

ENGLISH SECTION

The Call of the Russian Revolution

By Zilda Kahan-Coates

In times of revolution, when events change rapidly, more efficient and more rapidly working organs of representing the workers' views must be contrived, and, since the needs of the times give rise to the necessary institutions, as there arose the workers', soldiers' and peasants' Soviets. The elections to these taking place in the workshop, trade or organization, the electors have their real needs, the real facts of their life ever present before them when electing representatives, and since the electors also possess the power of recall at any time, these representatives really have a chance of representing their electors instead of misrepresenting them. And it is to the great merit of the Bolsheviks that they saw the importance of the Soviets or councils at the very start of the revolution, and long before they themselves had a majority within these Soviets their battle cry within and without the two provisional governments that preceded the November revolution was "All power to the Soviets."

Of course, this means the dictatorship of the proletariat, for it gives no voice to any of the parasitic elements of society in the direction of its affairs. Therefore, say unthinking, even so-called Socialist, critics, you have simply substituted the dictatorship of one class by that of the other—the Have Nots have simply taken the place of the Haves. Nothing of the kind. For the dictatorship of the proletariat is merely the first stage in the abolition of all classes in society.

Capitalist society is based on the existence of a governing and a governed, an exploiting and exploited class. Within its own framework it could not, if it would, do away with the exploited, the working class. On

the other hand, the only *raison d'être* for the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to do away with all classes in society. In accordance with the universal dialectic law, it contains within itself the germs of its own destruction. So soon as it has become completely and firmly established it ceases to be a dictatorship, for in a society in which citizenship is based on work there is no longer a class to be oppressed or dictated to, and the dictatorship of the proletariat is transformed into the co-operative commonwealth.

Another class of critics—Marxians to wit, who, however, have made of Marxism a dogma instead of regarding it as a method for unravelling the facts and processes of history—urge another criticism of the Bolshevik revolution, namely, that Russia was not ripe for a Socialist revolution, that it must first pass through the stages of capitalism and so forth. To reason thus is to ignore altogether the close interconnection of the whole world. The Russian town workers had already largely gone through the school of capitalism; they could see clearly, both at home and abroad, where it was leading to, and precisely because in Russia the capitalist classes were not so strongly entrenched in power as their brothers in western Europe, therefore, it was the more easy to throw off their yoke and establish at one bound, at any rate, the first beginnings of a Communist order. The size of the country and the fact that it could, if need be, be made mainly self-supporting, were also important factors contributing to the success of the venture. Of course, the peasantry is by no means Communist yet. But much can be done, and is being done, by example (that is, by the state work-

ing model co-operative farms side by side with, allowing the peasantry to work privately as much land as any man and his family can himself manage) and by propaganda.

Of course, the Bolsheviks have made mistakes and are learning in the hard school of experience. Let he who is infallible among us cast the first stone. But for three years they have held a whole world of enemies at bay—and this in spite of the war weariness of its people; in spite of the fact that the revolution started because of the miseries brought on by the war.

In spite of the fact that neither the Czar, nor Milinkoff; nor Kerenski, could cope with desertion and the unwillingness of the peasantry to fight, Trotzky has been able to raise a Red army which has so far beaten off all comers; and yet, side by side with this, an enormous amount of educative, cultural, economic and organizing work has been accomplished by our Bolshevik Comrades. Naturally, the capitalist governments could not stand by and see such a colossal attempt at Communist organization work itself out to a successful conclusion. England, particularly, with its historic, self-imposed mission of looking after the welfare of all other nations and, if necessary, saving them from their own selves, as it is now, for instance, saving Ireland from its Sinn Feiners, undertook the protection and support of every White general who cared to proclaim himself supreme ruler of Russia and rushed to his destruction in a vain attempt to overthrow Bolshevism. France has done her part toward this undoubtedly, but without English support, without the infamous blockade of Russia kept up by the English fleet, we should not have witnessed the terrible amount of suffering gone through by Russian men, women and children.

The governing class of «Perfidious Albion», with its unctuous professions of horror at atrocities—while itself

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