

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of Events in Europe

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## The New Stage Opens

**T**HE oncoming proletarian revolution in Germany is acquiring a larger consciousness and power. Every day, every hour, increases the energy of the revolutionary masses, their understanding of the problems of the Revolution and the necessary tactics of class action. Every victory of the counter-revolution and of the petty bourgeois democrats of majority Socialism is a Pyrrhic victory, out of which emerges, gigantic and implacable, the developing power of revolutionary Socialism. The problems are enormous, the opposition powerful; but the struggle proceeds. The proletariat is snapping asunder the fetters of petty bourgeois democracy and petty bourgeois Socialism; it is, out of life itself, acquiring the energy and the means for the revolutionary struggle against Capitalism and the petty bourgeois democracy,—a struggle that uncompromisingly directs itself to the definite conquest of power,—the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

The National Congress of Councils accepted reaction; it rejected the struggle for power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat; it abandoned the proletarian class struggle in favor of petty bourgeois illusions, conciliation with Capitalism, and the parliamentary struggle for reforms! All this is implicit in the refusal of the Congress to decree all power to the Soviets and its abject acceptance of the Constituent Assembly. If the revolutionary masses had acquiesced in this decision, the German Revolution, which may let loose the impulse for the international proletarian revolution, would have degenerated into a bourgeois revolution, with "Socialist" trimmings, would have yielded power to "liberal" Capitalism, would have thrust upon the proletariat and Socialism the beggar's task of "parliamentary opposition." Acceptance of the decision of the Congress would have meant the abandonment of Socialism, the abandonment of the proletarian revolution in Germany, the betrayal of the proletarian revolution in Russia and of the revolutionary struggle in all nations.

But the miserable decision of the congress was not accepted by the revolutionary masses. Simultaneously with the congress deciding to become the apologist and protector of the petty bourgeois "Socialist" counter-revolution (behind which skulks Imperialism), the revolutionary masses opened a new stage of the Revolution—the stage in which the issue is definite and inescapable: Socialism or Capitalism—the stage in which compromise, equally with Capitalism and petty bourgeois Socialism, must, will be, and is being, savagely rejected.

The new stage of the Revolution opens with forces and tendencies clearly and sharply defined:

1.—Events have demonstrated, what was apparent in analysis, that the policy of the Ebert-Haase Government was determined by the "majority" Socialists, and not by the Independents; that the Independents were simply screens against the action of the masses. This is now clear in the virtually forced withdrawal of the Independents from the Government.

2.—The Government of Ebert, Scheidemann & Co. must resort to the use of the most sinister elements and most reactionary means to preserve itself and prevent the conquest of power by the revolutionary proletariat.

3.—The Executive Committee (Central Council) of the Councils of Workmen and Soldiers is solidly united with the Government, with the "Socialist" counter-revolution, providing Ebert, Scheidemann &

Co. with the authority to use any and all means against the proletarian revolution.

4.—But this Central Council is not representative of the revolutionary masses; it was not at the time of its election, it is still less to-day. The action of local Councils and the masses in city after city are an implied, if not direct repudiation, of the policy of the Central Council—local councils are usurping government functions, regulating industry, developing out of life itself activity and measures that the dictatorship of the proletariat would organize, unify, and "legalize."

5.—The Ebert-Scheidemann Government is now openly allied with the bourgeoisie, and tacitly allied with the Imperialism of the Allies it depends upon the counter-revolutionary generals, whom it retains in power, upon the old diplomats whom it refuses to dismiss, upon the Allies to whom it pleads: depends upon any and all things except Socialism and the revolutionary proletarian struggle. But the Government is shaking.

6.—The withdrawal of the Independents from the Government is not a victory for the Independents; while it is a victory for the "majority" Socialists, it is equally a victory for the Spartacans, since the conscious and vital elements among the Independents must accept now the Spartacus policy. It is, moreover, a victory for the Spartacans in another sense, that it impresses upon the masses the futility of the policy of hesitation and compromise, that they must march straight to the revolutionary conquest of power.

7.—The international aspects of the Revolution are being more clearly recognized by the German proletariat as *one National phase* of the Social Revolution. An alliance with proletarian Russia is becoming a fact—Haase's miserable juggling with the Bolsheviki issue has discredited Haase, and not the Bolsheviki. The Spartacus Group has organized nationally as the Communist Labor Party, in conformity with the (Bolsheviki) Communist Party of Russia.

8.—All problems of the Revolution are becoming aspects of one problem—the necessity for the conquest of power, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the dynamic means equally for the struggle against the counter-revolution and Imperialism in Germany, against international Imperialism, for the realization of a Socialist peace, and for the coming of Socialism. . . .

The reactionary forces in Germany, imagining that "representatives" decide events in revolutions, misjudged the importance of the National Congress of Councils, as did the bourgeois-"Socialist" Government. But the reactionary decisions of the Congress did not halt the elemental action of the masses: they accelerated this action. A few days after the Congress adjourned, Dr. Solf issued a desperate appeal to the Allies:

"The Allies must forget that Germany is their enemy. We must unite in the one great purpose of saving the world from the dreadful consequences of Bolshevism. . . . The north German revolution is adopting the methods and shows the influence of the Russian Bolsheviki. The scenes we see every day in Berlin, Hamburg, Dresden and the industrial centers of Westphalia and the Rhineland find their analogy in Moscow and Petrograd. Personally I believe Bolshevism is not only the greatest menace now confronting Germany and Russia, but it is equally menacing to all adjacent countries. And once Bolshevism has developed power in Germany, it will spread all over the

world, like the most contagious of diseases. It must be the aim and duty of all the Powers to fight this universal enemy. . . . I am sure that Bolshevism has prepared its groundwork in France and Italy, the same as it has in Finland and Lithuania."

Having secured a mandate from the reactionary Congress of Councils, the Ebert Government prepared to disarm the Revolution. Its policy is to retain in the service "loyal" and reactionary troops, while disarming those who favor new and definitely proletarian action. The events that opened the new stage of the Revolution developed out of the decision of the Military Commander of Berlin, Otto Wels, to disband the majority of the 2,000 revolutionary sailors in Berlin,—men who initiated the revolution at Kiel and who are active in the new revolutionary movement. The sailors refused to disarm and leave Berlin. A controversy started. On Monday, December 23, a delegation of sailors marched to the headquarters of Wels, in Unter den Linden, to protest against his counter-revolutionary order. Wels thereupon, as if prepared, summoned the "Republican Guard," which opened fire upon the sailors with machine guns. The sailors, incensed at this method of answering their protest, immediately met the attack by an attack of their own upon the headquarters and made Wels a prisoner. Another detachment of sailors thereupon marched to the Chancellor's Palace, to interpellate the Cabinet of Six. Premier Ebert ordered the counter-revolutionary Potsdam Guard to march against the sailors. In the meantime, a large number of armed civilians joined the sailors, who had seized and barricaded the Royal Castle and the adjoining stables, prepared to resist; while other groups occupied the Konnigstrasse. These events developed into a demonstration against the Ebert-Haase Government, with a demand that a new government should be organized by Karl Liebknecht and George Ledebour—Ledebour having definitely aligned himself with Liebknecht. Another group of Spartacans invaded the offices of the majority Socialist organ, *Vorwaerts*, and issued a *Red Vorwaerts* stigmatizing the majority organ as "a lying dog" and "a reptile whose poisonous teeth are now about to be pulled," and demanding the retirement of Ebert, Scheidemann & Co.

Street fighting on a large scale developed on Tuesday, armed civilians uniting with the sailors. Ebert, Scheidemann and Landsberg subsequently admitted that they ordered the summoning of troops, under General Lequis, to march against the sailors, who were attacked with machine guns and artillery. The "Republican Guard" several times attacked the Castle and stables, but were repulsed by the sailors. The Alexander and Franzer regiments joined the sailors, and the whole Berlin garrison was sympathetic. The Government, however, called in other troops and managed to secure control. General Lequis declared that the Government had given him orders to fire upon the sailors, and he acted accordingly. The troops under Gen. Lequis had been sent to Berlin from the Western Front by Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, in response to an appeal from the Government,—of the Socialist Republic! Socialism and Hindenburg!

The events of the first part of last week precipitated a ministerial crisis. The Independents in the Government, Haase, Dittmann and Barth, refused to accept responsibility for Ebert's order to fire upon the sailors. Ebert & Co. thereupon decided to appeal to the recently elected Executive Committee (Central Council) of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Coun-

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# The Revolutionary Age

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Saturday, January 11, 1919

Louis C. Fraina, editor of *The Revolutionary Age*, is at present in Essex County jail, Newark, N. J. serving a thirty day sentence which was imposed for a speech made at a meeting of Conscientious Objectors in New York during the first months of the war. Fraina appealed the case and on the decision going against him he presented himself for sentence on last Tuesday. E. Ralph Cheyne, who was chairman of the meeting, was also sentenced to thirty days and is at present undergoing sentence.

