

fused to co-operate with them, Scheidemann would quickly enough have vanished, completely discredited from the scene

The German people pinned their highest hopes to the government under Ebert-Haase. But the very first days of their regime showed that the ruling Social Democratic Party had lost none of its counter-revolutionary character in the revolution. Instead of pursuing a revolutionary policy, instead of arming the people and demobilizing the army of the bourgeoisie, instead of taking arms and munitions out of the possession of the Hindenburgs and the Ludendorffs, and putting them into the hands of a Red Army, instead of proceeding immediately with the expropriation of the capitalist class and overthrowing the protesting bourgeoisie, they pursued the paths of a reactionary policy. Under their supremacy the Workmen's and Soldier's Councils quickly lost influence, the old bureaucratic machine remained in action, the bourgeois press was allowed to continue its reactionary work, slandering the revolution and preparing public opinion for the counter-revolution.

As the strength of the counter-revolution visibly grew, it was only natural that the revolutionary forces within the proletariat should awake to determined opposition. From day to day, unrest among the workers increased. Mass demonstrations grew in extent and in number. The workmen formulated political and industrial demands. Strikes were ordered to force their adoption. The struggle against the capitalist class assumed more aggressive forms, reaching their climax in the famous January uprising in Berlin. At the end of December the Independents had resigned from the government. Their position had become untenable long before. They lost much of the influence they had once possessed among the masses because they hesitated so long after the policy of the government had ceased to be their own.

Now an openly counter-revolutionary period set in. The Social democratic member of the Reichstag, Noske, from Chemnitz, became its chief defender. "Volunteer Corps" and "White Guards" were enlisted which terrorized whole Germany. They were used now in Hamburg or in Leipzig, now in Munich or in Bremen, wherever the proletariat was unwilling to submit to the dictatorship of the counter-revolution.

As the Communists had foreseen from the start, the National Assembly elections resulted in the return of an anti-socialist majority. In Russia, too, after the November revolution, those who

called for the Constituent Assembly did so likewise for counter-revolutionary purposes. Just as in Germany. Under a socialist form of Government the time will come, likewise, for a general representative election by the people. But not until the power of the bourgeoisie is completely broken, not until the brains of the working-class population has been freed from mental enslavement by capitalism, when a socialist form of society is already in actual operation. Until this is so a National Assembly must always be a hindrance in the path of the revolution, a weapon in the struggle against the revolution. The National Assembly richly fulfilled what the German bourgeoisie expected from the election of this "Peoples Parliament." To-day the Workmen's and Soldier's Councils are little more than ornaments, and the Constitution differs in no way from the bourgeois democratic conception of statecraft in any other capitalist state.

In fact the German Republic is nothing more than a capitalist state. The November Revolution did not liberate the German proletariat from its capitalist class. The means of production are as securely in the possession of the capitalist class as ever before. The progress made in social legislation—the granting of the 8 hour day, of higher wages and other social legislative measures, are little more than concessions made with the assurance that they can be withdrawn when they are no longer necessary for the pacification of the masses. The German government was not called upon to face the socialization of its industries, for that is a problem that can be approached only by a victorious proletariat.

The parole given out by the new government: "Unceasing work alone can save Germany from industrial ruin"; and "Wild strikes are a detriment to the industrial life of Germany and to its working class" are plainly nothing but a device of the capitalist rulers to fix capitalism more firmly than ever before in Germany, to save the bankrupt state of Germany from the dissolution that threatens it since its defeat in the world war. The twenty billion marks that Germany must raise annually to pay interest on its national debt and for indemnities to the victorious Allies, can only be pressed out of the proletariat by means of the most intense exploitation of its working class. It can be accomplished only by the use of the severest measures, by accustoming the masses to unceasing labor, to sacrifices and deprivations as great if not greater than those they suffered during the war. Compulsory labor legislation is already in preparation and other measures will have to follow if the "state" is to be saved for capitalism. The German working class stands before the alternative: either