all the European peoples and killed the already somewhat weak conceptions of men as to the value of life and respect for the worker. Is it because of the slight transgressions of the Russian Revolution against humanity, is it because of the lack of highmindedness on the part of the Russian workmen towards their conquered class enemies, that the imperialists of Europe and America are taking the field against Revolutionary Russia? No, the case is not so beautiful or