## They Are Still There!

SENATOR La Follette reopened the matter of the American troops at present in Russia operating against the Bolsheviks, in a speech in the Senate on January 7, which he declared was inspired by the hundreds of letters he receives daily from the people of Wisconsin asking why their sons are kept in Russia when the war is over. In the course of his speech he declared that "The great organized wealth of all the countries of the earth fears the principles that the Soviet government is trying to establish" and that "If the Soviet government, of which we know so little, is the sort of government that 140,000,000 or 150,000,000 Russians desire, that is their business and not our business."

In response to the question raised by the speech Senator Swanson, speaking for the Foreign Relations Committee, explained that it was expected that Senator Hitchcock would make a statement on the Russian situation at an early date and then proceeded to belabor the Bolshevik government for its sympathy towards Imperial Germany. All the old tales were reiterated and apparently Senator Swanson has not heard that Imperial Germany is no more. But even if what Senator Swanson intimates is true it would be interesting to know why press dispatches of the same date from London announce that Great Britain does not intend to send any more troops to Russia and is endeavoring to withdraw those she has there as quickly as possible. Surely England is interested in preventing Imperial Germany from being aided by Russia? And why did the Japanese announce the withdrawal of their troops?

As a matter of fact it is clear that none of the governments who have foreign troops in Russia are willing to make statements to their peoples as to what exactly their intentions are with regard to Russia. Now that pressure is being exerted to force an explanation they are announcing their intention of withdrawing the troops. But are these announcements being translated into action? Simultaneously with such announcements comes the news of heavy fighting between the Allies and the Bolsheviks. What is the object of this fighting? What is to be gained by killing the men of either side when the Allies are about to withdraw? Surely it is useless to send soldiers into battle to meet mutilation and death unless some definite object is to be accomplished and surely the peoples of the Allied nations are entitled to know what this object is so that they may say whether or not they want their husbands, sons and brothers to continue fighting.

From all the Allied countries protests are arising against intervention in Russia. None of the common people want to wage war against the Russians. Every

day protest meetings are being held in England, France, Italy and throughout America. The central organ of the French Socialists, *L'Humanite*, writes as follows on the threatened allied military campaign against Russia:

"All those who contribute to provoke and prolong the war are alarmed at the awakening of the masses . . . and demand that the centres of the people's revolution should be promptly suppressed. Their anxiety is no longer to conquer the enemy, but to preserve from the revolutionary peril the capitalist bourgeoisie of all countries. They know that the Russian Bolsheviks have destroyed monarchic and capitalistic privileges, have placed their hands upon the property of social parasites. Anything sooner than that. Their hatred of the enemy is giving place to the desire of coming to an understanding with him, so as to bar the advance of this scourge, which is worse, in their eyes, than war or pestilence . . . That a new war should be undertaken tomorrow—a war waged by the international counter-revolution, a crusade against the peoples who are progressing towards political and economic enfranchisement—this is possible; but surprises await the initiators of such an adventure. They will no longer be able to plead the necessities of national defense, and the necessities of capitalist defense are not of a nature to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses. On the contrary, the workers will perceive clearly that they are being thrown against one another only in order that their chains may be riveted, and the domination of their masters consolidated."

But in spite of all these protests the snows of Northern Russia are being dyed with blood. The Soviets proclaim that all they wish is for the Allies to withdraw so that they may build up their government in peace. They disclaim any wish to wage war upon the Allied countries. The Allies declare they will not send any more troops, but still the fighting continues, still the dreary spectre of war haunts the frozen Steppes.

The chief reason advanced by the United States Government for its participation in intervention in Russia was to protect the Czechoslovaks. According to a dispatch from Vladivostok the Czechoslovaks refused on November 24 to take part in an offensive against the Soviet Republic, feeling "that the Allies had betrayed them." Imperial Germany is destroyed, destroyed by the influence of the Bolshevik ideas, the Czechoslovaks refuse to fight against the Soviet Republic. The two chief reasons advanced for intervention have disappeared but alien troops are still at Archangel and Vladivostok. . . .

## International Socialist Delegates

IN answer to the call of Camille Huysmans for an International Socialist Congress to be convened at Lausanne, Switzerland, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America announces that it has appointed Algernon Lee, James Oneal and John M. Work as delegates. The statement published in the New York Call goes on to say that on a referendum vote taken over a year ago, when the Stockholm Conference was to be held, Morris Hillquit, Victor Berger and Algernon Lee were elected to attend that body and intimates that the appointment of the three men named as the Lausanne delegates was governed by the vote cast on the former occasion, Hillquit being unable to go to Europe owing to ill health which has held him confined for some months past and Berger being at the present moment standing trial under the Espionage Act.

As a matter of fact the three men elected to attend the Stockholm Conference were Hillquit, Kirpatrick and Berger. None of the present appointees were elected, nor did any of them even run fourth, that position being taken by Scott Nearing. But even if they had all been elected to attend the Stockholm Conference it is the meanest kind of subterfuge to presume that such an election would give them any claim to attend a Congress called under altogether different circumstances and facing entirely new problems. In the lapse of time between the attempt to convene the

Stockholm Conference and the present day much that vitally affects the Socialist movement of the world has happened, and it is a preposterous supposition that because under one set of circumstances a man is elected he is the choice of the electorate for all time.

The National Executive Committee advances the argument in defense of its action that the time set for the opening of the Congress is so short that it has no time to appeal to the membership. This is merely paltering. The National Executive Committee has been approached by various branches and locals of the party to call an Emergency National Convention in order to give the membership an opportunity of expressing their will on all the matters arising out of the present crisis through which the world is passing, and particularly to deal with the convocation of an International Socialist Congress. However, the National Executive Committee has not been able to meet since the armistice was signed. They have put off meeting time and time again on various paltry excuses and when the call came for an International Socialist Convention they selected delegates by telegram.

The constitution of the Socialist Party provides for the election of delegates to International Socialist Conventions, it provides several ways in which they may be elected, but it does not provide that the National Executive Committee shall appoint delegates. The appointment of the present men is contrary to the constitution, it is arbitrary and it is illegal. It makes no difference whether the choice is a wise one or not, the action is illegal. The Socialist Party has insisted that the delegates of the United States government to the Peace Conference should be appointed by a referendum vote of the people but in the appointment of Socialist delegates the National Executive Committee ignores the membership of the party.

Algernon Lee, one of the appointees, is the leader of the Socialist group in the New York City Board of Aldermen and his actions and those of his colleagues in that body have not found favor with a considerable section of the membership of the party in New York. On one occasion 27 branches of New York Local voted to censure their actions, 2 advocated the withdrawal of the group from the Board of Aldermen and only 2 or 3 voted to uphold the actions of the Socialist Aldermen. At the present moment there is a movement to withdraw them from the Board. In view of these facts Lee's chances of election as one of the delegates to represent the Socialist Party of America in Europe are at least debatable and his appointment is directly contrary to Socialist practices.

But before electing delegates the American Socialist Party has first to decide whether or not it will participate in a conference called by Social-patriots of the type of Huysmans. According to the press the Bolsheviks have refused to participate in the congress on the grounds that it is called by reactionary Socialists and will not be representative of the revolutionary Socialism that is sweeping triumphantly over Europe. If the revolutionary sections of the Socialist movement repudiate this conference then the membership of the American Socialist Party must also refuse to participate or else align itself with the reactionaries who accepted and condoned the war.

The only way in which American Socialism can arrive at a decision that will reflect the wishes of the membership is through an Emergency National Convention. The National Executive Committee is empowered to call such a convention and the membership of the party should insist that it act without a moment's delay.

## Labor and the New Era

IN periods of transition, such as the world is now passing through, old conceptions of old things are swept aside and old conceptions of new movements must be also swept away. Any change in the world's affair must necessarily affect all the peoples and all sections of society. Particularly is that section of society affected which is the instrument of the particular change in question. In succeeding eras the aristocracy, the upper middle classes and the lower

middle classes or petty bourgeoisie, have played the dominant role. Now it is the proletariat, the propertyless workers, who are the instrument of the change which is at present taking place in society. It therefore behooves the propertyless workers to prepare themselves that they may fulfill their function.

The rise of labor is a new movement. The trade union is a comparatively new weapon, though it is an old weapon of the new movement which is the rise of labor. In its upward struggle labor, like everything else, has had to learn from experience both in its conceptions and its practices. But the rise of labor has been so swift that its conquest of power in one section finds it still clinging to its old conceptions of its functions in other sections of the world. Thus we have the workers of Russia and Germany marching on triumphantly to the conquest of their historic mission while in other countries labor is still arguing and fighting for petty concessions.

In America particularly labor is still in the grip of middle class ideas. This is due to a variety of causes, that the country is a comparatively a new one, that immigration has been so great that the workers are split into different factions, that the country has only recently arrived at complete development and that hitherto its working class was not a permanent working class but was interchangeable with the other classes. Up until very recently the American worker had the chance of amassing wealth constantly before his eyes, or if he did remain in the ranks of the worker his son might rise to the employing class. This stage of American life is already passed, however, and a definite working class is established, but it still retains its middle class ideas. The skilled worker considers himself a property owner insofar as he owns his skill but the day of the skilled worker is also rapidly passing away. . . .

As a result of these and similar conditions the trade union movement has confined itself specifically to reform programs. It has not, as yet, recognized the fact that the mission of the workers of the world is to own and control all they produce and that this accomplished they are the rulers of the world. The average union man today wants more pay, shorter hours, better working conditions. He does not dream of owning the tools of his industry, except in the same manner as his boss owns them—so that he might exploit his fellows—he does not see that as long as someone else owns the means whereby he and his family live, his life will be one long struggle for reforms. He is convinced that his boss gives him a job, that without a boss to provide a job he would starve. He has a vague idea that his boss amassed enough money to buy the industry that he directs its operation and that he is entitled to the money he gets from his enterprise. The boss recognizes that the worker thinks in this way and so it is a common answer of the employers to the demand for more wages or shorter hours that they cannot afford to make the required concessions.

But with the march of events the worker must revolutionize his ideas. He must study the conditions under which he lives and he must watch the progress of his brothers in Europe who are overthrowing the bosses and operating industry themselves for the benefit of the community as a whole.

What do the owners of industry do? What use are they? What do they contribute to the operation of the world's work that entitles them to control the lives of thousands of families? Not one in every five hundred of the capitalists could operate the machines which make their fortunes. Few of them understand anything about the actual operation of industry. Few of them could rivet a bolt, feed a furnace, drive an engine, run a lathe, or perform any of the thousand jobs that go to run industry.

Nor are they capable of performing the executive work of their own plants. If all the owners of industry in America were to take a year's vacation tomorrow morning not one wheel would stop as a result. But if all the workers in industry would take a day's vacation the nation would be at a standstill. These are simple truths and they are irrefutable. But if

the workers recognized them it would mean the end of the present system of society and so those who benefit by things as they attempt to misrepresent the issue. They lie about the progress of the proletarian revolution in Russia, represent all the actions of the Soviet government as destructive, picture Russia in a state of chaos. . . .

When some news about the workers of Russia gets through the capitalist press perverts it. One of the best evidences of this perversion is supplied in the comments of the newspapers and weekly magazines on the pamphlet by Nicholas Lenin entitled *The Soviets at Work*, which the Post Office authorities recently suppressed. In this pamphlet Lenin deals with the difficulty experienced by the workers when they took over industry owing to the shortage of engineers and other highly skilled men. The press immediately hailed this as an admission that capitalism was necessary to the preservation of society. But Lenin did not mention the owners of the factories, but the skilled employes, the men who under capitalism really direct industry.

The average worker is in the habit of looking upon the engineers, shop experts, executive heads, etc. as the bosses, the capitalists. In reality these men are members of the working class although they class themselves and think alike with their masters. The owners of the industries also own the men who enforce their dictates and it is one of the tricks of Capitalism that these men are removed from the ranks of the workers.

Take for example the captain of a ship. He is necessary to the ship, but no more necessary than is a fireman. Under Capitalism the captain is given tremendous powers and privileges. He holds the power of life and death in his hands, he is the arbiter of all the affairs of the ship, he and his officers sleep in fine quarters, eat fine food, wear fine clothes while the crew are treated like brute beasts. Soviet Russia recognizes that the captain of a ship performs a useful function. He is the navigator and as such he has his duties to perform, part of those duties is to direct the work of the ship but outside of this he has no more authority than any fireman. The administration of the ship is carried out by a committee elected by the whole ship. Every member of the crew sleeps, eats and drinks of the best that is available. All are workers, each performs his task and all together they bring the ship to port.

What is done in the ship is done in industry and what is done in industry is also done in the administration of the affairs of the country. During the transition period the Soviets found it necessary to employ the skilled men until they could train men from their own ranks, but they have never denied the right of these skilled men to accept the Soviet form of government and take their places in the life of the community as part of and contributors to the welfare of the community.

Capitalism purposely keeps men apart, Bolshevism, which is merely another name for Socialism in action, brings men together so that all may work for the good of all.

The new era has already dawned. The day of the workers of the world is at hand. The propertyless, the earth's disinherited, are the coming masters of the world, a world wherein every one that works for the benefit of society shall be benefitted by society. But in the period of transition many perils face the advancing proletariat, many mistakes will be made unless the workers prepare themselves for their new destiny. Socialism is no longer a theory, it is a living fact working out its problems in the face of tremendous odds. The future lies with the workers but in order to take their place they must understand the nature of the problems they will have to face. They must think for themselves, organize for the benefit of all and act as reason dictates.

Divided you are helpless, united you are invincible. The great slogan of the dawning day is: "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to gain."

## Bolshevikjabs

FIELD MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG is reported as marching on Berlin. He always was headstrong, and if he insists, why, we suppose he must have his own way, but we hope no soldier will be so unfortunate as to mention the name of Kornilov while the Field Marshal is within hearing.

\* \* \*

It seems like a good idea to make Paderewski president of the Polish Republic. "Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast," and perhaps he will be able to charm away the pangs of hunger which gnaw at the vitals of the working class by getting out on the balcony of the state house and playing nocturnes and sonatas.

\* \* \*

The idea has at least novelty to commend it and, as we are living in the era of democracy, once the thing gets under way we will, doubtless, be able to forsake the refined atmosphere of the concert platform for the more democratic boards of the vaudeville stage when we look for rulers. In the near future we may expect to see Frank Tinney, Harry Lauder, Bert Williams, Gaby Deslys, Mary Pickford, or even the inimitable Charlie, put on diplomatic robes.

\* \* \*

Personally we are of the opinion that any government would find it a very difficult matter to declare war on the republic of which Charlie Chaplin was president. The entire youth of the world would be certain to be pro whatever country it happened to be.

\* \* \*

The latest sensation from Russia is that Lenin has been jailed by Trotzky. The Hearst papers carry the news in a headline appropriately colored red. We await with interest the thrilling details of Lenin's escape and his victorious march upon Moscow where he will jail Trotzky.

\* \* \*

Owing to some oversight Trotzky is not credited with jailing Lenin with the object of satisfying his personal ambitions and occupying Lenin's position in the Soviet government. It appears his thirst for blood got the better of him and when Lenin refused to quaff anymore at the expense of the bourgeoisie Trotzky promptly jailed him and is now running amuck among the unfortunate Russian middle classes.

\* \* \*

We must protest at these tales the newspapers are telling, quoting some guy in a New York garret as their authority. In the first place, Bolshevik agents don't live in New York garrets; only artists and poets can afford them. We have always had to be content with cellars when we lived in the great city. Besides, cellars are so much more appropriate for plotting, don't you think?

\* \* \*

However, that's a detail; what really annoys us is this talk about \$500,000. According to the papers there are 500,000 agents, so it only works out at a dollar apiece, and when we think of all the wives that Trotzky has sent to the different European capitals with millions of dollars in gold tucked away in their stockings it make one mad to be put off with a miserable dollar.

\* \* \*

When the Kaiser was giving away money he was at least supposed to be liberal. But these Bolsheviks are a lot of pikers.

\* \* \*

While we are on the subject, we would ask these papers who have been good enough to give this paper publicity in connection with the affair that the next time they wish to credit us with anything they would also mention our address, so that those wishing to subscribe may know where to apply.

\* \* \*

According to The New York Tribune the Bolsheviks have been in the habit of giving the peasants 10 cents for every military officer killed. It, however, omits to tell how the peasant can collect the money; but we suppose a Bureau of Scalps has been appointed to attend to this matter.



# The Struggle of the Ages

By Maurice Malone

NEVER in all human history have the toiling people who have done the work of the world received the product of their toil. The product of the labor of the people has been perpetually filched from them, and they themselves subordinated and cowed in their slavery and penury. The great masses of the people have ever been held in helpless servitude to the powerful and privileged classes. The history of "man's inhumanity to man" through economic injustice is one long, terrible tale of cruelty, brutal oppressor, and unforgivable outrage upon the bodies and minds and souls of the teeming millions that have populated the nations.

The masses of the people come here by the natural operation of procreation; but the earth and its products, and equipment for labor, these new millions find already in private possession. The resources of the earth are entrenched by law and sanctioned by religion.

But these millions must live, and rather than leap into fire or water, or over the rocks, or perish by hunger or poison, and mastered by the love of life these millions may live only on one condition: by offering their labor for whatever it will bring, as the slaves, serfs, hirelings, or wage-earners of the few who control the earth and the fullness thereof.

Rather than die, they have chosen to live a living death under the domination and at the mercy of those who controlled the only sources by which men can live.

Ancient slavery, this economic and social injustice, is the supreme unrighteousness of the ages of history. The Assyrian kings, back in the dim past, boasted of the horde of human beings that they captured and forced into exhausting labor. The empires of Babylon, Persia and Egypt and the Republic of Greece and Rome were all built upon the bleeding backs of millions and millions of baffled, degraded and terror-stricken children of men.

Alexander the Great on one occasion sold into slavery 30,000 inhabitants of the one city of Thebes at \$16.00 per head. The Roman General, Aemilius Paulus, put up for auction on a battlefield 150,000 human beings. Even Great Caesar took thousands of Gauls to Rome and sold them like beasts of burden to the noble patricians.

A paragraph from the pages of a recent archaeologist gives an account of the almost universal industrial oppression of the working classes:

"Here in Egypt are the tombs of kings, stupendous monuments, not alone of monarchial glory and pride, but of the reckless waste of human lives, deep in sands dug a myriad slaves ignorant of everything save the stern necessity of yielding up every bit of strength in their bodies and every last gleam of intelligence in their minds, to the demands of the King. In the quarries on the roads, and on the walls for scores of years, there toiled these thousands of men, wageless and half fed, overworked and scourged. Sick, dizzy and exhausted, the only hospital they knew was the taskmaster's whip, which stimulated into one last, agonized effort the exhausted muscles of a used-up body or the frenzied movement of a reeling brain." Whether the glory of monarchs demanded the speedy completion of some expression of his selfish pride or a too rapidly growing race must be reduced to manageable proportions without massacre, the whole picture of that useless grinding toil testifies to an ugly, wicked contempt for human life, that is the picture of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome. Romaine Patterson said of Babylon, "there was justice, but it belonged to a few and had never penetrated the great dumb laboring population—Babylon was great. She used science and she used art, but she abused humanity. She could calculate a star's eclipse, but not her own. No state has been more guilty of the waste of human life, and when we see her ruins lying like a vast, mysterious autograph scrawled over the desert, her history appears to be full of warning." Of Greece he tells us: "The truth is that behind her splendid facade of art, and literature, and philosophy, and eloquence, we discover an industrial tyranny and work-

shops full of slaves, the gleaming city of Athens was one of the greatest slave markets of the ancient world." Mommsen says that, compared with the sufferings of the Roman slaves, the sum of all negro sufferings is but a drop. *Capitalists of that day speculated on slaves, as many as 10,000 being sold in a day.*

Modern slavery and this record of ancient history finds its modified continuance through medieval serfdom. Down to the French Revolution we find the horrible parallel in the slavish toils of the mill workers of England up to 1825 and over into the chattel slavery of America to 1863, when in the black code of South Carolina death was the penalty for him who dared "to aid any slave in running away or departing from his master's or employer's service." In the memory of men now living it was a crime punishable by imprisonment for a white man to teach a negro to read or write; it was left for the slavery in *Christian Nations to do what pagan slavery never did, prohibit instruction of the slave*, but the sad story does not end there. The present chapters of the long drawn-out affliction of the enslaved working class may now be read in the daily records of twentieth century Capitalism, with its sweating and unemployment and labor wars, exiled from the face of nature and besieged by necessity in the unwholesome and filthy streets and alleys of our great industrial centers.

In daily papers we read of a Senator leaving \$30,000,000 to his family, and a railroad king leaving \$60,000,000, and an oil king worth hundreds of millions, while one half of the *producing classes are propertyless and millions live on the verge of deepest want.* Just the other day Mr. Frick, the steel magnate gave as wedding presents to his son and the bride checks for \$14,000,000. At this very moment, this very day, millions of human brothers and sisters, old and young, not in heathendom, but of our own religion, language and kin, and millions more in all Western Christendom, are eking out the miserable lives of un-owned slaves in the poverty, degradation and Hell of our modern industrial centers. At times hundreds of thousands cannot sell themselves by the day at any price to the masters of the machine and the market; men, women and little children consume their lives away in a bitter struggle merely to exist, while "wealth sits a monster gorged midst starving populations."

Up to this moment the people who have made the bread of the world have never received the bread their hands have made. They have hungered, and hunger today, in the presence of the wealth their own hands have created. Mrs. Shelly, in her famous book, entitled "Frankenstine," published 1817, pictured "Frankenstine" as the most perfect being. Having completed a most marvelous piece of mechanism, all at once, to his surprise, it turned out to be a monster

and a demon—so bad that it destroyed its real purpose. A parallel of this is to be seen in our late war where 55,000,000 of people were engaged in making life-destroying implements, 5,000,000 of lives lost, and \$155,000,000,000 of wealth wasted. Were this same energy and skill used in a constructive way what a blessing it would be to the human race. Now look at the situation: In less than two months after the war, our boys, on coming home, find the Government arsenals on short time and thousands are discharged. Is this fighting for Democracy? Not much! While we are holloaing for Democracy for foreign nations and their people, we are threatened with labor troubles galore.

The whole world today faces the tremendous issue of reconstruction. We are confronted with the following state of affairs:

1st.—Munition factories closing down will throw many out of work.

2dn.—Millions of soldiers and sailors, returning home from the war, will render insecure the jobs of those at work.

3rd.—Women will work for less wages than men in order to retain their jobs.

4th.—The loss of war business will compel firms to economize, especially in regard to wages, hours, etc.

5th.—The cost of living will not be lowered to the pre-war standard.

The above are facts, not theories. These facts must be met in a common-sense way. It will be no use passing pious resolutions, because paper resolutions never did solve any problems. Something has got to be done.

In the first place, there has got to be solidarity. We have got to be united; and this is the time for unity, but before we can have unity we must have unity of purpose. We must understand the purpose of our coming together, and upon what basis. There must be co-operation, everybody will admit, but it must be intelligent co-operation.

How can these people meet the high cost of living?

Name	Capital	Income
John D. Rockefeller...	\$500,000,000	\$50,000,000
Andrew Carnegie.....	300,000,000	15,000,000
William Rockefeller....	200,000,000	20,000,000
Estate Marshall Field...	120,000,000	6,000,000
George Barker.....	100,000,000	5,000,000
Henry Phipps.....	100,000,000	5,000,000
Henry Frick.....	100,000,000	5,000,000
William A. Clark.....	80,000,000	4,000,000
Estate J. P. Morgan....	75,000,000	7,500,000
Estate E. H. Harriman..	68,000,000	3,400,000
Estate Russell Sage....	64,000,000	3,200,000
Estate W. K. Vanderbilt	50,000,000	2,500,000
Estate John S. Kennedy.	65,000,000	3,250,000
Estate John J. Astor....	70,000,000	3,500,000
W. W. Astor.....	70,000,000	3,600,000
J. J. Hill.....	70,000,000	3,500,000
Isaac Stephenson.....	74,000,000	3,500,000
Estate Mrs. H. Green...	60,000,000	3,500,000
Jay Gould.....	70,000,000	3,500,000
Cornelius Vanderbilt...	50,000,000	2,500,000
Wm. Weightman.....	50,000,000	2,500,000
Ogden Goelet.....	60,000,000	3,000,000
W. M. Moore.....	50,000,000	2,500,000
Arthur C. James.....	50,000,000	2,500,000
Robert Goelet.....	60,000,000	3,000,000
Guggenheim.....	50,000,000	2,500,000
Thomas F. Ryan.....	50,000,000	2,500,000
Edward Morris.....	45,000,000	2,500,000
J. O. Armour.....	45,000,000	2,500,000

Socialism is the only remedy for this great evil. What is Socialism? It is the public ownership of all the wealth, the mills, the mines, the factories, the railroads and land. Things that are used in common, must be owned in common, by the people and for the people under democratic management by the people, instead of the present system of private ownership for profits—then humanity will be free from want and the fear of want. Workers of the world unite—then, and not until then, will you be free. Read and study Socialism and think for yourself.

**Spartacus?**  
The aims and objects of the  
Spartacus Group  
will be explained at a  
**Mass Meeting**  
...in...  
**Grand Opera House**  
cor. Washington and Dover Sts.  
at 2 p. m.  
**Sunday, January 12, 1919**  
—  
Prominent New York and Boston Speakers  
—  
ADMISSION FREE  
Auspices Boston Socialist Party

# The Truth About Bethlehem Steel

By Scott Nearing

THE Bethlehem Steel Corporation was born on the 10th of December 1904—born to "perpetual life" under a charter granted by the State of New Jersey. Since that time Bethlehem Steel has been growing as every healthy child of capitalism should grow. The Bethlehem Corporation is an international capitalistic enterprise typical of capitalism at its biggest. Beside the Lehigh plant at Bethlehem the Corporation has plants at Readington, Pa.; at New Castle, Del.; at Tituville, Pa.; at Lebanon, Pa.; at Cornwall, Pa.; at Steelton, Pa.; and at Sparrows Point, Md.

When the outlook for the shipbuilding business became bright the corporation went in for the production of maritime commodities. Through one of its subsidiaries the Bethlehem Steel Corporation has secured plants at Elizabethport, N. J.; at Wilmington, Del.; at Sparrows Point, Md.; at San Francisco, Cal.; at Alameda, Cal.; at Quincy, Mass.; at Squantum, Mass.; at Buffalo, N. Y., and Providence, R. I. One of the San Francisco plants, beside the plants at Quincy, Squantum, Buffalo and Providence is owned by the United States Government, but operated by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation.

The Bethlehem Steel Corporation has extensive quarrying and mining properties. Five quarries in Pennsylvania and New Jersey furnish fluxing stone for the Corporation. There are three large Cuban ore properties. One of them contains 3,500,000 tons of ore; the second, 560,000,000 tons of ore, and the third, 970,000,000 tons of ore. One of the three Cuban tracts totals 55,000 acres.

The Bethlehem Steel Corporation also controls important iron ore mines in Chile and important coal mines in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The Corporation has also organized a steamship company to carry its ore from South America and Cuba to Sparrows Point, Philadelphia and New York.

The Corporation has issued \$105,000,000 worth of stock besides its bonded indebtedness. The stock is in four classes. Until January, 1918, the 8 per cent. preferred stock never paid any dividend. The 7 per cent. preferred paid dividends until February, 1907. From then until April, 1913, no dividends were paid. The initial dividend on the common stock (30 per cent.) was declared January 20th, 1916. A 200 per cent. stock dividend was paid on Class B Common Stock, February 17, 1917. In other words Bethlehem

was made by the war.

The net manufacturing profit of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation was eight millions and a half in 1913 and a little more than nine millions in 1914. In 1915 it was twenty-three millions, and in 1916 sixty millions. Even more striking is the "surplus" in the pre-war as contrasted with the war years. In 1913 it was only a little over one million dollars; in 1914 it was nearly five million dollars; in 1915 it was sixteen millions; in 1916 it was thirty-eight millions; and in 1917 it was nineteen millions.

The total amount of money paid in dividends reflects the same condition. The Company paid dividends of seven millions in 1913; less than five millions in 1914; eight millions in 1915, twenty-three millions in 1916, and thirty-four millions in 1917.

Bethlehem has been made by the war! Its prosperity is as distinctly a war prosperity as that of any other company in the United States. Until the time of the war the Corporation was doing badly, but since the war it has been a "gold mine" to its stockholders.

The average net income of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation for 1911, 1912 and 1913 was \$3,075,108; in 1914 it was \$5,590,020; 1915 it was \$17,762,813; 1916 it was \$43,593,968.

These figures are startling, but they are merely surface indications of Bethlehem's prosperity. They are the figures that go to the public. Behind them in the reports of the corporation are figures of far greater significance.

A Corporation like the Bethlehem Steel Corporation appropriates money out of its income for "additions" and for "working capital." That is, it takes a part of its earnings and turns them back into the business without ever giving the stockholders a look at them. In 1912, and again in 1913, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation appropriated seven and a half millions for this purpose; in 1914 it appropriated twelve and a half millions; in 1915, twenty-five millions; in 1916 sixty millions, and in 1917 forty-seven millions, five hundred thousand dollars. In other words, in the three war years—1915, 1916, 1917—the corporation put back into the business out of its earnings \$132,500,000—or thirty million more than its entire capital stock.

The same facts are brought out very clearly in the charges for "depreciation," "repairs" and "mainte-

nance." In 1912, 1913 and 1914 the amount charged for repairs and maintenance was about the same each year; namely, a million and three-quarters; in 1915 three and a half million was so charged; in 1916 nine millions, and in 1917 eighteen millions. The same thing is true of the charges for relining furnaces, etc. In the years from 1912 to 1915 these charges averaged about eight hundred and fifty thousand a year. In 1916 they were three millions and in 1917 \$10,869,000.

A great corporation like the Bethlehem Steel charges off large amounts against the losses due to the working out of mines, the running out of patents and the general depreciation of its capital. From 1912 to 1915 Bethlehem charged about three hundred thousand dollars a year for "amortization of patents and extinction of mining investments." Other depreciation charges were: In 1912, three-quarters of a million; in 1913, one million and a quarter; in 1914, a million and a half, and in 1915, \$4,377,000. For 1916 and 1917 both accounts were lumped together as follows: 1916, \$14,351,000; 1917, \$17,912,000.

In other words during the year 1917, Bethlehem paid approximately thirty-four millions in dividends. It made appropriations for "additions" and "working capital" of about forty-seven million, five hundred thousand dollars. It invested \$18,330,000 in repairs and maintenance and \$10,869,000 for relining furnaces, etc. It laid aside \$17,912,000 as a depreciation fund and then had a surplus for the year of \$19,143,417.

Every worker in the employ of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation should rejoice at these figures. They indicate a state of prosperity heretofore undreamed of, even by the most optimistic apologists for modern capitalism. Never in the history of the economic world has there been such stupendous surplus placed in the hands of a few individuals with no responsibility to the public save that of citizenship. The war has brought unexampled prosperity to Bethlehem. Its stock holders have earned fabulous dividends. Its properties have been lined with "fat" that will run for a decade.

The annual reports of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation make no mention of the workers. The manuals of industrial securities do not comment upon them at all. The corporation has laid by its tens of millions. The workers are for the most part still laboring at the old subsistent wages.

## British Workers Speak to President Wilson

*John McLean, member of the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain, was sentenced to five years penal servitude for his activities in the great munitions strike last year. He served nine months of his sentence and was then released owing to the demand of the Scottish and English workers. McLean was appointed some time ago by the Soviet government to be its ambassador in Great Britain.*

*Upon his release he addressed the following letter to President Wilson:*

Woodrow Wilson,  
President, U. S. A.

Sir:

You are here in Europe to negotiate a "Democratic Peace" as a Democrat. If so, I wish you to prove your sincerity by releasing Tom Mooney, Billings, Debs, Haywood, and all others at present in prison as a consequence of their fight for Working Class Democracy since the United States participated in the War.

The Working Class Democracy of Britain forced the Cabinet to release me from Peterhead Prison, where I was undergoing five years' sentence under D. O. R. A. (Defense of the Realm Act)

I therefore write as an ease to my conscience and a repayment to the World's Working Class Democracy to release my above-mentioned friends and comrades.

The Clyde Workers will send me as one of their Delegates to the coming Peace Conference, and there,

inside or outside the Conference Hall, I shall challenge your U. S. A. Delegates if my friends are not released.

After that I shall tour America until you do justice to the real American champions of Democracy.

Yours in deadly earnest,  
JOHN McLEAN,  
42 Auldhouse Road,  
Newlands, Glasgow, Scotland.

The following letter was sent to Miss Eleanor Fitzgerald, secretary of the New York Council of the International Workers Defense League:

Dear Madam:

I am directed by the Glasgow Trades and Labour Council to inform you that the undernoted resolution was unanimously passed by the Council on Wednesday, December 11:

"The Glasgow Trades and Labour Council joins in protesting against the continued imprisonment of T. J. Mooney and others, and demands new trials or immediate release. One hundred thousand Trades Unionists in this city protest against the unscrupulous methods of trumping up evidence, and ask you to convey to America's President our demand for Justice."

I was accordingly instructed to cable to you the foregoing resolution, which I hope you have received, and I shall be pleased to have an acknowledgment of the resolution from you.

I have to inform you, also that a large Demonstration in the interests of Labour was held in the St.

Andrew's Halls on December 6, when the following resolution was unanimously passed by the audience inside the St. Andrew's Halls and the overflow Meeting outside. These Meetings represented rather more than ten thousand workers, and the resolution referred to, and which was unanimously carried, was moved by Mr. Robert Smillie, President of the British Miners' Federation, as follows:

"Resolved that this Meeting in the St. Andrew's Halls, numbering, with the overflow Meeting, ten thousand workers, protest against the life-sentence on Tom Mooney, and desire to associate ourselves with the American Federation of Labour in respect to a compromise of Penal Servitude, and further declare that Tom Mooney is either Guilty, or he is Innocent, and be it therefore resolved that the workers of Scotland demand the release of Tom Mooney, or we shall judge the American Democracies by the final outcome of the fate of Tom Mooney."

You may take it that the Labour movement in Britain is with the Labour movement in America in their demand that Mooney and his fellow Trade Unionists must not be allowed to rot in prison, and will continue to agitate and demonstrate until they are released.

Yours truly,  
WILLIAM THAW.

The National Security League is sending out thousands of pamphlets written by Dr. Moore to the Negroes, telling them to work and save. Making the Negro safe for exploitation!

# The Background of the German Revolution

By Louis C. Fraina

II

## The Russian Revolution

IN the early days of the war between the two belligerent powers, there was a third power, silent, unseen, but preparing to burst forth in irresistible action—the power of the Russian Revolution. During the days immediately preceding the declaration of war, when German Imperialism was trying to create a war psychology by exploiting the fears of Czarism, certain German Socialists acutely insisted that there was a power in Russia that should be considered in any real valuation of the situation, a power mightier than Czarism, and that was—the Revolution. But this was not heeded, and was forgotten by the German Social Democracy in the wild orgy of social-Imperialism and social-patriotic insanity that ensued.

That the coming Russian Revolution was a proletarian revolution was evident. The Revolution of 1905, betrayed and maligned by the bourgeois liberals; the subsequent counter-revolutionary period in which the bourgeoisie consolidated its power, accepting Imperialism and autocracy, and abandoning all revolutionary convictions—made it clear that the Socialist proletariat alone could make a revolution in Russia. This was emphasized by the bourgeois attitude during the war,—enthusiastic acceptance of the war and of its imperialistic objects, the abandonment of even ordinary liberal opposition in favor of victory and a bourgeois Czarism.

The Russian bourgeoisie was partially critical, truly, but it was within the limits of Czarism, a criticism based upon the fact of Czarism producing defeat instead of victory. When the "great Duma" met in March, 1917, it did not concern itself with the needs of the people, the mass agony and starvation: the Duma refused to grant powers to the Petrograd municipality necessary to provide food for the people; the Duma liberals were interested exclusively in the war and victory. The intervention of the revolutionary proletariat was necessary.

Then came the elemental mass action of the workers of Petrograd—mass strikes, demonstrations, food riots, revolutionary action against Czarism, that annihilated the reactionary regime mercilessly and completely, and which was the signal for the revolt of the soldiers, who were still agonizing in a hopeless, reactionary war. The bourgeoisie did not participate in this revolutionary action; their attitude was comprised in intrigues to depose Czar Nicholas in favor of a Grand Duke who would bring victory and recognize bourgeois requirements, in participation in the plots of Anglo-French capital directed against Czar Nicholas and a separate peace. It was the proletarian masses that marched to the assault against Czarism, that through the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council issued a call for the Republic and a call to the belligerent proletariat to act against Imperialism and the war.<sup>1</sup> The bourgeoisie wanted a "constitutional monarchy": this was admitted by M. Milyukov, the Constitutional Democratic leader, on March 13, after the revolution. It was the revolutionary action of the masses that gave the Duma courage to disobey the Czar's ukase to dissolve; and it was the Workmen's Council that imposed a republican program upon the first Provisional Government organized out of the old Duma opposition.

But the Provisional Government was bourgeois, the government of the capitalists, and accordingly counter-revolutionary. Its personnel was part and parcel of the imperialistic forces and purposes instinct in the war. It established the usual bourgeois freedoms; and it prepared to wage more aggressively the imperialistic war waged by Czarism, accepting the agreements and obligations of the Czar's government to other nations. Foreign Minister Milyukov, of the Provisional Government, insisted that revolutionary Russia would fight until it secured Constantinople; and the Provisional Government accepted Milyukov's policy. But the masses, who had made the Revolution in the name of peace, bread and liberty, repudiated the proposition; on May 2 and 3, the revolutionary masses in Petrograd demonstrated against Milyukov, the Provisional Government, and all imperialistic aims. As a consequence of this and other pressure, Milyukov and others were compelled to resign, and on May 18 a new Provisional Government was organized, a "coalition government" which contained representatives of moderate Socialism, of the

Soviets,—coalition being accepted against the violent protests of the Bolsheviks.

At this stage, a bourgeois revolution had been definitely accomplished, not by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat, who momentarily, however, allowed the bourgeoisie to usurp power. It was a political revolution. But with this change at the top, there was a movement at the bottom, an elemental bursting forth of the revolutionary activity of the people. This activity alone, destroying and reconstructing fundamentals, could accomplish the Revolution, by means of an implacable class struggle against Capitalism and Imperialism.

The revolutionary masses had constituted as instruments of revolutionary action their Soviets, of Workers, of Soldiers and of Peasants,—the self-governing units of the organized producers, completed forms of the "sections" and "communes" of the French Revolution. These Soviets constituted the only real power; but under the influence of the moderate Socialists, all power was yielded to the bourgeois Provisional Government. The Soviets were class organizations characteristic of the proletarian revolution; under the pressure of revolutionary events, they usurped powers of government, developing from exclusive instruments of revolutionary action into instruments of revolutionary government. The moderate Socialists, under the guidance of the Mensheviks (representing the dominant opportunistic Socialism) and the Social-Revolutionists, wanted to degrade the Soviets into a "parliamentary opposition"; the revolutionary Socialists, represented by the Bolsheviks, wanted all power to the Soviets, a revolutionary government of the Soviets alone. This was the decisive struggle of the Revolution,—the struggle between the bourgeois Provisional Government and the developing proletarian government of the Soviets; the struggle between the petty bourgeois democracy of the Constitutional Assembly, and all power to the Soviets.

The world concerned itself much with the attitude and proposals of the politicians during these early days; but the decisive events of the Revolution were being prepared by the masses. The bourgeois political tendency, which aimed simply at a change in the forms of government, enthroning the bourgeois republic and bourgeois supremacy, was superficially dominant; but the real factor was the economic revolutionary tendency of the masses, which aimed at a complete annihilation of the old regime and a reconstruction of the industrial system. This was apparent in the peasants seizing the land (monopolized by a few, very few, nobles and rich peasants), in spite of the prohibitions of the Provisional Government; this was apparent in city after city, where, even at this early stage, the Soviet usurped the functions of government, in the workers electing Shop Committees to control factory production, and seizing factories closed down by owners as a measure against the Revolution.

The Provisional Government, being bourgeois, paltered on the land question, since confiscation would be inimical to the interests of the bourgeois peasants, capital and the banks; the Provisional Government, being imperialistic, had to dodge and bluster about the war and the purposes of the war, and lie about peace while continuing to wage an imperialistic war; and the Provisional Government, being capitalist, had to protect the interests of the capitalists in all vital measures. The old bureaucracy had been retained; and all progressive measures were sabotaged by these hang-overs of the old regime, as the capitalists sabotaged production. The crisis developed more acutely: the revolution had only begun. But revolution is the great educator and developer of class action—temporary reverses created a new opportunity.

On June 18, the Petrograd workers, under the inspiration of the Bolsheviks, determined upon a demonstration against the Provisional Government. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets, then in session in Petrograd, issued a declaration against the demonstration, and the Government prepared to crush it by force. The Soviet moderates had become definitely counter-revolutionary; the demonstration was abandoned; but it broke out on July 16-17, after the ill-fated July offensive (determined upon as a diplomatic trick), and after the bourgeois ministers had resigned because of a disagreement on Ukrainian autonomy. The demonstration was to have been a peaceful one; but counter-revolutionary gangs and government troops provoked the masses, and for two days there was savage fighting in the streets, resulting in a victory of the Government. Then followed a reign of terror: the revolutionary masses were disarmed, Bolsheviks arrested, including Trotzky, and an order

issued for Lenin's arrest, who went into hiding, from where he continued to direct the revolutionary campaign. The All-Russian Soviet Central Executive Committee, dominated by the moderates, aligned itself with the Government: the moderate Socialists had become the real enemy of the Revolution. The proletariat and poorer peasants, the proletarian revolution could conquer only by the annihilation of moderate Socialism.

But the crisis had become more acute. The pressure of the masses increased; and a new Government was organized with the "Socialist" Kerensky as Premier: "Socialism" was now the last bulwark of defense of Capitalism. The first important act of Kerensky was to restore the death-penalty in the army, a restoration demanded by counter-revolutionary generals as a measure against the soldier democracy, and to call a conference at Moscow in August, at which convened all the reactionary forces of Russia, and where it was openly declared that the thing necessary for Russia was the abolition of the Soviets. It was apparent at this conference that the counter-revolutionary forces were preparing a coup against the Revolution. The coup materialized early in September in General Kornilov's revolt, which Kerensky had invited to crush the revolutionary masses of Petrograd, but which Kornilov transformed into a coup equally against Kerensky, and which Kerensky thereupon opposed. The revolt was crushed; but it convinced the masses of the force of the Bolshevik contention—either all power to the Soviets, or the defeat of the Revolution. The aftermath was swift and certain: in Soviet after Soviet the Bolsheviks became ascendant, and Leon Trotzky was elected President of the most influential Soviet, that of Petrograd. The final struggle approached: the masses prepared for all power to the Soviets, the reaction for the suppression of the Soviets, while the coalition government, symbolizing a fictitious unity of all the classes, was marching to destruction.

Kerensky tried to bolster up his declining prestige and power, by means of a Democratic Congress and a Preliminary Parliament, which declared Russia a Republic—an empty gesture. But Kerensky was completely discredited; he could talk, but he dared not act, hesitation, compromise and intrigues characterizing his desperate policy. With the discrediting of Kerensky came the discrediting of the moderate, petty bourgeois Socialists in the Soviets. This process was feverishly accelerated by the problem of peace. Kerensky had tried, and vainly, to secure a revision of the war aims of the Allies; the Soviet Executive Committee, still controlled by the moderates, elected Skobelev to represent it at the coming Allied Conference in Paris which was presumably to discuss war aims and peace terms; but the Entente Governments through Jules Cambon declared that they would not recognize Skobelev, and that, moreover, the Conference was to discuss only military measures. The conclusion was clear: only by means of international class action and the revolutionary struggle could peace be secured, only by means of the uncompromising struggle against all Imperialism and the repudiation of petty bourgeois Socialism.

This was at the end of October; some time earlier the Bolsheviks had called for a meeting of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. This created consternation equally among the bourgeoisie and the moderate Socialists: the Congress, it was clear, would accept the program of the Bolsheviks. The Central Executive Committee, in spite of the fact that a Congress was due, refused to call it; but the Bolsheviks issued their call for a Congress to convene on November 7. This initiated the definite proletarian revolution in Russia, of which the uprising of November 7 in Petrograd was an incident: the revolution had been accomplished in the local Soviets, which accepted Bolshevism and which had become organs of revolutionary government as well as instruments of revolutionary action. The insurrection of November 7 swept the Kerensky Government away; and on the evening of the same day, the All-Russian Congress decreed all power to the Soviets—a workers' and peasants' government instead of a bourgeois government, an industrial Socialist state instead of a parliamentary capitalist state: Socialism and the proletarian revolution had conquered!

All power to the Soviets constituted a proletarian revolution, necessarily; a Soviet Government implied the adoption of revolutionary Socialist measures, the initiation of the process of introducing Communist Socialism, the immediate political expropriation of the bourgeoisie and its partial economic expropriation. But the proletarian revolution in Russia alone could not permanently survive: it had to develop revolutionary allies in the proletariat of the other belligerent nations; and so the Soviet Republic struggled for the international proletarian revolution.

<sup>1</sup>This call to action to the belligerent proletariat was ignored, except among minority groups of revolutionary Socialism. Philip Scheidemann, German majority Socialist leader, declared it was out of the question to follow the Russian example, and severely scored strikes and action against the government. When the German proletariat prepared for large strikes and demonstrations on May Day, 1917, in sympathy with the Russian Revolution, majority Socialism repudiated the plans and declared that there should be no revolution—the Berlin "Vorwaerts" even defended the monarchy!



# The New Stage Opens

Continued from page 1

cils. Ebert and Scheidemann assumed full responsibility for the orders to fire upon the sailors, and insisted that "the strongest and most uncompromising measures must be taken to prevent riots and further lawbreaking by civilians as well as the military." Unless the Government was given this power, Ebert & Co. threatened to resign. Scheidemann, Ebert and Landsberg made one of the conditions of their remaining in the Government the organization of "a popular army of reliable troops." They issued this appeal through the *Vorwaerter*:

"Comrades, you will have to decide, because our title of People's Commissaires rests on your confidence. If you should absolve us, you must do something more. You must create power for us. There is no Government without power. We cannot act as your executive without power. Without power we become the prey of anyone sufficiently unscrupulous to use his comrades and their arms for vainglorious purposes and his own profit. Do you really desire a German Social Democratic Republic? Do you desire a Government by men who are your partisans? Do you want us to make peace as soon as possible and secure food for the starving? If so, then help the Government create a people's army that they may protect its dignity and freedom of decision and action against base attacks and coups."

The Central Council favored Ebert and Scheidemann quite naturally. The Independent ministers presented eight questions to the Committee, formulated by Dittmann, the answer to which was to decide their further action:

"First—Does the Central Council approve the action of Ebert, Scheidemann and Landsberg, who, on the night of December 23-24, gave unlimited power to the War Minister to use military force against the sailors in the Castle and royal stables?"

"Second—Does the Central Council approve the ultimatum of ten minutes fixed for the surrender of the Castle stables by General Lequis."

"Third—Will the Council see to the immediate executions of the resolution passed by the Congress of Soldiers' and Workmen's Councils, abolishing all distinctions of military rank and prohibiting officers in home garrisons from wearing arms?"

"Fourth—Does the Council approve the intimation at Hindenburg's headquarters in a confidential message to the Eastern Headquarters that this resolution would not be recognized?"

"Fifth—Does the Council approve the removal of the Government from Berlin to Weimar or any other place in Central Germany?"

"Sixth—Does the Council approve the program that instead of total demobilization, only a reduction of the standing army is planned?"

"Seventh—Is the Council of the same view with us that the Socialist Republic must not rest on the support of generals and the rest of the standing army, but on Citizens' Guards to be formed on democratic principles?"

"Eighth—Does the Council approve that the socializing of industries as far as practicable should begin at once?"

These are surely moderate demands, characteristic of a "centre" policy, and actually in accord with the avowed policy—in words—of the bourgeois—"Socialist" Government. The Central Council decisively approved the action of Ebert and Scheidemann in using force against the sailors, and answered the first question affirmatively. The second and fourth they answered negatively, and dodged the others on the plea that further reports were required. The Central Council then asked the Commissaires two questions of its own:

"First—Are the People's Commissaires prepared to protect public order and security and especially private and public property against violent aggression?"

"Second—Are the People's Commissaires in a position to defend with what forces they command the public offices against any violence, no matter from

what side, so as to secure their own administration and the effective service of subordinate organs?"

Haase, Dittman and Barth thereupon declared that they would resign voluntarily, since they could not approve of the use of force, because bloodshed might have been avoided if Ebert, Scheidemann and Landsberg had adopted other measures, and because they disapproved of entrusting to General Lequis, a representative of the old regime, the power of life and death. The Council's answers to the other questions, moreover, were considered unsatisfactory by the Independents. They declared there was no necessity of answering the Council's two questions, since they were resigning.

The Ebert Government is drawing further away from the revolutionary masses—while Herr Scheidemann fulminates against Liebknecht, declaring that the arrest of Liebknecht and twenty others would dispose of the "rebels"; but they dare not make arrests. The withdrawal of the Independents has strengthened and weakened the Government—strengthened it immediately, in that it may now smoothly work with the counter-revolution and use dramatic measures; weakened it ultimately, in that the policy of repression and force will awaken the anger of the masses and new revolutionary action. Events are clearing the air. Once the revolutionary masses recognize the accomplished fact of the Ebert Government being an instrument of Capitalism, with all that that implies,—then the masses will act, swiftly, aggressively.

The withdrawal of the Independents, characteristically on minor issues and not on the fundamental prob-

## What is a Strike?

(Continued from page 8)

Electric has four or more plants in various cities. If one plant is struck the management can simply transfer its orders to another. So the workers learned that to be successful they must strike not only the *whole plant, but all the plants of the company*. When the Lynn workers were making demands, the Schenectady workers came forward and threatened to strike to support them. When the Schenectady workers had demands they were supported by Pittsfield. As I write, a general strike in all the plants seems likely.

The workers throughout America must learn to organize so as to be able to strike not one by one, each for the good of himself, but all at once for the good of everybody.

Does this mean that the workers must abandon their craft unions and form a new general organization. Some will tell you so. I do not think so. I think there will always be a need for organization along craft lines. But what is immediately necessary is that the craft unions *act together*. Let the local officers of the unions in each plant work as one central committee. Let them agree to act only when all act together. Then let them send delegates to a general national committee representing all the plants in that industry. And let these delegates agree to act only when all act together.

When your delegates do this, then your employers will rage and call you Bolsheviks. And by this you will know that you have the kind of industrial weapon that *they* fear and that *you* need.

When all the workers in the plant strike together, then, and only then, will the workers in the industry get their demands.

To take this type of industrial action you need not change the form of your organizations. You need only adopt a different way of using them. What is needed for successful action by the workers in the next few years is two things:

- (a) A clear understanding by all the workers that a strike is only a strike when all strike for the good of all; and
- (b) A determination to make their elected officials and delegates carry out the orders of the membership.

The form of organization will then take care of itself.

lems of the Revolution, will not increase their prestige, is again an expression of their hesitant policy. They should never have become members of the Government, disgraced themselves by association with Ebert, Scheidemann, Solf, and the other lackeys of the old regime. They might have "redeemed" themselves by withdrawing when the Congress of Councils approved of Ebert and Scheidemann and declared for an early convocation of the Constituent Assembly: but they stayed, and that is their stigma. The decisions of the Congress of Councils and the wavering attitude of the majority Independents caused a split within the party, Ledebour and other Independents of the left openly accepting the Spartacus program and working with Liebknecht. The withdrawal of Haase, Dittmann and Ebert from the Government will enormously strengthen the Independents of the left, and thereby strengthen the Spartacans. In demonstrations after December 23-24, large numbers of Independents marched with the Spartacans; Independents are now calling for "All power to the Soviets!"

The power of revolutionary Socialism is being augmented by great industrial strikes, among the miners in Silesia and Westphalia, and by the pressing problems of reconstruction. Under the pressure of life itself, local Councils are usurping government functions, establishing control over industry, adopting measures that, precisely as in Russia, prepares the way for realizing all power to the Councils, to the federated Soviets. What forms the struggle may adopt until the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, is uncertain; the struggle against the Constituent Assembly continues; but should the Assembly meet and decrease a "democratic" republic, it would automatically decree the abolition of the Councils, and should this, as is likely, provoke a new revolutionary struggle, the Councils would emerge victorious and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The measures being adopted by local Councils can never fit in with a regime established by the Constituent Assembly. The Communist Labor Party builds upon the basis of the Councils; and Scheidemann was right: as long as the Councils exist, they must drift toward Bolshevism, develop into a proletarian dictatorship.

The call to revolutionary action is clear, insistent, aggressive, and clearer, more insistent, more aggressive is developing the response. It must come, it will come—the Revolution. The general European, the world revolution depends upon the completion of the proletarian revolution in Germany; but equally, the proletarian revolution in Germany depends upon the general revolution.

Each to his task! The proletariat in its own way and in accord with its own conditions, must further the general revolutionary struggle. But one tactic is common to all: *the relentless struggle against petty bourgeois Socialism as an indispensable phase of the struggle against Capitalism and Imperialism*. The theory and practice of the Bolsheviks—*Marxism in action*—alone constitute the theory and practice of Socialism and the revolutionary proletariat.

## "The Revolutionary Age Red Week Conference"

meets every Friday evening at 8 P. M., Room 1, Dudley Street Opera House, 113 Dudley Street, Roxbury, Mass. All S. P. organizations of Boston and vicinity are invited to join the Conference by sending two delegates to the earliest meeting.

ROBERT ZELMS,  
Secretary of the Conference.

# What is a Strike?

## By Facts

*The writer of this article touches on a point upon which the American workers have long been divided—the utility of the present craft form of unions as opposed to the One Big Union. The attitude he takes, that the present craft unions are necessary and can be made to suit the needs of the workers, is one side of this important question. We invite discussion by our readers on the matter.—Editor.*

EVERY worker knows that there is no such thing as a strike by one man. If one man goes "on strike" he simply loses his job. Nor is there such a thing as a strike by two or three men. And in a large plant a strike by fifty, or a hundred, or five hundred men is just as futile as a strike by two or three. It does not cripple the plant. It only cripples the strikers.

If the workers know this, then common horse sense ought to tell them that a strike by one craft union is not a strike, either. It may look like a strike, but it isn't. A strike occurs when *all* the workers quit together for a common purpose. Anything less than this is not a strike, but only part of a strike. It is usually worse than no strike at all. In principle it is the same thing as a strike by one man.

So long as the workers are content with half-strikes and quarter-strikes and one-tenth strikes they will have to be content with half-meals, and quarter-clothing, and one-tenth bedrooms.

Whenever one craft union in a shop goes on strike and leaves the others at work, there is no real strike in the shop. There is only part of a strike. For a few days it may look like the real thing. The striking men may be highly skilled. They may not be replaceable by ordinary strike-breakers. They may, by their strike, slow up work all through the shop, or even stop it altogether. This may look bad for the boss. But nine times out of ten it only *looks* bad.

There are at least ten different ways of breaking such a strike as this, and every one of them hurts the workers worse than it hurts the boss. These are some of the ways:

(1) If orders are slack, the boss may shut down the plant entirely. Then all the workers who stayed at their jobs starve, and *get nothing for it*. The owners have saved more money up than the workers and can stand it longer. Often the owners actually make money by strikes such as these and hire *agents provocateur* to provoke them. When the strike fails the unions always come back weaker than before.

(2) The boss may transfer his orders to other plants doing the same kind of work. This enables him to keep his contracts, at little more than ordinary cost, and helps him to starve out the strikers, which is an advantage to him in itself. Employers are always ready to help each other in these little ways. When their interests are the same they know enough to *act together for each other's benefit*, which is more than can be said of some workers.

(3) The boss may import skilled strike-breakers. Some union leaders will tell you that skilled men can't be replaced, but it is not so. The boss can get skilled men "loaned" from another factory, enough to keep orders going and starve out the strikers. This has often happened. Any employer is glad to spare a few skilled workers to help break a strike in another plant. Employers know where their interests lie.

(4) The boss may hire smooth-tongued scabs to join the union, go on strike and then urge the men to go back to work. In some unions the man with the loud mouth can persuade the others. So all the boss needs to do is to hire a man with a loud mouth and see that he takes out a union card and goes on strike with the craft. For the first few days he damns the boss louder than anybody else; then he changes his tune and says it's hopeless, and that all must go back to work.

(5) The boss may give the increase asked for. Often this is the best way of all. If the craft is small the increase does not cost him much. He can usually make it up by speeding up the less skilled workers, by "revising" the piece-rate, or by introducing a fancy bonus-system, where the more you work the less you make. Or he may simply raise the price of the product which the workers must buy. But what he is most likely to do, when he gives the strikers what they ask for, is to tie them up to an *agreement* of a year, or two years or five years. Then, later, when the other craft unions come to strike, this union can't quit with them because it has a "contract." It promised the boss it would scab and it must keep its promise. If

the boss has all the skilled crafts tied up with signed "contracts," the unskilled workers can strike all they like. There are strikers to take their places.

(6) The boss may *buy out the strike*. This is often done, for there are always some union leaders who are more anxious about money than about the working class. The workers can never be sure that there isn't some union leader who will sell out.

These are only some of the ways in which the employer can break the strike of a small craft union, or turn it to the disadvantage of the other workers. Of course, the workers are familiar with these methods. But they forget.

The employers are clever. They have studied strike problems for years. They know all the ways of breaking little strikes or using them for their own advantage. They have made a science of it. The working man cannot possibly be familiar with all the ways of beating the boss at these crafty games. If the working class fights with pop-guns it is sure in the end to be beaten.

The strength of the working class does not lie in the accuracy with which it can aim a pop-gun. It lies in the strength of its heavy artillery and the mass attack on the economic field. The strength of the employer is his cleverness. The strength of the workers is their numbers. The working class should conduct its struggles with its own best weapons. It should fight where it is strong; not where it is weak.

It used to be said that the employer does not like unions. This is no longer true. The employer likes unions, and *the more there are the better he likes them*. He would like twenty or thirty or fifty unions in his shop. For he knows how to manage them.

John D. Rockefeller likes unions. Charlie Schwab likes unions. They have said so in public. Nearly all "progressive" employers nowadays like "good unions" conducted on "sensible, conservative lines." They like craft unions and "shop unions," and any sort of unions which divide the working class. The only thing, nowadays, which makes them wild with rage is the idea of one big union.

The worker will readily understand why this is so. When a general is fighting in the field, the first thing he tries to do is to divide the forces of the enemy. The world knows how badly the Allies fared when their armies were commanded by *three generals*, fighting against a unified command. Think what it would have been like if the Allied army had been split up into three hundred independent regiments, each with a general at its head.

The "progressive" American employer does not try to crush the unions. He tries to divide them. "Divide and conquer" is the first maxim of the general in the field and the general in industry. Whenever the employer succeeds in creating a rivalry between two unions, or in persuading them to act separately and for their own separate interests, he wins a victory.

The workers must understand this modern strategy on the part of the boss. They must realize what kind of a fight they are up against. It is not the old fight of local skirmishes. It has become a general fight, scientific and highly organized. The employers during the war have learned to act together. They hold regular conferences at which all the employers, the country over, decide on labor policies, and pledge mutual aid in carrying them out. The employers are fast coming to adopt a Unified Command and a Unified Strategy. And their Unified Strategy is this:

To welcome unions to encourage them, even to organize them, and then to make them weak, jealous and "tame."

The union leader who urges merely the old-line of

attack, simply does not know what is happening in the industrial world.

There are many leaders who will tell you that the unskilled workers may have to form one general union for their protection, but that the skilled are adequately protected through their craft organization. They will tell you that the skilled workers are limited in number and have a monopoly value on their skill, that when they strike they cannot be replaced.

If this ever was wholly true, it is rapidly becoming untrue. The skilled craftsman no longer has a monopoly of his skill. "Efficiency methods" and the war have changed that fast.

Four years ago the machinists were among the most highly skilled workers in the country. Their work was absolutely essential to their employers. They were well organized in many places. They spent four years of apprenticeship learning their trade. They limited the number of apprentices. If they went on strike they could not be replaced. They were getting good wages. They were a part of the "aristocracy of labor."

The war came. With it came an enormous increase in the product to the making of which they alone had the necessary skill. Profits became enormous. The cost of living almost doubled. One would think that the machinists could get anything they asked for under those circumstances. That their skill would absolutely protect them.

But just the contrary happened. The demand for increased production brought thousands of unskilled workers, including women, into the trade. The unions were obliged to cancel their apprenticeship rules. Efficiency men got on the job and taught the unskilled to do parts of the machinists' work. Then they put the unskilled workers on piece rates that enabled them to earn more than the regular machinists. Soon, nearly all the machinist's trade was being carried on by unskilled workers, with a few skilled machinists to oversee them. And usually, the skilled overseer was getting less than the unskilled worker. The unions were obliged, for self-protection, to take the unskilled into the unions. New rates were set up. The classifications for which the machinists had struggled all these years, and which they regarded as their protection, were discarded. Piece rates were established which nobody but the bosses could understand. And when the war came to an end the machinist's trade *was no longer a trade*.

The men were laid off. Which men? Why, of course, the high-priced skilled workmen who were the old and loyal members of the craft union, those who had spent four years at learning their trade. They were laid off exactly because they were skilled craftsmen and members of a strong craft union. If they strike, it will do them no good. The newcomers, bossed by a few skilled machinists and efficiency men, can carry on the work at much less than union rates.

What has happened to the machinist's trade is happening to most of the trades, to some gradually, to others rapidly. The worker's skill is no longer a protection to him. The bosses have learned how to break the unskilled into the skilled man's job. That is part of their new strategy.

The only defense the workers have against this strategy is the solidarity of the masses. If a few workers strike the bosses will know how to manage the situation. If all strike, the bosses are helpless.

The workers of the General Electric Company have learned their lesson. Many of them are highly skilled, but that will not help them always. They have learned that to strike successfully you must strike the whole plant. So when the machinists tried to organize the Lynn plant last summer, they did not simply work with the machinists. They marched through the plant with an American flag and *called upon everybody to quit*. As a result there are unions in the Lynn plant today for the first time in its history.

But then the General Electric workers went on strike and learned another lesson. They found that it was not enough to strike the whole plant. For the General

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